

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Redlands

App Ref: 231816/FUL

Address: Royal Berkshire Hospital, London Road, Reading, RG1 5AN

Proposals: Proposed upgrade and replacement of the rooftop air handling system within the Intensive Care Unit located within the South Block Building. Erection of a new acoustic screen around the existing Redlands rooftop plant.

Case Officer: Sian Hickey

Date received (valid from): 18 December 2023

Decision date (ext): 22nd April 2024

1. Site description and Surrounding Area

The application site is the South Block of the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

The Royal Berkshire Hospital (use class C2) is located partially on London Road, Redlands Road and Craven Road. The application site is outside of a conservation area and does not include any listed buildings.

Site visit date: 17/01/2024

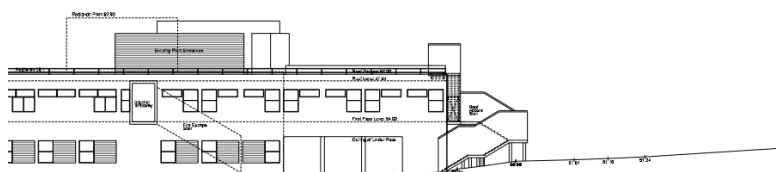
Site photos:



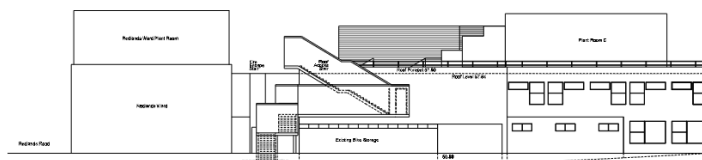
2. The Proposal

The proposal is for the upgrading of the air handling system within the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) located within the South Block Building level 3. The current air handling system is within an enclosed plant room on the roof of level 3. As a section of the existing plant room is dedicated to other services within the hospital, not all the plant room can be demolished. Instead, a section of the plant room will be demolished, and then rebuilt once the new air-handling equipment is installed.

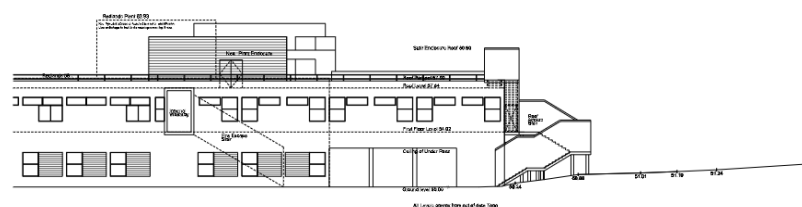
The proposal also includes the erection of a new acoustic screen around the existing Redlands rooftop plant to help reduce the existing noise levels. The size and shape of the proposed screening will match the existing.



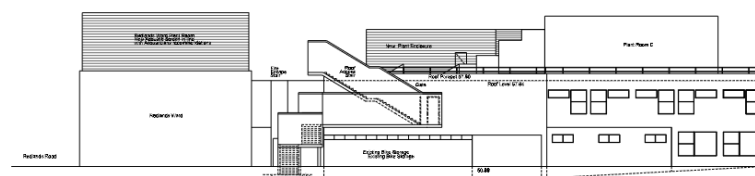
Existing West Elevation - 1:100



Existing South Elevation - 1:100



Proposed West Elevation - 1:100



Proposed South Elevation - 1:100

The Council is dealing with a noise nuisance investigation with regards to the existing plant at the site. Therefore, in order to proceed with the proposal for the new plant, a noise assessment of the existing and proposed plant was requested along with a solution to reduce the noise from the existing plant.

The environment health officer reviewed the information provided and confirmed the noise assessment and proposals are acceptable. However, the only remaining concern is the possibility that the existing noise complaint relates to the AHU room to the east to which no work is proposed.

Officer note: The Trust have confirmed that they are committed to resolving this issue.

Should the noise issue relate to the AHU room to the east, which is not part of this application, rather than the area the subject of this application, then the Trust commit to carrying out attenuation work on that far plant room as a next step to resolving this issue. This would be in liaison with Environmental Health under separate legislation.

Transport

There are no transport objections to this application.

Conservation Area Advisory Committee

No comments received at time of writing report.

External Consultation

The following addresses were consulted by letter:

15 Redlane Court, Reading, RG1 5QT
16 Redlane Court, Reading, RG1 5QT
32 Redlands Road, Reading, RG1 5HD
36 Redlands Road, Reading, RG1 5HD
34 Redlands Road, Reading, RG1 5HD
26 Redlands Road, Reading, RG1 5EX

No letters of representation have been received.

4. Plans and Documents Considered

Drawing No 7069.105 rev A - Location and Block Plan received 12th March 2024

Drawing No. 7069.144 rev B - Existing Roof Plan and Site Plan received 12th March 2024

Drawing No. 7069.218 rev D - Existing South and West Elevations received 12th March 2024

Drawing No. 7069.217 rev D - Proposed Roof Plan and Site Plan received 12th March 2024

Drawing No. 7069.219 rev E - Proposed South and West Elevations received 12th March 2024

Noise Assessment received 18th March 2024

Acoustic barrier details received 18th March 2024

Design and Access Statement received 15th April 2024

Drawing No. 7069.220 rev E - Existing and Proposed East Elevation received 15th April 2024

5. Relevant Planning History

231087 - Installation of new enclosed escape stairs on the external of the ICU - PERMITTED

6. Relevant Planning Guidance

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. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

The 'National Planning Policy framework' ('NPPF') 2012 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The 'NPPF' states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019) according to their degree of consistency with the 'NPPF' (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the 'NPPF', the greater the weight that may be given). Accordingly, the 'NPPF' and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

7. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework;
National Planning Policy Guidance;

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction
CC7 Design and the Public Realm
CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
EN16 Pollution and Water Resources
EN17 Noise Generating Equipment
ER3 Royal Berkshire Hospital

8. Appraisal

Principle of development

The public benefit of development to help the efficiency and quality of environment at the hospital is understood and accepted. In addition, Policy ER3 (Royal Berkshire Hospital) states that development will be supported where it complies with the following criteria:

Where development would result in an increase in staff or visitors, it should be accompanied by measures which ensure that development does not have an adverse effect on the functioning of the highway, either as a result of increased use or by resulting in additional on-street parking in surrounding streets - it would not.

Development will conserve the listed main block on London Road and 17 Craven Road, ensuring that their use is consistent with its conservation - this proposal does not relate to the Listed part of the hospital.

Development would not result in adverse effects on the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas - it would not.

There will be no significant detrimental impact on neighbouring residential properties - it would not result in detrimental impact; see below.

Subject to meeting the above criteria, and other policy considerations, development at the Royal Berkshire Hospital is accepted in line with Policy ER3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

Impact of the proposal on the surrounding area

The proposals are not considered harmful out of keeping given the context of the site and surrounding area which comprises of an array of structures and equipment to facilitate the effectiveness of the hospital. The development is set back from the hospital boundaries and at high level, causing minimal impact to the street scene. Moreover, in terms of appearance, the proposals are not considered to be significantly different to that of the existing arrangement.

Overall, the proposal is not considered to conflict with policies CC7, CC8 and ER3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) subject to condition.

Amenity

In terms of noise, as there is currently a noise nuisance investigation ongoing at the application site, a site visit was carried out on the roof of the hospital with the Planning Officer and the Environmental Health Officer. The site visit identified that noise created from the existing Redlands rooftop plant was likely to be causing the issue and therefore a revised scheme was submitted to include the erection of a new acoustic screen around the existing Redlands rooftop plant. Furthermore, the original scheme submitted was for an open-air compound, the proposals have evolved to include a new fully enclosed plant room for the new air handling unit, replacing the one to be removed. The nearest residential properties are at least 45m away from the proposed plant. The Environmental Health Officer was content with the noise details provided in the Noise Assessment. However, as set out above, should the noise issue not be resolved with the measures through this application then these would be addressed under environmental legislation.

Due to the nature of the development, the proposal is not considered to give rise to an undue loss of light, outlook or privacy to occupants of nearby dwellings.

The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in relation to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

Other matters

The proposed development would not result in an unacceptable loss of biodiversity or impact any existing trees.

The proposal would not result in the loss of any parking spaces on site.

9. Recommendation

Grant planning permission

Conditions

1. TL1
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials

Informatives

1. Terms
2. Building Control
3. Complaints about construction
4. Positive and Proactive

