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Submitted via email only to:
Anthony.Scholes@reading.gov.uk

Dear Anthony,

PL/24/1155: Former John Lewis Depot, Letcombe Street, Reading, RG1 2HN – Submission of Revised Information

On behalf of our client, John Lewis Partnership (JLP) BTR Ltd, we hereby write to submit revised information to accompany the current full planning application (ref. PL/24/1155) at the former John Lewis Depot, Letcombe Street, Reading, RG1 2HN (the Site).

As you are aware, the current planning application was validated on 3 October 2024 and has since been subject to consultation feedback received from RBC planning officers, statutory consultees, neighbours and local residents. In response to the feedback received, the design of the proposed development has been amended and revised plans and additional information is hereby submitted for determination as part of the current planning application, as detailed further below.

John Lewis Partnership (JLP)

As set out in the original planning application submission, JLP is the UK's largest employee-owned business, operating two of Britain's best-loved retail businesses – John Lewis and Waitrose. Founded over 160 years ago, the company has been built on a vision to ensure a better way of doing business by benefitting its Partners, customers, suppliers and the communities in which JLP operates.

As JLP's retail business has expanded over many years, it has grown a sizable property portfolio of shops, warehouses and previously developed land. By transforming some of its underutilised, brownfield sites, it has the opportunity to provide much-needed homes, including as much affordable housing as is commercially viable, in the communities it serves. Many of JLP's stores and land holdings are close to transport links and amenities - and the Partnership believes it has a social responsibility to make as best use of these sites as possible, to play a role in addressing the UK housing shortage.

The Build to Rent (BTR) homes proposed will be purpose-built for renters, owned, developed and managed by JLP for the long term, which means it's in JLP's interest to deliver high-quality buildings that are thoughtfully designed. Residents would rent directly from a trusted business, providing them with greater certainty around areas such as quality, service, community and security of tenure.

Offices and associates throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia Pacific, Africa and the Middle East..

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Context

Overview

As explained in the original planning application submission, the application site currently accommodates a warehouse building with customer collection facilities, ancillary car park and servicing area. However, the use of the existing building became surplus to requirements as a customer collection centre in 2021, with its functions having been transferred to the John Lewis department store at Broad Street, Reading.

The Site comprises brownfield land located within the designated Reading Central Area within close proximity to key local services and facilities within the town centre. The redevelopment and intensification of brownfield land in sustainable locations, such as the Site, is explicitly encouraged in both national and local planning policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024, amended February 2025)) and Reading Local Plan (2019). Further to this, the Site is specifically identified for allocation for residential development in the submission draft Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) (May 2025) (Policy CR14r) which is currently subject to examination. In line with the provisions of the submission draft LPPU (May 2025), adopted Local Plan (2019), local supplementary planning guidance and national planning guidance, the proposed development seeks to deliver high-quality build-to-rent dwellings and provide a number of clear and substantial benefits to residents and the local area.

Planning Application Determination

The proposals have evolved positively following the original planning application submission through detailed engagement with Officers to respond to consultee feedback received and to inform amendments to the proposed development. This has included amendments made to the proposed quantum of development and scale, height and massing of built development. The current revised proposals build upon the original submission and reflect ongoing and careful consideration of relevant design and technical matters.

Revised Proposals

The current revised proposals hereby submitted include the following key changes to the submitted development proposals. Further details are set out within the accompanying information submitted.

- Reduction from 215 to 170 build to rent dwellings;
- Changes to proposed height and massing, including:
 - Reduction to building height along Mill Lane frontage from max. GF+10 to max. GF+7 storeys;
 - Reduction to building height stepping down to GF+5 storeys along Crossland Road to the south and east towards the Conservation Area;
 - Building form 'nib' introduced at eastern end adjacent to Central Club;
- Updates to detailed elevation design, including revisions relating to brickwork detailing, metal cladding and parapet line and articulation along Mill Lane frontage including the introduction of Juliet balconies;
- Setting back of building footprint along Letcombe Street to introduce greening;
- Setting back of central 'finger' on Crossland Road to unify garden spaces;
- Introduction of 4 no. ground floor apartments with defensible space to Crossland Road;
- Updates to proposed unit mix;
- Internal changes to ground floor layout including relocation of flexible community space;
- Removal of bin chutes throughout;

- Removal of car parking spaces previously proposed, with the exception of 1 Car Club space to be relocated to Crossland Road; and
- Increased greening and improved pedestrian footway arrangements to eastern side of Crossland Road.

The updated description of development for the revised proposals is thereby as follows:

“Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site comprising erection of a new building for up to 170 build to rent residential dwellings (Use Class C3) together with flexible community space (Use Class F1/F2), residents’ facilities, landscaping, public realm, amenity space and cycle parking.”

Revised Information Submission

Please find enclosed the following revised plans and additional information (as per our previous email correspondence) which is submitted for consideration as part of the current planning application.

The revised plans and additional information submitted should be read in conjunction with information previously submitted in August 2024.

- Updated CIL Additional Information form (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Application drawings, with accompanying Drawing Issue Sheet, prepared by Carey Jones Chapman Tolcher (CJCT) (replacing all proposed application drawings previously submitted 30/08/24);
 - Proposed Site Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0100 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed Site Topography (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0110 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-00-DR-A-0200 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed 1st Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-01-DR-A-0201 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed 2nd Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-02-DR-A-0202 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed 3rd Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-03-DR-A-0203 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed 4th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-04-DR-A-0204 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed 5th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-05-DR-A-0205 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed 6th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-06-DR-A-0206 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed 7th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-07-DR-A-0207 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed Roof Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-RF-DR-A-0211 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed North Elevation (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0700 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed South Elevation (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0701 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed East Elevation (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0702 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed West Elevation (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0703 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed Section AA (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0600 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed Section BB (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0601 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed Section CC (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0602 Rev. C.02);
 - Proposed Section DD (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0603 Rev. C.02);
 - Typical Core B Parapet Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0500 Rev. C.02);
 - Typical Core A Parapet Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0501 Rev. C.02);
 - Typical Core B Rear Parapet Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0502 Rev. C.02);
 - Typical Core C Parapet Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0503 Rev. C.02);
 - Typical Access Deck Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0504 Rev. C.02);
- Updated Schedule of Residential Net & Gross Floor Areas, prepared by CJCT (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);

- Updated Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, prepared by AECOM (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Daylight and Sunlight Assessment: Internal Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Report, prepared by GIA (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Daylight and Sunlight Assessment : Impact on Neighbouring Properties Report, prepared by GIA (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Design and Access Statement Addendum, prepared by CJCT (accompanying submitted Design and Access Statement);
- Updated Energy Statement, prepared by Hoare Lea (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Fire Statement: Gateway One, prepared by Hoare Lea (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, prepared by Fairhurst (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment, prepared by Montagu Evans (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Landscaping drawings, prepared by Camlins (replacing all proposed landscaping drawings previously submitted 30/08/24);
 - General Arrangement – Public Realm and Landscape (ref. SY743-275-0001 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Overall Landscape (ref. SY743-275-0002 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Landscape Levels (ref. SY743-275-0011 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Areas of Hard Surfaces (ref. SY743-275-0021 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Boundary Treatments, Edges, Steps and Walls (ref. SY743-275-0031 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Ecological Enhancements (ref. SY743-275-0091 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Growing Medium Formation (ref. SY743-275-0041 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Tree Planting Plan (ref. SY743-275-0051 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Planting Strategy (ref. SY743-275-0061 Rev. P01);
 - General Arrangement – Furniture and Fixtures (ref. SY743-275-0071 Rev. P01);
- Updated Landscape Strategy, prepared by Camlins (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Landscape and Ecology Management Plan, prepared by AECOM (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Updated Operational Waste Management Strategy, prepared by SLR (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Planning Statement Addendum, prepared by Savills;
- Updated Sustainability Statement, prepared by Hoare Lea (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24);
- Transport Assessment Addendum, prepared by Glanville (accompanying submitted Transport Assessment);
- Viability Assessment Addendum, prepared by DS2 (accompanying submitted Viability Assessment); and
- Updated Wind and Microclimate Assessment, prepared by RWDI (replacing previous version submitted 30/08/24).

I trust that you will find the above information in order and will be able to commence re-consultation as soon as possible as appropriate.

Summary

JLP has fully considered the consultation feedback received during the determination of the application and has engaged positively with RBC Officers throughout. The continued dialogue and feedback have been appreciated and have informed the development of the revised proposals. As a result, a number of amendments have been made to the proposed development to seek to further support the delivery of high-quality build-to-rent dwellings and associated substantial benefits to residents and the local area.

I trust that the revised plans and additional information hereby submitted appropriately reflects our previous discussions and will now enable Officers to recommend the application for approval accordingly.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Sebbage", written in a cursive style.

Jonathan Sebbage BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
Associate Director