

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

SITE ADDRESS: 25-31 London Street, Reading, RG1 4PS

WARD: Katesgrove

APPLICATION NUMBER: PL/24/1504

PROPOSAL: Change of use of floors 1-4 from Class E (offices) to Class C3 (dwellinghouses) to comprise 24 residential apartments. Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

APPLICANT: Innovate Associates Limited

DATE RECEIVED: 12/11/2024, so valid from 13/11/2024

TARGET DATE: 08/01/2025

CASE OFFICER: Jonathan Markwell

1. Introduction

- 1.1 25-31 London Street is a five storey building known as Central Point, located on the eastern side of London Street, on the corner with Queen's Road. The building is in lawful use as Class E offices, based on the planning history (see below).



Site photographs 15/11/2024) showing the Queens Road (left) and London Street (right) elevations.

- 1.2 The building is not listed, but is located within the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. Within the Conservation Area Appraisal, the building is **not** identified as a building of townscape merit, although trees to the north of the building are identified as significant trees. Moreover, the three neighbouring buildings to the south are all statutory listed buildings, including the landmark 33 London St (Grade II – presently occupied by 'Hotel 1843 x Calcio Bar & Eatery', formerly the Great Expectations pub and hotel).



Extract from Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal

- 1.3 The site is located within the Reading Central Area as defined by Policy CR1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. It is also within an air quality management area (Policy EN15) and area of archaeological potential (Policy EN2).
- 1.4 The site falls **outside** of the Article 4 area within Reading, which restricts prior approval changes of use.
- 1.5 The site is wholly within Flood Zone 1.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 Prior approval is sought under Class MA Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) for the change of use of the first to fourth floors to 24 self-contained residential flats.
- 2.2 The applicant specified at the outset of the application that “No external alterations are needed or planned and the work is entirely internal fit out works”.
- 2.3 More specifically, 18 x 1-bedroom and 6 x 2-bedroom units are proposed, with 4x1-bed and 2x2-bed units at each upper floor.
- 2.4 At ground floor level there is a main entrance on the north (Queens Road) elevation, with a lobby leading to stairs and a lift. The site plan states that no works are proposed in the ground floor areas to the east and west of the lobby area.
- 2.5 The submitted site plan specifies that at ground floor level, adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site, that “06 No. Cycle Stands under Shelter Providing 12 No. Cycle Spaces” are provided. The officer site visit established that these were existing. The submitted transport statement specifies that *“The site currently provides 5 car parking spaces located to the rear of the building, accessed from East Street and 10 cycle parking spaces”*. The site plan however states *“09 No. Vehicle Parking Spaces Existing”*, with these shown on the site

plan. During the officer site visit on 22/11/2024 it was established that 9 spaces exist, as per the site plan submitted. The Transport Statement specifies that the proposed development will be car-free, with paragraph 3.6 stating “It is proposed that these spaces will be removed and the site will become car free”.

- 2.6 During the course of the application the proposed site plan has been updated, with the revised submission indicating the provision of on-site waste storage. This results in the number of car parking spaces reducing from 9 to 8. In addition, further information in order to address queries raised in respect of the noise assessment, noise between the ground and first floors and the treatment/status of the windows on the north elevation of the first to fourth floors serving the existing toilets at the building were submitted during the course of the application.

3. Information Submitted

- Completed application form (Portal Ref PP-1352775)
- 100 Rev A - Site Location Plan
- 102-1 Rev A – Proposed Ground, First & Second Floor General Arrangement Plans
- 102-2 Rev A – Proposed Third & Fourth Floor General Arrangement Plans
- ~~201 Rev A – Proposed Site Plan~~ (superseded 28/11/2024)
- Transport Statement by Motion, Ref iaread/2405038 Final Issue dated 16/10/2024
- Noise impact assessment to a proposed residential development by ACA acoustics, Ref 240202-R001 dated 14/03/2024
As all received by the Local Planning Authority on 12 November 2024

- 201 Rev A – Proposed Site Plan
As received by the Local Planning Authority on 28 November 2024

- Email from Innovate Associates ‘Re: 25-31 London Street, Reading (PL/24/1504)’, dated and received 09/12/2024
- Photograph showing window at first floor level
- 2 x videos of strip out works on the first floor
As received by the Local Planning Authority on 9 December 2024

- Email from Innovate Associates ‘Re: 25-31 London Street, Reading (PL/24/1504)’, dated and received 11/12/2024
- 207 Rev A – Ceiling Detail
As received by the Local Planning Authority on 11 December 2024

- Email from Innovate Associates ‘Re: 25-31 London Street, Reading (PL/24/1504)’, dated and received 17/12/2024
- Technical Letter by ACA Acoustics Ref 240202-R002 dated 11/12/2024
- 2 x Photographs showing window at first floor level
As received by the Local Planning Authority on 17 December 2024

4. Policy Context

4.1 Legal context

4.2 The application has been submitted to determine whether prior approval is required in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Class MA involves development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class E (commercial, business and service) of Schedule 2 to the Use Classes Order to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to that Order.

4.3 Before development can be carried out under Class MA, the developer must submit a Prior Notification to determine if 'Prior Approval' of the Local Planning Authority is required in respect of the following matters:

- (a) transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access;
- (b) contamination risks in relation to the building;
- (c) flooding risks in relation to the building;
- (d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development;
- (e) where—
 - (i) the building is located in a conservation area, and
 - (ii) the development involves a change of use of the whole or part of the ground floor,the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area;
- (f) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses;
- (g) the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses; and
- (h) where the development involves the loss of services provided by—
 - (i) a registered nursery, or
 - (ii) a health centre maintained under section 2 or 3 of the National Health Service Act the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost.
- (i) where the development meets the fire risk condition, the fire safety impacts on the intended occupants of the building

4.4 Class MA requires development to be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date. Any building permitted to be used as a dwellinghouse by virtue of Class MA is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and

for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the use as a dwellinghouse.

- 4.5 If the Local Planning Authority determine that Prior Approval is required, Paragraph W of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) states that the Local Planning Authority should, when determining an application, have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 'so far as relevant to the subject matter of the prior approval, as if the application were a planning application' (Paragraph W, para 10b).

5. Planning History

- 5.1 PL/96/0295 -Change of use of part of ground floor to A2 (Financial & Professional Services). Approved 27/06/1996.
- 5.2 PL/08/0886 (08/00863/FL) - Refurbishment of existing office building, external glass canopy, hard landscaping to front, re-surfacing car park/yard and air conditioning condenser units and transformer unit in rear yard. Granted 05/12/2008.
- 5.3 PL/09/0317 - Change of use of ground floor from A2 (Financial Services) to B1(a) offices and retention of upper floors as B1(a) offices. Refurbishment of existing office building, external glass canopy, landscaping to front, re-surfacing and re-marking of the car park/yard and air conditioning condenser units and transformer unit in the rear yard (Resubmission of 08/00863/FUL). Granted 06/04/2009.
- 5.4 PL/09/1646 - Minor amendment to permitted application 09/00184/FUL. Agreed 01/12/2009.
- 5.5 PL/10/0270 - Non material change to planning permission 08/00863/FUL for new acoustic louvres and relocation of air conditioning units to plant room on roof. Agreed 10/02/2010.
- 5.6 PL/10/0741 - Discharge of conditions 2, and 8 of planning consent 08/00863/FUL. Discharged 01/07/2010.
- 5.7 PL/10/1315 - Discharge of conditions 3 and 4 of planning permission 08/00863/FUL.M Approved 23/11/20210.
- 5.8 PL/24/0789 - Application for change of use of the 2nd and 3rd Floors of 25-31 London Street from Class E (Commercial Offices) to Class F1 (Learning and Non-residential Institutions); or Class E (Commercial Offices) (amended description). Granted 20/09/2024.
- 5.9 Tree applications
- 5.10 PL/22/1847 - T2 - up lift lower branches crown reduce by 25%. T4,T5 London plane - uplift lower over hanging branches and reduce crown by 25%. T6 up lift lower branches crown reduce by 25%. T7,T8 lift lower branches and reduce

crown by 25%. T9 lift lower hanging branches above 2.5m in height. Conifer to be reduced in height by 30%. Split decision 28/02/2023.

- 5.11 PL/24/0793 - T1 - Alder Tree. - reduce the crown and shape the tree accordingly, bringing in the lateral branches to a symmetrical shape. Agreed 24/07/2024.

6. Consultations

- 6.1 RBC Transport – The application is supported by a Transport Statement which asserts that the site currently provides 5 car parking spaces located to the rear of the building, accessed from East Street, but site visits have confirmed that the site currently provides 9 car parking spaces in addition to cycle parking spaces.
- 6.2 Vehicular access into the site will remain as per the existing situation, with access taken from East Street to the on-site car park. The primary pedestrian access will be made via the site's frontage on the corner of Queen Road/London Street, retaining the levelled access. Pedestrian access to the building can also be taken from the rear car park.
- 6.3 Policy TR5 states that development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport. Local parking standards are set out in the RBC, Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which takes into account the accessibility of the site.
- 6.4 The site is located within the Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area which is an area at the very heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments, with limited residential. This area is well served by rail and bus links and also contains the largest proportion of public car parking spaces. The site is within a 5-10 minute walk of Reading's primary shopping area.
- 6.5 The proposed change of use would comprise of 24 residential apartments consisting of 16 x 1-bedroom and 8 x 2-bedroom apartments. The proposals will retain 8 car parking spaces to the rear. Whilst the proposed parking provision is below the Council's requirements, Queens Road, London Street and the surrounding road network all have extensive parking restrictions preventing on-street parking, therefore, any overflow in parking would not affect flow of traffic on the classified road network.
- 6.6 From a highway perspective, it is not considered that the proposed change of use to residential use would have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network or increase on-street parking given the existing parking controls surrounding the development. The site is within

walking distance to public car parks located within the town centre (both the Oracle and Queens Road car park are located opposite the site).

- 6.7 A bin store is proposed within the rear parking area to provide refuse and recycling storage for the whole development. The proposed layout is acceptable from a Highways perspective but it is recommended that the Council's Waste department determines whether the bin storage is suitable for the number of units proposed.
- 6.8 The existing cycle parking shelter located to the west of the building will be retained providing 12 cycle parking spaces. Ideally these facilities should be provided within a secure store (opposed to shelter) for additional security for residential cycle parking. However, I assume this is outside of the scope of a prior approval application.
- 6.9 In summary, the Highway Authority do not have any objections to prior approval being given as the change of use would not have a material impact on the character of the traffic in the vicinity of the site given the extensive parking restrictions in the area. However, I request that any permission granted is subject to the following informative.

I13 Parking Permits

The occupiers of the residential units will not be entitled to an on- street car parking Permit. The parking permit conditions above place a requirement that the Council be notified of postal addresses of the residential units before occupation and that the occupiers/transferees to be informed of the prohibition on entitlement to a car parking permit. There is already a high level of on street car parking in the area and the site is located close to local facilities, with frequent public transport services on nearby roads.

- 6.10 The applicant confirmed via email on 9 December “*acceptance of the proposed condition from highways*”
- 6.11 RBC Environmental Protection – the initial response raised a series of queries, summarised as:
1. *The assessment refers to the eastern section of the building, however I understand that the proposal is for conversion of the whole building (with exception of the ground floor). Can the applicant confirm the proposed mitigation will be applied to all of the flats?*
 2. *What is the proposal for ventilation, will MVHR with summer bypass be implemented? Trickle vents are unlikely to be sufficient unless an overheating assessment confirms that they are. If mechanical ventilation is proposed, where will the inlets be located? The polluted sides of the building should be avoided if possible and if they cannot be then the inlets should be as high up as possible away from the road.*
 3. *No assessment has been undertaken for the impact of noise from the ground floor office space on the first floor proposed flats. This should be carried out*

with the aim to ensure the separating floor/ceiling exceeds building regulations requirements by 10 dBA.

- 6.12 The applicant provided further information on 11 December, summarised as:
- A ceiling detail for the ground floor commercial to first floor residential interface, seeking to meet the acoustic requirements required for the building.
 - Confirmation that MVHR requirement from the sound testing report will be applicable to the entire building and all apartments will be fitted with the same. There are a number of vent grills in existence on the building and the applicant will seek to utilise these with the installation.
- 6.13 Further feedback was provided to the applicant on 12 December, summarised as:
- In terms of MVHR based matters, the principle of providing this is accepted, but given no details of the grills / inlets have been provided, in the event of the application being supported, a condition would secure full details of the MVHR system. The applicant is advised that Inlets should be away from the ground and away from the polluted side of the building, unless effective filtration is demonstrated to be provided.
 - In terms of the impact of noise between the ground and first floors, further information is required on the predicted acoustic performance of the separating floor/ceiling. This was raised previously, but has not been adequately responded to.
- 6.14 The applicant provided further information on 17 December, summarised as:
- Thanks for confirming the principle of MVHR and the comments from officers are noted. The design of such works would be subject to Building Regulations which would consider those factors.
 - In relation to the noise impact from the ground to first floors, a note from the acoustic engineer confirms the specification. Again, the design of such works would be subject to Building Regulations which would validate these factors.
- 6.15 Environmental Protection subsequently confirmed that the noise impact between the ground and first floors information is now sufficient.
- 6.16 RBC Waste Services – Originally submitted comments advised that no bin stores were indicated and outlined the provision required. Once a revised site plan was received, Waste Services confirmed contention with the now shown arrangements. Final practical queries were raised in respect of whether collection would take place from within the site or from East Street and whether the entrance gates would be locked or not. The applicant confirmed such details can be dealt with as part of future implementation.
- 6.17 Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee – No response has been received.

7. Publicity

- 7.1 A site notice was displayed at the application site on 15/11/2024. No comments have been received.

8. Appraisal

The proposal comprises the change of use of the building from Class E (office) to Class C3 (dwellinghouse) with the proposal to be considered against the criteria and conditions contained within Part 3, of Class MA.1. (1) (a)-(g), of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

In addition, in order to qualify for assessment under Class MA, all applications submitted under this class from 6th April 2021 must comply with Department for Communities and Local Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards, minimum space standards. As the application was received after the 6th April 2021 there is a requirement to comply with these minimum space standards. It can be confirmed that the proposed units comply with these minimum space standards as illustrated in the accompanying plans and the accommodation schedule.

Each of the criteria is discussed below:

Criteria MA.1.—(1)

Part (a) (three month vacancy) was removed from the legislation on 5th March 2024 and is therefore not relevant.

(b) Previous use qualification – “*unless the use of the building fell within one or more of the classes specified in subparagraph (2) for a continuous period of at least 2 years prior to the date of the application for prior approval;*”

Complies. It can be confirmed that the use of the building fell within Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) for a continuous period of at least 2 years prior to the date of the application for prior approval. The planning history section above references the retention of office uses on the upper floors in 2009. Although a separate permission for flexible Class E or F1 uses at 2nd and 3rd floor uses was granted on 20/09/2024 (see relevant history above), a site visit on 22/11/2024 established that no Class F1 use was present at these floors of the building.

(c) (Floorspace qualification) was removed from the legislation on 5th March 2024 and is therefore not relevant.

(d) Land designation criteria – “*If land covered by, or within the curtilage of, the building —*

- (i) is or forms part of a site of special scientific interest;***
- (ii) is or forms part of a listed building or land within its curtilage;***
- (iii) is or forms part of a scheduled monument or land within its curtilage;***
- (iv) is or forms part of a safety hazard area; or***

(v) is or forms part of a military explosives storage area;”

The site does not form part of a site of special scientific interest, listed building nor land within its curtilage (the neighbouring building to the south is listed, but the application site boundary is outside the curtilage of the listed building), a Scheduled monument or land within its curtilage, safety hazard area, nor military explosive storage area.

(e) Landscape designation criteria – “if the building is within—

- (i) an area of outstanding natural beauty;**
- (ii) an area specified by the Secretary of State for the purposes of section 41(3) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;**
- (iii) the Broads;**
- (iv) a National Park; or**
- (v) a World Heritage Site;”**

It can be confirmed the site is not within a landscape designation criteria.

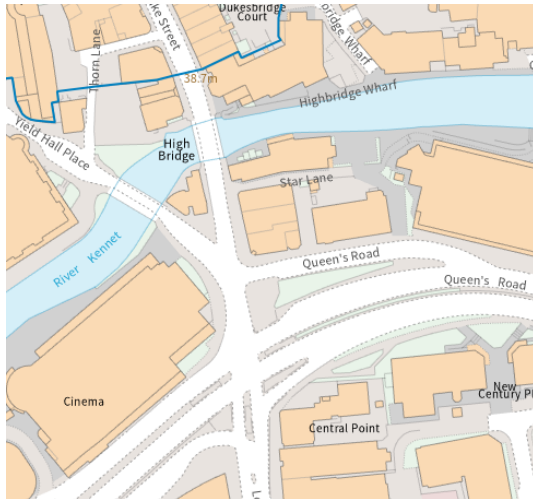
(f) Agricultural tenancy criteria – “If the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained;”

It can be confirmed the site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy.

(g) Previous use criteria - “before 1 August 2022, if—

- (i) the proposed development is of a description falling within Class O of this Part as that Class had effect immediately before 1st August 2021; and**
- (ii) the development would not have been permitted under Class O immediately before 1st August 2021 by virtue of the operation of a direction under article 4(1) of this Order which has not since been cancelled in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3.**

Complies – the site is outside the article 4 area within Reading Borough, as shown below.



Conditions

MA.2.—(1) Confirms that development under Class MA is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—

- (a) transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access;
- (b) contamination risks in relation to the building;
- (c) flooding risks in relation to the building;
- (d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development;
- (e) where—
 - (i) the building is located in a conservation area, and
 - (ii) the development involves a change of use of the whole or part of the ground floor, the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area;
- (f) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses;
- (g) the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses; and
- (h) where the development involves the loss of services provided by—
 - (i) a registered nursery, or
 - (ii) a health centre maintained under section 2 or 3 of the National Health Service Act 2006,

the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost.

(i) where the development meets the fire risk condition, the fire safety impacts on the intended occupants of the building and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) apply in relation to that application.

Assessment of MA.2.—(1)

(a) Transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access

The Council's Transport Team, as per the comments at section 4 above, are content with the proposals, subject to an informative which effectively advises future occupiers that they will not be automatically entitled to an on-street car parking permit. This will be duly included.

(b) Contamination risks in relation to the building

The applicant has not submitted a land contamination study. RBC Environmental Protection Officers raise no issues in this regard, so the proposals are acceptable in respect of this condition.

(c) Flooding risks in relation to the building

The site is wholly within Flood Zone 1. A Flood Risk Assessment has not been submitted, with it agreed in this instance that no FRA is required owing to the low flood risk status of the site.

(d) Impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development

RBC Environmental Protection Officers have reviewed the noise assessment and associated details submitted with the application, as described at section 4 above. As per this correspondence, following clarifications and additional details being submitted, and subject to a condition securing full details of the intended mechanical ventilation heat recovery system being provided and considered acceptable prior to the first occupation of any residential units, the proposals are considered appropriate in protecting the intended occupiers of the proposals.

(e) where— (i) the building is located in a conservation area, and (ii) the development involves a change of use of the whole or part of the ground floor, the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area;

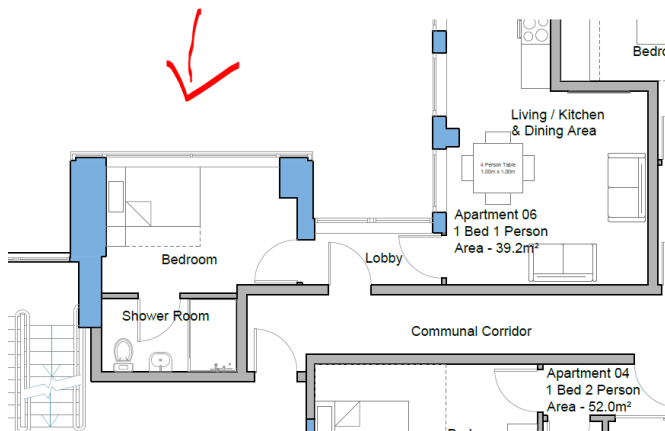
Whilst the residential units are solely at first to fourth floor level, access will be required from the ground floor entrance and associated lobby/stairs/lift. It is considered that the proposals at this point would have no negative impact on the character or sustainability of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The proposal therefore complies.

(f) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses

Statutory Instrument 2020:632 introduces the requirement that consideration is given in respect to the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms. This requires examination of the detailed floor plans and a judgement to be exercised as to whether appropriate levels of light can be achieved to rooms used for sleeping or living. This excludes bathrooms, service rooms, corridor, laundry rooms and hallways.

The residential units are located above ground floor level and no external alterations are proposed. Based on the officer site visit on 22/11/2024 and an assessment of the plans, it is evident that the vast majority of habitable rooms will benefit from suitable access to natural light, given the size of the existing clear glazed windows and the configuration of the proposed units.

However, questions were raised with the applicant concerning the bedroom within proposed apartments 6, 12, 18 and 24, given they are presently served by windows which are currently blocked up and serving existing toilets. It was not clear from the officer visit whether these windows were presently obscure glazed, had some form of film applied to them, or were clearly glazed but appear akin to obscure glazed at present owing to being blocked up internally.



The applicant provided further information, in the form of a photograph (shown below) and two videos, together with commentary stating:

Attached is a photograph and two short videos showing strip out works on the first floor clearly showing the windows in place behind the walls and panels in the toilet areas. This detail is replicated on each floor and confirms that the windows are in place and you can see that film has been applied to the glazing for the external opaque appearance you observed on site.



A further officer query was raised, on the basis of the response, as to whether the film referenced could be removed to reveal clear glazing, or whether the windows were obscure glazed. A further site visit was suggested, or evidence of the film being removed to reveal clear glazed windows. This was advised on the basis of an unaccompanied site visit to the outside of the building on 12 December indicated no change in visual appearance in comparison with the earlier officer site visit.

The applicant provided a further response on 17 December, including two photos (see below) stating:

In relation to the windows, see attached photos from site at your request showing the paint removal from the glazing. For the avoidance of doubt there is natural light into all the four floors in the toilet area as present which will become habitable rooms under the proposals. Opaque glazing is in place currently due to the present use, but this will be clear as part of the works which does not require alterations that would require planning permission and is just part of the refurbishment needed for the conversion should PA be granted. The sample removal can be observed externally should you feel that it is necessary.



Accordingly, the applicant at this point confirmed that the windows are obscure glazed, but considers “there is natural light into all the four floors in the toilet area as present”. Moreover, the applicant also advises “this will be clear as part of the works which does not require alterations that would require planning permission and is just part of the refurbishment needed for the conversion should PA be granted”.

A further unaccompanied officer site visit on 18 December indicated a change in appearance externally (see below), consistent with the photographs provided by the applicant (see above).



Comparison of external appearance on 22/11/24 (left) and 18/12/24 (right)

On balance, it is considered that the applicant has sufficiently demonstrated that adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses will be provided. No internal daylight assessment has been submitted with the application, but no formal assessment is considered to be required in the vast majority of instances to be submitted on the basis of the context witnessed on site. The windows discussed above would have benefitted from a formal assessment to demonstrate (via formal assessment) adequate provision, but on balance the information submitted by the applicant is considered sufficient in the context of the regulations, as although it is evident that natural light would not be considered ‘good’, it would be difficult to substantiate that this is not ‘adequate’, whilst the commentary from the applicant specifying that clear glazing will be provided in due course is also noted (albeit Class MA does NOT afford any permitted development rights for external works which affect the exterior of the building in order to implement the change of use – an informative is recommended to clarify this to the applicant). It is also considered that it would not be sustainable to seek to resist the proposal solely on this basis, should the proposal then be subject to an appeal.

(g) the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses

The site is not within a core employment area or located in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses.

(h) where the development involves the loss of services provided by— (i) a registered nursery, or (ii) a health centre maintained under section 2 or 3 of the National Health Service Act 2006, the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost.

The development does not result in the loss of services provided by a registered nursery, or health centre maintained under the relevant sections.

(i) where the development meets the fire risk condition, the fire safety impacts on the intended occupants of the building

A Fire Statement would be required if the development involves the development of an existing 'relevant building'. These new criteria applies to a building which satisfies the height condition in paragraph (3) of the Procedure Order and contains— (a) two or more dwellings; or (b) educational accommodation. Paragraph (3) states the height condition is that— (a) the building is 18 metres or more in height; or (b) the building contains 7 or more storeys.

The building does not meet these criteria and therefore a Fire Statement is not required.

(3) An application for prior approval for development under Class MA may not be made before 1 August 2021.

The application was received on 12 November 2024, so complies

(4) The provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to an application under this paragraph

Complies

(5) Development must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date.

Will be secured via condition 1

(6) Any building permitted to be used as a dwellinghouse by virtue of Class MA is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the use as a dwellinghouse.]

Will be secured via condition 2.

Recommendation:

Prior Approval is REQUIRED and GIVEN, subject to conditions:

Conditions

1. This development under Class MA is permitted subject to it being completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date on this decision notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirement of paragraph MA.2.—(5) of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)

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

102-1 Rev A – Proposed Ground, First & Second Floor General Arrangement Plans

102-2 Rev A – Proposed Third & Fourth Floor General Arrangement Plans

Both received by the Local Planning Authority on 12 November 2024

201 Rev A – Proposed Site Plan

As received by the Local Planning Authority on 28 November 2024

207 Rev A – Ceiling Detail

As received by the Local Planning Authority on 11 December 2024

Technical Letter by ACA Acoustics Ref 240202-R002 dated 11/12/2024

As received by the Local Planning Authority on 17 December 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. Prior to the first occupation of any future residential unit, details of the mechanical ventilation heat recovery system, aligning with the principles set out in 'Noise impact assessment to a proposed residential development' by ACA acoustics, Ref 240202-R001 dated 14/03/2024, as received on 12 November 2024, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. All approved measures associated with the mechanical ventilation heat recovery system shall be carried out prior to the first occupation of any residential unit and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In order to protect the amenity of future occupants of the proposed development from noise disturbance, in accordance with Policies CC8 and EN16 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives:

1. The proposal meets the relevant criteria set out in Class MA.
2. The applicant is advised that this decision represents the determination of the Local Planning Authority in respect of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) as to whether Prior Approval is required in respect of the change of use only. Class MA does NOT afford any permitted development rights for external works which affect the exterior of the building in order to implement the change of use.
3. There is a widespread problem in Reading with rats as the rats are being encouraged by poor waste storage which provides them with a food source. Where developments involve shared bin storage areas, there is a greater risk of rats being able to access the waste due to holes being chewed in the base of the large wheelie bins or due to occupants or passers not putting waste inside bins, or bins being overfilled. It is therefore important for the bin store to be vermin proof to prevent rats accessing the waste and for the correct waste bin capacity to be provided so that waste is not deposited outside of bins.
4. The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic. Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.
5. The occupiers of the residential unit(s) will not be automatically entitled to an on-street car parking permit. Current and new occupiers should be informed of this and be advised to find out more about parking permits on the Council's website. There is already a high level of on street car parking in the area and the site is located close to local facilities, with frequent public transport services on nearby roads.
6. With regard to condition 3, Officers advise that any future proposed inlets should be away from the ground and away from the polluted side of the building, unless effective filtration is demonstrated to be provided.
7. Your attention is drawn to the possible requirement for submission of a Building Regulations application for the proposed development. Please contact RBC Building Control on Building.control@reading.gov.uk OR telephone 0118

9372449 9.00am to 1.00pm Monday to Friday. In addition, please also be mindful of the following fire safety regulations, which appear to apply in this instance too: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-england-regulations-2022-fire-door-guidance/fire-safety-england-regulations-2022-fire-door-guidance>