

Planning Services
Reading Borough Council
Civic Centre
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 7AE

Via Planning Portal
Ref. PP-07253640

10 September 2018

let.001.KH.RP.29310001

Dear Sir/Madam

PHOENIX HOUSE, 1 STATION HILL, READING, RG1 1NB

On behalf of our client, Fidelity UK Real Estate Fund c/o FIL Investment Management Ltd., we enclose an application for full planning permission in respect of minor external alterations at the above site.

This application seeks planning permission for the:

Minor external alterations to the ground floor to facilitate the installation of an internal shower block.

Application documents

In addition to this covering letter, this application is supported by the following documents and drawings:

- Application forms, signed and dated;
- Application drawings:
 - Site Location Plan;
 - Existing Ground Floor GA Plan;
 - Existing Building Elevation – Front South Facing A;
 - Existing Building Elevation – Front South Facing B;
 - Proposed Ground Floor GA Plan; and
 - Proposed Building Elevation – Front South Facing A.
- Photo Pack, prepared by Area.

The application fee of £234 has been paid directly via Planning Portal (Ref. PP-07253640).

Site and Surroundings

Phoenix House is a six-storey office building located within the central area of Reading. It is located on the northern side of Station Hill opposite the junction with Greyfriars Road and Tudor Road. The site is less than 200m from Reading Station.

Relevant Planning History

On 13 March 2012, full planning permission was granted for an extension to front entrance to follow the frontage line of the east wing made up of a glazed curtain walling (four storeys high) to accommodate a new reception area and additional office space. This proposal also included minor internal alterations, full office refurbishment and replacement of outdated plant system (LPA Ref. 120097).

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018)

Para 11 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Para 91 supports planning decisions that aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles.

Local Planning Policy

The following development plan documents and policies for the Reading Borough Council are relevant:

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) (2012, altered 2015)

- DM4 Amenity
- DM12 Highway Matters

Core Strategy (2008, altered 2015)

- CS7 Design and the Public Realm
- CS20 Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy
- CS24 Car Parking
- CS34 Pollution

Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009)

- RC5 Design in the Centre

Emerging Planning Policy

Readings New Local Plan was submitted for examination on 29 March 2018. Once adopted, this will replace the current development plan documents. As this document is in the later stages of production, it is a material consideration in current planning decisions.

- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Planning Designations

The site is subject to the following planning designations as shown on the adopted Policies Maps:

- Within Reading Central Area;
- Within the Central Core and Office Core;
- Within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
- Within Flood zone 1; and
- Station Hill is a Cycle Route.

Proposed Scheme

The application site has a lawful use as Class B1(a) offices. The proposed scheme seeks to make improvements to the facilities of this office building. The scheme comprises:

- External alterations comprising the infilling of three ground floor arched apertures with brick/blockwork and reinstating the existing open security grilles to ensure privacy to a new shower block proposed within the internal ground floor car park (these are internal works so do not require planning permission).

Planning Assessment

This section identifies and addresses the key planning consideration in respect of the proposed alterations at this site.

Design and Appearance

To ensure privacy to the new internal shower block, it is proposed to infill three ground floor arched apertures with brick/blockwork. These will be rendered and painted to an off-white limestone colour to match the existing façade. The existing open security grilles will be reinstated to maintain a consistent visual appearance. The proposed materials are high quality and will respect the form and quality of the existing development site. The proposed external alterations are therefore in accordance with Policy RC5 of the RCAAP, Core Strategy Policy CS7 and emerging Policy CC7.

Amenity of Surrounding Occupiers

As the proposed external alterations are simply to a minor area of the ground floor of the existing office building, they will not result in any undue harm to amenity of surrounding occupiers and would accord with Policies DM4 and CS34.

Conclusion

This document identifies the key issues and planning policy considerations associated with the proposed development and demonstrates how the scheme complies with adopted and emerging planning policy at both local and national levels. It demonstrates that the proposal will improve the sustainable and efficient use of the site.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenya Hill', written in a cursive style.

Kenya Hill

Enc: As listed