

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT - Application No. 171002/FUL

Address: 9 Greyfriars Road

Proposal: Proposed open plan terrace area situated between the 3rd & 4th floor level, associated glazed balustrade and timber screen and landscaping

Case officer: Matt Burns

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The site is located at the corner of Greyfriars Road and Vachel Road and comprises a predominantly 5 storey office block. The building steps down in height towards the north of the site along Greyfriars Road.

Proposal: The application seeks planning permission for a proposed open plan terrace area situated between the 3rd & 4th floor level, associated glazed balustrade and timber screen and landscaping.

The proposed terrace area would be formed to the existing roof space of the building fronting Vachel Road. This area is currently flat with a gravel surface and small brick wall and metal rail around the edges of the roof. The proposed terrace would make up around 2/3 of the roof surface of this part of the building with the rest to be retained in its existing gravel surfaced form. The roof space area is accessed internally from the central core of the building located at the corner with Vachel Road and Greyfriars Road which has a small additional recessed storey of accommodation. There is an existing separate roof top terrace area to the building fronting Greyfriars Road to the opposite side of this elevated part of the building.

Plans and Documents Considered:

Drawing no.s:

P3805W GA 1 02 04 rev B - General Arrangement Terrace Floor Plan

P3805W GA 1 01 04 rev B - Sections of the Terrace Floor

P3805W GA 1 03 04 rev A - General Arrangement Building Roof Plan

Received on 21st June 2017

Location Plan ref. Coopers_amp_Lybrand_9 Greyfriars_Road_RG1 1JG

Received on 20th June 2017

Relevant Planning History:

141917 - Refurbishment and extension of existing office building, to include renewal of all facades, glazing and curtain walling, removal of existing planters to Greyfriars Road and Vachel Road, removal of planter in rear car park area to be replaced with cycle storage, reconfiguration and renewal of plant equipment including new enclosure, renewal of main perimeter paving and refurbishment of roof terrace area - Granted.

150500 - Discharge of conditions 3, 4 and 9 of planning permission 141917 - Granted.

150506 - Non-material changes to planning permission 141917 including replacing brick plinth with granite cladding system, alterations to spandrel panels, brise soleils and canopies and associated works - Granted.

151338 - Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 and 9 of planning permission 141917 - Under consideration.

151339 - Non material change to planning permission (141917) to include the reduction in height of the parapet glazing to south east corner, reduced angle to front entrance steps, granite cladding to base plinth on south and east elevations amended from light to dark grey, additional permeable paving and reduction in 3rd level roof terrace planters - Granted.

161863 - Discharge of condition 8 (BREEAM) of planning permission ref. 141917 - Condition discharged.

Consultation Responses:

Environmental Protection - No Comments.

Natural Environment (Trees) - No objection - the proposal is a significant enhancement of the existing bare gravel roof top.

Neighbouring Properties along Greyfriars Road, Stanshawe Road and Vachel Road were notified of the application and a site notice was displayed at the site. No representations have been received.

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).

In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Core Strategy, Sites and Detailed Policies Document and Reading Central Area Action Plan) 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)

CS7 Design and the Public Realm

CS34 Pollution

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

DM4 Amenity

Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP 2009)

RC5 Design in the Centre

Appraisal

Design and Appearance

The height of the building and density of the surrounding built environment is such that the roof top of the building is not readily visible from street-level. Timber decking, planters and benches are proposed to the central area of the terrace which due to their low level would not be prominent and are considered an enhancement to the existing bare gravel top surface of this part of the roof of the building.

The most prominent and visible feature of the proposal would be the 1.3m high glazed balustrade and plinth which would surround the edge of the roof space terrace area where it fronts Vachel Road to the south and also to the rear (north) of this part of the building, facing Stanshawe Road. An existing metal rail balustrade already lines these parts of the roof space whilst a glazed balustrade and terrace area was approved under application ref. 141917 to the roof space of the other side of the building, fronting Greyfriars Road. It is not considered that the proposed glazed balustrade and plinth to this part of the building would result in any significant harm to the appearance of the building or character of the street-scene and surrounding area.

A taller (1.8m high) slatted timber screen is proposed to the west part of the roof space which would separate the terrace area from the part of the roof to be retained in its existing gravel surfaced form. Set back from the edge of the roof this timber screen would not be readily visible from the surrounding area.

It is not considered that the proposed terrace area with balustrade and timber screen would conflict with Policies RC5 of the Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009) or CS7 of the Core Strategy (2008, 2015).

Amenity of surrounding occupiers

The roof top terrace area is proposed to be used by office staff in association with the existing office use of the building as per the roof top terrace area to the other side of the building along Greyfriars Road.

There are residential properties opposite the building and proposed terrace area on Vachel Road and also adjacent to the west of the site along Vachel Road. It is not considered that the proposal would result in any significant additional overlooking to surrounding residential occupiers above that of the existing extensive office windows. In addition the

balustrade and screening would be recessed from the very edge of the roof space, which it is considered would prevent any increased levels of overlooking or loss of privacy.

Associated with the existing office use of the building only it is not considered that the terrace area would result in any significant noise or disturbance to surrounding residential occupiers. It is considered reasonable to restrict the use of the terrace to that ancillary to the office use of the building only, to ensure it could not be used for other purposes which may not be acceptable given the proximity to nearby houses. The applicant has also proposed that the terrace area would be used between 7am and 7pm only which is it considered reasonable to secure by way of a suitably worded condition as an additional control to prevent any undue disturbance or harm to the amenity of surrounding residential occupiers.

It is not considered that the proposed terrace area, subject to the conditions referred to above, would conflict with Policies DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, 2015) and CS34 of the Core Strategy (2008, 2015).

Other Issues

Terrace areas are not liable for the Community Infrastructure Levy.

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT planning permission, subject to conditions.

Conditions

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission was granted.

Reason: to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions and in accordance with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The permission relates only to the following plans and documents:

Drawing no.s:

P3805W GA 1 02 04 rev B - General Arrangement Terrace Floor Plan

P3805W GA 1 01 04 rev B - Sections of the Terrace Floor

P3805W GA 1 03 04 rev A - General Arrangement Building Roof Plan

Received on 21st June 2017

Location Plan ref. Coopers_&_Lybrand_9 Greyfriars_Road_RG1 1JG

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Reason: To clarify which plans have been approved.

3. The terrace area hereby permitted, as shown on drawing no. P3805W GA 1 02 04 rev B - General Arrangement Terrace Floor Plan received by the Local Planning Authority

on 21st June 2017, shall not be occupied outside the hours of 07:00-19:00 hours Monday to Saturday nor at any time on Sundays, Bank Holidays or Public Holidays.

Reason: In order for the Local Planning Authority to control the use of the terrace in the interest of the noise and disturbance impact on the amenities of surrounding occupiers (Policy CS34 of the Reading Core Strategy 2008, altered 2015 and DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012, altered 2015).

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) the terrace area hereby permitted, as shown on drawing no. P3805W GA 1 02 04 rev B - General Arrangement Terrace Floor Plan received by the Local Planning Authority on 21st June 2017, shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the B1a office use of the building known as 9 Greyfriars Road.

Reason: In order for the Local Planning Authority to control the use of the terrace in the interest of the noise and disturbance impact on the amenities of surrounding occupiers (Policy CS34 of the Reading Core Strategy 2008, altered 2015 and DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012, altered 2015).

Informatives

1. The Local Planning Authority has been positive and proactive in dealing with this planning application by agreeing an extension of time and determining it in a timely manner.
2. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this planning permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any conditions 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.
3. The applicant is advised that the long term success of any new planting in this exposed, urban location is adequate irrigation and drainage of the planters. Consideration should be given to installing an automated irrigation system and rainwater harvesting to ensure new plants can thrive.