

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 240698/LBC

Address: 150 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1HE

Proposals: The internal subdivision of an existing workspace to create 2 smaller units. No external modifications are proposed.

Case Officer: Marcie Rejwerska

Date received (valid from): 5 June 2024 Target Decision date: 31 July 2024

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises the upper floors of 150 Friar Street, which are in office (Class E) use. The application refers to the second floor in particular where there is a large open space on the left-hand side of the building. The property was granted permission in 2018 for internal alterations which included the removal of a partition wall in this space. The cornice and skirting detail were installed to match the existing in this room. 150 Friar Street is Grade II listed as part of a group of buildings on Friar Street and Queen Victoria Street. The official listing reads as follows,

Including Nos 148 and 149 Friar Street and Nos 24 to 28 and 35 to 37 (consec) Broad Street. A circa 1894 commercial street with returns to Broad and Friar Streets. Probably by Joseph Morris. Dutch gabled free Baroque style. 3 1/2 storeys, yellow brick and terracotta with dividing Ionic pilasters. Dentil cornice. Pilasters to dormers, broken pediments above. An elongated pattern of shallow bays to 1st and 2nd floors 4:2:1:1:1:3. Mullion and transom window to bays, sashes with architraves (and pediments on 1st floor) to rest. Modern shopfronts, retaining cornice to fascia and scroll brackets to pilasters, only one shop retains prewar shopfront.

The listing has been amended to include 150 Friar Street. The site is not within a Conservation Area but is designated as a primary frontage within the central core.



150 Friar Street as seen from Friar Street junction with Station Road and Queen Victoria Street.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Listed building consent is sought to reinstate the partition wall within the office space on the second floor along the same line as the previous partition wall. No external alterations are proposed.

Plans considered:

Design, Access & Heritage Statement, dated May 2024

11553-PL100 - Location and Block Plan

11553-GA110-Second Floor Plans (Proposed)

11553-GA102-Third Floor and Roof Plans

11553-GA101-First and Second Floor Plans

11553-GA100-Basement and Ground Floor Plans

10768-AS-603 - Existing Skirting Detail

10768-AS-601 - Existing Cornice Detail

Received by the LPA on 29 May 2024

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

150 Friar Street (relating to upper floors only)

170210/FUL & 170211/LBC - Proposed conversion of vacant office accommodation at first, second and third floor levels to create 7 x 2 bed residential units with part of ground floor and basement for ancillary storage space. - Application permitted on 28/04/17 but not implemented

181197/LBC - Various internal and associated external works associated with the continued office use at basement, part ground and upper floors, including various removal of partitions, restoration of staircase and landing arrangement, replacement of roof linings, provision of rooflights on inward facing roofslopes and incorporation of new WCs, kitchens and services - Application permitted on 18/10/18

4. CONSULTATIONS

Non-statutory:

RBC Conservation Officer - no objections raised.

Public:

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

153 Friar Street, Reading

149 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1EX

4 Queen Victoria Street, Reading, RG1 1TG

2 Queen Victoria Street, Reading, RG1 1TG

No letters of representation received. A site notice was displayed on site by the applicant.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance 2008

BS7913: Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

CR7: PRIMARY FRONTAGES IN CENTRAL READING

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

APPRAISAL

Policy EN1 states *“Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.”*

The proposal only affects one room within the building. It is unclear from the record of the internal layout of the property whether the internal partition wall had been an original feature, however, there are no objections to the reinstatement of this wall to divide the space to suit the applicant's needs. There are internal details including the skirting boards and cornices that should be carefully retained, and a condition is recommended to secure a schedule of works and materials details prior to commencement of the works.

Conclusion

The proposal has been assessed in line with the policies as outlined above and is considered to pose minimal risk to the heritage asset, and is therefore considered acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Subject to the following conditions:

1. Time Limit Standard Listed Buildings

2. Approved Plans

3. Schedule of works and materials schedule to be submitted prior to commencement.