

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Whitley

App Ref: PL/25/1594 Full planning permission

Address: 452 BASINGSTOKE ROAD, READING, RG2 0QE

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

Applicant: Mr Martens Hategue

Received date: 06/11/2025

Target Decision date: 09/01/2026 (Ext)

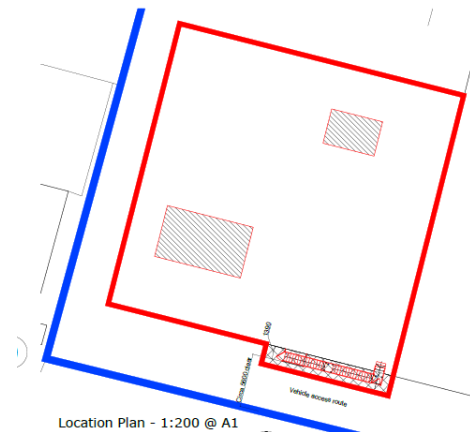
Case Officer: Alison Amoah

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.



Google Aerial View application site circled in red



Block Plan



**Looking towards the west elevation (red square denotes application site in the distance)
(photo taken during course of previous application ref: PL/25/0391)**

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is a revision of an approved scheme (under ref: PL/25/0391) consisting of replacing the air handling and cooling units on the workshop roof, which is a single storey building, with larger plant, along with louvred enclosures and maintenance access in the form of a new external staircase on the southern elevation and dedicated roof walkways for inspection and maintenance purposes. This compares to the previous approval which included a spiral staircase on the northern elevation.

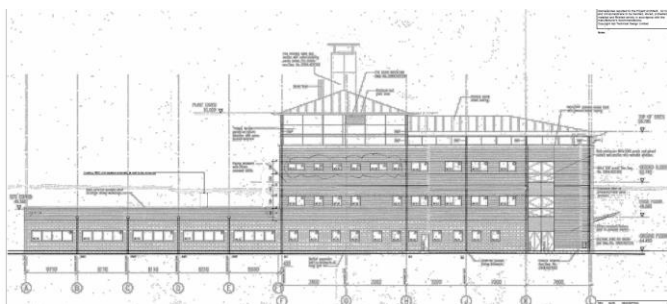
The submitted Planning Statement states *“The existing air handling/cooling units for the workshop have reached the end of their economic life. The internal units present operational issues within the building and are also difficult to maintain. Therefore, these facilities are to be relocated, externally”*. The replacement units would on the workshop located to the rear of the laboratories and offices.

- External Staircase - galvanised steel stairs with guard railing and galvanised steel roof access platform including overhead lifting beam, guard railing and cage with lockable gate to prevent unauthorised access.
- Roof mounted Air Handling Unit (AHU) - 7.05m (long) x 3.25m (wide) x 1.3m (high)
- Roof mounted Cooler Unit – 3.27m (long) x 1.45m (wide) x 0.78m (high)
- Louvre Screen Enclosures, powder coated metal coloured terracotta – 2.1m high

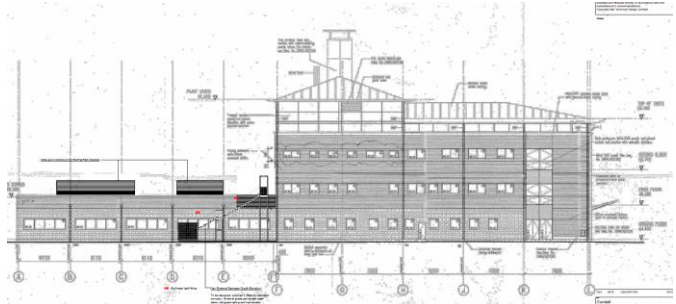
Plans and other information considered as received 6th November 2025:

- Drawing no: A210, dated October 2025 – Existing Roof GA & Section AA
- Drawing no: A211, dated October 2025 – Existing North Elevation
- Drawing no: A212, dated October 2025 – Existing West Elevation
- Drawing no: A213, dated October 2025 - Existing South Elevation
- Drawing no: A220, dated October 2025 – Proposed Roof Plan GA & Section AA
- Drawing no: A221, dated October 2025 – Proposed North Elevation
- Drawing no: A222, dated October 2025 – Proposed West Elevation
- Drawing no: A223, dated October 2025 - Proposed South Elevation
- Drawing no: A224, dated October 2025 - Enclosure - Plans, Section & Elevations
- Drawing no: A225, dated October 2025 - Enclosure - Plans, Section & Elevations
- Drawing no: A227, dated October 2025 – Proposed External Staircase - South
- Flood Map for Planning, dated 17th February 2025
- Noise Impact Assessment Report, document ref: PAG-CDL-XX-XX-T-AS-45200, Rev – P03, dated 29/5/25, prepared by Cundall
- Planning Statement, dated November 2025, Prepared by Westbournes

Existing South Elevation

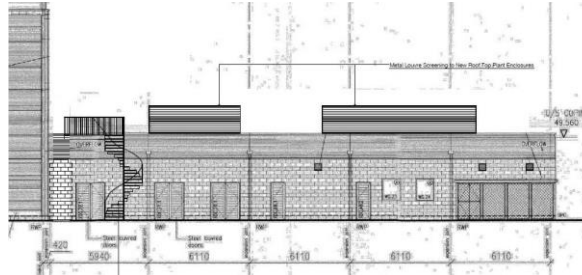


Proposed South Elevation



3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/25/0391/FUL – Replacement roof plant including enclosures, roof walkway and new spiral staircase access – Approved 6th June 2025



Approved North Elevation (showing spiral staircase, walkway and plant enclosures)

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal Consultees

Environmental Protection – No objection - the noise assessment shows that our noise policy levels are met.

External Consultees

It should be noted that under the previous application (ref: PL/250391) that Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service were consulted and advised that the proposal, which is very similar to this application: *“would 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.”*

Neighbour Consultation

A site notice was erected on 2nd December 2025. No comments 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

National Planning Policy Framework 2021
National Planning Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
EN17: Noise Generating Equipment

Supplementary Planning Documents

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

7. APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Principle of Development
- b) Design and Impact on the Character of the Area
- c) Noise
- d) Impact on Residential Amenity

a) Principle of Development

In principle, the proposed replacement air - handling unit, air - cooling unit, new access walkways, steps and 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.

b) Design and Impact on the Character of the Area

The proposed air - handling unit and air - cooling units would be located on the roof above the existing workshop space. The access staircase and safety fencing would be positioned on the south elevation visible from within adjacent commercial sites only and of a nature consistent with a commercial location. It is not considered that the proposals would, therefore, harm the character of the area and would comply with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

c) Noise

The submitted Noise Impact Assessment Report was previously submitted and agreed under the previous approved scheme (ref: PL/25/0391). This proposal includes the same units in the same locations as the previous approval with the only change being to the location and type of access staircase.

The Environmental Protection Officer has reconfirmed that the assessment concludes that the operational noise emissions of the proposed plant would meet the noise criterion set by Reading Borough Council, i.e. to be 10dB below background noise. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of noise, and it is considered, therefore, that it would comply with Policy EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

d) Impact on Residential Amenity

The proposed changes would be located approximately 80m away from the nearest residential properties located in Longships Way. It is considered that the proposals, by virtue of the small scale, would not harm residential amenity, subject to noise controls as proposed and would comply with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.



8. RECOMMENDATION

The proposal has been considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and relevant SPDs and is considered acceptable. The recommendation is, therefore, to GRANT, subject to the following conditions and informatives:

Conditions

- Standard 3-year time limit
- Approved Plans
- Materials as specified
- Noise Mitigation

Informatives

Terms and conditions

Building Control

Positive & proactive