



Planning Statement

Garrard House New Build

30 Garrard Street

Reading RG1 1NR

Andmore Planning Ltd

September 2015



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Appendices

Appendix A

Prior Approval planning ref: 141277

Appendix B

Variation Application ref: 151010

1. Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Andmore Planning Ltd on behalf of Titan Property Developments to accompany an application at Garrard House, 30 Garrard Street, for:

“Extension to include part new fourth floor and new fifth and sixth floors to provide 20 residential units”.

1.1.2 This application is a revised submission following the 23 unit scheme being withdrawn in August this year under planning reference: 150056. This seeks full planning permission for the erection of additional storeys to the existing building to provide 20 residential units. This also follows the Prior Approval for the change of use of the building from office to residential as granted by Reading Borough Council (the Council) under planning reference 141277, a variation of that Prior Approval to amend the internal layout under planning reference 151010.

1.1.3 The proposal has developed with input from a wide consultant team and each aspect has been considered in detail in order that it makes the most positive contribution to not only Reading’s housing targets but also the immediate local area.

1.1.4 This statement has the following format:

- Section two contains a description of the site and the surrounding area;
- Section three sets out proposed development;
- Section four outlines the relevant planning policies;
- Section five provides an assessment of the proposal against local characteristics and relevant planning policies;
- Section six serves as a conclusion to the statement.

1.1.5 In accordance with local and national validation requirements, this application is accompanied by the following documents:

- Drawings (WCEC Architects);
- Design and Access Statement (WCEC Architects);

- Transport Statement (Crosby Transport Planning);
- Daylighting Impact Assessment (Fabric Building Physics);
- Phase I to III Environmental Site Assessment (REC Ltd);
- Energy Statement (Ecofirst);
- Sustainability Statement (Ecofirst);
- Air Quality Assessment (REC Ltd);
- Ecological Statement (Bridgeway);
- Utility Records Statement; and
- Sustainable Drainage Systems Strategy (Water Environment).

1.1.6 The full planning application forms are also submitted with completed Certificate of Ownership Forms together with the CIL Additional Questions Form as we understand that Reading Council are shortly due to adopt CIL charging in the borough and that will be in force by the time the application is determined.

1.1.7 A Financial Viability Assessment completed by Douglas Birt Consulting, has also been submitted but this is subject to Section 41/43(2) of the FOI Act and as such should not be made publicly available. The application is submitted via the Planning Portal (reference: PP-04527161) where all forms and certificates have been completed. As this is a resubmission within one year of the date of the previous application (ref 150056) this is considered a free resubmission and as such no planning application fee is required.

2. Site Description & History

- 2.1.1 The site lies in the Reading Town Centre and close to the mainline railway station and bus interchange. It is a highly sustainable location with excellent accessibility, owing to its siting close to numerous modes of transport providing links to other parts of Reading and the wider area. The site sits opposite the Thames Tower development to the north as well as the existing multi-storey car park that will form part of the town centre regeneration by Stanhope developers. To the south is the residential Icon House scheme which was developed as part of the mixed use hotel scheme on Friar Street. Either side of the building are offices including 29-35 Station Road, a vacant 1950s building with Prior Approval for conversion to residential flats.
- 2.1.2 The existing building has been internally stripped out and the internal works commenced for the conversion to 83 apartments. Plant such as the former air conditioning units and condensers on the roof have also been removed as they are no longer required for the residential units below. These works are being carried out in accordance with Building Regulations and no additional permissions are required for the removal of the 5th floor plant rooms.
- 2.1.3 The site is located within the Riverside Opportunity Area and detailed in the Reading Town Centre Area Action Plan. As such a more detailed set of planning criteria apply to this site in addition to national, regional and local planning policies contained in the Development Plan.

2.2 Planning History

- 2.2.1 The former use of the site was for office B1(a) but has been vacant for a number of years and the site is currently being converted for residential use as 83 apartments across all floors pursuant to Prior Approval under Class J of the GPDO 2013 granted by the Council under planning reference 141277 and a subsequent amendment under planning reference 151010. A further application for external alterations to the facades has been approved to improve the appearance of the building and create a more residential character rather than as a 1980s office.
- 2.2.2 Prior to the applicant, Titan Property Developments acquiring the site a full planning application for a similar bulk to the roof of Garrard House through an extension to the fourth

and new fifth and sixth floors for use as an ‘aparthotel’ was approved under planning reference 07/01393/FUL which sought the following: *Change of use from office (B1) to a 94-bedroom apart hotel (C1), with spa (D2) at basement and cafe (A3) at ground floor level, involving the formation of an additional two storey roof extension (comprising 1,351 square metres) to add accommodation, and associated alterations.*

- 2.2.3 A further application was approved in March 2012 that extended the time limit for implementation by three years under planning reference 11/00590/EXT. The development description read: *Application for an extension of the time limit for implementation of permission 07/01393/FUL for change of use from office (B1) to a 94-bedroom apart hotel (C1), with spa (D2) at basement and cafe (A3) at ground floor level, involving the formation of an additional two storey roof extension (comprising 1,351 square metres) to add accommodation, and associated alterations.*
- 2.2.4 The building massing as approved has been included on elevations contained within the supporting Design & Access Statement and discussed in the Planning Assessment section of this statement. This shows the additional areas to the fourth floor together with a new fifth and sixth floor similar to this proposal subject of this submission.
- 2.2.5 As above the change of use to residential is now underway to convert the existing floorspace into 83 apartments. This is pursuant to Prior Approval under Class J of the GPDO 2013 granted by the Council under planning reference 141277.
- 2.2.6 A further full planning application was approved to update the external facade of the office building to improve on energy efficiency by the replacement of fenestration together with new detailing to the window surrounds and entrance features. Granted in July 2015 under planning reference 150711.
- 2.2.7 Following the detailed design of the internal flat layouts it was necessary to amend the extant Prior Approval. An application to vary the condition that specified the plans was also approved in July 2015 to reconfigure the internal layout. No external alterations were proposed and the unit numbers remained at 83 flats. This was approved under planning reference: 151010.
- 2.2.8 An application for 23 additional units was withdrawn for further discussions and amendments and this application represents that amendment.

3. Proposal and Revisions to the Design

3.1.1 This application seeks permission for 20 new residential units within an extended fourth floor and a new fifth and sixth floor above the existing building that is currently being converted to residential apartments. The use of the site as residential is therefore already established and this application relates to the new floors only in terms of additional floorspace.

3.2 Proposed Units

3.2.1 The 20 new dwellings have been designed to provide good quality living spaces which meet the identified needs of local residents. The distribution of unit types proposed is as follows:

1-bed 2-person	8
2-bed 3-person	11
3-bed 6-person	1
TOTAL	20

3.2.2 Further details including floorspaces and formats can be found at Section 5 of this Statement and in the accompanying Design & Access Statement.

3.2.3 The Council's Street Care Service have been consulted prior to the submission to confirm the number of general waste and recycling bins that are required for the scheme. Given this application is proposed above the Permitted Development scheme for 83 units it is agreed that the most pragmatic approach would be to have one combined bin store for the entire building. The Permitted Development scheme indicatively showed internal bin stores although that detail was not required for the Prior Approval Notification the space is sufficient for the entire building. Accordingly the Ground Floor Plan submitted with this application shows a combined space for 10 general waste Eurobins and 10 recycling Eurobins.

3.2.4 The Prior Approval did not allow for any external alterations therefore the existing 12 car parking spaces were shown on the indicative layout and car parking spaces were not required for the Prior Approval application as the Transport Statement confirmed that the trip generation of the former office was more than the proposed residential use on the site.

In accordance with current good practice guidance limited car parking spaces are provided for the scheme given the town centre location and proximity to the railway station and bus interchange- the scheme is otherwise “car free”. This proposal reduces parking spaces to includes the provision for one disabled space. Given this positive reduction, the development proposals incorporate a number of cycle parking areas across the site, with a minimum of 54 cycle parking spaces provided.

3.3 Revisions to the Previously Withdrawn Scheme

- 3.3.1 The previous application went out to consultation and following detailed responses further discussions were had with Reading Council Officers to assess the scheme. In addition a site visit by the Council including into one of the flats in Icon House has held to further assist the assessment of the proposal. During these discussions it was advised that the distances between windows and the bulk needed to be reconsidered together with additional material being required in relation to the viability of the scheme. Accordingly the application was withdrawn for a review of the design.
- 3.3.2 As a result this scheme now has three less flats proposed bringing it down to 20 in total. This reduction in unit numbers responds to the distances between the rear of the site and the buildings to the south, being Icon House Projection East and West and also the external appearance of the proposed extension when viewed from the west along Garrard Street. The reduction in numbers occurs at the fifth floor where one unit has been removed to the southernmost projection and at the top sixth floor where two units have been removed- again over the southern projecting but also due to the western corner of the building being reduced in bulk.
- 3.3.3 The proposal to have a communal roof terrace has been omitted from this application in response to comments from existing residents at the adjacent buildings. This was to be at the south side of the proposal at the fifth floor. Instead a row of small storage units are proposed. These are set in from the existing façade and also set behind the parapet so as to provide a step in the rear elevation as the building is extended up.
- 3.3.4 The existing sloping parapet is also now retained to address the matter of the proportions of the proposed additional storeys. Therefore the new fourth floor extension and the replacement of the 5th floor pant rooms with the proposed extension will now be part

concealed behind the parapet and make the extension appear lower in its context of the host building.

- 3.3.5 The corner of the building at the sixth floor has been revised to pull back the side walls from the north, south and west elevations. The material treatment has also been revised to create a much lighter appearance and a small private terrace included facing west and north.
- 3.3.6 The unit at that top corner has also been enlarged to provide a 3-bedroom unit also in response to discussions with the Officers and to accord with Council Policy RC9.
- 3.3.7 The roof of the building has been revised following detailed calculations in relation to sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). This has resulted in a large area of the 6th floor roof being proposed as a brown roof for water attenuation qualities. Details are included in the SUDS Statement and also the Design & Access Statement.
- 3.3.8 Following detailed comments from the Councils viability assessor and the reduction in numbers a revised Viability Assessment has been carried out. A redacted version has been made publically available and it is understood that the full version will be independently assessed.

4. Relevant Planning Policy

4.1.1 Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning decisions are required to be made in accordance with the development plan for the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory Development Plan for the area comprises the following:

- National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012);
- Reading Council Core Strategy (2008 and 2015 in part);
- Reading CAAP (2009).

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework

4.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 by the Department of Communities and Local Government. This is a new, simplified planning framework that better supports growth, helps create the homes and jobs and helps protect and enhance the natural and historic environment.

4.2.2 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For decision-taking this means:

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

4.2.3 The NPPF then sets out core planning principles, which should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These principles include (among others):

- proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the

country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area;

- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- take account of the different roles and character of different areas; and
- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land).

4.2.4 Part 7 of the NPPF relates to “Requiring Good Design” and notes that this is a key aspect of sustainable development. It requires that Local Planning Authorities formulate policies which aim to ensure that developments “function well; optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development; reflect the identity of local surroundings and material; create safe and accessible environments; and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture”. These factors have been key in formulating the design of the proposed development, and will be explored in greater detail in Section 5.

4.3 Local Planning Policy

4.3.1 The Development Plan relevant to this site comprises the following documents:

- Core Strategy (Adopted January 2008 with alteration adopted January 2015)
- Site and Detailed Policies Document (October 2012)
- Reading Central Area Action Plan (January 2009)
- Proposals Map (December 2012)

4.3.2 Core Strategy Policy CS7 requires that new developments “must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in Reading in which it is located”. The policy goes on to set out a list of overarching urban design principles that developments must achieve and proposals will be assessed against. Core Strategy Policy CS4 requires that the scale and density of a development should be related to its level of accessibility. Given the site’s location within the very centre of Reading it has immediate access to excellent public transport connection as well as all facilities and amenities of the Town Centre.

4.3.3 Core Strategy Policy CS15 covers the issues of location, accessibility, density and housing mix, and each of these criteria have been heeded in formulating this proposal. As required

by this policy the development represents a development of more than 70 dwellings per hectare given its highly sustainable location. Core Strategy Policy CS16 relates to the provision of affordable housing and requires that developments of 15 units or more provide 30% of those units as affordable, where this is financially viable. As such the viability of this requirement has been considered and a full assessment is submitted with this application.

4.3.4 Turning to the Site and Detailed Policies Document, Policy DM1 Adaptation to Climate Change suggest that a number of measures should be incorporated into development such that it may adapt to potential climate change. As such a full Energy Statement and Sustainability Statement have been submitted. The Sustainability statement sets out a Code for Sustainable Homes-style pre-assessment setting out the credentials of the building and its positive contribution to the site's sustainability. The requirements of Policy DM1 Decentralised Energy have been considered in the submitted Energy Statement.

4.3.5 Policy DM4 requires that development does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential property in terms of the following criteria:

- Privacy and overlooking
- Access to sunlight and daylight
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development
- Noise and disturbance
- Artificial lighting
- Vibration
- Dust and fumes
- Smell
- Crime and safety

4.3.6 Policy DM12 relates to infrastructure work and increased traffic onto a classified road. The site is accessed for both pedestrians and vehicles from Garrard Street which is an unclassified road. The supporting Transport Statement considers the highly sustainable location in the town centre and assesses the significant increase in cycle parking provision for the scheme given the local plan policy and sustainable transport initiatives for future occupants.

- 4.3.7 Policy DM19 states that development should have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality. As such any potential impact of the development, as well as the sensitivity of the residential use proposed has been assessed in the accompanying Air Quality Assessment which takes account of the sites' location within an Air Quality Management Area.
- 4.3.8 The Reading Central Area Action Plan contains a number of site-specific policies for this part of Reading. The site is within the Riverside Opportunity Area where significant development potential has been identified linking the town centre to the River Thames with the new railway station hub as a focus in the north south access of the town. Tall buildings clusters are also identified in this area and recent approvals for major regeneration confirm this approach.
- 4.3.9 Policy RC1 looks to contribute towards providing a high density mix of uses in the Station Road / Friar Street area. More generally though, Policy RC5 requires that new development follow a number of urban design principles, and should of course be of a high quality. Policy RC9 deals with residential proposals specifically and relates to housing mix and residential amenity, among others. The proposed mix is set out in the next section of this Statement.

5. Planning Assessment

5.1.1 This application is submitted following the previous application for 23 units being withdrawn by the applicant. This was to allow for further discussion and negotiation of the scheme to overcome a number of matters predominantly in relation to the design. This also follows lengthy scheme development by a wide technical team to produce a scheme of high quality homes on a previously developed and sustainably located site. Numerous detailed and technical surveys and assessments have been completed, which now also includes a SUDS Statement, in accordance with the Council's validation requirements. The below sets out each aspect of the revised proposal and the associated Development Plan policies to which they relate.

5.2 Principle of Development

5.2.1 The principle of a residential use on this site is accepted as an appropriate form of development in town centres to create places where people can live and work in a sustainable way with all the amenities that a town centre such as Reading can offer to future occupants. The use of much of the surrounding area in all directions is that of residential notably immediately to the south with the large residential blocks of Icon House. Other major development sites are coming forward for residential including through the change of use from offices to residential. Garrard House itself has been vacant for a number of years but is now undergoing transformation into residential apartments securing the site for much needed flats in the town centre.

5.2.2 The NPPF and more specifically Reading's own planning policies encourage the provision of residential uses in the town centres such that truly sustainable homes are provided close to jobs and services, minimising the need to travel by private car.

5.2.3 Reading's Core Strategy: Policy CS4 concerns sustainable development, place making and growth noting that the scale and density should relate to accessibility. The site is located moments from the mainline railway station, the bus interchange and within the town centre where walking to work as well as to local amenities is the most efficient mode. Reading town centre has been transformed significantly since the introduction of the Oracle Shopping Centre and a shift in its hierarchy as a regional centre. The town has become more popular

as a destination and more recently the town centre is seen as a place where people want to live rather than simply visiting for the day and travelling back out of the centre to the more residential suburbs. This shift is supported by this application and indeed by local policy and those promoted by regeneration. Therefore the development proposed through this application contributes directly to this key aim of the Local Plan. The remainder of this Statement will examine the other key policy matters to be considered through this planning application.

- 5.2.4 The site is highly accessible and as such the scheme is effectively a 'car free' development, save for the 8 parking spaces provided at the ground floor one of which for disabled users. The proposed development results in the loss of four parking spaces however given it has an excellent level of accessibility to public transport links, low or zero parking provision would be fully in accordance with national, regional and local planning policies. The former office use having ceased, the residential units are being marketed as a low or car free scheme. Therefore residents would be fully aware of the parking availability prior to deciding whether to purchase a property. The reduction in spaces prior to conversion to residential use is an important step in ensuring the transport impacts of Garrard House are reduced yet further and reliance on private car travel is minimised. It is anticipated that the other spaces at the ground floor will be converted to disabled spaces for use by future occupants of the adjoining site at 29-35 Station Road. In total it is envisaged there will be 7 disabled parking spaces on the site. This is being discussed in further detail with the Highways Department noting that for this application one disabled space is proposed.
- 5.2.5 Furthermore the former office use had no cycle provision for the office workers. However, this application proposes 54 'josta' style cycle stands entirely for the future occupants. These stands are located beneath the undercroft part of the site and will therefore be secure and covered. These stands will be for the use of the whole building and future residents will be encouraged to use bicycles for both going to work and recreationally given the excellent links to the countryside cycle initiatives such as the Thames Path.
- 5.2.6 The applicant is aware of the need to provide affordable housing in Reading and across the country as a whole. Reading's Policy CS16 requires that all new developments of over 15 units or more provide up to 30% affordable housing where viable. The NPPF provides that if

a scheme cannot provide the target amount this should be informed by a full financial viability assessment which allows for a developer's profit and accounts for CIL payments.

- 5.2.7 In order to calculate the appropriate level of affordable housing or contribution resulting from the proposed development Douglas Birt Consulting have examined the policy and undertaken a full assessment of the financial inputs and projected outputs. The scheme has been remodelled given the reduction in unit numbers and calculated on a present day basis according to the assumptions outlined in the submitted Financial Viability Assessment (subject to exemption from FOI). Based on this assessment it is apparent the proposed development cannot be considered viable if 30% were to be provided. As such the affordable housing provision has been calculated and two affordable rent units can be secured on this scheme. This takes into account the significant impact that the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy will have on the scheme which came into force in April this year and as such would be levied on this scheme and must be taken into account in the viability assessment. Therefore despite a reduced affordable unit provision from what the Council aims to secure, the community within the borough still benefit considerably from the CIL contribution.

5.3 Townscape

- 5.3.1 The NPPF reminds applicants and decision-makers that good design is indivisible from good planning, attaching great importance to the design of the built environment. It is highlighted within the NPPF of the importance to plan positively to achieve high quality and inclusive design for all developments. Paragraph 58 seeks to achieve inclusive design proposals that establish a strong sense of place, and optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development.
- 5.3.2 At the local level the Reading Development Management Document provides a list of detailed criteria for all new developments. As such the form, layout and design of the proposed development has been predicated on a detailed review of the opportunities and constraints of the site, with the aims of local and national policy in mind. This also follows detailed assessment of the previous permission on the site which allowed for the two additional floors for an 'aparthotel'. The scheme has also been directed by recent surveys and reports to take into account a number of townscape improvements while considering the nearest neighbours. This has resulted in the scheme being considerably redesigned and

amended from the previous submission. Further in-depth analysis of the Daylighting afforded to the nearest residents to the south has also been undertaken. It is understood that this will be independently assessed perhaps by BRE.

- 5.3.3 The accompanying Design & Access Statement establishes the quality of the proposed development and describes the design process taking into account consideration of issues such as local character, surrounding uses, and existing design vernacular in this part of Reading. The external appearance of the existing building will already be significantly improved pursuant to the Prior Approval change of use of Garrard House and the external alterations already approved. Those applications represent a standalone process given the internal work to strip out the office has already been complete and the removal of the plant on the roof on the fifth floor has also been complete. It is therefore the intention that all applications will work in harmony hence included within the supporting Design & Access Statement are proposed elevations indicatively showing the final appearance of the entire building.
- 5.3.4 Key features of the design and how the proposal makes the best of its location and enhances the character of the townscape in the locality are also included that statement. The proposal uses a simple palette of materials to harmonise with the surrounding context of the Reading town centre which takes reference from the adjacent buildings. It is considered that contemporary and highly sustainable approach to the design, along with the modest palette of materials will complement local character. Design features such as alternative window reveals, the expressed hierarchy and inset composite panels emphasise this modern approach. The retention of the brick below takes reference from surrounding developments as well as the history of bricks in Reading.
- 5.3.5 The lightweight construction and different material design of the top floors helps to break up the visual mass of the building. Openings are provided predominantly to the front and side elevations both to allow light and access, but also to actively break up any perceived bulk of the buildings. Their positioning minimises overlooking whilst providing attractive proportioning to the new build floors.
- 5.3.6 This part of the town centre is intentionally dense in character and is being developed significantly. The Station Hill Development to the north is now underway and the large extension to the roof of Thames Tower is also being built out which will significantly improve

the appearance when the building also receives a new cladding system. The heights of the buildings are considered in detail by the Council's policies on tall building clusters and one such area considered for these is the area near the station.

- 5.3.7 As such the proposed building complements the street frontage and creates an attractive, modern and updated facade to an otherwise tired 1980s office block. The major improvements to the streetscene and the pedestrian experience will form part of the external alterations full application; however, this proposal will utilise the same resident's entrance directly off Garrard Street and reinstate activity in the street which has been lacking for some years until the recent construction activity in the area.
- 5.3.8 Changes to the scheme has revised the mass and bulk of the scheme on the most prominent corner facing west. This now has a stepped appearance and a lighter weight to that part of the proposal. This improvement is coupled with the retention of the brick parapet which allows part of the new build to be set behind it and thus altering the proportions to similarly match those of the aparthotel scheme.

5.4 Impact on Adjoining Occupiers and Living Conditions of Future Occupiers

- 5.4.1 The development has been designed to be sensitive to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings following a redesign to respect the local context in this part of Reading, and the existing residential community. Local policy takes this a step further and require that development should be of a high quality and should respect and enhance the varied local character of Reading, and contribute positively to the public realm. As is clear from the above section this has been the key theme running through the progression of the scheme design, and the contribution made to the landscape, townscape and indeed the local community along Garrard Street and the wider area has been of utmost importance.
- 5.4.2 The location of the proposed fifth and sixth floors have been amended following the previous comments relating to withdrawn scheme. Those floors have removed the rear projecting apartments so they no longer extend over the southern 'arm' of Garrard House. This reduces the bulk of the building to improve the outlook of residents to the south and also to ensure adequate distance between the site and the neighbours to the south. This has also been developed following a full daylight and sunlight analysis of the nearest windows to the proposal. When the 14 storey hotel -led scheme at Friar Street was proposed the

residential element of the scheme immediately adjacent to Garrard House was already designed to be close to its neighbours. This application does not exacerbate the situation given the set-back of the top floors proposed.

- 5.4.3 The communal amenity roof terrace has been removed from this application to overcome issues of noise and disturbance to those nearby. In its place, in part, are internal storage areas that have no windows facing south and therefore no overlooking matters. These storage areas are integral to the proposal, accessed off the internal corridor and will create a step up in the building at the fifth floor. Therefore the existing fourth floor parapet will be retained, then an area of inaccessible roof, then the storage area at fifth floor and then up to the proposed sixth floor.
- 5.4.4 The remaining flat to the roof of the fourth floor has also been redesigned to overcome any overlooking issues. The use of obscured glazing and the extension of projecting columns ensures that there will be no loss of privacy to the residents in Icon House. The rest of the flat roof above the fourth floor will not be publically accessible and not used as a terrace or sitting out area. It is anticipated that this could be conditioned to ensure no development is allowed of that area again to prevent any loss of privacy. Details of these features are included in the Design & Access Statement.

5.5 Dwelling Mix

- 5.5.1 Whilst Reading has no minimum floor area standards the scheme has considered the internal space very carefully and suggested room with furniture layout can be seen on the accompanying plans. The mix of unit types has also been considered given the town centre location and the market requirement for one and two bedroom units. Further amendments to the internal arrangement have reduced the number of units to 20 but has also enabled one of the units to now be a 3-bedroomed unit in accordance with RC9.

5.5.2 As such this application proposes an appropriate mix as follows:

Level	Unit Number	Format	Gross Internal Area (sq m rounded)
Fourth	04.01	2-bed 4-person	57
	04.02	1-bed 2-person	40
	04.03	2-bed 4-person	60
	04.04	2-bed 4-person	63
	04.05	1-bed 2-person	39
Fifth	05.01	1-bed 2-person	48
	05.02	2-bed 4-person	60
	05.03	2-bed 4-person	63
	05.04	1-bed 2-person	38
	05.05	1-bed 2-person	42
	05.06	1-bed 2-person	42
	05.07	1-bed 2-person	42
	05.08	2-bed 4-person	61
Sixth	06.01	1-bed 2-person	48
	06.02	3-bed 6-person	91
	06.03	1-bed 2-person	38
	06.04	1-bed 2-person	42
	06.05	1-bed 2-person	42
	06.06	1-bed 2-person	42
	06.07	2-bed 4-person	61

5.5.3 Policy RC9 requires the provision of a mix of housing sizes, types and tenure, to meet the needs of the borough's communities. The town centre location makes this a perfect site for smaller one and two bedroom units rather than family sized three or four bedroom units which are more suited to larger sites where houses can be provided instead of only flats. The one 3-bedromm flat is now located on the top floor and has its own private terrace to the north and west elevations to provide amenity space for that flat.

5.6 Lifetime Homes

5.6.1 The scheme incorporates positive measures to help create socially inclusive and adaptable environments capable of meeting longer term needs of users. As such the applicant has committed to meeting the requirements of the Lifetime Homes criteria, and the needs of disabled and elderly residents have been incorporated into the design. Most of the units have been design to meet the following Lifetime Homes criteria and those that are compliant are identified on the submitted plans (a greater level of detail is provided in the accompanying Design & Access Statement):

1. Parking – the scheme is “car free” save for limited spaces and wheelchair accessible spaces
2. Approach to dwelling from parking – all parking is located at ground floor, with direct access to flats by lift or stairs
3. Approach to all entrances – all entrances provide level access, and gradients across the site re kept to a minimum
4. Entrances – all meet the appropriate criteria
5. Communal stairs and lifts – both lifts are of the minimum internal dimensions for Building Regulations, and once meets Lifetime Homes criteria
6. Internal doorways and hallways – all doors to units have sufficient width entrances
7. Circulation space – sufficient space for turning a wheelchair is provided
8. Entrance level living space – this is provided
9. Potential for entrance level bed space – not applicable as each unit is single-storey
10. Entrance level WC and shower drainage – all bathrooms are of the appropriate size for the relevant Part M or Lifetime Homes criteria
11. WC and bathroom walls – handrails can be fitted
12. Stairs and potential though floor light dwelling – not applicable
13. Potential for fitting of hoists and bedroom / bathroom – hoists may be fitted
14. Bathrooms – appropriate access can be facilitated
15. Glazing and window handle – window be fully operable
16. Location of service controls – switches, sockets and ventilation will be at the appropriate height

5.6.2 In light of the above it is considered that the addition to the local community that this proposal will make will be truly sustainable given it is fully inclusive for all users. The proposed new units meet the needs of a number of sections of the community and help to encourage social cohesion.

5.7 Daylight / Sunlight

5.7.1 The new floors have been designed to incorporate a proportionate amount of glazing to benefit from a good amount of daylight without excessive solar gain. Daylight penetration into deep rooms has been considered to ensure that future residents will receive more than adequate level of daylight into their homes. In accordance with paragraph 17 of the NPPF a full Daylight & Sunlight Assessment has been undertaken by Fabric Building Physics, and this is submitted with the application. This has been revised and new calculations made given the amended scheme and the reduced bulk to the rear of the proposal. The analysis of the

scheme also takes into account the Thames Tower and other commitments following advice from officers. It is expected that this will be independently assessed by BRE.

- 5.7.2 The Daylight & Sunlight Assessment contains comprehensive calculations, for which the resultant internal daylight assessments to the proposed habitable rooms have demonstrated that an acceptable level of compliance will be achieved with the proposed development being in place. Habitable rooms will meet the required levels of average daylight factor (ADF) to comply with the former Code for Sustainable Homes, and this has been reflected in the submitted pre-assessment. The overall results demonstrate that the proposed development has been carefully designed to ensure that a good level of daylight is achieved.

5.8 Environmental Impacts

- 5.8.1 In terms of ground conditions and contamination advice has been taken from the NPPF which provides that development on brownfield land should not result in significant harm to humans or the environment. As such a Phase 1 to 3 Environmental Site Assessment has been submitted which evaluates the contamination potential of the entire site and concludes that the likelihood of historical or current contamination on the site is low. This follows a desk top study and further intrusive investigation with core samples taken and tested. The scheme proposes additional floors to the roof of the existing building and as such will not affect the underlying ground conditions.
- 5.8.2 An Air Quality Assessment (REC Limited) has also been carried out to consider the appropriateness of additional residential accommodation on the site. The site is within an AQMA however the provision of 20 new units is considered acceptable.

5.9 Ecology

- 5.9.1 A survey of the site has been undertaken following advice from the Council. The site is entirely covered by either building or hardstanding and the ecological value of the site is considered low. There were no nesting birds at the time of the survey and since that time the site has been in active use as a building site which further detracts it as being suitable for nesting birds.
- 5.9.2 The proposal for a brown roof on the sixth floor is seen as a positive benefit and could be suitable for black redstarts which could in the future choose to nest here.

5.10 Sustainability

- 5.10.1 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. In an environmental sense this means contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 5.10.2 The development minimises carbon dioxide emissions and incorporates high standards of sustainable design and construction. Standards will be achieved through a number of features as detailed in the accompanying Energy and Sustainability Statements (Ecofirst).
- 5.10.3 Whilst a full assessment of the sustainability features is included in the submitted Energy Statement (Ecofirst), in summary here, those incorporated into the proposed new building include:
- Air tight construction
 - High performance double glazing
 - Dual flush toilets
 - Thermostatic valves
 - Low energy lighting
 - Separate recycling and refuse areas

5.11 Transport

- 5.11.1 The transport and highways aspects of the development have been considered in detail, and a Transport Statement has been completed by Crosby Transport Planning. The key transport aspect of the proposal is the sustainable location of the site, and in accordance with the NPPF Chapter 4, the development promotes sustainable transport choices. Local Policy DM12 requires that developments do not create significant transport movements which would have a harmful impact of the surrounding road network. Since the development will be largely car-free, with the exception of eight parking spaces, and the site is located within a highly accessible town centre location, close to regular and frequent public transport links

and adjacent to extensive pedestrian and cycle networks, it is concluded that there will be no such impacts arising.

- 5.11.2 The residential refuse collection arrangements will remain largely similar as for the previous office use. Dedicated areas for bin storage and collection will be located on the ground floor level and refuse vehicles are able to turn and manoeuvre at the entrance to the site to collect the refuse from the pickup point adjacent to Garrard Street.
- 5.11.3 The cycle storage area will accommodate a minimum of 56 cycle parking spaces in the form of two-tier Josta-style stands, thereby meeting the minimum standard requirements as set out in the Transport Assessment. The site represents the highest level of access to public transport which demonstrates that the levels of car and cycle parking proposed on site are in accordance with policy guidance. Further detail on the difference between trip generation for office and residential uses is contained in the Transport Statement, and it is strongly concluded that the development would not give rise to any adverse transport impacts.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1.1 It has been demonstrated above that the proposed development of 20 new homes in this part of the Reading Central Area complies with local and national planning policy. Each tier of the development plan has been considered throughout the scheme development, and the proposal has been designed to accord with every aspect.
- 6.1.2 The principle of a residential use on this site has been confirmed through the application of criteria within Class J of the 2013 Permitted Development legislation and the Council's Prior Approval granted in 2014 under planning reference 141277 for the building to be converted into 83 flats. Notably Garrard House is currently being converted for that use and external alterations which will update the appearance of the facades and the entrance on Garrard Street will also be carried out. The principle of additional bulk and massing to the site has also been considered acceptable by the approval of similar additional floors to the building when it was going to be converted as an aparthotel. This also follows reduced massing and unit numbers following detailed discussions with the Council.
- 6.1.3 All unit and room sizes have been designed to create high quality well-proportioned apartments arranged as one- and two-bedroomed units in this town centre location. Communal amenity space is provided to ensure future occupiers enjoy high standards of accommodation. The proposal would provide much-needed market housing on a currently under-used brownfield site.
- 6.1.4 The full package of technical reports and assessment which accompany the application test the proposal against the relevant policies and guidance in relating to transport and accessibility, ground conditions, daylighting, ecology, air quality, utilities, energy and sustainability. As such the amenities of existing residential properties adjacent to the site and future residents of the development have been considered in the design of the proposal.
- 6.1.5 The NPPF and Council's policies seek to ensure a sufficient stock of land to meet the future needs of residents in this part of Reading, including for good quality homes providing more housing, and, to provide social infrastructure and to contribute to the town centre's continued development. The proximity within the town centre, and given that the site is well

served by public transport, provides an opportunity for a sustainable development in transport terms.

- 6.1.6 The proposal would enable the delivery of a significant and sustainable residential development within the Riverside Opportunity Area, which would make a considerable contribution towards meeting housing targets in accordance with the aims of the NPPF.
- 6.1.7 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposal accords with local and national planning policy and guidance. Therefore the determination of this application to a great extent centres on the simple statement from the Government that Councils should take a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and “approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay” (NPPF, para 14).



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TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

**THE TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) ORDER 2010**

To: Andmore Planning Ltd
16 Old Town
Clapham
London
SW4 0JY

Application No: 141277
Application type: Office Prior Approval -
Class J, Part 3, GPDO (2013 amendment)

**APPLICATION FOR PRIOR APPROVAL
UNDER CLASS J, PART 3 OF SCHEDULE 2 TO THE TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) ORDER 1995**

Applicant: Titan Properties Ltd

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL as local planning authority give notice that the prior approval of the local planning authority is **GIVEN** for the following development in accordance with the plans and supporting information submitted in connection with this application.

Proposal: Change of use of Garrard House from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwellinghouses) to comprise 83 flats. Prior Notification under Class J, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended).

At: Garrard House Garrard Street Reading RG1 1NR

OTHER STATUTORY CONSENTS MAY BE REQUIRED

Date: 3 October 2014



Head of Planning, Development
& Regulatory Services



Application At: Garrard House Garrard Street Reading RG1 1NR

Application No: 141277

Application type: Office Prior Approval - Class J, Part 3, GPDO (2013 amendment)

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details approved by the local planning authority as follows, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority:

The following plans and drawings have been assessed (received 08/08/2014):

- PL-01 Existing Site Plan
- PL-02 Proposed PD Layout
- PL-03 Existing Site Location Plan
- Transport Statement
- Appendix II - Figures

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

INFORMATIVES

1. The proposal meets the relevant criteria set out in Class J paragraph J.1; and the proposal is not considered to have an adverse impact in relation to transport and highways matters, contamination risks on the site; or flooding risks on the site.
2. The residential use of the building (falling within Class C3 dwellinghouses) must be begun before 30th May 2016.
3. The granting of Prior Approval relates only to the change of use of existing floorspace and land. If external alterations or extensions to the building are intended, a separate planning application is required for these works.
4. The grant of prior approval does not certify that the proposed development would be lawful within the meaning of Section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. If you wish to obtain confirmation that the proposed development would be lawful and that no enforcement action could be taken against it, you can apply for a Certificate of Lawfulness. A fee is payable for this. Further information can be found on the Council's website:
<http://www.reading.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-control/PlanningApplicationService/FormsandInformation/need-for-planning-permission/>
and on the Planning Portal:
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/next/lawfuldevelopmentcertificate>

Date: 3 October 2014

Head of Planning, Development
& Regulatory Services



Reading

Borough Council

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5. You are advised that the development lies on the site of an historic garage, which has the potential to have caused contaminated land, and the proposed development is a sensitive land use.

Where development is proposed, the developer is responsible for ensuring that development is safe and suitable for use for the purpose for which it is intended. The developer is thus responsible for determining whether land is suitable for a particular development or can be made so by remedial action.

If any external works are to be carried out that will disturb the ground surface, or if any external amenity areas are to be provided as part of the development, then a contaminated land risk assessment will be required to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.

In addition, the developers must be aware that any ground or enabling works may bring receptors into contact with the aforementioned contaminants. You may wish to satisfy yourself that the details of the construction proposals take the necessary account of the possibility of contaminants from that source.

Date: 3 October 2014

Head of Planning, Development
& Regulatory Services

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
PLANNING AND COMPENSATION ACT 1991
THE TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015**

**APPLICATION TO VARY/REMOVE CONDITION UNDER SECTION 73 OF THE TOWN
AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

To: Andmore Planning Ltd
16 Old Town
Clapham
London
SW4 0JY

Application No: 151010
Application type: Variation of Condition

Applicant: Titan Property Development

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL as local planning authority hereby **GRANT** planning permission for the development as described below:-

Proposal: Application for variation of a Condition 1 (Approved plans) of planning permission 141277/OPA

At: 30 Garrard Street Reading RG1 1NR

Subject to such conditions and for such reasons as may be attached

**OTHER STATUTORY CONSENTS MAY BE REQUIRED
PLEASE READ THE NOTES ISSUED WITH THIS DECISION NOTICE**

Date: 24 July 2015



Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services 

Application At: 30 Garrard Street Reading RG1 1NR

Application No: 151010

Application type: Variation of Condition

1. The permission relates only to the following plans and drawings:
PL-02 Rev A - Proposed PD Layout (received on 10 June 2015)

INFORMATIVES

1. This decision solely replaces condition 1 on office prior approval 141277, as granted on 03/10/2014. You are advised that all informatives relating to office prior approval 141277 remain applicable and are unchanged.
2. The determination of this application required no issues to be resolved, so officers have worked positively and proactively to provide a recommendation for approval to be made within the target timescale.

Date: 24 July 2015



Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services *RE*

NOTES

APPEALS TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

If you are aggrieved by the decision of the Council to refuse permission for the proposed development or to grant it subject to conditions, then you can appeal to the Secretary of State under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

If this is a decision on a planning application relating to the same or substantially the same land and development as is already the subject of an enforcement notice, if you want to appeal against the Council's decision on the application you must do so within 28 days of the date of this notice.

If an enforcement notice is served relating to the same or substantially the same land and development as in your application and you want to appeal against the Council's decision on your application, you must do so within 28 days of the date of service of the enforcement notice, or within 6 months (or 12 weeks in the case of a householder appeal) of the date of this notice, whichever period expires earlier.

If the above circumstances do not apply, any appeal must be made within the following time limits. If this is a householder application and you want to appeal against the Council's decision then you must do so within 12 weeks of the date of this notice. If this is an advertisement application and you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision then you must do so within 8 weeks of the date of this notice. If you want to appeal against your local planning authority's decision for any other type of application (which is not a householder or advertisement application, or an application for a Certificate of Lawfulness) then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.

The Secretary of State can allow a longer period for giving notice of an appeal, but he will not normally be prepared to use this power unless there are special circumstances which excuse the delay in giving notice of appeal. The Secretary of State need not consider an appeal if it seems to him that the local planning authority could not have granted planning permission for the proposed development or could not have granted it without the conditions they imposed, having regard to the statutory requirements, to the provisions of any development order and to any directions given under a development order. In practice, the Secretary of State does not refuse to consider appeals solely because the local planning authority based their decision on a direction given by him.

Appeals must be made using a form which you can get from the Planning Inspectorate at Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN, tel. 0303 444 5000, or online at www.planningportal.gov.uk/pcs.

Purchase Notices

If either the local planning authority or the Secretary of State refuses permission to develop land or grants it subject to conditions, the owner may claim that he can neither put the land to a reasonably beneficial use in its existing state nor render the land capable of a reasonably beneficial use by the carrying out of any development which has been or would be permitted. In these circumstances, the owner may serve a purchase notice on the Council in whose area the land is situated. This notice will require the Council to purchase his interest in the land in accordance with the provisions of Part VI of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.