

Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge St
Reading
RG1 2LU



Date: 06 September 2024

My ref: 23113/LT20240906

By email

Dear Sir / Madam,

Prior approval for the demolition of buildings and subsequent restoration of the site at 2, 4, 14, 16 and 18 Thurso Close, Reading, RG30 4YG and 27 and 29 Deveron Drive, Reading, RG30 4YB

1. On behalf of the applicant, Reading Borough Council, please find enclosed a prior approval application for the demolition and subsequent site restoration at the above site. This application is made under Class B, Part 11, Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order (2015) [as amended]. The application is for the demolition of 2, 4, 14, 16 and 18 Thurso Close.
2. Prior approval for "Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed Demolition of Buildings under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B" was granted on 22 August 2024. This granted permission for the demolition of 27 and 29 Deveron Drive and the garage/storage building (240540/DEM). Those buildings were surveyed and did not have potential for bats and so an application could be submitted straight away whereas 2, 4, 14, 16 and 18 Thurso Close did have potential for bats and so this application had to wait for those surveys to take place.
3. The prior approval application fee is £184.
4. The planning application comprises the following information:
 - Completed planning application form;
 - Covering letter (Shrimplin Planning & Development) (September 2024), including site notice statement;
 - Site Plan – Phase 2, drawing number 5 (J Mould) (July 2024);
 - Demolition Method Statement Phase 2 Issue V2 (J Mould) (August 2024);
 - Demolition Management Plan Phase 2 Issue V2 (J Mould) (August 2024);
 - Phase 2 Restoration Plan V3 (J Mould) (June 2024);
 - Traffic Management Plan Issue no. 1 (J Mould) (April 2024);
 - Asbestos Survey Report – Phase 2 (Airsafe) (November 2023)

- Asbestos Survey Report (Airsafe) (February 2024)
- Arboricultural Method Statement Rev B (Keen Consultants) (April 2024);
- Tree Protection Plan, drawing 2231-KC-XX-YTREE-TPP01-RevA (Keen Consultants) (February 2024);
- Preliminary Roost & Nest Assessment (Ecological Surveys Ltd) (February 2024);
- Phase 2 Bat Emergence Survey Report (Ecological Surveys Ltd) (September 2024);
- Additional Ecology Mitigation Measures Note v3 (Ecological Surveys Ltd) (July 2024).
- Site notice
- Site notice photos (to be sent separately)

Background

5. The Application Site forms part of the Dee Park Regeneration Programme, multi-phase estate regeneration scheme of the 32-hectare estate delivering 763 new homes, of which 281 will be affordable, 482 for sale and a new extra care facility.
6. The Application comprises three blocks of flats, two storeys tall, and a storage unit with parking above. All of the buildings on the site are vacant with former tenants decanted to other housing nearby to enable the delivery of phase 3 of the Dee Park Regeneration Programme.
7. Since being vacated the site has been broken into and subjected to numerous arson attacks. Since May 2023 it has been boarded up and a security company has overseen the security of the site. The buildings currently pose a public safety risk. It is therefore essential that the buildings are demolished and the site made safe.

Assessment

8. The General Permitted Development Order Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B, 'Demolition of Buildings' states that confirmation as to whether prior approval is required should be sought from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) before the development is carried out. Should prior approval be required, this should also be given by the LPA before the development is carried out.
9. Paragraph B1 says that development is not permitted if any of the criteria apply. None of the criteria apply, as explained below:
 - Criterion B1(a): the building has not been deemed unsafe or otherwise uninhabitable by the action or inaction of any person having an interest in the land on which the buildings and it is not practicable to secure safety or health by works of repair or works for affording temporary support.
 - Criterion B1(b): the building to be demolished is not listed or within the curtilage of a listed buildings, nor is it located within a conservation area.
 - Criterion B1(c): the existing use of the building does not fall within use Class A4 (drinking establishment).

10. Paragraph B.2 says that development is permitted subject to a number of conditions. This application fulfils the requirements of those conditions.
11. Paragraph B.2 (ii) states that *“an application described in paragraph (b)(i)(aa) must be accompanied by a written description of the proposed development, a statement that a notice has been posted in accordance with paragraph (b)(iv) and any fee required to be paid;”* (emphasis added). A site notice will be put up outside of the site on w/c 9 September 2024 and will be left in place for 21 days.
12. As part of this application, 2 of the buildings (No. 2, 4, 14, 16 and 18 Thurso Close) and hardstanding are proposed for demolition. These are detailed on the Site Plan, drawing no. 5.
13. A Demolition Method Statement and Demolition Management Plan have been submitted which demonstrate that the demolition process will be carried out professionally and without causing undue harm to the environment or the amenity of the surrounding properties. It includes a section on how expected contamination will be dealt with. The demolition is expected to start in November 2024 and a 10 week period is anticipated.
14. A Site Restoration Plan (J Mould) has been submitted which shows how the site will be restored and maintained in advance of the commencement of the Dee Park Regeneration Programme.
15. Asbestos Survey Reports (Airsafe) have been submitted which show how asbestos will be dealt with.
16. A Preliminary Roost & Nest Assessment (Ecological Surveys Ltd) (February 2024) has been submitted which confirms that 2 of the buildings (No. 2, 4, 14, 16 and 18 Thurso Close) have bat potential. The PRNA advises that emergence surveys are required for these buildings. A Phase 2 Bat Emergence Survey Report (Ecological Surveys Ltd) (September 2024) has been produced which sets out the findings of an emergence survey that took place on 15 May 2024. This confirms that bats were identified emerging from the building initially identified as having bat potential. No bats were identified emerging from the buildings identified as having negligible bat potential.
17. An Additional Ecology Mitigation Measures Note (Ecological Surveys Ltd) (July 2024) has been submitted which sets out mitigation measures for other protected species.
18. An Arboricultural Method Statement Rev B (Keen Consultants) (April 2024) has been submitted which sets out mitigation measures to avoid a detrimental impact to retained trees.
19. The site is not in an archaeological priority area and works are mainly above ground and so no archaeological investigations are proposed.

20. The site is not within an area of contamination risk. Works are mainly above ground.
21. We look forward to receiving confirmation that the planning application has been registered. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Shrimplin'.

Robert Shrimplin

Director

robert.shrimplin@shrimplin.co.uk