

Abbey Gardens

BREEAM Planning Statement South Block Extension

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1 Executive Summary

This BREEAM Planning Statement has been prepared by Della Berkshire of Love Design Studio, a qualified BREEAM Assessor and BREEAM Accredited Professional (AP), to address Reading Borough Council's Planning Policy CC2 that requires 'all minor non-residential development to meet the most up to date BREEAM 'Very Good' standard as a minimum' and the plausibility of the Proposed Development at Abbey Gardens, 4-6 Abbey Street, Reading, RG1 3BA achieving the referenced Very Good BREEAM rating.

The existing Abbey Gardens development which was constructed in the mid-1980s is a modern office development consisting of three cores (north, central and south), with a basement level, lower ground floor level and 5-8 storeys across its cores, with the height increasing towards the southern portion of the building. The existing façade features extensive glazed curtain walling and projecting bays.

The works involves infilling a section of the south block undercroft, with the intention of providing additional units within the newly created space. Works are part of a wider project that involves the conversion of the existing office building into residential apartments, prior approval consent for the conversion of existing offices to residential use can be found under references PL/25/0202 and PL/25/0918.

A detailed review of the BRE's BREEAM scheme standards identified that the most suitable standard, with reference to a commercial premises, would be the UK Non-Domestic 2014 Refurbishment & Fit-out assessment scheme, and as the current application only relates to the building façade the assessment would equate to an Offices Part 1 assessment.

To confirm whether the scheme will align with the UK Non-Domestic 2014 Refurbishment & Fit-out standards, several activities have been carried out:

1. Review of UK Non-domestic Refurbishment & Fit-out for Offices standard criteria.
2. Review the development design considering the Non-domestic Refurbishment & Fit-out for Offices requirements.
3. Identification of any shortcomings, considering the level of development related to this application and future use of the building.
4. Investigation of alternative options to BREEAM UK Non-Domestic 2014 Refurbishment & Fit-out certification.

Following an extensive review of the project proposals and the BREEAM Non-domestic RFO 2014 (Part 1) Office criteria, Love Design Studio can conclude that the maximum realistic rating for this development would be a BREEAM rating of 'Pass' with a maximum potential score of 42.75%, thereby falling short of the 55% score required for a 'Very Good' rating. A few credits are deemed to be not technically relevant to the specific scope of the proposal, hence why they can realistically not be obtained.

Pursuing BREEAM certification for this project will be a long and costly process, encompassing completing and certificating the project at both Design and Post Construction stages. It is also important to note that any achieved BREEAM rating and

subsequent certificates will be null and void where the assessment and certificates are sought for an office development, as residential development cannot be assessed or certified under BREEAM non-domestic assessment methodologies.

In lieu of carrying out a full BREEAM Assessment, other assessments/reviews could be carried out to demonstrate that the proposal has given due consideration to embodied carbon emissions. These assessments would adhere to the principles of the relevant credits within the BREEAM manual and the associated criteria, ensuring that sustainability is incorporated in a more tailored and cost-effective manner than undertaking a BREEAM assessment. The proposed assessments are noted below.

- Life Cycle Analysis – a framework for measuring the environmental impact of the products used in construction of the building.
- Sustainable Procurement Plan – Policy document that outlines how an organisation should integrate sustainability considerations into its procurement processes.

2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose of this Statement

This BREEAM Planning Statement has been prepared by Love Design Studio, who are qualified BREEAM Assessors and BREEAM AP's, to outline the BREEAM certification feasibility and provide guidance for the Proposed Development at Abbey Gardens, 4-6 Abbey Street, Reading, RG1 3BA.

The purpose of this note is to:

- Review the information provided to date and assess the potential for the scheme to achieve a Very Good BREEAM Rating.

The term BREEAM UK RFO is used throughout this document to refer to the UK version of the BREEAM's 2014 Non-Domestic Refurbishment & Fit-out certification scheme, BREEAM relates to the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology.

2.2 Scheme Description

The site is in a prominent position of Abbey Street in the heart of Reading town centre, within the 'Abbey Quarter' an area of historical and archaeological significance, immediately adjacent to Reading Abbey Ruins.

The existing Abbey Gardens complex, currently comprises an up to 8-storey building, originally constructed in the mid-1980s as a Grade A office development, with car parking and refuse storage at lower ground floor level. The building currently features extensive glazed curtain walling and projecting bays.

The refurbishment of the building will be completed over two phases, a portion of the ground and first floor within the north block is currently occupied under an active commercial lease and a future application for change of use for that space will be part of Phase 2 works, this phase will also include a portion of the upgrade to the façade. Phase 1 of the proposed development, includes removal of the existing glass and aluminium façade and reinstatement of the façade with a brick slip and window infill and a residential conversion to the main building, providing future tenants with homes that have a private outdoor space (balconies), additional cycle parking spaces and an upgrade of the waste and recycling storage facilities.

Alterations to the existing façade are proposed to improve the aesthetic of the existing building, transitioning from a 'transparent commercial skin' to a 'solid residential wall' that includes contrasting feature brick panels and the introduction of balconies.

This statement has been prepared in relation to the infill of a section of the south block undercroft, with the intention of providing additional units within the newly created space.

3 BREEAM UK Non-Domestic Refurbishment & Fit-Out Overview

BREEAM UK RFO is a performance-based assessment method and certification scheme for existing **non-domestic** refurbishment and fit-out projects to promote the delivery of sustainable refurbishment and fit-out, to mitigate the life cycle impacts of existing buildings on the environment in a robust and cost-effective manner.

The BREEAM UK Non-domestic Refurbishment and Fit-out 2014 scheme provides a modular set of criteria that are applied depending upon the scope of works for a particular project type including:

- **Part 1: Fabric and Structure**
- Part 2: Core Services
- Part 3: Local Services
- Part 4: Interior Design

A **Part 1** assessment may be appropriate where a refurbishment project includes one or more of the following alterations to the building fabric and where the area to be renovated is greater than 50 per cent of the surface of the individual element or 25 per cent of the total building envelope.

- Building façade: where the external façade of the buildings is being upgraded/refurbished such as new cladding, rendering, façade system, internal dry lining etc.
- Roof: where a new roof is being installed or where significant changes are being made to the roof structure or the replacement/refurbishment of roof coverings.
- Windows: where changes are being made to the windows such as replacement, upgrade/refurbishment of existing windows with new glazing or the specification of secondary glazing.

A Part 1 assessment may also be appropriate where a small extension to an existing building is proposed.

There are several elements that determine the overall performance of a refurbishment or fit-out project assessed using BREEAM; these are as follows:

1. The scope of the assessment
2. The BREEAM rating level benchmarks
3. The minimum BREEAM standards
4. The environmental section weightings
5. The BREEAM assessment issues and credits

The BREEAM Rating Benchmarks are as follows (%):

- Outstanding - ≥ 85
- Excellent - ≥ 70
- **Very Good - ≥ 55**
- Good - ≥ 45
- Pass - ≥ 30

- Unclassified - < 30

To achieve a particular level of performance the majority of BREEAM credits can be traded, i.e. non-compliance in one area can be off set through compliance in another to achieve the target BREEAM rating. However, to ensure that performance against fundamental environmental issues is not overlooked in pursuit of a particular rating, BREEAM sets minimum standards of performance in key areas, e.g. energy, water, waste etc. To achieve a particular BREEAM rating, the minimum overall percentage score must be achieved and the minimum standards, detailed below for a Very Good rating:

- Ene 02: Energy monitoring (Parts 2-4)- Sub-metering of major energy consuming systems
- Wat 01: Water consumption (where applicable) – 12.5% percentage improvement over baseline building water consumption
- Wat 02: Water monitoring (Part 2) – The specification of a water meter on the mains water supply to the building
- **Mat 03: Responsible sourcing of materials – All timber and timber-based products used on the project is Legally harvested and traded timber**

Indicative BREEAM Environmental section weightings for a Part 1 Assessment:

- Management – 15%
- Health & Wellbeing – 14.8%
- Energy – 16.4%
- Transport – 10%
- Water – 0%
- Materials – 15.6%
- Waste – 9.4%
- Land Use & Ecology – 12.5%
- Pollution – 6.3%

The BREEAM RFO weightings outlined above are for common project types, purely as a starting guide and can be expected to vary significantly for real projects, with the complexity and applicability of the issues and credits.

The process of determining a BREEAM rating is outlined below:

1. The BREEAM UK Refurbishment and Fit-out 2014 scheme parts assessed need to be selected according to the project type and scope of works.
2. The BREEAM assessor will then determine for each of BREEAM's nine environmental sections (as applicable) the number of 'credits' awarded. This must be determined by the BREEAM assessor in accordance with the criteria of each assessment issue.
3. The percentage of credits achieved is then calculated for each section.
4. The percentage of credits achieved in each section is then multiplied by the corresponding section weighting. This gives the overall environmental section score.
5. The section scores are then added together to give the overall BREEAM score.

6. The overall score is then compared to the BREEAM rating benchmark levels and, provided all minimum standards have been met, the relevant BREEAM rating is achieved.

4 Scoring

The BREEAM Projects online reporting tool for BREEAM UK Refurbishment & Fit-out 2014 was used to determine the maximum achievable BREEAM rating based on the scope of the works being undertaken, and assumptions on the applicability of certain credit issues. These figures are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: BREEAM UK Refurbishment & Fit-out 2014 rating

Category	Weighting (%)	Target Score (%)
Management	22.51	6.62
Health & Wellbeing	20.54	0.00
Energy	2.67	0.00
Transport	10.82	7.72
Materials	28.97	24.51
Waste	14.49	2.89
Innovation	10.00	1.00
		42.75%

Note: Values in the Target Score column are shown rounded to two decimal places meaning the total value may slightly differ from the sum of the rounded values shown.

Calculations found that based on a Part 1 Office assessment that the Proposed Development could possibly achieve a maximum of **42.75%** equating to a '**Pass**' rating; this result was calculated with the removal of credits where consultant appointments and reports relative to an office development are required to verify the achievement of a number of credit issues which would result in unnecessary cost.

The current score is based on several assumptions and credits cannot be verified until robust evidence is supplied to the assessor for them to confirm the achievement of the targeted credits and ultimately the overall score.

As this development will ultimately be a residential development, it's worth pointing out that residential developments are not covered under this assessment methodology and credit criteria relates to non-domestic commercial premises only.

5 BREEAM Non-domestic RFO 2014 Criteria Review

The achievement of BREEAM certification will depend on the criteria outlined in the BREEAM Non-domestic RFO 2014 Technical Manual SD216 2.0. Table 2 sets out the criteria which the development would have to comply with to achieve the BREEAM certification and earn the respective credits. A project response comment is included in the table for each assessment issue to highlight whether it would be technically and/or financially viable to target specific credits.

Table 2: Commentary on BREEAM credit criteria

Category	Credit/Criteria	Project Response/Alignment (Abbey Gardens)
Management	Man 01 - Project Delivery: Prior to concept design develop a project brief, define roles & responsibilities for the project team, provide a project execution plan and communication strategy - Stakeholder Consultation (3rd Party): Prior to concept design undertake a consultation with stakeholders - Sustainability Champion: Prior to concept design appoint a BREEAM AP to facilitate the setting and achievement of BREEAM performance - Sustainability Champion: Appoint a BREEAM AP to monitor progress against the BREEAM target	Man 01 Credits under this issue have strict timelines under the credit criteria. Much of the design and decisions on design have been formulated before this application for the change to the building façade and as such the credits would not be achievable. Additionally, there would be no evidence of consultation for the project proposals related to an office development as the aim of the scheme is residential. No credits would be targeted under this issue.
	Man 02 - Elemental Life Cycle Cost Plan: Prior to end of concept design undertake an entire life cycle cost plan - Component Level Life Cycle Cost Plan: Prior to the end of Technical Design undertake a component level Life Cycle Cost Plan - Capital Cost Reporting: Provide the predicted capital cos of the project	
	Ma 03 - Pre-requisite: All timber and timber-based products are 'Legally harvested and traded timber' - Environmental Management: Principal contractor is EMS ISO 14001 certified and implements best practice pollution prevention policies and procedures on-site - Sustainability Champion: Appoint a BREEAM AP to monitor progress against the BREEAM target - Considerate Construction: register with CCS and achieve a score of at least 35 - Monitoring of Site Impacts: Monthly recording of energy, water and transport consumption related to site activities	Man 02 The elemental and component level LCC's require external consultant appointments and reports, a decision has been taken not to target these credits as they have a significant cost implication, and the resulting reports will not relate to a residential development. The capital cost credit could be targeted.
	Man 04 Testing and inspecting building fabric: Undertake a thermographic survey	

Category	Credit/Criteria	Project Response/Alignment (Abbey Gardens)
	Man 05 - Aftercare Support: provide aftercare support to the building occupier - Post occupancy evaluation: The client or building occupier makes a commitment to carry out a post occupancy evaluation (POE) exercise one year after initial building occupation	Man 03 Minimal credits could be targeted based on appointment of a sustainability champion, registration with CCS achieving the minimum score and monthly recording of site consumption. Man 04 The thermographic survey requires an external consultant appointment and subsequent report, alongside the Thermographic survey air testing will be required. As this would incur significant cost, this credit would not be targeted. Man 05 The scope of works under this application relates to an office development, the building occupiers will ultimately be domestic residents, these credits are therefore not applicable in this instance. No credits would be targeted under this issue.
Health & Wellbeing	Hea 01 - Daylighting: relevant building areas meet good practice daylight factor - View Out: Minimum of 80% of the floor area in each relevant building area is within 7m of a wall which has a window or permanent opening that provides an adequate view out. Hea 02 - Indoor Air Quality: Produce an Indoor Air Quality Plan - Ventilation: Provide fresh air into the building in accordance with the criteria of the relevant standard for ventilation. - Potential for Natural Ventilation: The building ventilation strategy is designed to be flexible and adaptable to potential building occupant needs and climatic scenarios. Hea 04 - Thermal Modelling: Undertake thermal modelling on the upgraded shell of the building and a typical servicing configuration using software in accordance with CIBSE AM111 Building Energy and Environmental Modelling. Hea 05	Hea 01 Daylighting and view out requirements relating to a commercial development would be based on a supposed office layout. The proposal going forward is for a residential development that would consist of individual homes that contain several rooms. As such the BREEAM Part 1 assessment report would not reflect the true nature of the development. No credits would be targeted under this issue. Hea 02

Category	Credit/Criteria	Project Response/Alignment (Abbey Gardens)
	Acoustic Performance: Appoint an acoustician to carry out a quantifiable assessment of the specification of the built form and any external factors that are likely to affect the building acoustics criteria relevant to an office development. Where the specific room functions and areas within the building are yet to be defined, the acoustician must base their assessment on the most sensitive room type likely to be present in the building, as a worst case.	Proposed works cover the external envelope, no internal work is being undertaken to warrant an Indoor Air Quality Plan, and the servicing strategy would relate to domestic and not commercial premises. No credits would be targeted under this issue. Hea 04 The thermal modelling would not be appropriate for the current scheme under this application, the development going forward is for a residential development that will have its own servicing strategy which will not relate to the outcome of a report completed for office development. No credits would be targeted under this issue. Hea 05 The BREEAM acoustic report and recommendations would relate to a commercial office space. This development will ultimately be a residential development where the sound insulation requirements would not correlate with the acoustic requirements for an office development. No credits would be targeted under this issue.
Energy	Ene 01 - Whole building energy model: Produce and provide as existing and as designed BRUKL INP files Ene 04 - Passive Design Analysis: Carry out an analysis of the existing building fabric, form, site location and outline scheme design to influence decisions made during the Concept Design identifying opportunities for the implementation of passive design solutions and retrofit measures that reduce demands for energy consuming building services	Ene 01 Energy modelling for a commercial development requires modelling using SBEM, modelling for domestic development requires SAP calculations. SAP calculations cannot be used for an office development under BREEAM.

Category	Credit/Criteria	Project Response/Alignment (Abbey Gardens)
		No credits would be targeted under this issue. Ene 04 Again, as the application relates to the building fabric it would be a costly consultee appointment for a report that would not reflect the true nature of the development. No credits would be targeted under this issue.
Transport	Tra 01 - Accessibility Index: Confirm the accessibility Index for the development Tra 02 - Local Amenities: Confirm the location and proximity of the required 2 x local amenities within 500m for an office development Tra 03 - Cycle Storage: Confirm provision of secure cycle storage @ 1 space per 10 members of staff required for an office development - Cyclist Facilities: Confirm provision of a minimum of 2 cyclist facilities (showers – 1 per 10 cycle spaces, lockers – equivalent to the number of cycle spaces provided, changing rooms, drying space) Tra 05 - Travel Plan: Develop a site travel plan of the feasibility and design stages	All credits apart from the cyclist facilities and Travel Plan would be targeted under these issues.
Materials	Mat 01 - Environmental Impact of Materials: Undertake a Project life cycle assessment study Mat 03 - Pre-requisite: All timber and timber-based products are 'Legally harvested and traded timber' - Sustainable Procurement Plan: Produce a Sustainable Procurement Plan which the principle contractor will need to follow when sourcing materials for the project - Responsible Sourcing of Materials: A minimum of 18% of materials used on the project have been responsibly sourced from one of the responsible sourcing schemes recognised by BREEAM (PEFC/FSC, EMS ISO 14001, BES 6001 etc) Mat 04 - Insulation: Any new insulants used to the building fabric achieve an insulation index of at least 2.50 Mat 05	Mat 01 The credits would be targeted based on the current scope of works. Mat 03 The credits would be targeted based on the current scope of works. Mat 04 The credit would be targeted based on the current scope of works. Mat 05

Category	Credit/Criteria	Project Response/Alignment (Abbey Gardens)
	- Protecting vulnerable parts of the building from damage: The building incorporates suitable durability and protection measures or designed features/solutions to prevent damage to vulnerable parts of the external building and landscaping elements. - Protecting exposed parts of the building from material degradation: Existing applicable building elements have been surveyed have been assessed to identify impacts of material degradation effects including an assessment to grade the severity of any degradation effects. Newly specified materials or newly constructed elements (e.g. a new external wall) within the scope of refurbishment or fit-out works incorporate appropriate design and specification measures to limit material degradation due to environmental factors Mat 06 - Material Efficiency: Opportunities have been identified, and appropriate measures investigated and implemented within the scope of refurbishment or fit-out works, to optimise the use of materials through building design, procurement, refurbishment, maintenance and end of life	The credit would be targeted based on the current scope of works. Mat 06 The credit would be targeted based on the current scope of works.
Waste	Wst 01 - Pre-refurbishment audit: Undertake a Pre-refurbishment audit of all existing buildings or hard surfaces within the scope of the refurbishment or fit-out zone - Resource Efficiency: Develop and implement a compliant Resource Management Plan covering the waste arisings from the refurbishment or fit-out project with the aim of minimising waste - Diversion of resources from landfill: Ensure a minimum of 85% refurbishment and 90% demolition waste (volume) of waster is diverted from landfill. Wst 03 - Operational Waste: Provide a dedicated space for the segregation and storage of operational recyclable waste volumes generated by the assessed building/unit, its occupant(s) and activities. Wst 05 - Structural and fabric resilience: Conduct a climate change adaptation strategy appraisal for structural and fabric resilience by the end of Concept Design Wst 06 - Functional Adaptability: Undertake a building-specific functional adaptation strategy study by Concept Design and update at technical design identifying how the recommendations of the study have been incorporated into the design.	Wst 01 The first credit would be targeted based on the current scope of works. Most of the Wst 01 credits would not be targeted. Wst 03 The credit would be targeted based on the current scope of works. Wst 05 The credit would not be targeted based on the current scope of works. Wst 06 The credit would not be targeted based on the current scope of works.

6 Conclusion

Following an extensive review of the project proposals and the BREEAM Non-domestic RFO 2014 (Part 1) Office criteria, Love Design Studio can conclude that the maximum realistic rating for this development would be a BREEAM rating of 'Pass' with a maximum potential score of 42.75%, thereby falling short of the 55% score required for a 'Very Good' rating. A number of credits are deemed to be not technically relevant to the specific scope of the proposal, hence why they can realistically not be obtained.

One key issue with targeting a BREEAM rating for this project is that although this application relates to a small extension to the south block of the existing office building, planning has previously been granted for conversion to a residential development as set out under Section 2.2.

Pursuing BREEAM certification for this project will be a long and costly process, encompassing completing and certificating the project at both Design and Post Construction stages. It is also important to note that any achieved BREEAM rating and subsequent certificates will be null and void where the assessment and certificates are sought for an office development, as residential development cannot be assessed or certified under BREEAM non-domestic assessment methodologies.

There are a few credit issues that could be addressed outside of completing a BREEAM assessment for both commercial and residential development and although pursuing the full BREEAM certification route seems sub-optimal, targeting specific credit issues to confirm the sustainability credentials for the project could be seen as a suitable alternative that would have a lesser impact on the financial viability of the proposal.

We would suggest that the following reports could be completed outside of the BREEAM assessment process but using the BREEAM technical criteria as guidance:

- Life Cycle Analysis – a framework for measuring the environmental impact of the products used in construction of the building.
- Sustainable Procurement Plan – Policy document that outlines how an organisation should integrate sustainability considerations into its procurement processes.