

Delegated Application Report

Address: Watlington House, Watlington Street

Application No: 182240/ FUL

Proposal: Erection of new dwarf wall and railings to the street frontage and reformatting the forecourt

Target Date: 05/03/19

EOT: 14/03/19

Case Officer: Connie Davis

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application site is a Grade II* listed building and sits on the corner of Watlington Street and South Street and is within the Eldon Square Conservation Area. The property was the home of Kendrick School between 1877 and 1927.

The listing for the property is as follows:

WATLINGTON STREET 1. 5128 (West Side) No 44 (Watlington House) SU 7273 7/257 22.3.57. II 2. In 2 parts The western part built 1688 for Samuel and Anne Watlington, see rainwaterheads: 1688 W S A The eastern part said to have been added 1763 (Probably earlier). The whole is a rectangle of red and silver grey brick with a raised brick string at 1st floor level. Moulded and bracketed wood eaves cornice. Hipped old tile roof, brick end chimneys, dormered to west; valley roof with dormers facing valley. East front: 2 storeys and attic with modillion eaves cornice. 2 large flanking 3-light windows, glazing bar sashes and 2 dormers. Central, possibly circa 1688, double doors each of 5 heavily moulded panels with moulded architrave surround, frieze and cornice supported by flanking curved consoles and with carved keystone. Cornice breaks forward over consoles. Single central 1st floor window over. The west front: 2 storeys, attic and basement. 4 dormers with moulded pediments and C18 casements. 4 ranges of C18 glazing bar sash windows over 4 basement windows and central garden door with moulded architrave surround in trellis porch and central half-landing stair window above it under a moulded brick pediment. A single storey service wing to right. Original mullion and transom windows on ground floor of north front. Interior: panelled hall with 2 arch screen on fluted piers. Turned balusters to stairs (straight string), double ramped mahogany dado rail and baluster rail, panelled. dado (circa 1740 probably). Samuel Watlington was Mayor of Reading in 1695 and in 1711.

Listing NGR: SU7224773167

In addition to the building, the wall enclosing the site (located to the west of the building is Grade II listed. The listing for the wall is as follows:

WATLINGTON STREET 1. 5128 (West side) Walls enclosing garden to west of No 44 (Watlington House) SU 7273 7/257A 22.5.57. II 2. Late C17 or early C18. Massive brick and flint walls of varying heights. North and south walls about 80-90 yards long. West wall about 30 yards long.

Listing NGR: SU7218873139

Proposal:

The proposal is for the erection of a new dwarf wall (around 0.4m in height) with railings that will extend along the entire width of the front elevation of the site. The two existing vehicular accesses are to be retained but new barriers are proposed (which will be manually operated) along with a new pedestrian entrance. Four new Sheffield bike racks are to be installed which will accommodate eight bicycles.

The proposal does not seek to alter the grade II listed wall.

Plans Submitted:

The agent supplied the following plans and drawings:

WH21 - Location & Block Plans

TH 20 - Railing & Wall Details

WH22 - Existing Forecourt Plan

WH18 - Watlington Street Elevations

Received 20th December 2018

WH19 C - Front Forecourt Proposed Plan

Received 4th March 2019.

Heritage , Design & Access Statement for proposed new railings & wall to the street frontage plus reformatting the Front Forecourt at Watlington House, Reading

Received 20th December 2018.

Relevant Planning History:

181713/LBC - Erection of new dwarf wall and railings to the street frontage and reformatting the forecourt - determined at the same time as this application.

170606 - Creation of an opening within the brickwork partition subdividing the first floor office rooms at the North western corner of Watlington House. - Application Permitted

140484 - Enlarged gateway for vehicles and pedestrians off South Street (retaining existing widened temporary opening) - Application Permitted

120545 - Temporary widening of an existing access including partial demolition and then reinstatement of a listed wall and timber gate, and erection of a temporary security gate in order to facilitate access to carry out Water Infrastructure Works - Application Permitted

Consultation Responses:***External Consultation***

46 Watlington Street was formally consulted via letter on 09/01/19. A site notice was also displayed at the site until 5th February 2019.

No responses were received.

Internal Consultees

Heritage

The Council's heritage consultant did not raise any objections to the proposal and considered the proposed materials acceptable.

Officer Comment: Extra details are required regarding the proposed railings. Although the overall style of the railings has been indicated through a photograph taken at Eldon Lodge (within the Eldon Square Conservation Area) that the railings at Watlington House would mimic, further information on the material, specification etc. is required. It was confirmed by the agent via a phone call that the railings are to be bespoke made and therefore a specification is not available. Therefore a condition is placed on the application to submit details and a sample in due course. This does not prevent other works commencing on site.

Transport

The Council's Transport Development Control advisor requested that plans illustrated that the proposed barriers will be set back 5m from the highway so as to not cause an obstruction. This distance has been complied with on the submitted plans.

Clarification was also required as to how vehicles would manoeuvre in to and out of two of the proposed car parking spaces, through producing a tracking diagram.

However, the agent confirmed that these two spaces would be used as motorcycle spaces rather than for cars and therefore a tracking diagram was not required. This was deemed acceptable by the Transport.

Trees

The Council's Natural Environment Officer noted that the site is subject to TPO 77/02, and under this TPO tree planning is required. Pre-commencement conditions L2a, L2b, L3 and L6a would be attached to any permission granted. These were accepted by the agent on an email received 13/03/19.

CAAC

No objections. The application could be considered by the heritage consultant.

Historic England

Did not wish to be consulted on this planning application.

Summary of discussions with applicant/agent:

The agent was advised that the tree and transport concerns were to be rectified, as discussed above.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance and Legal Context:

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the *Reading Local Development Framework 'Core Strategy' 2008 (Altered 2015)*, the *Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009)* and *'Sites and Detailed Policies Document' 2012 (Altered 2015)*.

The '*National Planning Policy framework*' ('NPPF') 2018 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The 'NPPF' states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) according to their degree of consistency with the 'NPPF' (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the 'NPPF', the greater the weight that may be given). Accordingly, the 'NPPF' and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant

Relevant Policies:

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008) (Altered 2015):

CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland)

CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)

Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015)

DM12 (Traffic and Highway Related Matters)

Appraisal:**Impact on listed building and surrounding area**

The NPPF details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the assets conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be and any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

Policy CS33 states that the character and integrity of listed buildings will be preserved, and the Council will seek to enhance the settings of listed buildings wherever appropriate, by ensuring that new development in their vicinity is sympathetic.

Further to the conversation with the Heritage consultant, it is considered that the proposal will not cause significant harm to the listed building and the proposed materials to be used (Michelmarsh multi red stock brick) and the manual boom barrier are acceptable. However, further details are required of the proposed railings. It is acknowledged in the agent's email dated 05/12/18 that the railings are to be painted matt black and designed in a style similar to that of Eldon Lodge located in the Eldon Square Conservation Area, however additional details and a sample are still required to make a full assessment.

Overall, although it is acknowledged that the proposal will alter the existing street scene, it is not considered to adversely affect the appearance of the listed building, surrounding buildings, street as a whole or the setting of the conservation area. At present the site's frontage lacks a sense of enclosure and does not segregate car parking from pedestrian access. Therefore, by combatting this, it is felt that the proposal has the potential to enhance the visual amenity of site and in particular the forecourt. The proposal therefore is in accordance with Policy CS33.

Other matters:

The proposal complies with policy CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) through the inclusion of a pre-commencement condition relating to landscaping.

In addition, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of transport and therefore complies with policy DM12.

Conclusion

GRANT 182240/FUL

Subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. Time - 3 years

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing No:

WH21 - Location & Block Plans

TH 20 - Railing & Wall Details

WH18 - Watlington Street Elevations

Received 20th December 2018

WH19 C - Front Forecourt Proposed Plan

Received 4th March 2019.

Reason: because permission is granted in respect of the development as detailed in the approved plans only.

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of this development shall be:

Michelmars multi red stock brick

SB.4 HD Manual Raise Arm Barrier

as shown on the approved plans or documents.

The development shall be completed using the approved materials and details.

Reason: in the interests of ensuring that the new development appears in keeping with the existing building or surrounding area in accordance with Policy CS7.

4. Prior to the installation of the railings details and samples of the railings to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning. The development shall be carried out using only the approved materials.

Reason: as no sufficient details have been submitted and in the interests of the visual appearance of the building and the area in accordance with Policy CS7 and CS33.

5. Pre-commencement

No development shall take place until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice for all existing trees that are not shown as being removed on the approved drawings, both within and adjacent to the site, has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.

Reason: to ensure that appropriate protection is given to trees of amenity value within and adjacent to the site in accordance with Policy CS38.

6. Pre-commencement

L2a Landscaping - When details need to be submitted for approval

No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping have been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include:

- (a) hard surfacing materials; and
- (b) proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g drainage, power, communications cables, pipelines etc. indicating lines, manholes etc); and
- (c) planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/planting densities where appropriate.
- (d) Tree pit specifications.

Reason: in the interest of ensuring that the landscaping of the development enhances the visual local environment and in accordance with Policy CS7

7. Landscaping implementation

The hard and soft landscaping of the development hereby permitted shall be carried out, in accordance with the approved landscaping plans and documents. The soft landscaping shall take place no later than during the first planting season following the date when the development hereby permitted is ready for occupation or in accordance with a timetable agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: in the interests of the character and appearance of the new development and in accordance with Policy CS7

8. Standard Landscaping Maintenance

All planted materials shall be maintained for five years and any trees or plants removed, dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced with others of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: in the interests of the character and appearance of the new development and in accordance with Policy CS7

Informatives

1. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.
2. The applicant's attention is drawn to Building Regulations requirements. Please contact Building Control on 0118 937 2449 for advice.
3. In accordance with Article 35 (DMPO 2015) some conditions have been highlighted to make clear that they require approval from the local planning authority before any development begins. This is because the details need to be designed or works implemented before any other works start on the site or are of a nature that it would be impractical to consider after work has started.
4. The decision to grant planning permission follows the positive and proactive consideration of the issues raised by this planning application and issuing the decision within the agreed extended time frame.
5. Due care should be taken to the Grade II listed wall to the west of the listed building so as not to harm the structure when the proposed works are carried out.