

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Whitley Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0391 Full planning permission

Address: 452 BASINGSTOKE ROAD, READING, RG2 0QE

Proposal: Replacement roof plant including enclosures, roof walkway and new spiral staircase access

Applicant: Mr Emre Ulukan

Received date: 13/03/2025

Target Decision date: 08/05/2025

Extension of Time agreed with agent: 06/06/2025

Case Officer: Gary Miles

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is known as The Reading Innovation Centre, located on the west hand side of the Basingstoke Road and accommodates Gillette's UK research and development function. The application site is split into two parts, a three-storey building housing the offices and laboratories, and a single storey building located to the rear which is used as a workshop. Residential properties are located approximately 80m northwest of the site. Whilst the application site is not listed itself, it is located near to the 1930's red brick front building of Gillette including the clock tower, which is Locally Listed by Reading Borough Council. The application site is not within a conservation area.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal consists of new and replacement roof plant including 2 enclosures, roof walkway, access steps and new spiral staircase access. The existing air-handling and air-cooling units pose difficulties with maintenance and have reached the end of their economic life. The replacement air-handling and air-cooling units are to be replaced on the workshop located to the rear of the laboratories and offices. The proposal consists of replacing the air handling and cooling units on the workshop roof, which is a single storey building, along with maintenance access in the form of a new spiral staircase to the westerly elevation and dedicated roof walkways for inspection and maintenance purposes.

The roof mounted plant cooler unit enclosure will measure 0.8m in height 3.3m long and 1.5m wide.

The roof mounted air handling unit enclosure will measure 1.3m in height, 7m long and 3.25m wide.

The enclosures will be covered with powder coated metal louvre screens - coloured Terracotta to match the brickwork of the existing workshop.

The walkways, access platform with steps and spiral staircase will all be constructed from galvanised steel.

Plans and documents considered:

Drawing no: A001-Site Location and Block Plans, dated Feb 25

Drawing no: A010-Existing Roof Plan GA & AA, dated Dec 24

Drawing no: A011-Existing North Elevation, dated Dec 24

Drawing no: A012-Existing West Elevation, dated Jan 25

Drawing no: A013-Existing South Elevation, dated Jan 25

Drawing no: A020-Proposed Roof GA & Section AA, dated Dec 24

Drawing no: A021-Proposed North Elevation, dated Jan 25

Drawing no: A022-Proposed West Elevation, dated Jan 25

Drawing no: A023-Proposed South Elevation, dated Jan 25

Drawing no: A024-Enclosure-Plans, Section & Elevations, dated Feb 25

Drawing no: A025-Enclosure-Plans, Section & Elevations, dated Feb 25
Covering Letter (Cundall) dated Jan 25
Planning Statement (westbournes) dated Mar 25
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 13th March 2025

Noise Impact Assessment Report – Rev P01 (Procter & Gamble) dated 31st Mar 25 (superseded)
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 23rd April 2025

Noise Impact Assessment Report – Rev P03 (Procter & Gamble) dated 29th May 25
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 30th May 2025



Location Plan (application site circled red)



- **Emergency Planning Officer comments received 25/03/2025**

No comments/objections from Emergency Planning in respect of this Planning Application.

- **Environmental Protection Officer (EPO) comments received 07/05/2025**

I have reviewed the information submitted, and further details are required regarding the noise levels produced by the plant in order to determine whether a full noise assessment is required. It is noted that it is 50 metres from residential property, but at nighttime when the background noise is lower this could potentially still cause an impact.

Further documents were submitted and reviewed by the EPO:

I have reviewed the report and the noise level now complies with our requirements, I note significant mitigation has not been added but that there are now weather louvres incorporated and one of the plant item noise levels has been corrected to account for the directivity of the noise.

External Consultees:

- **HSE Fire Safety Consultations**

No comments received at the time of preparing the report.

- **Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Consultations comments received 08/04/2025**

At this stage there is no duty placed upon the Fire Authority under the aforementioned legislation to make any comment relative to your application.

Your proposals have, however, been cursorily examined and in as much as would affect the planning application and appear to meet the basic principles of means of escape in case of fire:

Any structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirement. These matters are administered by the local authority Building Control or approved inspectors, who you are advised to contact in this regard.

Please be advised that any comments made by the Fire Authority in this letter must not be taken as formal approval that your plan/s conform to the requirements of current Guides or Codes of Practice for means of escape in case of fire.

Planning Notice

A planning notice was attached to the railings of the application site on 20th March 2025 and left in place for a minimum of 3 weeks for the duration of the public consultation period.

No letters of representation have been received.

5. 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.

6. 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:

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC7 – Design and the Public Realm
Policy CC8 – Safeguarding Amenity
Policy EN17 – Noise Generating Equipment

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Principle of development
- b) Design and impact on the character of the area
- c) Impact on Residential Amenity
- d) Noise

a) Principle of development

In principle the proposed replacement air-handling unit and air-cooling unit, new access walkways, steps and spiral staircase are acceptable, as the proposals will improve energy efficiency, reduce the buildings carbon footprint and overall reduce energy costs, which in turn will be a positive benefit to Gillette's UK research and development function based here in Reading.

b) Design and Impact on the Character or the Area

The proposed air handling unit and air-cooling units are to be located on the roof above the existing workshop space. The spiral access staircase and safety fencing will be positioned on the north elevation which is screened from public view by adjacent industrial building within the same complex and those along Commercial Road, to the west of the site. It is not considered that the proposals will harm the character of the area.

In terms of character and appearance, the proposal complies with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

c) Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed changes are located approximately 80m away from the nearest residential properties located in Longships Way. The proposals by virtue of the small scale are not considered to harm residential amenity, subject to noise controls as proposed.

The proposal is not considered to be harmful to the residential amenity to the surrounding area and is considered compliant with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

d) Noise

The EPO reviewed the original Noises Impact Assessment who questioned the impact of the noise relating to the air handling and cooling units in respect of the nearest residential properties. The agent undertook and submitted a revised Noise Impact Assessment which included tweaks to the units and to the enclosure louvres to account for the directivity of the noise and concluded that the operational noise emissions of the proposed plant now meets the noise criterion set by Reading Borough Council to be 10dB below background noise.

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of noise and is therefore considered compliant with Policy EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. RECOMMENDATION

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