



Planning Application

**Southcote Community Centre,
Coronation Square,
Southcote, Reading RG30 3QP**

Proposed Extension for new Community Hub

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STATEMENT



1.0 Introduction

This Statement, which has been prepared by Corporate Property Services, is submitted in support of an application on behalf of Reading Borough Council for Planning Permission to construct a new extension at the side of the existing Community Centre building, together with the replacement of existing curtain walling to the main hall and minor internal remodelling of the existing building.

2.0 Information about the development site

The proposed development site, Southcote Community Centre, is situated in Coronation Square, which is located in Southcote, a suburb to the south-west of Reading town centre. The approximate Ordnance Survey grid reference for the site is SU6871NE. The site is accessible from Southcote Lane, which is off of the A4 Bath Road. The land and buildings are Freehold and owned by Reading Borough Council, which also manages the Centre.

Southcote Community Centre is in the heart of Southcote area and currently offers many activities for the local residents including children's activities, play clubs, adult learning and community activities.

The Centre has a large hall, multi-purpose/IT Training Room, lounge area and kitchen facilities. The hall can be hired by local residents for private functions and parties.

3.0 Site History

Southcote has a population of about 8,500 (as of 2011). The settlement lies primarily between the London-to-Bath road and the River Kennet.

The area was sparsely populated until after the Second World War, though excavations have revealed evidence of Paleolithic and Iron Age activity in Southcote, as well as Roman and Saxon habitation. By the time William the Conqueror undertook the Domesday Survey in 1086, Southcote was sufficiently established to warrant a Lord of the Manor, who at that time was William de Braose. From the 16th century onwards, Southcote Manor was owned by the Blagrove family, who sold the manor house in the 1920s. Much of the area was subsequently changed from agricultural to residential in the 1930s and again in 1950s, centred on Coronation Square (named for the 1953 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II) with hundreds of council houses built to satisfy post-war demand.

The development site forms part of the grounds to the existing Community Centre in Coronation Square, which was built to support the large residential council estate that surrounds it.

4.0 Description of the existing site and buildings

The development site comprises a small plot of land (0.097 hectares in area) which includes the existing Community Centre building. The site is relatively level with no major changes in ground level except at the rear of the building.

The site is located along the western side of Coronation Square, which consists of a large open public space surrounded by two other community buildings (a Health Clinic and a Public Library), several blocks of flats and a local shopping centre with flats above.

Immediately to the west of the site is Southcote Children's Centre, which is also managed by Reading Borough Council and offers full and part time childcare, as well as a range of family-orientated community services for parents-to-be, parents/carers and children under 5 years old.

Immediately to the south of the site is an access road which serves seven three storey high blocks of flats on the opposite side of the road and a garage court at the end of the road.

The site benefits from easy access to a wide range of local services and facilities, and is located within easy walking distance to bus stops on a high frequency bus corridor, local schools (three Primary and two Secondary), several churches and Prospect Park.

The Reading Borough Local Plan classifies the location of the Development site as Zone 3, Secondary Core Area.

The site is not within a Conservation Area and there are no Listed Buildings or other notable features in the surrounding area.

The site is not situated within a flood plain.

The existing Community Centre building, which is managed by Reading Borough Council, was constructed in the late 1950's/early 1960's and has had internal refurbishment work undertaken within the past five years. The property is a mix of traditional brick masonry construction with timber roof structure to the single storey areas and a portal frame to the hall with glazed curtain walling on the east elevation and timber cladding to the gable end walls.

Accommodation consists of a Main Hall with a multi-purpose/IT Training Room, a Café/Kitchen, an Office, Toilets, Stores, Plant Room and circulation spaces. The existing building has a gross external floor area of 297 square metres.

5.0 Relevant Planning History

A search of the Reading Borough Council online planning application pages discloses only one record of planning permission being granted for the development site.

In May 2005, planning permission was granted for the construction of a single storey building to provide children's centre (Application No. 05/00260/REG3) on the vacant site behind the existing Community Centre.

There are no details of applications prior to 1988 on the system.

6.0 Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

The following national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

Part 4 – Promoting sustainable transport

Part 7 – Requiring good design

Part 8 – Promoting healthy communities

Part 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Planning Practice Guidance: Design

The following local planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

Reading Borough Local Development Framework

Core Strategy, Adopted January 2008

The Core Strategy for Reading was adopted by Reading Borough Council on 29th January 2008. This document sets out the overall planning strategy and broad principles for development in Reading.

The following policies are considered relevant to the determination of this planning application.

CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design
CS3: Social Inclusion and Diversity
CS4: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
CS5: Inclusive Access
CS7: Design and the Public Realm
CS24: Car /Cycle Parking
CS28: Loss of Open Space
CS31: Additional and Existing Community Facilities
CS32: Impacts on Community Facilities
CS38: Trees, Hedges and Woodlands
SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
DM4: Safeguarding Amenity
DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
DM13: Vitality and viability of smaller centres
DM18: Tree Planting
SA15: District and Local Centres
SPG/SPD: Parking Standards and Design

Pre-application discussions have taken place with the Council's Planning Officers in respect of this proposed development and the applicant has sought to address all of the matters raised in the pre-application response.

7.0 Why is the proposed development necessary

The aim of the project on which the proposed design is based can be summarised as follows:

- ❖ To consolidate the Library and Housing Advice Shop located in other buildings located around Coronation Square into one building.
- ❖ To engage with as many local groups and people as possible to encourage greater use of the Library.
- ❖ To provide additional multi-functional community spaces for use by local groups and people.
- ❖ To further enhance the existing Community Centre into a community hub offering additional activities and services that enriches the local community and supports it to develop and grow.

The existing office is too small and not fit for purpose to provide an adequate service to customers or a satisfactory working environment for staff. The customer reception is very unsatisfactory and can only accommodate a few customers at a time, allowing for little or no privacy, as there is no meeting room available.

The proposed remodelling of the internal layout of the building will fully meet the aims of the project and provide the required spaces for all the activities that are to take place in the enlarged community hub building.

The external spaces are to be designed to be as low maintenance as possible with areas of hard landscaping and tree planting.

The proposed development is deemed to be acceptable in Policy SA15: District and Local Centres and will broaden the range of facilities in the local centre of Coronation Square. It also helps fulfil the following Core Strategy objectives:

- No.2 in providing good access to services and facilities.
- No.3 in ensuring new development is accessible and sustainable.
- No.6 in offering cultural opportunities, which are based on multiculturalism, local heritage and high quality, modern arts and leisure facilities.
- No.7 in enhancing social inclusion where the needs of all citizens are met by high quality, cost effective services and outstanding levels of community involvement.

8.0 What is being proposed

The proposed development that is the subject of this planning application is to construct a new extension at the side of the existing Community Centre building, together with minor internal remodelling of the existing building. The construction will require the removal of two external concrete ramps used as fire exits from the existing building and a small sitting area that currently occupying the plot, which are visually and environmentally detrimental to the area.

This work will create additional community spaces that will enhance and complement the existing facilities in the building and the associated Children's Centre at the rear. At the same time the opportunity will be taken to replace the glazed curtain walling to the Main Hall, which has been identified in a recent condition survey as having reached the end of its life and perform poorly from an environmental perspective.

The new extension will incorporate a new main entrance to the Centre with a reception desk and generous entrance lobby, Library space, a Library Store and a small Meeting Room. The extension will also house the Multi-purpose/IT Training Room which will allow the space that it currently occupies in the existing building to be converted into additional Library space. A walkway with a pergola will be provided on the south elevation to channel visitors to the new main entrance to the Centre.

The proposed development will provide:

- ❖ A more spacious and welcoming reception for customers
- ❖ Flexible spaces to accommodate diverse community activities
- ❖ A contemporary and more appropriate Library
- ❖ A more suitable working environment for staff
- ❖ A private meeting room to interview customers and staff

The proposed development will fully meet the aims of the project brief and provide the required spaces for all the activities that are to take place in the enlarged Community Centre.

9.0 Loss of existing facilities

There will be no loss of the existing building's facilities due to the proposed

development, except for the loss of an area of external space which will be occupied by the new extension. No demolition will take place and the structure of the existing building is to be retained with no loss of floor space.

The provision of a new Library space within the new development will allow the existing Library building (less than 100 metres away in Southcote Lane) to be closed as a result of this work. However, the functional space of the Library will be replicated in the new extension. The current floor area of the existing Library space is 126 square metres and the proposed floor area for the new library within the community hub is 100 square metres.

Similarly, the functions of the existing Housing Advice Shop currently located in 52 Coronation Square will be transferred into the new building.

10.0 Loss of open space

The proposed development will be positioned partly on a small area of open space. Policy CS28 states that, "In exceptional circumstances, development may be permitted (on open space) where it is clearly demonstrated that replacement open space, to a similar standard, can be provided at an accessible location close by, or that improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space".

As part of the works to extend the centre the intention is to improve the quality of open space to front of the building. This will be achieved by investing in a new covered sand pit and an all-weather rubberised play surface. The Applicant considers this investment would help mitigate the small loss of open space.

11.0 The effect upon visual amenity and the public realm

The proposed development will be located on the south facing elevation of the existing building, which overlooks an access road to three storey high blocks of flats and a garage court.

The new extension will be flush with the front and rear elevations of the existing Community Centre and will be single storey in nature with a flat roof that will be no higher than the existing building.

The aim of the design for the new extension is that it should blend seamlessly with the existing Community Centre building with the use of complimentary colours and materials. The proposed development will therefore have a minimal impact on the main street scene.

12.0 Impact on neighbouring amenity

The proposed development will not overlook any of the neighbouring residential properties and there is unlikely to be an impact in terms of noise and disturbance, loss of outlook or overbearing effects as required by Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity.

13.0 Description of proposed development

The application proposes the construction of a single storey structure with a flat roof built on one side and the rear of the existing Community Centre building. The proposed extension will be built on an under-utilised part of the site that is visually

and environmentally detrimental to the area. The new extension will have a gross external floor area of 127 square metres.

The flat roof of the proposed extension will be covered with a single ply membrane and will include rooflights that will provide natural light into the building.

The external wall finish of the new extension will be fair face brickwork with polyester powder coated aluminium framed windows and doors.

The proposed extension will consist of the following:

- o Reception area
- o Library Store
- o Library space
- o Meeting Room
- o IT Training/Quiet room

A new accessible main entrance into the building will be created via the new extension. The existing entrance into the building will become a fire exit and an “Out of Hour’s” entrance when the library area is not open.

The proposed remodelling of the existing building will consist of the following:

- o The removal of non-original partition walls forming storage cupboards in the old Multi-Purpose Room/new Library.
- o The construction of a new store and tea point (using timber studwork partitions) in the existing Main Hall.
- o Replacement of the existing life-expired curtain walling to the east elevation of the Main Hall with polyester powder coated aluminium framed windows and doors.

The existing external area to the front of the existing building will be retained with the addition of new paving and the creation of a small enclosed communal garden for users of the existing Main Hall (see Landscape Design below for details).

The new accommodation will comply with the requirements of the DDA and Part M of the Building Regulations.

14.0 Community Involvement and Consultation

All Stakeholders, Community Representatives and Staff have been consulted as part of the design process and the Service Managers have been active participants in the Design Team meetings. Local Residents have been notified of the proposal via a newsletter and were invited to a meeting to view the plans and discuss the proposed development with the Project Officers.

Comments from all those consulted has been largely positive and the feedback has been taken into account in the development of the design.

The proposed communal garden facing Coronation Square has been included following an extensive consultation with the community. They are keen to see a safe supervised space for children to use during activities run by the centre. At the moment the children’s centre has limited access to suitable play for children attending the centre. The community are also keen to have a space available to them during children’s parties held in the main hall. In addition to the above the

community have expressed a desire to use the space to encourage healthy eating and will plant some vegetables in suitable planters within the space, we intend to assist them in this endeavour.

15.0 Design

Following consultation with the various Stakeholder Services, a number of options were considered at the feasibility stage, which included extending the existing building onto the green space at the front of the building adjacent to Coronation Square. The chosen option was selected as it was considered to achieve the project objectives most effectively and to comply with planning policy.

The proposed development will be located on the south and west elevations of the existing community centre on an undeveloped and unused part of the site, which overlooks an access road to several blocks of three storey flats.

The addition of the new extension will provide practical and adaptable spaces that will benefit both the staff of the centre and their customers. The extended building will be ideally placed to carry out its intended functions.

The proposed building will comply with the requirements of Approved Document M (Access to and use of buildings) of the Building Regulations. The design will include the following features:

- ✓ Good natural light and ventilation
- ✓ Good thermal insulation
- ✓ High security windows and doors linked to a intruder detection system
- ✓ Wheelchair accessible

The proposed building is designed to be fit for purpose, appropriate and accessible by all potential users. When assessing the potential for redevelopment of this site, the following issues have been considered:

- The impact of the proposed building upon the physical and visual character, and quality of the area.
- Impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties (Flat Nos. 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 33 Coronation Square in particular) to ensure no significant loss of privacy.
- Setback from Coronation Square and the adjacent access road in relation to the existing building lines and setting.
- The retention of the existing green frontage/wide verge.
- The retention of important local community facilities for the residents of Southcote.
- To ensure that the proposed building will make a positive contribution to Reading, adding quality, variety and interest.
- Development to accord with principles of sustainable design and construction, and to take account of energy conservation and efficiency.

In line with Reading Borough Council's guidance, sustainability and environmental issues will be considered as part of the proposed development, to reduce the

environmental impact of the various elements of building and to take account of energy conservation and efficiency. The materials specified will also be low maintenance.

The proposed extension will incorporate the following:

- All new materials specified for the proposed development to have low levels of embodied energy wherever possible and to be capable of being recycled when the building is demolished.
- High levels of insulation to minimise the heat demand and reduce the amount of energy required to heat the building (to exceed the current Building Regulation requirements).
- High levels of insulation to keep the building cool in summer and mitigate the need for air-conditioning.
- Minimal areas of glazing to the west and south elevations will reduce solar gain.
- Windows and rooflights to be double glazed and ensure that the daylight levels are optimised, whilst balancing the potential heat losses from the building. These building elements will also provide natural ventilation via openable vents.
- The installation of low energy light fittings to reduce energy consumption and therefore carbon dioxide emissions.
- The installation of a new heating system to reduce energy consumption and therefore carbon dioxide emissions.
- All timber and engineered boards used in the proposed development to be FSC certified.

15.1. Amount

The proposed building will have a gross floor area of 127 square metres. This compares to a total gross floor area of 296 square metres for the existing Community Centre.

The new extension will be divided into five areas:

- Reception/Waiting Room (floor area of 29 square metres).
- Open Plan Library (floor area of 38.4 square metres).
- Library Store (floor area of 7.8 square metres).
- Meeting Room (floor area of 7.2 square metres).
- IT Training/Quiet Room (floor area of 33.4 square metres).

Please refer to the Proposed Floor Plan.

15.2. Layout

Access into the new extension will be via an automatic opening door into the new Reception area. From the Reception, visitors will be able to access the existing Main Hall, the new IT Training Room and the new Library; beyond the Library will be the remainder of the existing accommodation (toilets, office, community café and

kitchen). Windows in external walls and rooflights will provide a good level of natural daylight and ventilation to all areas.

The proposed remodelling of the internal layout of the building will consist of the following:

- The existing Multi-purpose/IT Training Room will be moved into the new extension and internal cupboards will be removed to increase the space available for the new Library.
- The existing Office will have built-in cupboards removed to increase the available floor space.
- The Main Hall will be provided with a new Tea Point and an additional Store.
- The Main Hall will be provided with a new external fire exit door to replace the existing door (which will provide access to the new Reception Area).
- The new external fire exit door will also give access to the new Communal Garden located at the front of the Centre.

The new accommodation will comply with the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 and the relevant parts of the Building Regulations.

Please refer to the Proposed Floor Plan.

15.3. Scale

The proposed extension will be 15.8m wide and 11.4m deep (maximum) with the highest part of the roof (excluding the domed rooflights) being 3.6m high. The aim of the design for the extension is that it should blend seamlessly with the existing building.

The proposed development will not be prominent in terms of bulk and dominance, particularly when considered against the existing building, as the new roofline will lower than the adjacent Main Hall (which is to be retained). The proposed extension will be at least 20 metres away from the nearest residential property opposite the access road and therefore will have no impact on these neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, loss of outlook or overbearing effects.

Please refer to the Proposed Block Plan.

15.4. Landscaping

The proposed scheme seeks to retain the existing generous green frontage to Coronation Square and only appropriate landscaping shall be carried out as part of the development.

Three new trees will be planted along the eastern boundary of the site adjacent to the public footpath and a new beds of low-growing ground cover with shrubs and herbaceous plants will be planted in the grass verge between the access road and the new path that leads to the main entrance of the proposed extension.

New tarmac paving will be provided to link the proposed main entrance to the existing footpath of Coronation Square. One of the new trees will be planted within the new tarmac area and will require a suitably designed tree pit.

An enclosed Communal Garden will be created at the front of the existing building with access via double doors in the new glazed curtain walling of the Main Hall. An all-weather play surface will be provided adjacent to the building and the area will be surrounded by 1.8 metres high weld mesh fence to provide a safe and secure external play space. The total area of the new garden will be 90 square metres.

The Applicant recognises that the boundary treatment for the Communal Garden will need to be light weight in appearance and maintain views across the site.

The photograph to the right shows the detail of the type of weld mesh fence panel that will be specified to enclose the Communal Garden (such as EuroGuard Regular or similar) with a green polyester powder coated finish. This type of fence with an open mesh will not obstruct views across the green frontage.



Please refer to the Proposed Landscaping Plan.

15.5. Appearance

The proposal will match the elevations of the existing building in terms of colour and materials. The proposed extension will have a flat roof that will match the height of the flat roof of the existing building and the development will be largely subservient to the main building.

The development will therefore have an insignificant effect on the character of the existing street scene.

Please refer to the Proposed Elevations.

15.6. Use

The new extension and the existing building will form a Community Hub to provide services for the local community that will enhance and complement the existing facilities offered in the building and the associated Children's Centre at the rear.

The new Reception area will provide adequate and more appropriate space for customers and provide improved working conditions for the staff.

The new Meeting Room will provide a suitable space for confidential meetings with customers, which can also be used as a private study space for the Library.

The new IT Training Room will meet the requirements for training and the sitting of examinations/tests that will take place in the centre. In addition, when this room is not being used for training, it will become a quiet reading space for library users.

The closure of the existing public library on the corner of Southcote Lane and Coronation Square will be mitigated by the introduction of new public library facility.

The proposed building will be accessible to all and will comply with the requirements of Approved Document M (Access to and use of buildings) of the Building Regulations.

16.0 Accessibility

The proposed development is easily accessible via public transport and there are Bus stops on both sides of the Southcote Lane which is located within walking distance of the building. The Buses that run between Reading town centre and Calcot have a 10 minute frequency during the day.

The majority of visitors to the building live within walking distance and there is on street parking available for users with limited mobility on Coronation Square, on the access road adjacent to the Centre or in the Clinic car park.

The proposed development will be built to satisfy the requirements of Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 of Approved Document M (Access to and use of buildings) of the Building Regulations, which are relevant to disabled persons gaining access to and using buildings other than dwellings.

Pedestrian access to the proposed extension and the existing building will be directly from the public footpath running along Coronation Square. Dropped kerbs with tactile paving have been provided in the footpath at road crossings.

The proposed extension will have a level approach to the principal entrance from the footpath which will be firm, level and slip resistant.

The principal entrance will be equipped with automatic opening doors with push button controls and safety gear to make the building fully accessible to all.

There are no changes in floor level within the building or the proposed extension and all doors will have level thresholds. All floor surfaces are to be firm, level and slip resistant.

The development will make use of the existing wheelchair accessible toilet.

The following documents were consulted and used as guidance in the design of the proposed development:

- ✓ Disability Rights Commission Publications
- ✓ Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- ✓ Building Regulations; Approved Document M, Access to and use of buildings
- ✓ BS 8300 Design of Buildings and their Approaches to Meet the Needs of Disabled People- A Code of Practice

17.0 Transport

The proposed development site is located in Zone 3, Secondary Core area according to the Revised Parking Standards & Design SPD adopted October 2011.

There are several bus stops situated on Southcote Lane within easy walking distance of the application site. Service 26 operates seven buses an hour during the day, offering routes east to the centre of Reading and west to Calcot.

The existing Community Centre is used mainly by local residents who walk to the site

and only a handful of visitors use a bicycle. Those that choose to use private vehicles to travel to the site, park their cars on Coronation Square, on the access road adjacent to the Centre or in the adjacent Clinic car park. This allows visitors to use the other local facilities located around the Square during the same trip.

A survey was conducted at the Southcote Library on Tuesday 6th June 2017 (between 1.40pm to 3.40pm) to determine the proportion of visitors that travel to the existing Library and use the dedicated car park at the front of the building. Library opening hours on Tuesdays are: 9am 12pm & 1pm to 7pm.

There were 26 visitors to the existing library during the survey period and only five of these used the car park. At no point during the survey was the car park full to capacity which has provision for six cars.

The modes of travel to the Library by the visitors can be broken down as follows:

Walk = 14

Bicycle = 1

Car = 11 (5 visitors used the car park and 6 parked on the street in Southcote Lane or Coronation Square).

It is therefore anticipated that the proposed development will not generate additional car movements as the majority of users are local and live within walking distance of the Centre. However, there is on street parking available for users with limited mobility.

In accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the proposed development should provide one parking space per 35m² equating to four parking spaces. The Applicant has investigated the possibility of providing parking spaces on the development site and four parking spaces could fit in front of the existing entrance to the centre. However, this will result in the loss of two trees and the surrounding green space, which would contravene the wishes of the Natural Environment Officer and their requirement to retain the existing green frontage/wide verge. In addition, by installing the drop kerb to access these Off-street spaces, the equivalent of two On-street spaces would be lost and therefore the actual net gain would only be two parking spaces.

As the number of private vehicles visiting the site is estimated to remain unchanged and any new parking areas would result in the undesirable loss of existing green space, no additional vehicle parking provision is to be provided as part of the proposed development.

The proposed development will comply with the requirements of Policy DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters. The proposals will not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network or be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, the proposals will not generate regular movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs).

No existing pedestrian or vehicle access points will be affected by the proposal.

Therefore a Transport Impact Assessment is considered to be unnecessary.

The proposed development will include for the provision of two secure "Sheffield" type bicycle stands located adjacent to the new main entrance of the Community Hub. This equates to 4 spaces to comply with the requirements of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (Adopted October 2011) at a ratio of one space per

six staff and one space per 300 square metres.

18.0 Ecology

A desktop assessment was undertaken using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (www.magic.gov.uk) website, which was searched for ecological information regarding the area in and around the development site. The data collected indicates that the site has no specific habitats or features of ecological interest although breeding birds may use certain habitats within the site (shrubs).

The existing building structure has been surveyed externally for bats and evidence of bats and none were found. The building is therefore considered to have little or no potential to offer shelter to bats within an undetected roost site.

No significant impacts on bats or great crested newt's sites are predicted under The Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 and a European Protected Species Licence is not considered to be necessary for the proposal development to proceed.

An Ecology survey is therefore considered to be unnecessary.

19.0 Arboricultural Survey

There are no significant trees of any note immediately adjacent to or within the footprint of development site. However, there are two newly planted trees located on the south east corner of the development site that require removal. Pre-Application advice has been received from the Natural Environment Officer requesting further Arboricultural information to confirm the details of these trees to be removed.

Please refer to the Arboricultural Report in Appendix A.

20.0 Archaeology and previous land use

A desktop assessment of the historic land use of the development site has been carried out using various internet resources (including the Ordnance Survey) in order to collate existing records of the local area. The records indicate that it is very unlikely that the proposals will have any archaeological implications as the development plot is essentially a Brownfield site.

An Archaeological survey is therefore considered to be unnecessary.

21.0 Flood Risk

The Environmental Agency website flood risk map indicates that the site is not within a flood prone area and due to the scale, nature and design of the proposed development means it will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

A flood risk assessment is therefore considered to be unnecessary.

22.0 SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STATEMENT

It is proposed that BREEAM accreditation is not sought for this scheme as the proposed development is a relatively small building in construction terms with a gross floor area of 202 square metres. However, the intention remains to design and build a scheme that achieves maximum thermal efficiency and to create a sustainable building that will comply with the principles of sustainable construction, design and energy efficiency. This Sustainability Statement details the measures to be adopted to achieve an energy efficient development.

Therefore an appropriate approach has been adopted to achieve an energy efficient development by implementing a strategy that focuses on a 'Fabric First' approach, which lowers the building's energy load/demand through the use of energy efficient equipment, high levels of insulation and airtightness.

All new buildings are required to comply with current Building Regulations, which are driving greater levels of energy efficiency. The majority of current projects, commissioned by Reading Borough Council achieve Building Regulations compliance plus approximately a 9-10% improvement. This is frequently achieved without the requirement for sustainable technologies such as photovoltaic/ solar panels. Where appropriate we will review low or zero carbon technologies such as ground source or air source heat pumps, solar thermal and solar photovoltaic panels. This is considered on a project by project basis and chosen carefully with a view to the long term maintenance, operational costs and budget.

With regard to this proposed development the key points are:

- A commitment to low carbon design to reduce the energy requirements.
- Adopting the principles of Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM).
- The use of day lighting to reduce artificial lighting/ electrical use.
- The use of natural ventilation.
- The use of sanitary appliances with low water usage.
- Adoption of 'Soft Landings' approach to maximize building performance and reduce energy use via improved engagement with user/ training, seasonal commissioning of systems and post occupancy evaluation.
- The use of energy efficient equipment/ fittings including lighting.

Through the design process and the incorporation of the above items, it should be noted that the building's energy load is such that providing alternative technologies as part of the project are not economically viable in this instance.

When designing the proposed development, the following key areas of Reading Borough Council's Sustainable Design and Construction policy have been considered in order to use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and to take account of the effects of climate change.

Note: the Headings and item numbers below refer to Table A5.2: BREEAM – Sustainable Design Checklist.

A. Management

Aim: To recognise and encourage environmentally and socially considerate development.

1. Guidance for Building Users:

Guidance for the non-technical Building User will be provided on completion of the project so Building Users can understand and operate the building efficiently. This will be in the form of a Building Manual in accordance with the Building Regulations (Requirement L1(c) of Part L2A & B – Conservation of fuel and power in buildings other than dwellings).

2. Construction Site Impacts:

The Construction Site shall be managed in an environmentally sound manner in terms of resource use, energy consumption and pollution.

The Main Contractor will be responsible for monitoring, recording and reporting energy, water and transport consumption data resulting from all the construction processes during the Construction Phase, including the transport of construction materials and waste.

The Main Contractor shall ensure all timber used on site for the project is FSC certified (legally harvested and legally traded timber) and implement best practice pollution prevention policies and procedures on site (for noise, air & water).

3. Site Investigation:

Appropriate site surveys and investigations will be carried out prior to commencing work on site, including Soil Investigations, Drainage Survey and Refurbishment & Demolition Survey (in accordance with HSE Guidelines). Any necessary remedial action will be included in the building contract for the development.

4. Stakeholders and Shared Use with the Local Community:

The Staff of the Services that will operate the building and other Stakeholders have been fully involved in the design process. In addition, local residents have been notified of the proposed development via a newsletter and an exhibition event, with a drawing display. Comments from all those consulted has been largely positive and the feedback has been taken into account in the development of the design.

The local community will have full access to the building, which is designed to be fit for purpose, appropriate and accessible by all potential users.

5. Crime Prevention:

The safety, wellbeing and security of the public visiting the centre is of paramount importance and the site already has crime prevention measures in place, including a CCTV system. In accordance with DCLG Planning Circular 1/2006, Crime Prevention Measures have been considered in the design of this proposal. The existing intruder alarm system will be extended into the new extension. All windows and external doors will be fitted with security locks and laminated glazing. The design of the building shall follow the principles of Secure by Design to achieve a safe and secure site.

6. *Building Maintenance:*

The future maintenance of the proposed building has been considered by specifying materials, equipment and finishes that are robust, durable and suitable for use with low maintenance characteristics. All equipment that requires regular maintenance is to be easily accessible to allow the task to be performed without undue restriction.

B. Health and Well-being

Aim: To ensure a good quality amenity level is afforded to occupants of buildings.

7. The proposed development has been designed to ensure all users have sufficient daylight, an external view where possible, adequate and appropriate lighting, ventilation, air quality and drinking water.

7.a The proposed development will be provided with a good degree of natural daylighting from windows and rooflights. Suitable artificial lighting for an office environment will also be provided with low energy LED light fittings. Day lighting and controls will be designed to CIBSE standards.

7.b The new development is to be naturally ventilated by means of openable high-level windows with trickle vents and also mechanical ventilation in the toilets (in accordance with Part F of the Building Regulations). Rooflights with trickle vents will also be provided. Air conditioning units will not be specified for the proposed development.

7.c Drinking water will be accessible to staff and visitors from the kitchen and water dispensers in the building.

All water systems will be designed and maintained to control the risk of Legionella.

Unfortunately it will not be possible to provide the Library spaces in the extension with external views due to the bookshelves fitted on the external walls. However, the rooflights will provide added interest to the atmosphere of the spaces.

C. Energy

Aim: To conserve energy and maximise the use of energy efficiency techniques.

8. *CO2 Emissions:*

The design and implementation of the Engineering Services for the proposed development will focus on delivering low energy installations to minimise energy consumption.

In order to maximise energy efficiency and thereby minimise CO² emissions the proposed extension has been designed to incorporate the following measures:

- Provide insulation in the external walls, floors and roof, with a greater thickness than that required to comply with the current Building Regulations to reduce heat loss and the consumption of energy. High levels of insulation will keep the building cool in summer and mitigate the need for air-conditioning.

- Provide windows with sealed double glazed units with Argon filled cavities to reduce heat loss and ensure that the daylight levels are optimised and reduce the need for artificial lighting.
- Provide minimal areas of glazing to the south elevation that will reduce solar gain during the summer months.
- Provide opening windows with trickle vents to provide natural ventilation to mitigate the need for mechanical ventilation and cooling by air conditioning.
- Provide low energy LED light fittings and room occupancy sensors to reduce the consumption and wastage of energy.
- Provide point of use water heaters for the sinks and wash hand basins to reduce the consumption and wastage of energy to heat hot water via long pipe runs.
- Provide a technically advanced radiator system with panels installed in the suspended ceiling grid, which heats rooms more rapidly and achieves a comfort air temperature typically 3 degrees lower than conventional or underfloor heating. This relates approximately to a 15% reduction in heat loads and therefore energy consumption.

The existing central heating system which has a gas fired condensing boiler will be extended into the new extension and will therefore continue to reduce energy consumption and consequently carbon dioxide emissions. The heating system is linked to an automatic Building Management System (BMS), which provides optimum start up times and matches building occupation in order to reduce the consumption and wastage of energy. The system is controlled and monitored externally by RBC Engineers to measure energy consumption.

All new materials specified for the proposed development will have low levels of embodied energy wherever possible and be capable of being recycled when the building is demolished thereby reducing CO² emissions.

9. Energy from the sun, natural daylighting and controlled natural ventilation:

Due to the scale and nature of the proposed extension the use of energy from the sun is not viable or appropriate for this particular development. However, it should be noted that the applicant will investigate the possibility of reusing the solar photovoltaic panels currently installed on the flat roof of the existing Library in Southcote Lane.

For natural daylighting and controlled natural ventilation see Health and Well-being above.

10. Use of energy:

The proposed building will make efficient use of energy by installing insulation in the external walls, floors and roof, with a greater thickness than that required to comply with the current Building Regulations.

Space heating will be provided by an existing efficient gas fired condensing boiler.

11. Renewable energy sources and decentralised energy:

Due to the scale and nature of the proposed extension the use of renewable energy

sources or decentralised energy is not appropriate for this particular development.

D. Transport

Aim: To reduce the need to travel through appropriately located development.

12. Design and Layout:

Measures to reduce the need to travel or promote alternative and sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport are not applicable for this particular development. All sustainable modes of transport are available to use.

13. Public Transport Networks & Local Amenities:

Consideration for public transport networks in terms of the location of the development and proximity to local amenities are not relevant to this particular development.

Local amenities in Coronation Square and bus stops in Southcote Lane are within easy walking distance of the application site. Service 26 operates seven buses an hour during the day, offering routes east to the centre of Reading and west to Calcot.

14. Deliveries:

Consideration for deliveries and the manoeuvring of delivery vehicles is not applicable to this particular development. However, there is an existing dedicated area for waste collection.

E. Water Resources and Flooding

Aim: To improve efficiency in the use of water, conserve water resources and minimise vulnerability to flooding.

15. Water Saving Devices:

Water saving devices will be specified on all sanitary appliances installed in the new building. The new sinks will have aerating taps to help reduce the consumption of water as much as possible. A metered water supply is already connected to the existing building.

It should be noted that the new extension will produce very little in the way of grey water so the collection, storage and cleaning of this waste water would not be viable.

New external landscape planting will be developed that requires minimum irrigation and rely on rainwater with limited watering rather than a dedicated irrigation system.

16. Areas of potential flooding:

The proposed development will not be located in an area that is vulnerable to potential flooding.

The proposed development will utilise the existing foul and storm water drainage systems connected to the existing building.

17. Harvesting and re-use of rainwater:

Due to the scale and nature of the proposed development, measures to incorporate harvesting and re-use of rainwater have not been included as new storm water drainage is minimal and will connect into the existing storm water drainage system.

F. Materials

Aim: To retain local character and promote the use of materials with a low environmental impact.

18. Selected Materials:

The facing bricks to be used for the external walls of the proposed development shall be selected to match the bricks used on the existing building and hence retain local character. The use of brickwork will also ensure the long life of the structure.

Materials for the proposed building have been chosen for their high recycled content, long life, low maintenance and the potential to be recycled when the building has reached the end of its useful life, for example, bricks, concrete, aluminium, steelwork, timber and floor coverings.

All timber and engineered boards, such as plywood, used in the construction of the new extension shall be FSC certified and other building materials, such as Rockwool Insulation, that have low levels of embodied energy will be specified wherever possible to ensure a low environmental impact.

19. Reusing and Sourcing Materials:

Due to the scale and nature of the proposed development, the opportunity to reuse materials in-situ is very limited. One hundred percent of the existing structure on the development site will be reused.

The Main Contractor shall ensure all materials used in the construction of the proposed development are sourced responsibly. All new timber supplied through the supply chain shall originate from legal and sustainable sources and independent certification is to be provided.

G. Waste

Aim: To minimise the production of waste and maximise re-use and recycling.

20. Audit of materials present on the site:

The proposed development does not include much in the way of demolition work so the opportunity to recycle or reuse waste materials is very limited.

21. Use of construction, demolition waste and recycled materials:

The Main Contractor that will be awarded the building contract will be responsible for ensuring that waste management systems are in place prior to the works commencing and that they are complied with during the Construction Phase of the Project. The Main Contractor shall also require Subcontractors and Suppliers to assist in waste control and recycling.

22. Storage and recycling of waste:

The existing site already has facilities for the storage, segregation and recycling of waste. The proposed development will not significantly increase the amount of waste and therefore there will be no need to expand the existing facilities.

H. Land Use and Ecology

Aim: To retain, protect and enhance wild life habitats and natural features.

23. Wildlife Habitats and Natural Features:

The existing wildlife habitats on and adjacent to the proposed development site will be largely retained and left undisturbed by the construction of the new extension. However, an area of large overgrown shrubs located to the south of the existing building and two newly planted trees on the eastern boundary will have to be removed as part of the proposed development. The proposed landscape scheme will include for three replacement trees and new areas of low-growing ground cover with shrubs and herbaceous plants to be planted on the development site to mitigate the loss.

The Ecology Assessment found no evidence of bats on the development site and therefore the protection of bats is not considered to be an issue as there are no suitable nesting/roosting sites within the existing building. No bat licences are therefore required for the scheme.

24. Undeveloped Land:

Consideration not to use previously undeveloped land is not applicable as the site is already developed.

25. Contaminated Land:

A ground investigation survey will be carried out on the development site prior to the works commencing. However, due to the existing and previous land use of the site, the risk of contamination from the land is considered to be low. Should any contamination be discovered, it will be dealt with appropriately.

A refurbishment and demolition asbestos survey will also be carried out on the two existing buildings that will be affected by the proposed development. Any asbestos found by the survey will be removed prior to demolition.

I. Pollution

Aim: To minimise damage to the environment through air, ground/surface water, land, noise or light pollution.

26. Noise, Light and Surface Water Runoff Pollution:

Noise from the proposed development will be minimal and will not affect existing properties in the area. Any noise that is created will be no greater than that produced by the existing development.

The proposed development is adjacent to access roads with minimal traffic flow. The specified construction of the external walls, roof and double glazed windows and doors will mitigate any traffic noise generated by vehicles using the roads.

The transmission of noise between adjacent properties is not applicable to this development.

The noise from air conditioning units and other external plant is also not applicable as they are not to be specified for this particular development.

For Light Pollution see below.

Pollution transported through surface water runoff is not applicable to this development.

27. Light Pollution:

The provision of new external lighting will be minimal. Light fittings will be controlled by photocell and time clock using energy efficient lamps in accordance with the Building Regulations, ensuring low light pollution from the fittings i.e. reflectors and controllers within the fittings to control light output and glare.

28. Refrigerants and Nitrogen Oxide Emissions:

Refrigerants will not be used in any equipment specified for this development.

29. Impact of Flooding:

The proposed development is not within a flood zone and the design of the drainage systems will minimize the risk of flooding elsewhere.

30. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS):

The lack of suitable open space around the building and within the site generally excludes the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS).

J. Innovation

Aim: To recognise innovation in the field of sustainability.

Due to the scale of the proposed development, the opportunity to include innovative sustainability measures in terms of a procurement strategy, design feature, management process and technological development is limited.

Regular meetings with all the Services that will occupy the new building, the Project Officer and Designer have taken place to agree the brief, identify site constraints, identify staff requirements, recognize Community aspirations, highlight key objectives and develop the proposals. The Project Board have been informed throughout the process. Meetings will continue throughout the project to discuss the developing scheme.

31. Sustainable Procurement Strategy:

Reading Borough Council intend to procure the contract for these works from local Contractors and Suppliers that are familiar with the area, which will have the advantages of local resources and expertise and a reduced carbon footprint for the construction work.

The most up to date materials, appliances and equipment will be specified to ensure the new extension is as sustainable and energy efficient as possible.

23.0 Conclusion

The proposed development has been designed in accordance with relevant National and Local Planning Policies and guidance in a style that reflects the existing building that seeks to respect and improve the appeal and appearance of the local area. The design, location and scale of the new extension is such that it would not have an overbearing impact.

In line with Reading Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Document, sustainability and environmental issues have been carefully considered and the measures outlined above will reduce the environmental impact of the various elements of building and to take account of energy conservation and efficiency. It should be noted that providing alternative technologies as part of the project has been investigated but the proposed building's energy load is such that their use is considered to be not economically viable in this instance. However, the materials specified will be low maintenance and recyclable.

The proposed development will be accessible and comply with the requirements of the DDA and Approved Document M of the Building Regulations.

In overall terms, the new extension will enhance the site and meet the specific needs of the local community, whilst successfully making effective use of previously developed land.

24.0 Supporting Documents

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings and documents:

Drawing/Document	Reference No.	Scale/Size
Site Location Plan	HNS/16/001/01	1:1250 @ A3
Block Plan	HNS/16/001/02	1:500 @ A3
Existing Floor Plan	HNS/16/001/03	1:50 @ A2
Proposed Floor Plan	HNS/16/001/04	1:100 @ A2
Proposed Landscaping Plan	HNS/16/001/05	1:100 @ A2
Existing & Proposed Elevations	5152588-G-FG-B--002	1:100 @ A1
Arboricultural Report	Appendix A	N/A

25.0 Aerial photograph of the existing site & surrounding buildings (circa 2013)



APPENDIX A

ARBORICULTURAL REPORT