

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: PL/24/1234 Full planning permission

Address: Station Hill Reading Friars Walk, Friars Walk, Reading, RG1 1DX

Proposal: Installation of Four Art Works across Station Hill including, Mosaic Mural at Station Underpass Wall, Mosaic Mural at Friars Walk, and two sculptures "The Seed" and "Pivotal" at Station Square.

Applicant: Station Hill Reading Master LLP

Received date: 18/09/2024

Target Decision date: 13/11/2024 extended to 28 November 2024

Case Officer: Steve Vigar

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises the Station Hill Phase 1 and 2 land stretching from Friar Street in the south to Station Square in the north.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Installation of Five Art Works across Station Hill including, Mosaic Mural at Station Underpass Wall, Mosaic Mural at Friars Walk, Link Bridge Railings (over Garrard Street) and two sculptures "The Seed" and "Pivotal" at Station Square

3. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

Transport – no objection subject to the approved Construction Method Statement documents being secured by condition.

Site notices were displayed in Garrard St, Station Square and Greyfriars Road. No representations have been received.

4. 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:

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.

5. APPRAISAL

All artworks proposed are the result of the Public Art and Cultural Strategy, which is secured under the terms of the S106 agreement relating to the Station Hill redevelopment. The Public Art and Cultural Strategy has involved a wide range of local stakeholders in the Advisory Group, who have been instrumental in bringing the current proposal forward. Some of the artworks require separate planning permission in their own right due to their scale and prominence, hence the current application.

Proposed Artwork Locations



Station Underpass Mosaic Mural



The proposed mural by artists Stuart Melrose and Kev Munday would cover the existing retaining wall around the station underpass and switchback ramp, opposite the new pocket park. It would be made up of numerous stylised images of Reading landmarks and recent historical personalities and would be internally illuminated by LEDs.

It is considered that the mural would be a significant improvement upon the existing wall which has a purely functional appearance and provides a poor setting for the new development. The proposed mural would enliven the space and bring visual interest where this is currently lacking, enhancing the character and appearance of the area. It would also be likely to enhance the economic benefits of the wider Station Hill regeneration scheme, drawing in visitors.

The proposal would not affect or harm the setting of the listed railway station building as it is set down at a lower level and viewed firmly in the context of the modern development which surrounds it.

The mural, once installed, will not obstruct or impede the pedestrian and cycle route through the underpass and instead would improve legibility of the entrance to this facility.

The mural is considered to be acceptable provided illumination is not excessive (limited to 300 candelas per square metre) and subject to safe working practices and suitable traffic/pedestrian controls during installation, which have been discussed with and agreed by the Highway Authority. Conditions are recommended to secure these matters.

Friars Walk Mural



The proposed mural by artists Stuart Melrose and Kev Munday would be stood on posts adjacent to the the blank flank wall of 39 Friar Street. The mural depicts Reading's history and would be internally illuminated by LEDs. It is considered that the mural would add visual interest and would distract from the blank and uninteresting flank wall behind. The proposal is considered to be acceptable, subject to the illumination controls and construction methodology, as per the underpass mural above.

“Pivotal” Sculpture



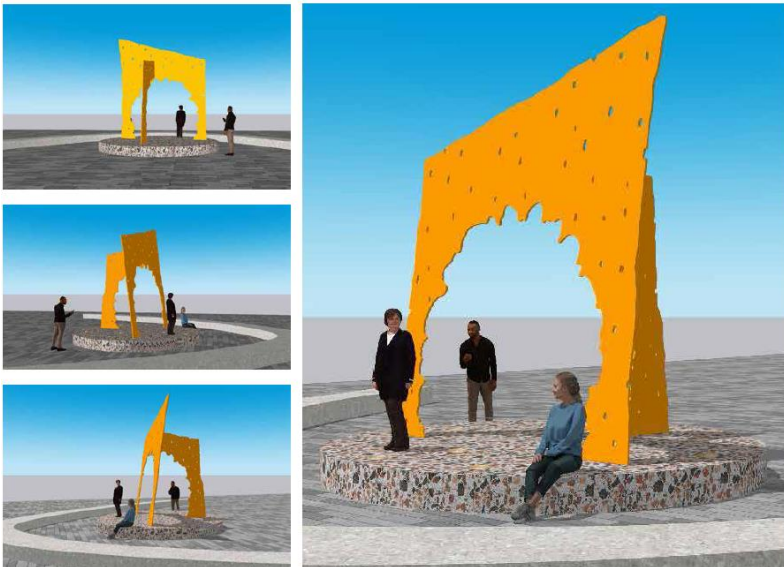
The Pivotal sculpture, by artist Neon would be located to the front (north) of the Plot G office “One Station Square”, fronting onto the Pocket Park open space. The proposal is described as a “monumental

flag inspired kinetic artwork". The proposal would be approx. 11 metres tall and would comprise a series of metal fins which each move independently in the wind and can be lit at night.

The proposal would be a striking addition to the space and would provide a focal point at the entrance to the office and the steps to the park. Although tall, it would not be unduly prominent in the context of the very large office buildings which lie adjacent. The proposal would not affect or harm the setting of the listed railway station building or the Edward VII statue.

"Seed" Sculpture

The "Seed" sculpture by artists Rachael Champion and Jonathan Trayte would be located in the new public square to the west of the Plot G office. The proposal would sit approximately 5 metres high (including the terrazzo plinth) and would represent the seed of a Pot Marigold *Calendula Officinalis* finished in a colour to match the colour of the flower of the plant. The proposal would be sited within the centre of the wider Station Hill site and would be viewed within the context of the new development surrounding it. It is considered that the proposal would complement the space well, providing a focus and a meeting place. It's open-sided nature would avoid the sculpture taking up excessive space, and would ensure the space remains flexible for a range of potential events which might take place.



6. CONCLUSION

The four artworks proposed would be a positive addition to the area, supporting its regeneration and providing visual interest. The proposals would not harm public safety and would preserve the setting of nearby heritage assets. The proposals are considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policies CC7, CC8, EN1, EN6, EN16, TR3 and TR4.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

Recommended Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the following approved plans and specifications:

SHRN-ARC-S2-00-PL-AR-4000-P4 Site Location Plan dated 13 November 2024

SHRN-ARC-S2-00-PL-AR-4008-P2 dated Friars Walk Mural Plans & Elevations, dated 9 September 2024

39 Friar St Mural Main Dimension Sheet R1 dated 18 July 2024

39 Friar St Mural Whole Cut Through R1 dated 18 July 2024

39 Friar St Mural Artwork Layer R1 dated 18 July 2024

39 Friar St Mural Hi-Macs diffuser Layer R1 dated 18 July 2024

39 Friar St Mural Lightguide Layer R1 dated 18 July 2024

39 Friar St Mural RGB LED Layer R1 dated 18 July 2024

39 Friar St Mural Diabond sheet split layer R1 dated 18 July 2024

39 Friar St Mural Structure and Power Layer R1 dated 18 July 2024

39 Friar St Mural Footing Layer R1 dated 18 July 2024

203-110 rev.A Plate Detail Pivotal dated 15 May 2024

203-050 Rev. B Axonometric Pivotal dated 15 May 2024

Colourtec Max Protected Coating for concrete and terrazzo

SHRN-ARC-S2-ZZ-PL-A-4001-P2 Proposed Elevation North, dated 9 September 2024

SHRN-ARC-S2-ZZ-PL-A-4002-P2 Proposed Elevation South, dated 9 September 2024

SHRN-ARC-S2-ZZ-PL-A-4003-P2 Proposed Elevation South, dated 9 September 2024

SHRN-ARC-S2-00-PL-AR-4005-P2 Seed Sculpture Plans & Elevations, dated 9 September 2024

SHRN-ARC-S2-00-PL-AR-4006-P2 Pivotal Plans & Elevations, dated 9 September 2024

SHRN-ARC-S2-P1-PL-AR-4009-P2 Station Underpass Mural Plans & Elevations

Method Statement & Risk Assessment Scaffolding Operations Champion Scaffolding ref no:
O:PPC/RE, Drawing ref TG20:21 dated 11 November 2024

PP-703-SW-002 Issue 1 Subway Mural Material & Equipment Transport dated 27 November 2024

Safe System of Work Station Hill Phase 3 Friars Walk Mural SSoW703-001 rev. C04 dated 27 November 2024

Method Statement by Contexture no. 003215 dated 25 November 2024

Risk Assessment by Contexture no. 00431 dated 25 November 2024

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of this development shall be as specified on the plans and email from DP9 dated 6 November 2024 unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. The maximum luminance from each artwork hereby approved shall not exceed 300 cd/m².

REASON: To protect the visual amenity and avoid excessive glare that could lead to a danger to highway users in accordance with Policy CC7 and Policy TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. The development hereby approved shall not be carried out at any time, except in strict accordance with the following approved construction method details:

Method Statement & Risk Assessment Scaffolding Operations Champion Scaffolding ref no: O:PPC/RE, Drawing ref TG20:21 dated 11 November 2024

PP-703-SW-002 Issue 1 Subway Mural Material & Equipment Transport dated 27 November 2024

Safe System of Work Station Hill Phase 3 Friars Walk Mural SSoW703-001 rev. C04 dated 27 November 2024

Method Statement by Contexture no. 003215 dated 25 November 2024

Risk Assessment by Contexture no. 00431 dated 25 November 2024

REASON: In the interests of public safety and amenity in accordance with Policies CC8 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

