

PLANNING STATEMENT

**HADWYN HOUSE
FIELD ROAD
READING
RG1 6PP**

Introduction

This Planning Statement accompanies the application for development at Hadwyn House, Reading to erect a new mansard roof and to provide additional office space within the roofspace with dormer windows and rooflights. It is also proposed re re-model the exterior of the building to enhance its character within the streetscene.

The local area is characterised by a mix of generally Georgian and Victorian buildings with large three storey properties along Castle Hill and Coley Hill to the west of the site and rows of Victorian terraces along Field Road. Hadwyn House is a flat roofed building of no architectural merit and was purpose built as offices probably in the 1970's. It does little to enhance the character of the area and the applicant company requires additional floorspace to satisfy current demand for their services.

The company has operated from Hadwyn House for 30 years and is a big local employer. The additional floorspace is required in order for the company to remain on the site and we consider this to be an appropriate response to the needs of the company within the context of development in the area and one we hope the Council can support.

Proposals

The application proposes to erect a mansard roof to provide a second floor of office space to incorporate dormer windows and rooflights and to re-model the exterior of the building to provide a more sympathetic presence in the streetscene.

The design principle was to re-model the building in a mid-Victorian industrial yard style and to change the existing horizontal emphasis of the facade to a vertical emphasis. The roof would be clad in slate tile with powder coated aluminium windows and with facing brick work.

The new roof would extend approximately 2.7m above the existing parapet and would incorporate a mix of protruding and recessed dormers along the frontage and recessed dormers to the rear.

The additional floorspace created would amount to approximately 186m² adding to the existing space of 427m² and resulting in approximately 613m² of B1(a) floorspace in the building. According to the Council's Parking Standards SPD B1(a) floorspace requires one parking space per 100m² and the site can provide 12 spaces in the existing carpark to the rear accessed through an underpass.

The existing building is functional but quite frankly ugly in its appearance and there is a commercial imperative to provide additional floorspace. This has been the company headquarters for 30 years and it is their desire to remain in this location for commercial and financial reasons, not least the fact that office space is becoming increasingly difficult to find given the incentives afforded to landowners with

recent changes to permitted development regulations. Notwithstanding that, we are of the opinion that the works proposed would enhance the appearance of the building and subsequently the character of the area and without any significant detriment to the amenities currently enjoyed by neighbouring occupiers.

The design is considered to relate well to the site and its surroundings, certainly it is an improvement on the existing situation in terms of the external appearance and the new roof tends to complete the built form on the site. The new vertical emphasis would relate better to the existing built form in the area and the scale of the proposal is considered to be in keeping with the more Georgian architecture found along Castle Hill and Coley Hill to the rear of the site.

With the introduction of the new roof the building would obviously be taller than it currently is but in terms of residential amenity it is not considered to be overly dominant in the streetscene where it is reflective of the scale of other buildings in the locality and where the bulk of the roof is broken up with discrete dormers.

There is one window in the flank elevation of the house immediately to the south of the site but this would appear to be a secondary window and is already shaded to a large extent by the existing relationship. That house and rear garden are set somewhat behind Hadwin House and to the south such that there should be no significant impact on access to daylight or sunlight to that property.

Furthermore, given the distances to properties on the opposite side of the road, together with the front to front relationship, it is not considered that the increased height of the building would cause any significant detriment to the amenities currently enjoyed by occupiers of those properties.

Conclusion

The application proposes to erect a new mansard roof and to provide additional office space within the roofspace with dormer windows and rooflights. It is also proposed re re-model the exterior of the building to enhance its character within the streetscene.

The amount of development proposed is the minimum required for the company's continuing growth in the market place and the proposed works to re-model the building are considered to represent a positive enhancement to the site and to the character of the area.

It is important to remember that these proposals were considered acceptable under Application 141889 dated 02.07.2015 and we see no reason why they should not be considered favourably under this application.

Prepared by:
The Basement Design Studio
June 2025