

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 17

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 10th October 2018

Ward: Redlands

Application No.: 180683/FUL

Address: Land adjacent to 300 Kings Road Reading

Proposal: Construction of a part five part three storey building of 14 residential apartments (C3) and associated undercroft car parking

Date received: 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Application target decision date: 9<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Extension of time date: 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018

### RECOMMENDATION

Grant Full Planning Permission subject to satisfactory completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018 and the following conditions:

If the Section 106 legal agreement is not completed by 10<sup>th</sup> November 2018 delegate to the HPDRS to refuse the above application unless the HPDRS approves an extension of time.

Legal Agreement to secure the following:

1. Provision of 4 on-site residential units as affordable housing, comprising of 2 x 1 bed and 2 x 2 bed shared ownership units
2. Commuted off-site affordable housing contribution of £35,000. Payable on first occupation and index-linked from date of permission
3. Employment Skills and Training Plan financial contribution towards construction-phase training of £2, 825

Conditions:

1. Time Limit
2. In accordance with the approved drawings
3. Material samples to be submitted
4. Submission and implementation of archaeological written scheme of investigation
5. In accordance with approved glazing and ventilation specification
6. Cycle store details to be submitted
7. Hard and soft landscaping scheme to be submitted
8. Implementation of landscaping scheme
9. Landscaping Maintenance
10. Landscaping replacement
11. Biodiversity enhancement details to be submitted
12. Construction Method Statement to be submitted
13. Vehicular parking spaces to be provided
14. Bin storage to be provided
15. In accordance with approved sustainability/energy efficiency reports
16. Photovoltaic details to be submitted
17. No parking permits - address details to be submitted
18. No parking permits - future occupants to be informed

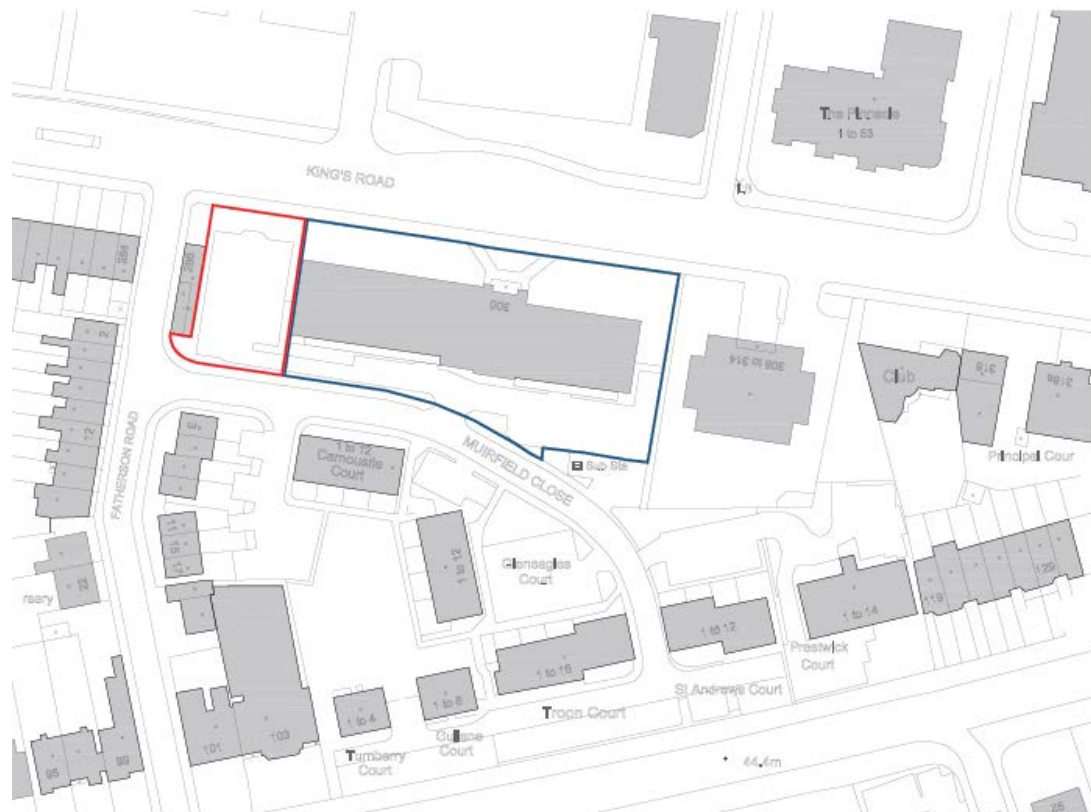
19. Contaminated Land 1: site characterisation report
20. Contaminated Land 2: remediation scheme
21. Contaminated Land 3: implementation of remediation scheme
22. Contaminated Land 4: reporting any unexpected contamination
23. Standard construction hours
24. Flat roof area not to be used as a terrace or balcony
25. Retention of lift (inclusive access)

Informatives:

1. Building Control
2. Terms and conditions
3. Positive and Proactive Statement
4. Damage to the highway
5. No parking permits
6. Noise between residential properties - building regulations sound insulation of any building
7. Section 106 Legal Agreement
8. Clarification over pre-commencement conditions
9. CIL

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a surface car park which currently serves a four storey vacant office building located on the south side of Kings Road. Vehicular access is from the rear via Muirfield Close to the surface and undercroft car parks. The site is adjoined by office development in Kings Road and residential to the south.
- 1.2 The site is located just outside the Reading Central Area as designated by the Reading Central Area Action Plan (2012, 2015) and is within an air quality management area. An area to the front of the site is also identified as an area of potentially contaminated land.



## 2. PLANNING HISTORY (blue land above)

- 2.1 170512/OPA - Change of use of office building from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 78 flats. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - Prior Approval Given
- 2.2 170915/FUL - Upgrade to existing elevations in connection with residential use granted under prior approval (reference 170512) - Granted
- 2.3 172326/VAR - Upgrade to existing elevations in connection with residential use granted under prior approval (reference 170512) without complying with condition no.2 of planning permission ref. 170915 to allow further changes to cladding and glazing to all elevations - Granted

## PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for a part five and part 3 storey building of 14 residential flats (C3 use class). The proposal would be located upon the site of the car park associated with the existing redundant office building at no. 300 Kings Road and would infill the gap between this building and no. 286 Kings Road (The Clock House) to the west at the junction with Fatherson Road.
- 3.2 The proposed building would incorporate three distinctive five storey front and rear gable roof pitches with a three storey flat roof element as the building transitions to no.286 to the west of the site. The building would be a mix of buff and dark grey brick with slate roof.
- 3.3 The proposal incorporates a mix of 6 x 1 bed, 6 x 2 bed and 2 x 3 bed units.
- 3.4 Six parking spaces are proposed with a part under croft area to the rear of the building at ground floor whilst a further two uncovered spaces are proposed to

the rear of the site. Vehicular access to the site would be retained as existing via Muirfield Road.

- 3.5 Landscaping and tree planting are proposed to the front of the building towards Kings Road.
- 3.6 Pre application advice was sought regarding the proposals with the footprint and massing of the building having been reduced at application stage. The proposal has also been reviewed by the RBC Design Review Panel.
- 3.7 Amended plans were submitted on 23<sup>rd</sup> July which incorporates minor alterations to the western flank elevation (facing no. 286 Kings Road) and roof of the building. This includes replacing third floor side facing windows with high level windows, setting the western flank 0.25m further away from the flank elevation of no.286 and a small drop in the parapet height of the three storey flat roof element of the proposal.
- 3.8 This application is reported to planning applications committee because, as a proposal for more than 10 new dwellings, it is in the Major Planning Applications Category.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

##### **RBC Natural Environment Trees**

- 4.1 No objection, subject to conditions to secure a detailed landscaping scheme, implementation of the landscaping and a scheme of maintenance.

##### **RBC Transport**

- 4.2 No objection, subject to conditions to secure a construction method statement, provision of proposed car parking, bicycle store details, provision of proposed bin store and a restriction on access to parking permits.

##### **RBC Environmental Protection**

- 4.3 No objection, subject to conditions to secure implementation of proposed noise mitigation scheme, a contaminated land remediation scheme, a construction method statement and control of construction hours (0800 - 1800 Monday - Friday and 0900 - 1300 on Saturdays and not at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays)

##### **RBC Ecology**

- 4.4 No objection, subject to a condition to secure a scheme of biodiversity enhancements and its implementation.

##### **Berkshire Archaeology**

- 4.5 No objection, subject to a condition to secure submission and implementation of a written scheme of archaeological investigation.

##### **Public Consultation**

- 4.3 Neighbouring premises adjoining the site were notified of the application by letter and site notices were displayed outside the building on Kings Road.

- 4.4 Five letters of objection have been received from four different properties as well as a petition against the development signed by thirty residents, raising the following issues:
- Intensification of the use of Muirfield Road for access to the proposed development (in combination with its use associated with the conversion of the existing office building at no. 300 Kings Road to 78 flats)
  - Impact on amenity of neighbouring occupiers
  - Design and appearance
  - Prejudice development of adjacent building (no. 268 for which there is a current application for prior approval change of use to 3 flats and also a planning application for fenestration alterations)
  - The application encroaches on neighbouring land/property and should be invalid

## 5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 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'. However the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 5.3 In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 5.4 Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

### **Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy (Adopted January 2008 - amended 2015)**

- CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
- CS2 Waste Minimisation
- CS4 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CS5 Inclusive Access
- CS7 Design and the Public Realm
- CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities
- CS11 Use of Employment Land for Alternative Uses
- CS14 Provision of Housing
- CS15 Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix
- CS16 Affordable Housing
- CS20 Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy (Local Transport Plan 2006-2011)
- CS24 Car/Cycle Parking
- CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- CS34 Pollution and Water Resources

## Sites and Detailed Policies Document - (Adopted October 2012, - amended 2015)

- SD1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DM1 Adaption to Climate Change
- DM3 Infrastructure Planning
- DM4 Safeguarding Amenity
- DM5 Housing Mix
- DM6 Affordable Housing
- DM10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- DM18 Tree Planting
- DM19 Air Quality

Supplementary Planning Document: Affordable Housing (July 2013)

Supplementary Planning Document: S106 Planning Obligations (March 2014)

Supplementary Planning Document: Parking Standards and Design (October 2011)

Supplementary Planning Document: Sustainable Design and Construction (July 2011)

Supplementary Planning Document: Employment Skills and Training (April 2013)

## 6. APPRAISAL

The main issues raised by this planning application are as follows:

- Principle
- Design and Impact on the Character of the Area
- Amenity of Surrounding Occupiers
- Standard of Residential Accommodation
- Unit Mix
- Sustainability
- Transport
- Natural Environment
- Archaeology
- Affordable Housing

### Principle

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2018) encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) and seeks that all housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The accessibility of the site is considered acceptable for the proposed development (CS4 of the Reading Core Strategy 2008, altered 2015) whilst the proposal would align with the broad objectives of Policy CS14, in assisting in meeting the Borough's annual housing targets.
- 6.2 Prior Approval has been given for change of use of the existing redundant office building at no. 300 to 78 flats (ref. 170512). Works for this conversion have commenced. The car park area upon which the current application is located does not form part of the prior approval conversion works and the parking spaces are not required to be retained in this respect. The conversion works to the existing building at no. 300 would retain 50 parking spaces in a basement car park as approved under the prior approval consent given.
- 6.3 The principle of the proposed development is considered acceptable and the following material planning considerations are relevant:

## Design and Impact on the Character of the Area

- 6.4 Policy CS7 seeks to preserve or enhance the character of the area in which a development is located.
- 6.5 The application site is currently an open car park positioned between two contrasting buildings. No. 300 Kings Road to the east is a large 4/5 storey building which is significant in terms of width and building frontage, whilst no. 268 to the west is a three storey building with rooms in the roof space, but is unusual in form given its narrowness. There is a wide variety of size and scale buildings along the Kings Road street-scene. The application site, as parking area, is therefore currently an open space with through views between Kings Road and Muirfield Close.
- 6.6 The proposed design with three distinctive gable roof projections is considered to form an appropriate link between the large flat roof building at no. 300 and the smaller narrower gable roof building at no. 286. The use of the distinctive gables is reflective of the appearance of no. 286 and is considered to result in a more cohesive appearance to this part of Kings Road whereas at present the narrow nature of the no. 268 appears as somewhat of an anomaly with the street-scene.
- 6.7 The footprint the proposal would align with the frontages/building line of both the adjacent buildings and be set back 8.5m from the Kings Road frontage. The proposed rear elevation is stepped such that it also aligns with the rear elevations of the adjacent buildings. At the closest point the rear of the building would be set 5.3m from the Muirfield Road frontage. To the rear of the site the character of surrounding properties is predominantly residential with rows of two and three storey terrace dwellings to Fatherson Road and three storey Blocks of flats to Muirfield Road. The set back from the Muirfield Road frontage and massing of the building relative to the existing building at no. 300 is such that the proposal is not considered to appear unduly dominant within the Muirfield Road street-scene.
- 6.8 The proposed height of the main five storey element of the building would reflect that of the large flat roof building at no. 300. However, the gable roof forms proposed result in a building which appears of lesser bulk and massing than the larger flat roof building at no. 300. The proposed 2m separation to the flank of no. 300 provides relief in the built form and assists in the transition between the different buildings and materials.
- 6.9 The proposed three storey flat roof element forms a link element where the building projects to within 0.25m of the flank elevation of no. 286. This different roof form is considered to assist in bridging the gap between the different height gables and eaves of the proposal and existing building at no. 286 and also the difference in brick colour.
- 6.10 Officers consider that the proposal is an appropriate design response to the site which would integrate satisfactorily with the character and appearance of adjacent buildings, street-scene and character of the wider area in accordance with Policy CS7. Material samples are to be secured by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 6.11 Policy DM10 seeks that new residential development is proposed with appropriate usable private or communal amenity space. Communal amenity space is proposed to the front of the site but officers acknowledge that fronting

onto Kings Road this would likely be quite a noisy area, albeit new tree planting is proposed to the road frontage which would provide a buffer to some extent. Nonetheless, provision of communal or very limited amenity space to flatted development near the centre of Reading is not uncommon. Given the proximity to nearby public recreation facilities the proposal development is not considered to be unacceptable in terms of amenity space provision and no conflict with Policy DM10 is advised.

### **Amenity of Surrounding Occupiers**

- 6.12 Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, 2015) seeks to protect the amenity of existing and future occupiers. Policy CS34 of the Core Strategy (2008, 2015) seeks to protect and mitigate development from pollution.

#### No. 300 Kings Road

- 6.13 The large adjacent building at no. 300 is currently undergoing conversion to 78 flats under prior approval consent ref. 170512. In association with this change of use planning permission ref. 172326 was also granted for fenestration and elevational alterations to the building which removed any windows to the west flank elevation facing the current application site. This work has also been commended on site. As such the proposal would not result in any loss of privacy, light or overbearing to the future residential occupiers of no. 300.

#### No. 286 Kings Road

- 6.14 The smaller adjacent office building at no. 286 does not incorporate any side facing windows to the east flank elevation directly facing the application site and such is not considered to result in any undue loss of privacy or overbearing impact.
- 6.15 However, no. 286 does have prior approval consent for conversion from offices to three flats (ref. 181090) as well as planning permission for the insertion of additional windows to the east flank elevation, directly facing the application site and proposed building (ref. 181077). Neither of these consents/permissions has been implemented at the time of writing this report however the implications of implementation either in relation to the proposed development are considered below. The owner of no. 286 has raised objection to the proposed development on the basis of its impact upon no. 286 given the above consent/permissions which has recently been granted.
- 6.16 It is considered that the proposed development would not cause a significant detrimental impact to the environment of existing office occupiers of no. 268 even if the proposed additional windows approved under planning permission ref. 181077 were implemented. The existing office occupiers presently enjoy triple aspect outlook (through the provision of a bay window on the east elevation providing outlook to the north and south, as well as to the west) to the open plan office layout which provides for suitable levels of access to day/sunlight for the current use. Should the proposed windows be implemented it is acknowledged that this would result in a reduction in outlook (being visually dominating and overbearing) and day/sunlight to these additional windows at no. 286, but given the existing generous window arrangements the level of harm would not be significantly detrimental. Furthermore, it is considered that an office use could function (as it does at present) with the existing arrangements.



- 6.17 With regard to a possible future residential use of no. 286, based on the layout plans approved under prior approval ref. 181090, it is evident that the additional windows proposed under planning permission ref. 181077, to the east elevation would be secondary windows for a bedroom and combined living/kitchen/dining room at each floor. Accordingly, future occupiers would enjoy sufficient access to day/sunlight and outlook from the existing arrangements (including two windows on the west elevation for the living/dining/kitchen room, one of which is a bay window effectively providing triple aspect), and owing to this context, future residential occupiers of no. 286 would not be considered to suffer a significant detrimental impact to their living environments. Whilst there would undoubtedly be a reduction in outlook (being visually dominating and overbearing) and day/sunlight, to these additional windows, given the existing acceptable window arrangements the level of harm would not be significantly detrimental.
- 6.18 The proposed development does not incorporate any side facing windows to the west flank elevation directly facing no. 286 at ground, first or second floor such that no loss of privacy or overlooking would result if the additional windows to the adjacent property were implemented. Windows are proposed to the facing elevation at third floor level however these are small high level windows would not result in any unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy. The objector from no. 286 has indicated concern that the flat roof of the three storey element could be used as a terrace and result in overlooking to their property. However, the proposed plans do not indicate any access to this flat roof area. Nonetheless, a suitably worded condition is recommended to prevent use of this area as a terrace as given the proximity to the boundary with no. 286 its use as such would be considered to be unneighbourly.
- 6.19 Given the location of the proposed windows on the boundary of neighbouring land, such matters of dispute between separate owners would be covered by the Party Wall Act 1996 - which provides neighbouring owners the opportunity of objecting to a proposal that they consider to be unacceptable, under separate legislation to planning. Notwithstanding the above, specific reference has been made by the objector from no. 286 that the development proposes works to the eaves of their building. Amended plans have been submitted by the applicant which set the west flank elevation of the proposal 0.25m away from the adjacent facing flank elevation of no. 286 whilst the parapet height of the three storey element of the proposal has been reduced marginally to ensure there would be no impact on the overhanging eaves of no. 286.
- 6.20 On the basis of the above it is not considered that the proposed development would result in the stifling of the neighbouring development at no. 286.

#### Dwellings to the rear on Fatherson Road and Muirfield Road

- 6.21 A daylight/sunlight report has been submitted as part of the application which assesses the impact of the proposed development upon the residential properties to the rear of the site. This demonstrates that the proposals would not result in any significant loss of daylight to existing dwellings or any loss which would be outside of BRE recommended levels.
- 6.22 The set back of the rear elevation of the proposal by 5.3m from the Muirfield Road frontage and bulk/massing and height of the proposal not exceed that of the existing building at no. 300 is such that the proposal is not considered to result in any unduly overbearing form of development to the residential properties within Muirfield Road and Fatherson Road.

- 6.23 The rear elevation of the proposal would face the side flank elevation of no.3 Fatherson Road which includes only a small high level facing window and also the rear garden of no.3. At a separation distance of 17m it is not considered that this would result in any undue overlooking or loss of privacy. The proposal would also partly face the front elevation windows of the flats at Carnoustie Court, however this would be at a separation distance of over 20m and as such no undue overlooking or loss of privacy is considered to result.
- 6.24 Overall the proposed development is not considered to result in any significant adverse harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers in accordance with Policy DM4.
- 6.25 Conditions are also recommended to secure an appropriate construction method statement and hours of working to protect neighbouring amenity during implementation of the proposed development in accordance with Policy CS34.

#### **Standard of Residential Accommodation**

- 6.26 Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, 2015) seeks that new development should not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of new residential properties. Policy CS34 of the Core Strategy (2008, 2015) seeks to protect and mitigate development from pollution.
- 6.27 The proposal would provide residential units of adequate size. Whilst some of the units are marginally below the National Technical Housing Standards these standards are not formally adopted by Reading Borough Council at this stage (proposed as part of the New Emerging Reading Local Plan). The daylight report submitted as part of the application indicates that all habitable rooms would receive light levels exceeding BRE recommendations apart from a single third floor level side-facing bedroom window to the east flank elevation. The affected bedroom relates to one of the three bedroom flats and on balance the development as a whole is considered to provide a good level of outlook and daylighting to future occupiers.
- 6.28 The application site is located adjacent to the A329/A4 Kings Road, one of the busiest routes in and out of Reading Town Centre and a noise assessment has been submitted. Environmental Protection Officers have reviewed the noise assessment and are satisfied that the glazing and ventilation specification proposed within it would meet the required internal noise levels for future occupiers. Installation of the required glazing and ventilation can be secured by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 6.29 Appropriate internal noise insulation between future neighbour occupiers of the proposed development would be secured under Building Regulations requirements.
- 6.30 An air quality assessment has also been submitted as part of the application which demonstrates that future occupiers would be served by suitable air quality levels. Environmental Protection Officers have advised that no additional mitigation is required in this respect.
- 6.31 The proposed development lies on the site of an historic builder's yard and as such a contaminated land study has been submitted as part of the application. This study concludes that further investigation is necessary. Therefore, Environmental Protection Officers have recommended that further investigative

reports and potential remediation measures are submitted for approval with the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of any works on site. This can be secured by way of a suitably worded condition.

- 6.32 The proposed development is considered to provide a suitable standard of accommodation for future occupiers and subject to the above recommended conditions would accord with Policies DM4 and CS34.

#### **Unit Mix**

- 6.33 Policy CS15 of the Reading Core Strategy (2008, altered 2015) states that "Developments should provide an appropriate range of housing opportunities in terms of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, in accordance with the findings of a housing market assessment." The supporting text to this policy states that the provision of at least an element of family housing in all developments is a priority, based on the findings of the Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007) (SHMA). The policy also states that the appropriate density and mix of residential development will be informed by the characteristics of the area in which it is located and accessibility.
- 6.34 The proposal is considered to provide a good unit mix for a flatted development in the form of 6 x 1 bed, 6 x 2 bed and 2 x 3 bed units and would accord with Policy CS15.

#### **Sustainability**

- 6.35 Policies CS1 and DM1 seek that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change. The applicant has submitted a sustainability report as part of the application which follows the relevant policies and SPD guidance applying the recognised energy hierarchy of 'be lean', 'be clean' and 'be green'. This demonstrates that a number of sustainability measures are proposed as part of the application. In terms of 'be lean' a number of energy efficient measures are proposed including low energy lighting, double glazing, passive solar gain, high efficiency boilers and low flow water fittings. In terms of 'be clean' and 'be green' the report sets out the photovoltaic panels located to the roof of the building would be the most feasible option and would enable the development to off-set the target 20% CO2 emissions as referred to in Policy CS1. Details of photovoltaics and their installation can be secured by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 6.36 The application also includes a suitable scheme for Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) compliance with which can again be secured by way of a suitable worded condition.
- 6.37 The proposal is considered to accord with Policies CS1 and DM1.

#### **Transport**

- 6.38 Policies DM12 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012, 2015 and CS20 and CS24 of the Core Strategy seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking relates matters relating to development.
- 6.39 In accordance with the adopted Revised Design and Parking Standards SPD (2013), the development would be required to provide parking provision of 1 off road parking space for each 1 and 2 bedroom flat and 1.5 for each 3 bedroom flat equating to a total provision of 15 car parking spaces. In addition to this, 1 space

per 10 dwellings is required for visitor parking; therefore the total provision required for development would be 16.

- 6.40 Plans submitted indicate that 8 car parking spaces are to be provided; 6 undercroft parking spaces and 2 uncovered, this falls short of the Council's current standards. However, given the proximity of the development site to the town centre and the on street parking restrictions in the surrounding roads, transport officers are satisfied that a reduced provision would be deemed acceptable in this central location.
- 6.41 The proposal intends to utilise the existing vehicular access point from Muirfield Road to service the development. This has been reviewed by transport officers who consider this arrangement to be acceptable for the 8 parking spaces proposed. Objectors and in particular the petition received refer to concerns regarding the intensification of use of Muirfield Road for access and pressure on parking in conjunction with the prior approval scheme for residential conversion underway to the existing building at no. 300. The parking/access impact of the proposed prior approval conversion was assessed when that application was determined where it was concluded that the residential use would result in less vehicular trips to the site during peak hours of the existing office use and as such the proposal would not increase traffic in the vicinity of the site. In this respect the use of the access for an additional 8 parking spaces associated with this development for 14 flats is not considered to materially increase traffic in the vicinity of the site. The proposed under provision of car parking is considered acceptable in this central location.
- 6.42 Kings Road and the surrounding road network all have parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. However, Fatherson Road is located within an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Area. There are also resident permit holder's bays only on Muirfield Road adjacent to the proposed development site. Whilst the site is accessible to good public transport links and local shops, the parking demand created by this development should not be accommodated on the surrounding roads where there is significant demand for on-street parking. Therefore, the parking conditions and informative would be applied to prevent any future occupants of the new flats from obtaining a residents and visitor parking permits for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure.
- 6.44 As such it is not considered that the proposal for an additional fourteen flats would result in any significant additional transport impacts.
- 6.43 In accordance with the Borough's Parking Standards and Design SPD, a minimum provision of 0.5 cycle storage spaces should be provided for each 1 and 2 bedroom flat and 1 space for each 3 bed flat, this equates to a total provision of 9 spaces. The submitted plans illustrate 2 areas of bike storage, 10 racks to be provided for the residents of the units and 8 for visitors. In principle this is acceptable and precise details of the type of cycle storage can be secured by way of a suitable condition.
- 6.44 An internal ground floor bin storage area has been illustrated on plans. This is shown to be located within 15m of the collection point and is therefore considered acceptable.
- 6.45 There are no transport objections to the proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions above, including for submission of a construction method statement. The proposal is considered to accord with Policies CS20 and

CS24 of the Core Strategy 2008, 2015 and Policy DM12 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012, 2015.

### Natural Environment

- 6.46 Policies DM18 and CS38 seeks to extend the Borough's vegetation cover and that development should make provision for tree planting whilst Policy CS7 seeks proposal should include appropriate landscaping. Policy CS36 seeks that developments should retain, protect and incorporates features of biodiversity.
- 6.47 Kings Road is one of the principal vehicular routes in Reading providing the main route from Reading to the east of the town and Borough. It supports an almost continuous flow of vehicles and buses which inevitably leads to congestion daily at peak times. As such, trees along the Kings Road are very important for the local environment and amenity of this area of Reading. The trees adjacent to the highway also provide screening for residents living adjacent to the road. Kings Road is designated as an 'Existing or potential treed corridor' in the adopted Borough Tree Strategy and the Borough Council has a commitment to retain and enhance the tree cover along these routes.
- 6.48 The site is also located in an area which has been identified in the Tree Strategy as having poor tree cover (10% or less). Objective 6 of the adopted Tree Strategy expects new development to make a *positive and sustainable contribution in supporting the objectives of the strategy in enhancing the town's urban environment. Such planting should be used to enhance streets and other public realm as part of planning permissions for all new relevant developments, particularly higher density urban developments.*
- 6.49 Development in this location is an opportunity to improve the tree cover of Kings Road and the Tree Officer advises that the any application should have been accompanied by a quality landscaping scheme with provision for potentially large growing trees which can reach maturity without foreseeable conflict with the buildings or access.
- 6.50 As such the Natural Environment Tree Officer recommends a condition to secure submission and implementation of hard and soft landscaping scheme prior to commencement of the development is attached to any planning permission. This should include planting of a minimum of 10 trees with larger tree species to the Kings Road frontage.
- 6.51 In terms of biodiversity, the Council's Ecology Consultant has confirmed that as a car park the existing site is of limited biodiversity value. However, a condition is recommended to secure the biodiversity enhancements, including the provision of 'swift bricks' within the building to encourage nesting of birds.
- 6.52 The proposed development is considered to accord with Policies CS7, CS36, CS38 and DM18.

### Archaeology

- 6.53 Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy (2008, 2015) states that development should protect features and areas of historic importance.

Berkshire Archaeology have advised that their records indicate that findings, including spots of prehistoric worked flint tools, evidence for Roman activity including Roman finds were recorded during excavation a short distance to the

east of the application site at 209 - 223 Kings Road as well as evidence of a cemetery, possibly associated with a Medieval Leper hospital.

- 6.54 As such, given the known archaeology within this area of Reading, and the scale of the proposals a condition is recommended to secure a submission (prior to commencement of the development) and implementation of a scheme of archaeological investigation to further assess the archaeological potential of the site in accordance with Policy CS33.

#### **Affordable Housing**

- 6.54 As a scheme for 14 dwellings the proposal would be required to provide a 30% provision of affordable housing in accordance with Policy DM6 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, 2015) and the Affordable Housing SPD (2013).
- 6.55 A viability appraisal was submitted as part of the application. Following discussions with the Council's Valuations Officer it is proposed to provide 4 on site affordable units which equates to a 29% provision, comprising of 2 x 1 bed units and 2 x 2 bed units. A commuted sum of £35, 000 is also proposed to top up the total affordable housing offer to a policy compliant equivalent level of 30%. The tenure of all 4 affordable units would be shared ownership. Through the viability process it was established that in terms of tenure the proposal could support the provision of 4 shared ownership units but if affordable/social rented units were provided the proposal would likely only support provision of 2 such units. RBC Housing officers have confirmed that four shared ownership units would be preferable in this instance.
- 6.56 The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of affordable housing provision and to accord with Policy DM6.

#### **Other Issues**

##### Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.57 As new build residential development the proposal would be liable for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The total liable floor space, as per the applicants, CIL Additional Information Form, submitted as part of the application is 1130 m<sup>2</sup>. On this basis CIL liability is estimated to be £166437, albeit this figure is likely to decrease slightly in practice in the event that the applicant applies for social housing relief for the affordable elements of the scheme.

##### Employment Skills and Training Plan

- 6.58 In addition to the affordable housing matters referenced above in the appraisal to be secured via s106 legal agreement, it is also necessary to secure a construction phase Employment Skills and Training Plan via a s106 obligation. This is in line with the Employment Skills and Training SPD's requirements. This can be in the form of a site specific plan or a financial contribution. The applicant has indicated they wish to make the required level of financial contribution in this respect (£2,825) which will be sought via the s106.

##### Access

- 6.59 Policy CS5 seeks that proposals should be located, sited and designed to provide suitable access, to, into and within, its facilities for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily.

- 6.60 All access points to the site and building will be a level threshold with a full DDA compliant lift accessing all floors. Retention of the lift is to be secured by way of a suitably worded condition. The proposal is considered to accord with Policy CS5.

### Representations

- 6.59 All matters raised are considered to have been addressed in the main body of the report.

## 7. Equality

- 7.1 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the current application) that the protected groups would have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application.

## 8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in the context of national and local planning policy and other material considerations as set out in this report. As such it is recommended to grant full planning permission subject to the recommended conditions and informative and satisfactory completion of a section 106 legal agreement.

### **Drawings Submitted:**

Drawing no.s:

PL-04 Rev A - Proposed Apartment Plans - All Floors

PL-05 Rev A - Proposed Elevations

PL-07 Rev A - Proposed 3D Views

PL-08 Rev A - Proposed Section

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018

PL-01 - Existing Location and Block Plans

PL-02 - Existing Topographic Site Plan

PL-06 - Existing Elevations

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018

**Case Officer: Matt Burns**

# PLANS



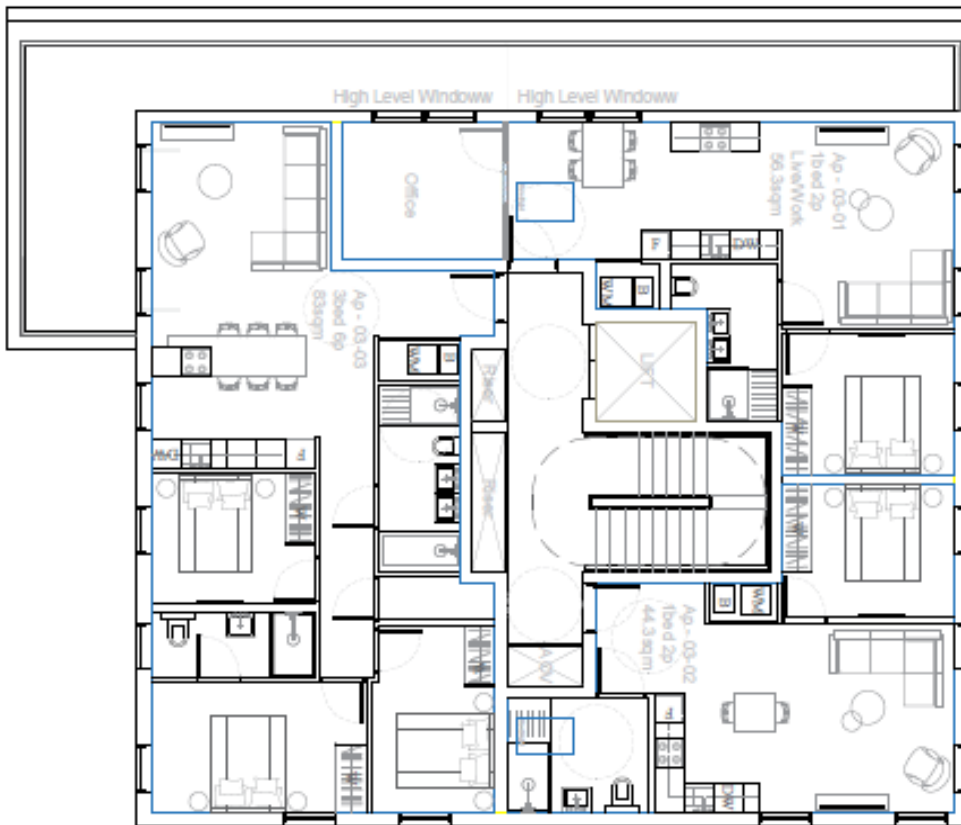
Proposed Site Plan/Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First & Second floor Plans - 1:100@A1

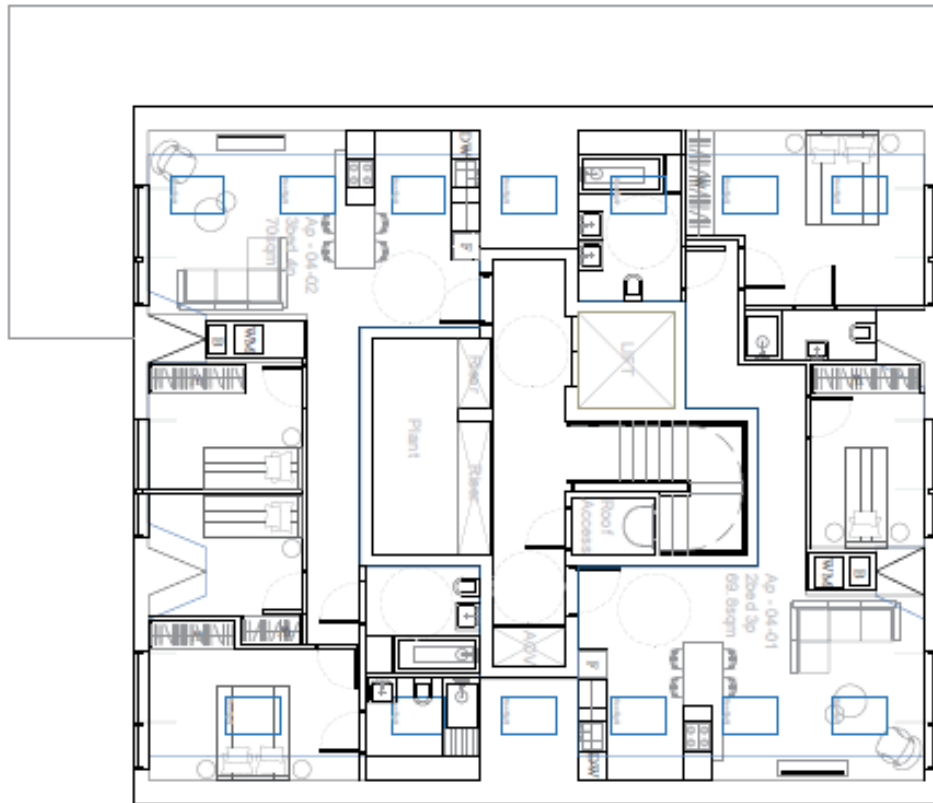


Proposed Third floor Plan - 1:100@A1

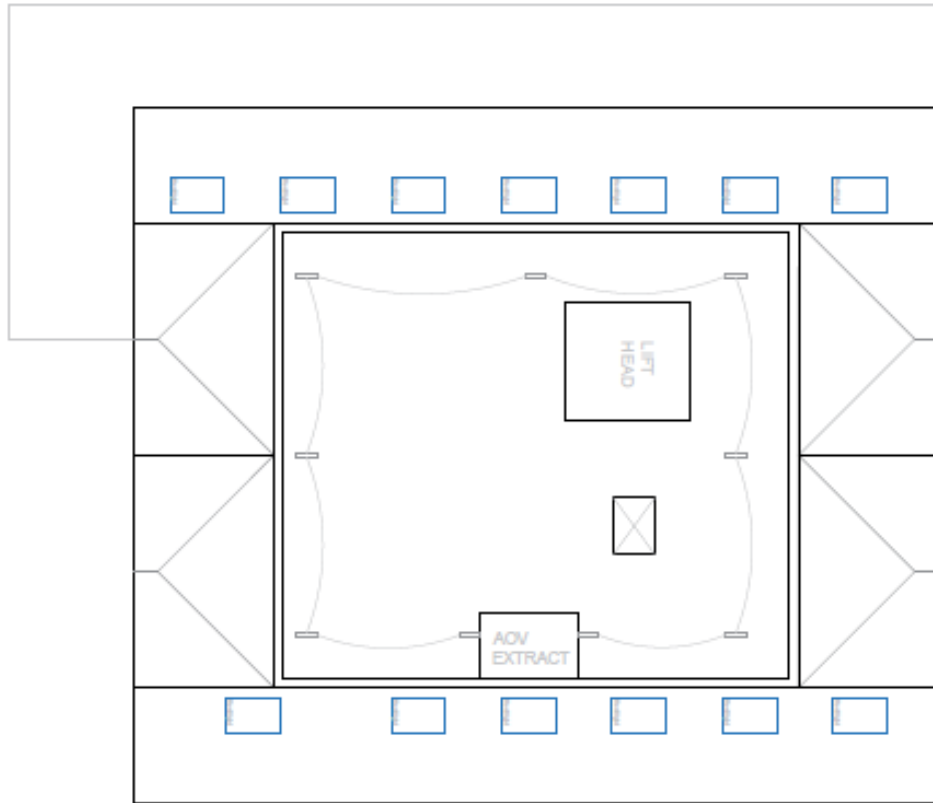


Proposed First, Second and Third Floor Plans

Proposed Attic Plan - 1:100@A1



Proposed Roof Plan - 1:100@A1

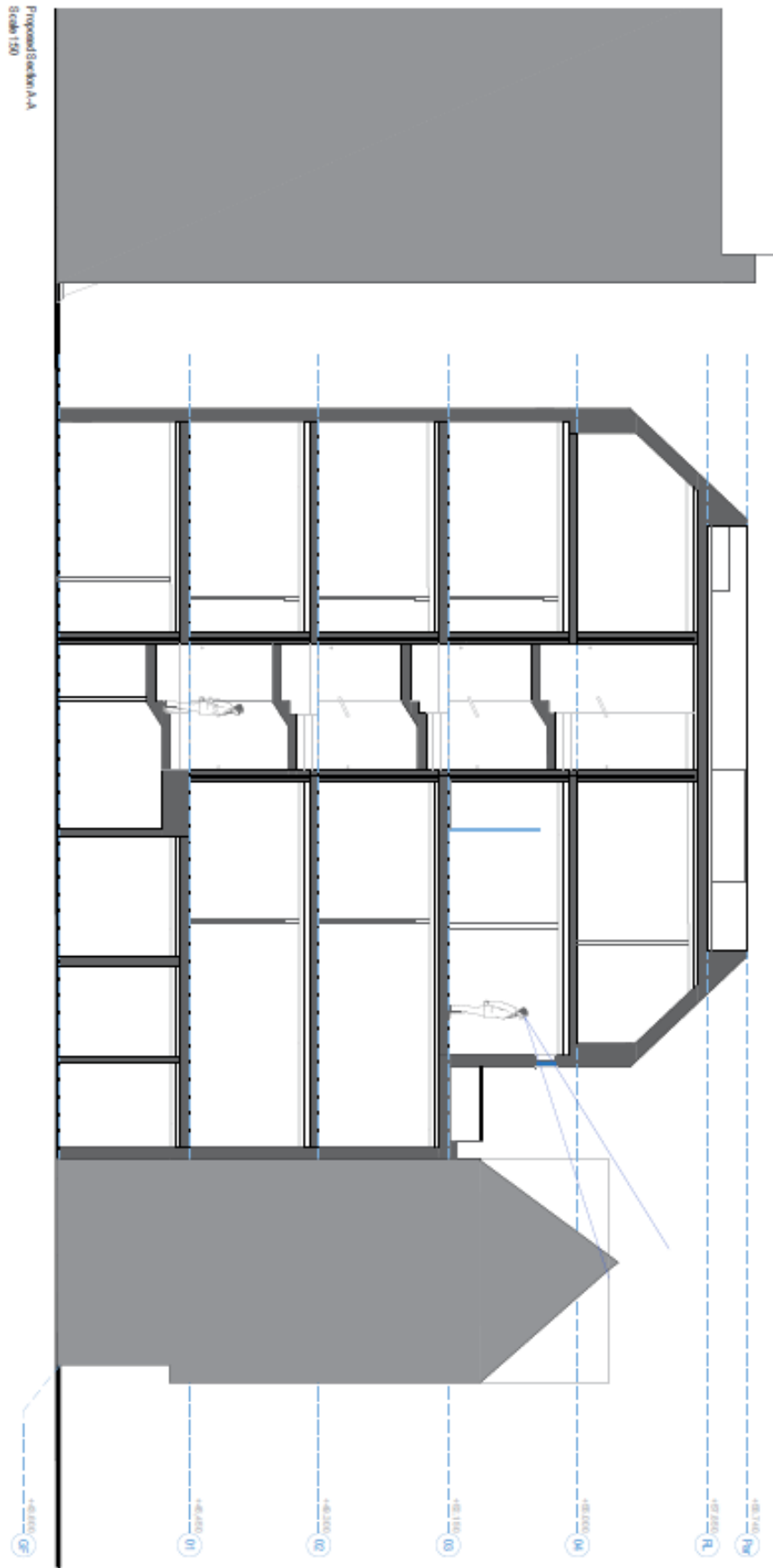


Proposed Attic (Fourth Floor) and Roof Plan



Proposed Elevations

Proposed Section A-A  
Scale: 1/50



Proposed Section (East to West)



Proposed 3D view 1



Proposed 3D view 3

---

Proposed Visuals



Proposed 3D view 2



Proposed 3D view 4

---

Proposed Visuals