

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0073 Full planning permission

App Ref: PL/25/0055 Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)

Address: Bel & The Dragon Restaurant, Gas Works Road, Reading, RG1 3EQ

Proposal: PL/25/0073:

Installation of 2 no. roof mounted flues and 4 no. roof mounted air conditioning units and associated works for the temporary use of the building as a public house staff training facility

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Applicant: David Lilley

Extended Target Decision date: 04/06/2025

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The 'Bel & Dragon' site is located at Blake's Lock, a group of historic buildings adjacent to the River Kennet. The application site comprises a boathouse building with a former pump house historically in use as a public house, with guest bedrooms in C1 use. The building is adjoined to a Grade II listed building, the Engine House (in use as a sewage pumping station) and is therefore listed in itself. The 'Bel & Dragon' car park is located to the west of the building with blocks of residential flats on the opposite side of Gas Works Road and the river. The adjacent part of Gas Works Road forms a private access road to the site.

The site is located within a green link (policy EN12) within the Reading Central Area, within flood zone 3 and in an area of potential contaminated land.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Permission was granted to convert the currently vacant public house into a training facility for a 'Proposed temporary change of use of the existing public house to a public house staff training facility, for a temporary period of up to five years' under planning application PL24/0619 on 11 September 2024.

In order for building to be able to provide a temporary use as a staff training facility, additional changes are required to provide additional internal ventilation comprising the temporary addition of ductwork and extract louvres.

No works are proposed within the older part of the listed building and former Pump house. All works are to be confined to the more modern extension on the southwest of the listed building and will include (as confirmed in a covering letter from the agent on 16 April 2025:

- ventilation and air handling equipment , including an associated 'independent, free standing steel frame fixed into the modern floor in accordance with engineers design' (to be removed when the approved temporary use ceases)
- ducking and vents for the air handling system will be placed 'onto the southwest facing roof of the tin covered roof of the modern extension and sited behind an existing steel flue associated with the existing internal open fire pit.'
- cabling and 'pipework is to be run though the opening formed in the southwest roof slope of the modern tin roof.'
- 'existing external plant and ducting remains unchanged'
- freestanding 'kitchen benches, storage units and sinks' will be used for the training stations.



*Image 1 – Modern link addition to the southwest of listed building with existing flue visible to the left of the roof slope.
Proposed flues are to be sited behind the existing and would not be visible in the view.*

Image 1 of existing flue from covering letter 16 April 2025



Image 2 – view along public realm in front of the listed building with modern addition to centre and right. Existing flue is not visible.

Image 2 of existing flue from covering letter 16 April 2025

Plans considered:

PL23/0073

Location plan

~~24-101-08-01 Existing External Elevations~~

~~24-101-08-02 Proposed External Elevations~~

Noise Impact assessment Revision 00 20/12/2024 ScothPartners

TNR-SO-00-004 - H Grille & Steel positions

CIL

Design and access statement, January 2025 for PL 25/0055 Heritage statement January 2023, Walsingham Planning

Planning and Heritage statement December 2024, Walsingham Planning for PL23/0073

As received 15 January 2025 for PL23/0073 and 13 January for PL 25/0055

~~KH/B0048/24 Cover letter, Walsingham Planning, 15 January 2025~~

~~24-101-01-01 Existing ground floor plan~~

~~24-101-08-01 Existing Elevations~~

~~24-101-02-04 Proposed Extract Details~~

~~24-101-02-01 Proposed Ground Floor Plan~~

~~24-101-02-03 Existing and proposed roof layout~~

~~24-101-08-02 Proposed Elevations~~

~~24-101-02-05 Proposed Kitchen Section~~

~~24-101-02-02 Proposed Ground Floor Structural Details~~

As received 16 January 2025 for PL23/0073 and 13 January for PL 25/0055

Block Plan

Revised Declaration of ownership Certificate B statement

As received 28 January 2025 for PL23/0073 and 11 February 2025 for PL 25/0055

LG/B0048-24 Covering letter regarding changes to the scheme 16 April 2025, Walsingham Planning

24-101-02-03 Rev A Existing and proposed & roof layout

24-101-02-04 Rev A Proposed Air Handling layout

24-101-02-05 Rev A Proposed Air Handling Equipment Section

24-101-08-02 Rev A Proposed External Elevations

24-101-02-02 Rev A Proposed Ground Floor Structural details

24-101-02-01 Rev A Proposed Ground Floor Plan

24-101-08-01 Rev A Existing External Elevations

As received 22 April 2025

Noise Impact assessment Revision 00 20/12/2024 ScothPartners

DEFRA Matrix Annex C Risk Assessment for odour

As received 30 April 2025

KH/Boo48/24 Flood risk assessment letter

flood-map-planning-2025-06-04T08_49_31.761Z

As received 04 June 2025

Relevant planning history

PL/24/0619/FUL Proposed temporary change of use of the existing public house to a public house staff training facility, for a temporary period of up to five years. Granted 11 September 2024

171103 Application for a non-material amendment following a grant of planning permission ref 161260 (removal of condition no. 5) Granted

161260-FUL & 161261-LBC - Proposed change of use at first floor to create five guest bedrooms and associated internal alterations – Granted subject to S106 legal agreement.

11-00363-LBC – Internal decoration, bar counter works, removal of lightweight decorative screens – Granted.

02-00459-FUL - Upper terrace with lower deck staff living accommodation on a barge to include moorings – Granted.

02-01512-FUL (Amended Description) 13 residential flats with 40 parking spaces (27 of which will serve the Bel & Dragon restaurant) and revised floor plans and elevations. Refused 31 July 2003
Appeal dismissed 29/09/2004

01-01170-LBC - Part change of use to restaurant (A3). Demolition of industrial sheds and extension and internal refurbishment of museum buildings – Granted.

3. CONSULTATIONS

PL/25/0073/FUL

The following were consulted:

- Environmental Protection – No objection following the submission of additional information.
- Transport Development Control – No objection
- Reading's Economy & Destination Agency Consultations – No objection
- RBC Transport team – No objections
- Reading museum – No objections following the submission of amended plans

A letter of objection was received from 47 Kenavon Drive as an inappropriate use of a Grade 2 listed building which should be used for the benefit of the community. *Case officer: a temporary change of use has already been granted under a previous application for a temporary inhouse training facility. Material considerations relevant to the existing proposal can be taken into consideration.*

PL/25/0055/LBC

- Conservation Officer – No objection, following the submission of amended plans. No additional condition appears to be required either.
- Reading Civic Society Consultations - No response at time of writing the officer report.

A letter was sent to 46 and 47 Kenavon Drive

Letters of objection were received from 46 Kenavon Drive and 47 Kenavon Drive regarding the loss of a community facility, is a security and traffic issue, with reconfiguring of the listed building for a temporary period, the lease should be rescinded, is an inappropriate for a semi industrial use, concerns regarding outputs and smells from the extractors. *Case officer: a temporary change of use has already been granted under a previous application for a temporary inhouse training facility. Material considerations including the impact on the listed building, and outputs and odour will be taken into consideration as part of the assessment of the application.*

Reading Museum objected to the original proposal which was more intrusive to the original fabric of the listed building and have since withdrawn their objection following the submission of amended plans.

The Riverside museum was consulted by letter, A site notice was displayed at the site for the required period for each of the planning applications and an advert was placed in a local newspaper for application PL/25/0055/LBC.

Thames Ward councillors originally called in the above applications for consideration at the Planning Applications Committee and were specifically contacted on this planning application following receipt

of revised plans. It was subsequently advised that they were content for officers to deal with the application based on the revised plans, subject to the consideration of views of consultees and comments received.

Communications with the agent

Following feedback regarding concerns about the impact of the original proposals, amendments were made to reduce any impact on the historic fabric, character and setting of the listed building.

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.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

PL/25/0073

Relevant Planning Policy and 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. 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:

PL/25/0055

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

In determining applications for Listed Building Consent, Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires 'special regard' to be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance (in particular on flooding)

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/annex-3-flood-risk-vulnerability-classification>

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

CR1: DEFINITION OF CENTRAL READING

CR2: DESIGN IN CENTRAL READING

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN11: WATERSPACES

EN15: AIR QUALITY

EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES

EN18: FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

EN4: LOCALLY IMPORTANT HERITAGE ASSETS

TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

RL6: PROTECTION OF LEISURE FACILITIES AND PUBLIC HOUSES
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

SPD

Supplementary Planning Document: Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)

Also relevant:

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

With respect to these applications, the applicable statutory provisions are:

Section 16(2) which regards listed building consent for any works; and

Section 66(1) the determination of applications

Historic England Good Practice Advice: The Setting of Heritage Assets, Planning note 3 (Second Edition)

5. APPRAISAL

The main issues are:

- a) Design and Historic Character of the Listed Building
- b) Impact on Neighbours
- c) Other issues

a) Design and Historic Character of the Listed Building

The revised plans submitted do not involve works to the historic fabric of the original part of the building, Temporary works for an extraction and ventilation system are proposed in the modern southwestern extension of the building, with minimal visual impact during the temporary change of use period. The proposal is considered to be in accordance with policy EN1. The Local Authority has discharged their duties under the relevant section of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Policies CC7, CC8, EN1 and CR2.

b) Impact on Neighbours

A noise assessment and odour report have been submitted and reviewed by the RBC Environmental team. The noise assessment submitted has been carried out in accordance with BS4142:2014+A1:2019 and the methodology has been correctly applied. The assessment concludes that the specific noise level of the proposed plant will not exceed -10dB below the background noise and the rating level does not exceed the background noise so adverse impact on the local noise climate is unlikely. There are therefore no objections to the proposed plant subject to the following condition:

No building or use hereby permitted shall be occupied or the use commenced until the extract/ventilation systems have been installed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications and thereafter the extract/ventilation systems shall be permanently retained and maintained in accordance with the approved specifications.

REASON: To safeguard the amenity of nearby premises and the area generally in accordance with Policy CC8 and EN16 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

The additional external flue and air conditioning units are low level and will be sited behind and existing

flue and will have minimal visual impact on the setting and character of the listed building. It is considered that the proposed equipment would not result in any significant noise or disruption to the amenities of the surrounding residential occupiers. Environmental Protection Officers have raised no objection to the proposal.

Policies CC8 and EN16.

C) Other issues

Flooding

The site is located in flood zone 3. No changes are proposed to the footprint of the building and will not involve any excavations for the installation of the 'roof mounted' flues and air conditioning units. An informative will be added to advise that flood mitigation and protection measures are advisable.

Policy EN18

Sustainability

Any works will be required to satisfy current Building requirements.

Policy CC2.

6. CONCLUSION

Whilst the addition of proposed equipment is considered to have a small-scale impact on the development in this instance and is considered to be acceptable for the reasons outlined above. Conditions are recommended for approved plans, the ventilation and extraction system in accordance with policies CC7, CR2, EN1, EN16 and EN18.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

PL 25/0073 FUL - Approve

Recommended Conditions:

Time limit

Approved plans

Extract/ventilation

Reinstatement

Informatives

P&P

Terms

Building Regulations

Temporary works

Flood mitigation measures

PL 25.0055 LBC – Approve

Recommended Conditions:

Time limit

Approved plans

LBC works

LBC protect historic features

Informatives:

Terms

P&P