

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT - Application No: 180264/FUL

Address: The Faculty, 23-27 London Road Reading

Proposal: Part retrospective application for Reconfiguration of the ground floor reception area to create a new reception area and laundry room plus an additional studio C1 apartment. Change in boundary treatment to London Road

Case officer: Ethne Humphreys

Determination date: Originally 16/04/2018, extension of time agreed until 11th July 2018

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

This application relates to a four storey serviced apartment block with 15 units which are entered via a reception lobby at the rear.

There is a narrow landscaped frontage in London Road and to the rear is a hard surfaced car park (accessed from East Street) with capacity for 8no. vehicles.

The site is located outside of the Reading Central Area and falls within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area.

Proposal:

The application seeks permission for various alterations including:

- Reconfiguration of the ground floor reception area to create new reception area and laundry room and additional C1 apartment
- Internal alterations including addition of lift
- Replacement signage and boundary treatment to London Road

The internal changes proposed will facilitate the reduction in the number of serviced apartments by 3 - from 19 to 16.

The proposed brick wall to the London Road elevation will be constructed out of bricks to match the main building.

The works have started, further to the permitted scheme 170576. The apartments are to be retained and used as serviced apartments.

Plans Considered:

Drawing No: Location and Block Plan 178-D-00-01

Drawing No: Existing Site Plan 178-D-01-01

Drawing No: Existing Ground Floor Plan 178-D-02-01

Drawing No: Existing First Floor Plan 178-D-03-01

Drawing No: Existing Second Floor Plan 178-D-04-01

Drawing No: Existing Second Floor Plan 178-D-05-01

Drawing No: Existing Elevations 178-D-06-01

Drawing No: Existing Elevations 178-D-07-01

Drawing No: Proposed Site Plan 178-D-10-01

Drawing No: Proposed Ground Floor Plan 178-D-11-01

Drawing No: Proposed First Floor Plan 178-D-12-01

Drawing No: Proposed Second Floor Plan 178-D-13-01

Drawing No: Proposed Third Floor (Roof) Plan 178-D-14-01

Drawing No: London Road Elevations 178-D-18

Received 9th February 2018

Environmental Noise Impact Assessment Ref IMP5185-1

Received 9th February

Drawing No: Proposed Elevations 178-D-15-02

Drawing No: Proposed Elevations 178-D-16-02

Drawing No: Proposed Detailed Entrance Elevation 178-W91 DC1

Received 9th July 2018

Air Quality Filter Panels

Received 9th July 2018

Relevant Planning History:

171948 Application for approval of details reserved by condition No's 3 (materials), 5 (Noise) and 6 (Air Quality) of planning permission ref. 170576. Discharged 06/04/2018

170576 Internal alterations to including division of 3no. existing three bedroom serviced apartments (Use Class C1) into 6no. one bedroom service apartments. Reconfiguration of

ground floor to create a new reception area and laundry room plus an additional studio apartment and addition of a lift. Permitted 29/08/2017

091394 Retrospective change of use from flats (Use class C3) to 15 serviced apartments (Use class C1) comprising 12 x 1 bedroom units and 3 x 2/3 bedroom units with associated parking. Permitted 09/10/2009

Consultation Responses:

Transport: No objections subject to condition.

Environmental Protection: No objection, further to the details submitted under 171948.

Natural Environment: No objection.

45 Properties in London Street (incl. Blenheim Court), East Street (incl. Elizabeth Mews) and London Road were notified and a site notice was displayed. No letters of representation received.

Summary of discussions with applicant/agent:

The applicant was advised of inaccuracies in the plans, and asked to submit air quality details (as previously discharged). Revised plans and additional information was received and an extension of time agreed until 11th July 2018.

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:

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. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National

Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

In this regard, 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 National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015)

- CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
- CS4 Accessibility and the intensity of development
- CS5 Inclusive Access
- CS7 Design and the Public Realm
- CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities
- CS14 Provision of Housing
- CS15 Location, accessibility, density and housing mix
- CS16 Affordable Housing
- CS18 Residential Conversions
- CS20 Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy
- CS23 Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans
- CS24 Car/Cycle Parking
- CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- CS34 Pollution and Water Resources

Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) 2009

- RC5 Design in the Centre
- RC9 Living in the Centre

Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015)

SD1 Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development

DM3 Infrastructure Planning

DM4 Safeguarding Amenity

DM10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space

DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Revised Parking Standards & Design SPD (October 2011)

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal

Appraisal

(i) Intensification of residential use:

Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy states that proposals to convert properties for residential use will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area particularly in terms of intensification of activity, loss of privacy, loss of external amenity space, the provision and location of adequate on-site car parking and the treatment of bin storage areas.

Policy DM8 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document sets out the criteria under which these will be acceptable including:

- the proposal respects the physical character of the area and would not, individually or cumulatively unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the loss of single family housing;
- there are no unacceptable adverse impacts to other residential properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units and proximity to other properties;
- there is appropriate sound insulation between proposed and neighbouring units and layouts avoid inappropriate stacking of rooms between the units

- bin and cycle storage is of an appropriate standard and location for the units proposed and should be located at ground floor level with easy access.

The Residential Conversions Supplementary Planning Document (November 2013) considers a general assessment of all types of conversions and provides a checklist of items with the relevant ones used to form the basis of an appraisal. Checklist 3 of the SPD re-iterates the need to contribute to achieving an appropriately mixed and sustainable community.

Policy DM5 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document sets out that on developments of 10 or more new dwellings outside the central area over 50% of dwellings should have 3 or more bedrooms. However, with proposals for fewer than 10 a mix of dwelling sizes would still be sought where possible.

The site was given planning permission under application 99/0866/FUL for the erection of 15 flats with access to a 9 space car park of East Street. However, since completion, the site has been used as serviced apartments for the business community staying and visiting Reading and full planning permission for the continued use as serviced apartments was granted under application 08/01143/FUL. A further application for internal alterations to create 6no. one bedroom service apartments was granted under application No. 170576.

Given the property has been used as serviced apartments since completion in 2001, permission for which was granted retrospectively in 2009, the mix of accommodation sizes or provision/retention of larger family sized units is not a relevant consideration to this proposal. However, given the above, the proposals are considered acceptable in principle. Whilst there would be a reduction in the number of unit from 19 to 16, this is to facilitate a better quality of accommodation.

(ii) Impact on the character of the surrounding area:

Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy sets out the need for a high quality of design that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area and makes a positive contribution to urban design objectives.

Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy confirms that historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including listed buildings, Conservation Areas and their settings, will be protected and where

appropriate enhanced with planning permission only granted where development has no adverse impact on such historic assets.

Policy RC5 of the Reading Central Area Action Plan considers how the details and materials use should be of a high quality that respects the form of the detailing and materials in the local area.

The proposed boundary treatment, with brick wall to match the main building, is considered acceptable and indeed the proposed hedging would soften the appearance adjacent London Road, positively contributing to enhancing the appearing of the building within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area.

Due to their nature, the various internal alterations would not result in any adverse harm to the character and appearance of Market Place/London Street Conservation Area in accordance with Policy CS33, CS7 and RC5.

The proposed signage, whilst considered acceptable in its context, would require separate advertisement consent and does not form part of this consent - an informative will be attached in this respect.

(iii) Amenities of future residents and neighbours:

Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document considers the living environment of new residential properties in terms of privacy, access to daylight/sunlight, noise and disturbance etc. Checklist 4 of the Conversions SPD considers whether an appropriate level of outdoor space will be expected.

Whilst these are service apartments and therefore not subject to the same criteria a satisfactory standard of amenity would nonetheless be provided in terms of daylight, outlook and privacy. In general, the room arrangement between floors is acceptable with appropriate upgrade to floors/ceilings (as may be necessary under Building Regulations) to achieve the minimum sound insulation measures.

The proposed additional studio flat on the ground floor is currently part of a reception area next to a car park and application 170576 considered that details of ventilation would be necessary due to the potential for poor air quality if windows were to

be opened. A suitably worded condition was attached in this respect and details were submitted under application 171948, considered acceptable by the Council's Environmental Protection Officer and subsequently discharged. The same details have been submitted with this application and the Environmental Protection Officer has raised no objection.

Similarly, with external noise mitigation, there were no details or conditions attached to the 2009 permission, hence retrospective requirements in this regard may be less critical as it could be assumed that the larger flats now sought to be sub-divided have been fit for habitable use since 2001. Notwithstanding, the Council's Environmental Protection Officer recommended the use of standing advice regarding mitigation to reduce the potential for disturbance from external noise sources. A noise assessment was submitted under application 171948, considered acceptable by the Council's Environmental Protection Officer and subsequently discharged. The same details have been submitted with this application and the Environmental Protection Officer has raised no objection.

Further to the above, whilst the original proposal of 19 serviced apartments was considered acceptable under application 170576, the reduction to 16 serviced apartments as proposed is considered to result in the units being more spacious and of a better quality of accommodation. This is welcomed.

Policy DM4 and Checklist 5 of the Residential Conversions SPD consider aspects of privacy, access to daylight/sunlight and noise and disturbance from the neighbour viewpoint. Checklist 8 looks at whether there is adequate sound insulation between the property and neighbouring units.

The proposal does not seek to enlarge the building such that no undue loss of light or overbearing impact would occur. As considered under application 170576, there is unlikely to be any significant nuisance arising between the proposed serviced apartments and the nearest adjoining properties in East Street due to the separation distance across the car park. It is not considered there would be any additional impact over and above that approved under application 170576.

On this basis, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the Residential Conversions SPD and Policy DM4 of the SDPD.

(iv) Transport

Policy CS24 of the Core Strategy applies the Council's adopted maximum car parking standards and cycle parking requirements in relation to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.

Policy DM12 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document permits development where the proposals would not be detrimental to the functioning of the transport network or to the safety of users of the network.

The site is located within Zone 2 of the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD in an area of mixed office and residential uses. The proximity to the town centre means that this area is well served by rail and bus links.

The Council's Transport Officer has advised that there are no highways or traffic related objections to the proposals. Whilst the proposal does provide for residents parking within the existing car park to the rear, a condition regarding the prohibition on the eligibility of future residents for car parking permits will be attached.

(vi) Affordable housing

Policy DM6 of the SDPD sets out the proportion of affordable housing provision by the number of dwellings per site or in lieu of such by contribution towards off-site provision elsewhere in the Borough.

The proposals as C1 use are therefore exempt from this requirement for a financial contribution towards off-site provision of affordable housing.

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

1. The works to which this consent relate shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

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

Drawing No: Proposed Site Plan 178-D-10-01

Drawing No: Proposed Ground Floor Plan 178-D-11-01

Drawing No: Proposed First Floor Plan 178-D-12-01

Drawing No: Proposed Second Floor Plan 178-D-13-01

Drawing No: Proposed Third Floor (Roof) Plan 178-D-14-01

Drawing No: London Road Elevations 178-D-18

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Drawing No: Proposed Elevations 178-D-15-02

Drawing No: Proposed Elevations 178-D-16-02

Drawing No: Proposed Detailed Entrance Elevation 178-W91 DC1

Received 9th July 2018

Reason: To clarify which plans have been approved and in the interests of proper planning.

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of this development shall be as stated in the application form, as annotated on the approved drawings and as discharged under application 171948/APPCON.

Reason: in the interests of ensuring that the new development appears in keeping with the existing building or surrounding area in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS33 of the LDF Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015).

4. Prior to any agreement being entered into for a new occupation of, or transfer of any interest in, the serviced apartments hereby approved the prospective occupier/transferee shall be informed of the prohibition on entitlement to a car parking permit. All material utilised for advertising or marketing the residential apartments for letting or sale shall make it clear to prospective tenants and

occupiers that no parking permit will be issued by the Council to occupiers of the residential apartments.

Reason: In order that the prospective occupiers are made aware of the fact that they will not be entitled to an on-street car parking permit, in the interests of the proper management of parking, and to ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area in accordance with Policy CS24 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015) and Policy DM12 of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015).

5. The proposed works shall be implemented in accordance with the following documents approved under application 171948/APPCON and submitted with this application:

- Impact Acoustics Environmental Noise Impact Assessment ref.IMP5185-1 dated 14th - 17th September 2017 and
- 'Rega Vent' Whole House Ventilation with Heat Recovery

Reason: To protect the amenity of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy CS34 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015).

6. The proposed works shall be implemented in accordance with the following document approved under application 171948/APPCON and submitted with this application:

- Jasun Envirocare Plc UltimaPleat Panel Filters '40'

Reason: to protect the health of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy DM19 of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015).

7. The maximum length of stay in the serviced apartments hereby approved shall not exceed 3 months from the date of check in.

Reason: To ensure the units are used on a short stay basis and not as residential units in accordance with Policy RC9 of the Reading Borough LDF Reading Central Area Action Plan 2009.

8. Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, the development hereby permitted shall be used for Use Class C1 serviced apartment/hotel use only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in the same Use Class of the Schedule to the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

Reason: Another alternative use of the premises which may otherwise be permitted by virtue of the above Orders could be harmful to the character of the area in terms of disturbance or traffic generation. In accordance with Policy CS34 of the LDF Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015) and Policies DM4 and DM12 of the LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015).

Informatives

1. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this consent. Any development which is carried out but differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition (s) attached to the consent 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. Internal alterations and works may require separate approval under the Building Regulations. Please contact the Council's Building Control service for further advice on (0118) 937 2449.
3. To minimise the disturbance by noise of future residential occupiers of the flats and its effect on neighbouring residents, residential accommodation must be designed

and constructed or converted so as to achieve the insulation requirements set out in Building Regulations Approved Document E.

4. The occupiers of the residential units will not be entitled to an on-street car parking permit in the interests of the proper management of parking, and to ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area. The site is located close to local facilities, with frequent public transport services on nearby roads. The occupiers/transferees should be informed of the prohibition on entitlement to a car parking permit.
5. It should be noted that separate advertisement consent is likely to be required for erection of signage on the buildings. No signage is approved as part of this application.
6. 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 time period.