

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND REGULATORY SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 210017/FUL

Address: Hunsaker, Alfred Street, Reading

Proposal: Replacement of the external façade and timber decking to balconies to the building housing flats at Hunsaker, Hermitage, Halcyon and Haywards in Chatham Place, Alfred Street

Applicant: Manco Ltd

Deadline: 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021

### RECOMMENDATION:

**GRANT** full planning permission, subject to conditions, to include:

1. Time limit for implementation
2. Approved plans
3. Materials to be used externally
4. Standard hours of construction and demolition
5. Construction Method Statement

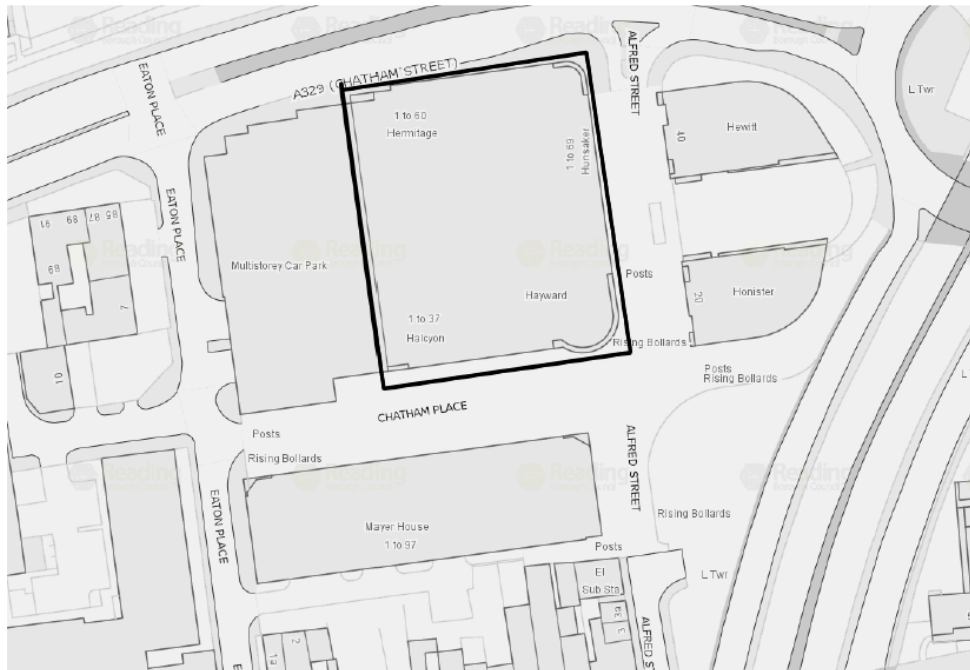
Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Building regulations
3. Complaints about construction
4. Positive and proactive
5. Appropriate licences need to be obtained

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site consists of 4 blocks of private residential flats ranging from 8 to 10 storeys in height. The building is located in Chatham Place and includes 211 flats within Hunsaker, Hermitage, Halcyon and Haywards. The building adjoins the multi storey car park to the west with retail/commercial uses on the ground floor.
- 1.2 The building is part of the larger Chatham Place development that was completed in 2009.

## Site Location Plan



## 2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the replacement of the external façade and timber decking to the balconies of the building.
- 2.2 Investigations carried out by the applicant revealed the materials incorporated within the existing façade and missing/defective fire barriers resulted in the building being classified as a high risk in the case of fire.
- 2.3 The proposal involves replacing the existing cladding with cladding that closely matches the existing but which meets the required fire classification; replacing the timber larch cladding with Rockpanel Wood in a 'Caramel Oak' colour and replacing the timber decking laid on the balconies with aluminium decking. Rockpanel Wood panelling is a product produced from compressed natural basalt bonded with organic material "to combine the advantages of stone and workability of wood".
- 2.4 The proposal also involves replacing the existing unsafe insulation and cement board and the installation of new fire barriers to all wall/floor and door/window reveals. The agent initially advised that the proposed insulation will be 40mm thicker than the existing insulation and therefore the building will increase in size by 40mm on either side; however, the agent has recently stated that other materials on the inner framework of the building may also not be to the correct standard and they may have the opportunity to add insulation into the inner framework and therefore the 40mm projection may not be required.

## 3. SUBMITTED PLANS AND DOCUMENTS:

Drawing No: PL-01 Rev 01 - Location Plan

Drawing No: PL-02 Rev 01 - Block Plan

Drawing No: PL-06 Rev 01 - Existing Plans Lower Ground and Ground Floor  
Drawing No: PL-07 Rev 01 - Existing Plans First Floor and Eighth Floor Plan  
Drawing No: PL-08 Rev 01 - Existing External North Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-09 Rev 01 - Existing External East Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-10 Rev 01 - Existing External South Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-11 Rev 01 - Existing External West Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-12 Rev 01 - Existing North Courtyard Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-13 Rev 01 - Existing East Courtyard Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-14 Rev 01 - Existing South Courtyard Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-15 Rev 01 - Existing West Courtyard Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-16 Rev 01 - Proposed External North Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-17 Rev 01 - Proposed External East Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-18 Rev 01 - Proposed External South Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-19 Rev 01 - Proposed External West Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-20 Rev 01 - Proposed North Courtyard Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-21 Rev 01 - Proposed East Courtyard Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-22 Rev 01 - Proposed South Courtyard Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-23 Rev 01 - Proposed West Courtyard Elevation  
Drawing No: PL-24 Rev 01 - Rendering of the courtyard  
Drawing No: PL-25 Rev 01 - Model of the Proposed Rockpanels

#### 4. PLANNING HISTORY

There have been numerous applications relating to the site however the most relevant are as follows:

03/00825/OUT (Civica Ref: 031373) - Mixed use development to include 98,321 sq.m. office, 258 residential units, 100 bed hotel, leisure uses, public swimming pool and multi storey car park. Flexible mix uses on ground floor of (A1,A2,A3,C3,D1,D 2). Decking over IDR. Permitted 12/10/2004.

05/00849/FUL (Civica Ref: 051364) - Detailed planning application for phase 1 comprising a mixed use development of 50,289 sq.m gea including 307 residential units (211 Private and 96 affordable), 591 space multi-storey car park, ancillary parking, a community use, flexible mixed uses at ground floor level comprising A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and D2 uses, highways and public realm works. Permitted 29/11/2005.

09/01771/MA (Civica Ref: 090985) - Minor amendment to planning permission 05/00849/FUL for door locations and high level zone for future signage and air ventilation/extract. Agree 17/11/2009.

12/00798/FUL (Civica Ref: 120293) - Detailed planning application for phase 2 of the Chatham Place redevelopment comprising one nine storey and one nineteen storey building to accommodate a total of 184 residential units and ground floor retail uses (use classes A1, A2 or A3), together with basement car parking, public and private amenity space, public realm works and landscaping and alterations to existing vehicular access. Permitted 28/11/2012.

13/00156/NMC (Civica Ref: 130149) - Internal alterations, reduction in height of ground floor from 4.9m to 4.6m, reduction in glazing area to lobby and shopfront, use of black brick at ground floor level, addition of a glass spandrel between windows of two top floors, glazed Juliet screen added to top floor, perimeter channel between ground and first floor,

overall 27sqm increase in GEA, 7sqm increase in retail NIA. Non-material amendment relating to 12/00798/FUL. Agree 18/09/2013.

131391/NMC - Non material change to planning permission 12/00798/FUL. Agree 30/10/2013.

150844/NMA - Non material Amendment planning application 120293 relating to the elevations of Chatham Place Phase 2. Agree 20/08/2015.

## **5. CONSULTATIONS**

### **5.1 Statutory**

None.

### **5.2 Non-statutory**

#### RBC Development Control Transport

The site is located in a pedestrianised area. In principle, there are no Transport objections to this application, however no details have been provided with regards to footpath or road closures that may be required to access and deliver material or indeed where materials etc will be stored or requirements of crane use. If any footpath or road closures etc are required a license will need to be obtained.

A Construction Method Statement will be required; however, this can be dealt with by way of condition.

#### RBC Building Control

No comments at the time of writing however it should be noted that separate approval under the Building Regulations will be required.

#### RBC Environmental Protection

No objections.

#### RBC Public Sector Housing

Support the work planned to make the external wall system at Chatham Place safe. This includes the removal and replacement of combustible non-compliant external wall materials on these blocks.

#### RBC Valuations

The building is located on Council-owned land on a 250 year lease from 2013. Although the 40mm extra thickness of the external cladding would technically 'oversail' Council land, it is advised that this proposal does not require additional consent over and above the licence for alterations which the Valuations Team will in any event already be seeking from the developer.

### **5.3 Publicity**

Three site notices were displayed around the building on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2021. No comments have been received at the time of writing.

## 6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

6.1 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) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

6.2 The development plan for this Local Planning Authority is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

## 7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Character and appearance
- Residential Amenity
- Other Matters

### Character and Appearance

7.1 The NPPF stipulates a social objective in paragraph 8b to “support strong, vibrant and healthy communities....by fostering a safe built environment....and support communities health, social and cultural well-being”. Paragraph 91 also states “planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places”.

7.1.2 The proposed development replaces the metal cladding like for like and the timber larch cladding will be replaced with Rockpanel Caramel Oak (see earlier description of product). Samples of the materials have been submitted and the visual appearance of the building once completed will be very similar to that of the existing. Initially the thickness of the proposed insulation meant that the volume of the building would increase by 40mm on each elevation. The agent has recently advised that other materials on the inner framework of the building are being considered which would mean the volume of the building will not need to be increased. Whichever method is undertaken the benefits of replacing the unsafe cladding must take precedence and even if the volume of the building is increased slightly it would not be a significant change when taking the size of the existing building into consideration. There is a recommended condition to control the materials to be used which can be drafted to allow alternative materials to be approved. If more detail is known by the time of Committee an update will be provided.

7.1.3 As such, the proposal is not considered to harm the character or appearance of the area and accords with policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

## Residential Amenity

7.2 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:

- o Privacy and overlooking;
- o Access to sunlight and daylight;
- o Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- o Harm to outlook;
- o Noise and disturbance;
- o Artificial lighting;
- o Vibration;
- o Dust and fumes;
- o Smell;
- o Crime and safety; or
- o Wind

7.2.1 Due to the nature of the proposed works there will be some noise and disturbance to the residents of the existing flats and neighbouring properties. Also, an increase in depth of the material could marginally reduce daylight and sunlight received at some windows. However, these works are essential and the building urgently needs to be made safe for the residents. The benefits of the proposed change to materials significantly outweigh the short term noise and disturbance and slight loss of daylight that may occur for some. A condition will be imposed to ensure that construction works are undertaken during appropriate times of the day.

## Other matters

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

7.3 Although the proposed scheme would be CIL liable development, because there is no net gain in GIA there would be no CIL charge for this scheme.

Equalities Impact

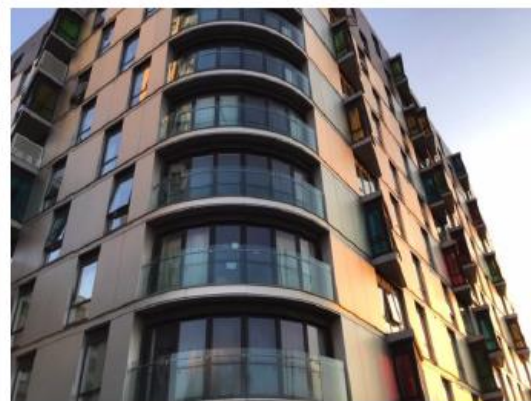
7.3.1 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this 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 proposed development.

## 8 CONCLUSION

9.1 The proposed refurbishment works are considered to be acceptable in the context of national and local planning policy, and other material considerations, as set out in this report. The application is recommended for approval on this basis.

Case Officer: Claire Ringwood

Existing elevations as built



Materials as proposed

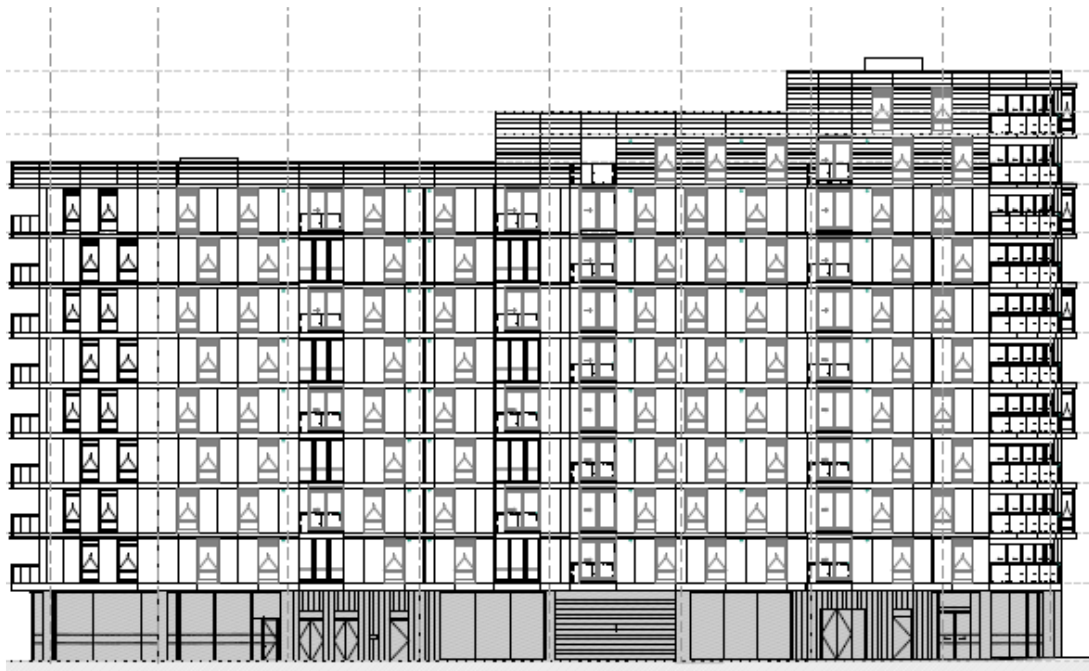


Proposed north elevation



Proposed east elevation

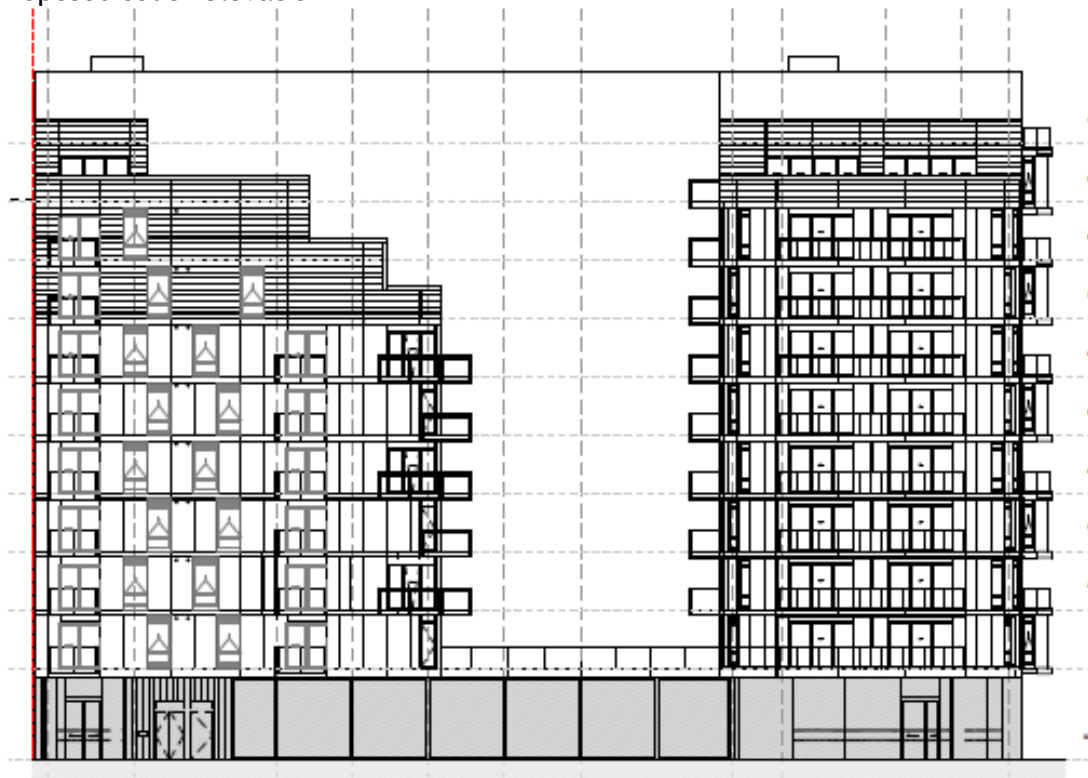




Proposed External East Elevation

1/100

Proposed south elevation



Proposed External South Elevation

Proposed west elevation

