

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Whitley Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1378 Full planning permission

Address: First Floor - Suite C, Reading International Business Park, Reading, RG2 6DH

Proposal: Installation of new fire escape door and access door, access step, fencing and pergola to existing first floor roof terrace.

Applicant: Alchemy Asset Management

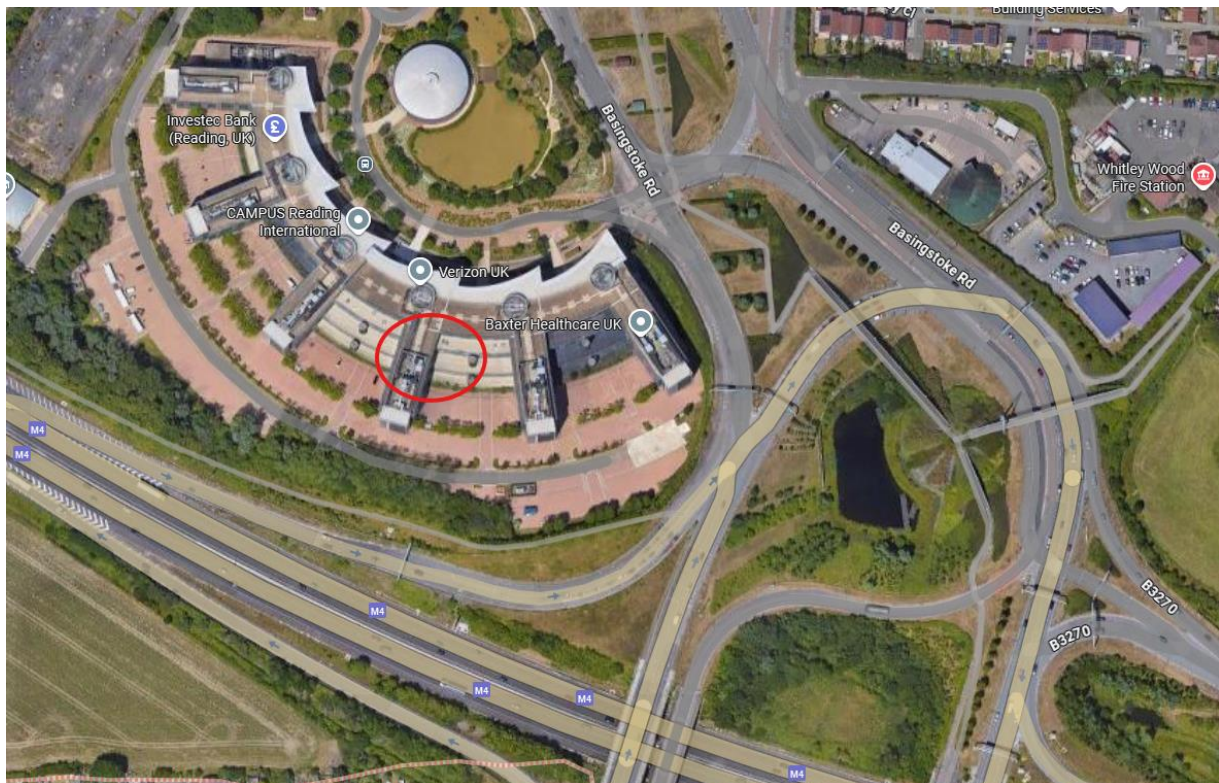
Received date: 29/09/2025

Target Decision date: 24/11/2025

Case Officer: Gary Miles

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site forms part of the wider Reading International Business Park, a purpose-built office campus. The building is located south of the Reading Borough, where the A33 Reading Relief Road meets junction 11 of the M4 motorway.



Site Location (Google Maps)

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The application is for the Installation of new fire escape door and access door, access step, fencing and pergola to existing first floor roof terrace. The development is to support the greater use of the terrace by office users, providing discreet, high quality outdoor breakout space that will improve tenant amenity.

The open sided aluminium metal pergola with louvre side panels will be finished in graphite grey. The pergola will measure 6m by 3m and stand at circa 2.5m in height and be attached to the floor with base plates. Development will also include composite decking.

A new fence will be positioned as marked in blue and shown on drawing MA6508-1-P005. The fence will also be circa 2.3m in height and be constructed from composite cladding battens finished in chestnut and be fitted with a fire escape gate made from the same materials. Uplighters are to be placed along the fence line and throughout the development. The composite batten fence will offer screening to the pergola and protect the pergola from view and traffic noise.

Plans and documents considered:

Overview letter (P&DG) dated 29th Sept 25

Composite Chestnut Battens specification

External Decking Fence Uplighter technical submission number: 014 (Sovereign Electrical Services) dated Sept 25

Location Plan, dated 29th Sept 25

Drawing no: P001-First Floor-Suite C-Location Plan, dated Feb 25

Drawing no: P002-First Floor-Suite C-Site Plan, dated Feb 25

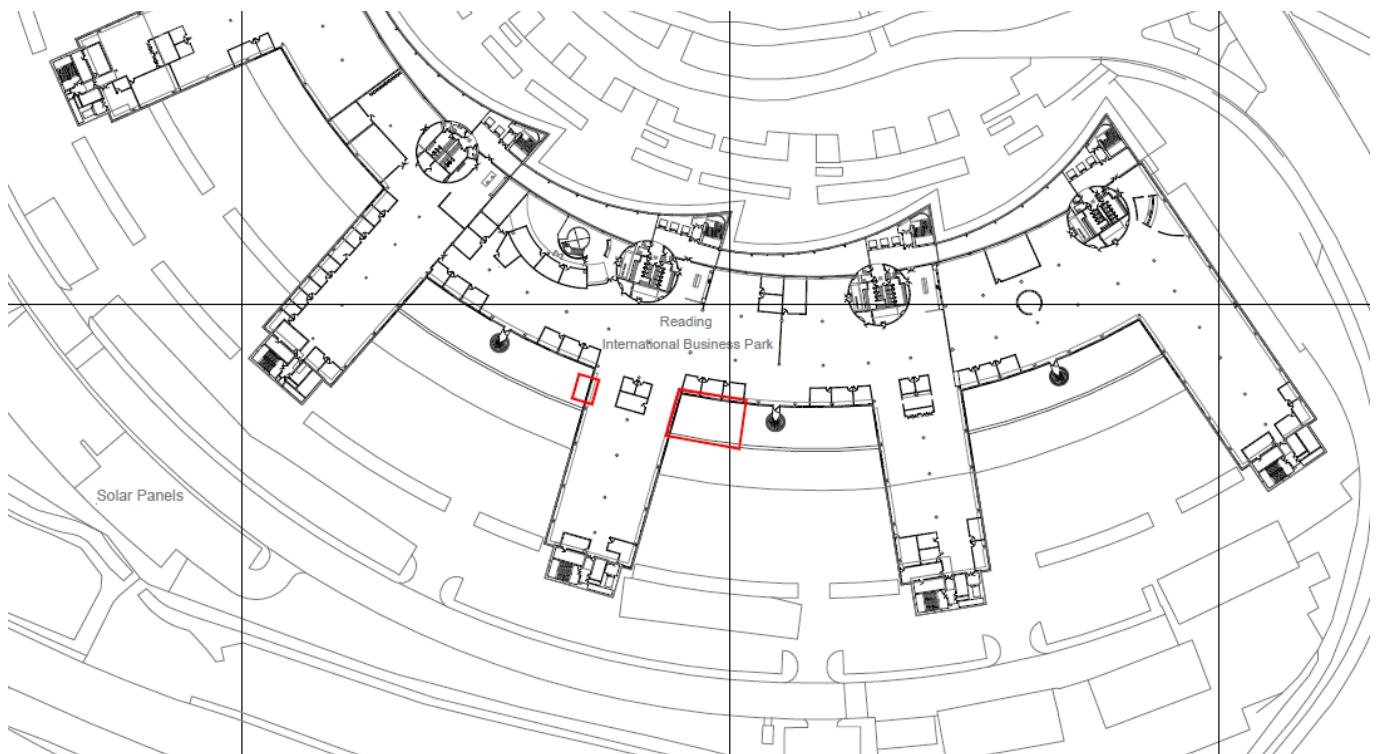
Drawing no: P003-First Floor-Suite C-New Door Details, dated Feb 25

Drawing no: P004-First Floor-Suite C-Step Details, dated Feb 25

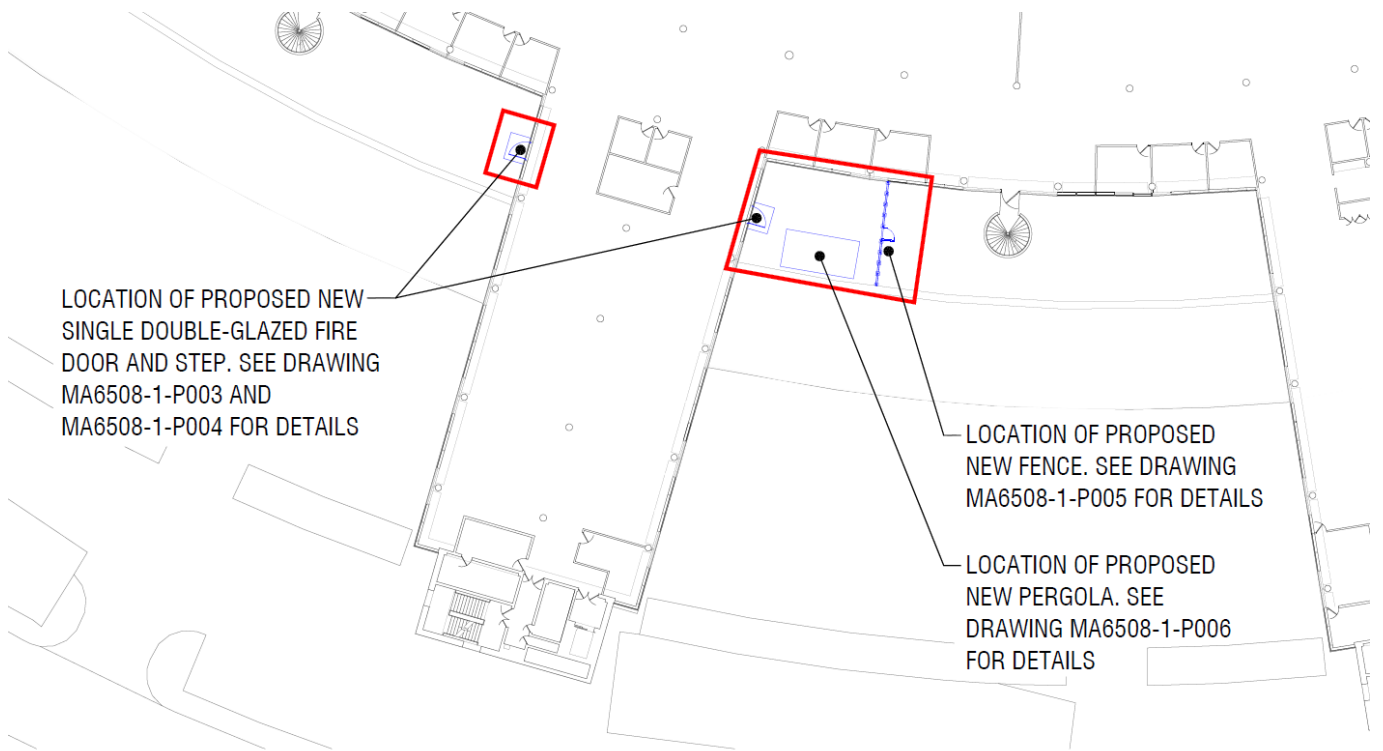
Drawing no: P005-First Floor-Suite C-Fence Details, dated Feb 25

Drawing no: P006-First Floor-Suite C-Pergola Details, dated Feb 25

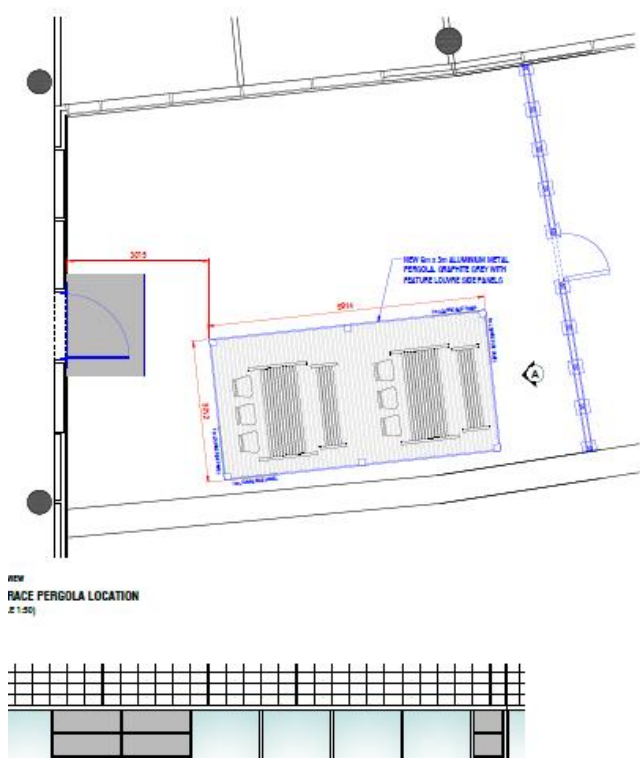
Received by the LPA on 29th September 2025



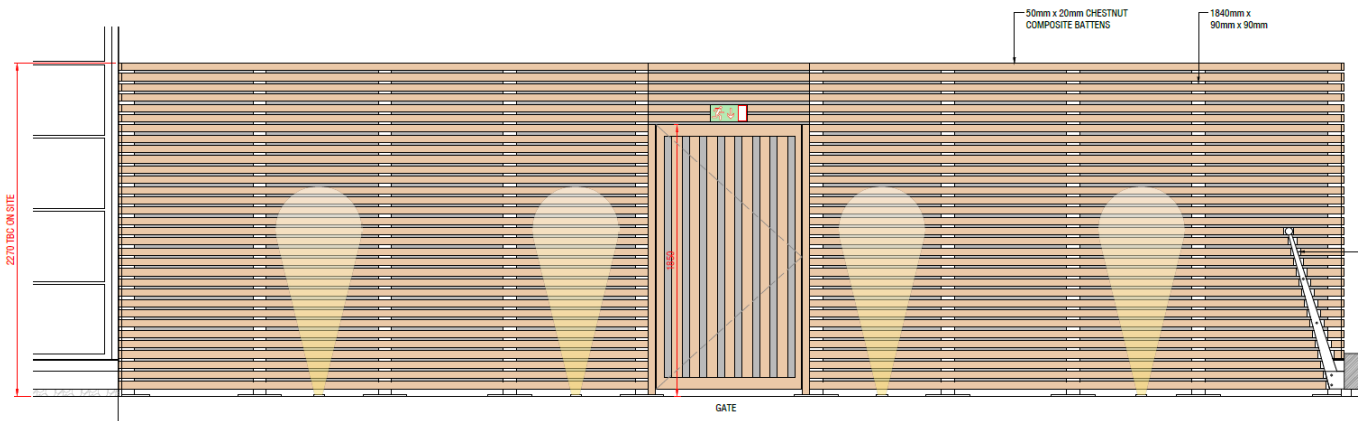
Location Plan (Drawing no: P001)



Site Plan (Drawing no: P002)



Proposed Pergola



Proposed Fence constructed with composite chestnut battens

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None of relevance.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal:

The Environmental Health Officer was consulted due to the introduction of lighting, and the creation of an outdoor seating area i.e. additional noise.

The EHO responded with no comments and no objections to the proposed development.

External:

A planning notice was displayed in the vicinity of the Suite C - attached to a lamp column around the rear of the Reading International Business Park. Notice put up on 7th October 2025.

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

7. APPRAISAL

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

a) Principle of development

In principle the proposed new fire escape door and access door, access step, fencing and pergola to existing first floor roof terrace of Suite C at Reading International Business Park is considered acceptable as the development will support the greater use of the outdoor terrace by office users which in turn will providing discreet, high quality outdoor breakout space that will improve the amenity of the tenants, helping to attract and retain clients and business to the borough of Reading.

b) Design and Impact on the Character or the Area

The proposed development is considered acceptable in terms of planning. The replacement fire escapes: doors and step are considered minor. The pergola is considered subservient to the host building in terms of height and construction methods-the aluminium metal construction will blend in with the materials of the host building. The proposed batten fencing, whilst it stands high it stands perpendicular to the main building, therefore only the width of the fence will be visible if looking from afar towards the host building. The fence has been designed from quality materials which are not considered to be detrimental to the host building.

Overall, the development is subservient to the wider and greater building and is therefore considered acceptable in terms of planning.

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

c) Impact on Residential Amenity

Officers first had concerns of harm to residential amenity due to the introduction of an outdoor amenity area. However, officers note there are no residential properties in the vicinity of the host building. The adjacent area is solely commercial and industrial, with the main A33 and M4 motorway located less than 100m away. The proposal development is not considered to harmful to residential or visual amenity by virtue of its positioning.

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.

8. CONCLUSION

The proposal has been assessed and complies with all quoted policies above. The LPA can therefore grant full planning permission subject to necessary conditions and informatives.

9. RECOMMENDATION

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