

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 240332/FUL

Address: 121-122 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2BD

Proposals: Installation of plant to rear of building.

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

Applicant: Diverse Dining Ltd

Date received (valid from): 13 March 2024 **Target Decision date:** 8 May 2024

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a three-storey property located on the southern side of Broad Street within Reading Town Centre. The property is currently vacant and faces a popular, pedestrianized high street. It is not listed, nor does it fall within a conservation area. The surrounding area features a diverse range of typical town centre uses, including various retail and leisure premises, many of which are situated within the large indoor shopping centre known as The Oracle.

Site visit date: 9 April 2024

Site visit photos:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The planning permission is sought for the installation of mechanical plant to the rear of the building. The proposed external mechanical plant equipment includes a kitchen extract fan, supply fan, an air conditioning unit, condensers for cold-room and freezer room, and a high-level extract duct within the rear lightwell of the building. Additionally, the proposal involves interior duct works associated with the external plant, as well as the installation of one over-door heater and some air conditioners. The property is intended for use as a restaurant.

Plans considered:

Drawing No. 001/23358 Rev C - Proposed Ground Floor HVAC Layout

Drawing No. 002/23358 Rev C - Proposed & Existing First Floor HVAC Layout

Drawing No. 003/23358 Rev B - Proposed & Existing Elevations HVAC Layout

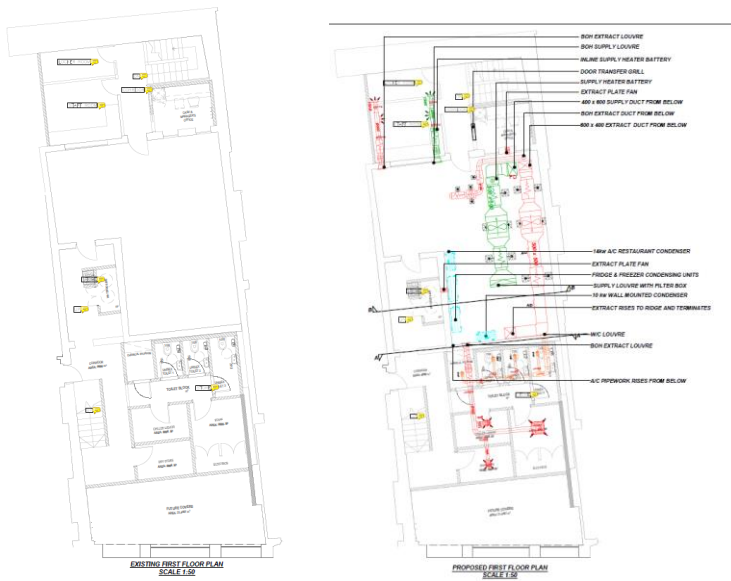
Drawing No. 004/23358 Rev B - Proposed & Existing Elevations HVAC Layout

Received 26 March 2024

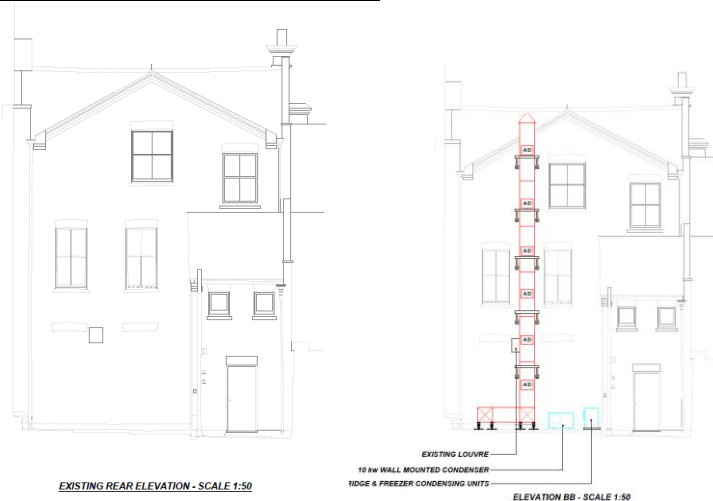
Block Plan
Location Plan
Covering Letter
Acoustic assessment of proposed new mechanical services equipment
Received 14 March 2024

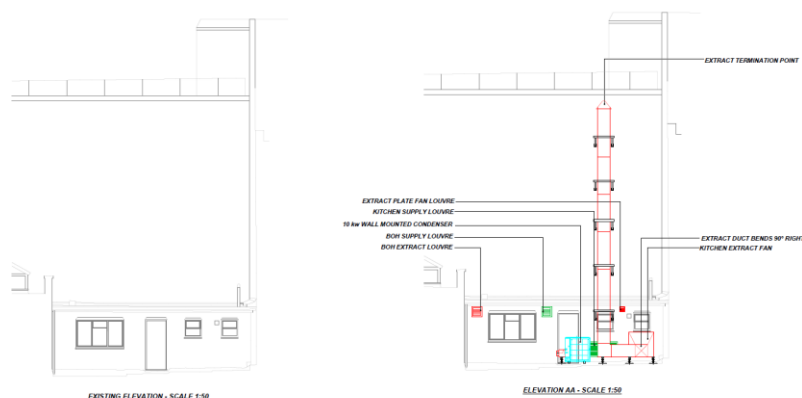
Extract Fan - FG - ESTOC TARGE
Condensing Unit Specifications Sheet - Medium Temperature (Cold Room)
Condensing Unit Specifications Sheet - Low Temperature (Freezer Room)
Systemair - MUB 062 630D4 Multibox - Supply Fan
AC Condenser
Received 7 May 2024.

Existing & Proposed Floor Plans:



Existing & Proposed Elevations:





3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 980134/ADV - New shopfront, new shop refurbishment - Application Permitted
- 980557/ADV - Brushed stainless steel fascia with pushed through acrylic letters in opal and backlit - Application Permitted
- 991893/ADV - Erection of internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs and obscure glazing with frosted manifestation at first floor level - Application Permitted
- 010675/ADV - New fascia and projecting sign - Application Permitted
- 020434/ADV - Non-illuminated fascia. Illuminated projecting sign - Application Permitted
- 211293/ADV - Removal of existing signage and replacement with new signage - Application Permitted

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal Consultation: Environmental Health

'I have reviewed the noise assessment and note the predicted plant noise level will be 1 dB higher than the required specific noise level of 10 dB below background. Due to the town centre location and the fact that 1 dB is not significant, this is likely to be acceptable therefore I recommend approval is granted.'

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

120 Broad Street Mall, Reading
123 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2BD

No letters of representation have been received.

Equality Act 2010:

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

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources)

EN17 (Noise Generating Equipment)

RL3 (Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres)

6. APPRAISAL

Principle of development

The application site currently is vacant and would be in use as a restaurant. It was previously occupied by Thomas Cook travel agent; however, is about to be converted into a restaurant under permitted development (same use class).

The proposal as submitted is for restaurant use and a mechanical plant scheme.

The site falls within a Major Local Centre as defined within the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. Policy RL3 (Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres) states that within district, major local and local centres, development will be permitted provided that:

- There would be no more than 2 consecutive A5 takeaways, and no more than 30% of the length of the Key Frontage would be in takeaway use.

No. 123 and 120 Broad Street are in retail use and as such the proposed restaurant use for No.121-122 would not result in 2 consecutive A5 takeaways. Furthermore, this change would prevent more than 30% of the key frontage from being in takeaway use. This would comply with Policy RL3.

Notwithstanding the above, to facilitate the restaurant use, the application proposes mechanical plant which does require planning permission, discussed further below.

Design and impact on the character of the surrounding area

Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires all development *“to be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area”*.

A kitchen extract fan, supply fan, an air conditioning unit, cold-room and freezer room condensers, and a high-level extract duct are proposed at the rear of the building. Whilst these proposed plants would not be in keeping with the character and appearance of the original building, in the context of the scheme, they are considered an appropriate, essential addition. This is not dissimilar to other properties along this part of Broad Street and would not be readily visible in the street scene due to all proposed works being located within the rear lightwell of the building. In accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) addressed pollution and EN17 (Noise Generating Assessment) specifically noise. Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) requires development to not cause detriment to residents including from noise and smell.

The application site relates to ground floor and first floor. The proposed use would generate noise potentially harmful to the local environment. Accordingly, a noise assessment has been supplied during the course of the application. The Council's Environmental Protection team has confirmed that it's acceptable for the predicted plant noise level to be 1dB higher than the required specific noise level, given its location in the town centre in terms of noise from the chemical plant equipment. Therefore, the proposal is considered in accordance with Policies CC8, EN16 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

In terms of odour, details are to be secured via the pre-commencement condition of Ventilation & Extraction (to be submitted). No development shall commence on the site until an odour assessment has been carried out, and a detailed odour management plan, including scaled plans, odour control specifications, and a maintenance plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

7. CONCLUSION

Having regard to the material considerations and all matters raised, the Local Planning Authority considers that the balance of considerations therefore weighs in favour of granting planning permission subject to conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT