

Heritage Statement Addendum

Jacksons Corner, 1-9 King's Road, Reading

Introduction

1. Comments from Reading Borough Council's Conservation Officer have now been received with regards to an application for planning permission for the redevelopment of Jacksons Corner and its associated rear site on Kings Road, Reading (LPA ref: 160849).
2. In summary, the Conservation Officer's consultation (dated 26/09/2016) notes that, by virtue of its height, the proposed development is unacceptable due to a harmful effect on the conservation area and surrounding listed buildings. The consultation notes that should the sixth floor of the development's rear block be removed harm would be avoided and support could be offered to the scheme. This was confirmed by both the Planning and Conservation Officer at a meeting held on 29 September 2016.
3. While the Conservation Officer's assessment of harm is not supported by the Heritage Statement (prepared by Heritage Collective, April 2016) the proposals have been amended to reflect Officer comments. An amended package of information has been supplied and this Heritage Statement Addendum has been prepared to assess the effect of the reduction in height.

Assessment

4. Physical changes are limited to the removal of the sixth floor from the rear development block; other elements of the scheme, including the retention and enhancement of the curved Jacksons frontage building, elevational treatment and landscaping, remain as submitted.
5. The fifth and sixth floor of the rear block previously comprised two 3 bedroom maisonettes and, as a result of the amendments, the fifth floor of the development now contains a single 3 bedroom residential unit.

6. As identified by the submitted Planning, Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement the six storey rear block, due to its height, could be appreciated very slightly above the Jacksons frontage building in views east along Kings Street. Due to the presence of large scale built form in the background of such views the Heritage Statement (April 2016) concluded that this would not result in any harm to either the frontage building or the conservation area.
7. By virtue of the removal of the sixth storey there is now no breach of ridgeline and no visual change to this view (see 5.4.4 of the Planning, Design and Access Statement). As such the situation, though not originally resulting in any harm, is improved and potential visual impacts lessened.
8. Visibility of the proposed rear block from Abbey Square has always been acknowledged. However, due to the removal of the sixth storey it is now only level 5 and part of level 4 which can be seen in this view (see 5.4.4 of the Planning, Design and Access Statement, October 2016). As previously identified while this is a view into the conservation area it is not a view which reveals the character, appearance or significance of the conservation area and is not, in heritage terms, considered to be a view of any heritage value.
9. Due to the removal of the sixth storey, while still higher than the three storey office development in the foreground, as a result of the storeys heights in its context the proposed development would not dominate or appear out of context with its surroundings. This is demonstrated well by context elevations provided at figures 5.7 and 5.8 of the updated Planning, Design and Access Statement, October 2016. Again, while no harm was originally identified by the Heritage Statement (April 2016) because of this visibility the reduced height of the rear block lessens visual impacts on the view and result in a lessened effect on the conservation area.
10. As before (i.e. when proposals entailed a six storey rear block) there will be no change to views from Duke Street or Market Place.
11. It is demonstrated that no key views of listed buildings (i.e. those from Market Place) are affected by the proposed development due to the topography, orientation and scale of the proposals. However, the Local Planning Authority has identified harm to the significance of a number of listed buildings due to the

prominence of the proposed development in these building's settings. The general reduction in height of the rear block from six to five storeys is considered to result in a building of reduced prominence within the setting of the listed buildings; a change which should eliminate any perceived harm to significance.

12. The quality of the built form proposed, by virtue of its elevational design, materials and landscaping, will result in a slight enhancement to the streetscape of the conservation area (specifically in the view from Abbey Square) or the setting of listed buildings.

Summary

13. In summary, the proposed amendments to remove the sixth floor of the rear block have been undertaken in order to overcome concerns raised by the Conservation Officer in their consultation of 26 September 2016 which, by virtue of the height of the rear block, identified harm to the significance of the conservation area and surrounding listed buildings.
14. This reduction in height has lessened the prominence of the rear block within the conservation area and within the setting of the listed buildings reducing visual effects of the proposed development, specifically in views from Abbey Square towards the site.
15. In accordance with Officer comments this reduction in height is considered to eliminate the harm identified by the Local Planning Authority allowing a recommendation for approval.

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