

## COMMITTEE REPORT TEMPLATE

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21 July 2021

Ward: **Battle**

App No.: **210583**

Address: **75 Loverock Road, Reading**

Proposal: Change of use of 75 Loverock Road from B8 to B2 requiring minor alterations and erection of substation and external plant area.

Applicant: **Stephen George & Partners**

Deadline: **2 August 2021**

### **RECOMMENDATION: 210583/FUL**

**GRANT** Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives.

#### **CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:**

- 1) TL1 - 3 yrs
- 2) AP1 - Approved Plans
- 3) M2 - Materials to match existing
- 4) C1 - Hours of Construction
- 5) C4 - No Bonfires
- 6) DC7 - Refuse and Recycling to be approved (to be vermin proof)
- 7) SU6 - BREEAM Post construction
- 8) DC1 - Vehicle Parking as specified
- 9) DC3 - Vehicle Access as specified
- 10) DC5 - Cycle Parking as specified

#### **INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:**

- 1) IF5 - Terms and Conditions
- 2) IF6 - Building Regulations
- 3) IF2 - Pre-Commencement Conditions
- 4) IF3 - Highways
- 5) IF7 - Complaints about Construction
- 6) IF8 - Encroachment
- 7) IF1 - Positive & Proactive.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

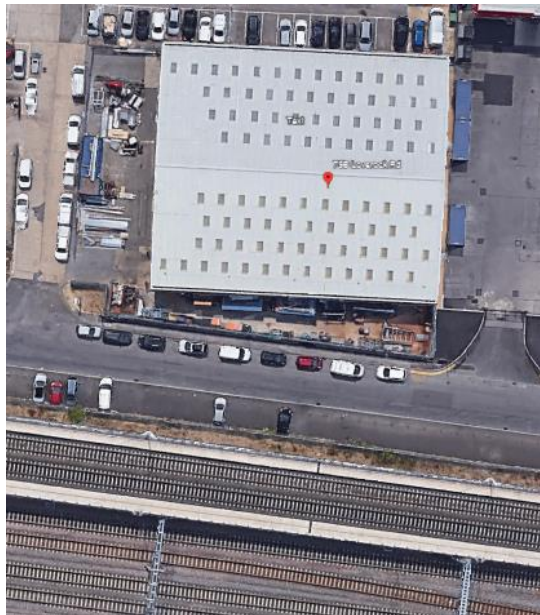
1.1 The site is located in the EM2h: Portman Road industrial estate, Core Employment area and AQMA. The site comprises 2 industrial units, split into 75A and 75B Loverock Road. The site area measures 1628 sqm has a self-contained yard and 20 car parking spaces on the opposite side of Loverock Road.

1.2 Loverock Road is accessed from Richfield Avenue and the Great Western main railway line is located to the north of the site.

## Site Location Plan



Aerial photo (not to scale)



## 2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for a change of use from B8 to B2 for the entire premises at 75A and 75B Loverock Road, with a long lease taken for both units operating in tandem. It is proposed to maintain the existing 3 points of vehicular access to the site.
- 2.2 Minimal changes are proposed to the existing building with minor changes to fenestration on the East elevation to enable a new internal layout. New flues, air intake and extract grilles are proposed with a new substation and external plant.
- 2.3 Submitted Plans and Documentation:  
The following plans and supporting documents have been assessed:

Received 7 June 2021

21-035-SGP DR A 130100 Rev P0 Existing floor plans

21-035-SGP DR A 130200 Rev P0 Existing elevations and section

21-035-SGP DR A 131000 Rev P0 Proposed location plan

21-035-SGP DR A 131001 Rev P0 Proposed site plan

21-035-SGP DR A 131100 Rev P0 Proposed floor plans

21-035-SGP DR A 131200 Rev P0 Proposed elevations and section

Other documentation

Steris Reading Design & Access statement, 25.03.21

Sustainability statement, Couch Perry Wilkes, Rev P01

#### 2.4 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):

In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. No additional gross internal area (0 sqm) is proposed and so it is not CIL liable.

### 3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The following is a summary of some of the main decisions.

Listed as 75a Loverock Road

- 160757/FUL (PP-05046602) Change of use from waste transfer facility to flexible Class B8 (storage and distribution)/ Class B2 (General Industrial)/Class B1 (Business) use. Permitted (5 August 2016)
- 110790/FUL (11-01898-FUL). Change of use and conversion of the existing warehouse into a church and community centre (resubmission of planning application 11/01066/FUL). Refused (16 August 2012).
- 111485/FUL (11-01066-FUL) Change of use and conversion of the existing warehouse into a church and community centre. Withdrawn (2 September 2011)

Listed as 75 Loverock Road

- 090611 (09-00909-FUL). Change of use of land and building to waste transfer facility. Permitted (28 August 2009) Subject to legal agreement of £14,000 as a contribution towards the Council's costs (including preliminary investigation, design and supervision fees) of carrying out transport improvements and measures identified in the central and western action plan areas as identified in the Local Transport Plan and Reading Urban Area Package.

### 4.0 CONSULTATIONS

#### 4.1 Statutory

No statutory consultations were required given the nature of the application.

#### 4.2 Non-statutory

##### RBC - Transport

No comments have been received at this time.

Environmental health

No comments have been received at this time.

Sustainability team

No comments have been received at this time.

**Officer note:** Transport or Environmental Health had objections to application 160757 for a Change of use from waste transfer facility to flexible Class B8 (storage and distribution)/ Class B2 (General Industrial)/Class B1 (Business) use. However, should comments be received from consultees they will be provided to the meeting in an update report.

#### 4.3 Public

A site notice was displayed and letters were sent to 61-73, 75, 83 Loverock, 22, 22, 24 and 24b Portman Road. No comments have been received.

### 5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 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 also states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.2 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is now in one document - the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019), which fully replaces the Core Strategy, the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Reading Central Area Action Plan. The relevant policies are:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 6 - Building a Strong Competitive Economy

Section 8 - Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places

Section 14 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan - November 2019

Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN15: Air Quality

Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

Policy EN17: Noise Generating Equipment

Policy EN18: Flooding and Drainage

Policy EM1: Provision of Employment Development

Policy EM2: Location of New Employment Development

Policy EM4: Maintaining a Variety of Premises

Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Policy TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
- Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
- Planning Obligations under S106 (2015)

Other Relevant Documents

- Technical Guidance to the NPPF (Mar 2012)
- National Planning Policy Guidance: Flood Risk and Coastal Change, March 2014
- National Planning Practice Guidance: Noise, 27<sup>th</sup> July 2019
- National Design Guide (MHCLG, October 2019)

## 6.0 APPRAISAL

6.1 The main matters to be considered are - eg:

- (i) Principle of development
- (ii) Transport/Parking
- (iii) Environmental matters
- (iv) Design
- (v) Sustainability
- (vi) Other Matters
- (vii) S106
- (viii) Equalities impact

(i) Principle of development

6.2 The proposed uses (B1, B2 and/or B8) are appropriate within a Core Employment Area. The closest residential dwellings are 146 metres from the building, with existing warehouses in between.

6.3 Policy CC1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) requires a positive approach to development proposals that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which lies at the heart of the National Policy Framework (para. 11 NPPF).

6.4 The three overarching objectives defined in the NPPF, to achieving sustainable development are economic, social and environmental. With regard to the economic role, the proposal would contribute to economic activity through contributing to *“building a strong, responsive and competitive economy”* as defined in the NPPF, both through the construction period and as part of the ongoing operation of the proposed distribution and retail uses. The proposal would also enable businesses to adapt and would support economic growth (para 80. NPPF).

6.5 Policy EM4 supports maintaining a variety of premises and the site does not lie within the areas south of the Basingstoke Road which should maintain the overall level of storage and distribution uses.

6.6 The change of use will contribute towards employment in the area on behalf

of Steris, 'a leading provider of infection prevention and other procedural products and services' as a company focussed primarily on healthcare, pharmaceutical and medical device customers. The principle of the change of use is considered to be acceptable.

(ii) Transport/Parking

- 6.7 In August 2009, planning permission was granted for 'Change of use of land and building to waste transfer facility' for non-hazardous and dry commercial waste. Prior to the waste transfer use, the property was used as a warehouse for storage and distribution (Use Class B8) and in August 2016 for 'Change of use from waste transfer facility to flexible Class B8 (storage and distribution)/ Class B2 (General Industrial)/Class B1 (Business) use'. Parking provision is being retained with a self-contained yard and 20 car parking spaces.
- 6.8 It has not been indicated whether the change of use will increase vehicle trips to the site, however, it is unlikely that the proposal would result in a material impact on the safety and efficiency of the local highway network. In addition, the site is located in a Core Employment Area which is suitable for commercial traffic associated with B2 and B8 type uses. The proposed development is not considered to create a harmful increase in volume of traffic and parking.

(iii) Environmental matters

- 6.9 **Noise** - Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) states that development should not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties including, but not solely, with respect to artificial lighting and noise. The nearest residential dwellings are 146m away at the closest point. Due to the distance between the site and the nearest residential housing, in addition to its location adjacent to the railway lines, the development is not considered to create a harmful impact on the environment in terms of noise or odour. The change of use will be subject to Building regulations and if relevant, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health COSHH safety guidelines.
- 6.10 In terms of noise generating equipment and the requirement for plant noise level to be at least 10db below the existing background noise (Policy EN17) the submitted Noise Assessment confirms that the maximum noise levels would meet this requirement.
- 6.11 **Air** - The site is located within an Air Quality Management Area (Policy EN15), but it is unlikely that air quality would worsen as a result of the development, and the proposal is therefore, acceptable in this regard.
- (iv) Design
- 6.12 RBLP Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm, requires all development to be of a "high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located." Design includes layout, landscape, density and mix, scale: height and massing, and architectural details and materials. Developments will also be assessed to ensure that they respond positively to their local context".
- 6.13 Minor changes are proposed to the external building elevations, substation and external plant that are not considered to have any adverse impact on

the function or setting of 75 Loverock Road and would accord with Policy CC7.

(v) Sustainability

- 6.14 There are several policies within the local plan which are relevant to new development and sustainability. The newly adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)' also emphasises the need and importance of securing positive environmental improvements as part of any new major development.
- 6.15 The overarching sustainability policy CC2 requires proposals for new development including the refurbishment and redevelopment of existing building stock, to reduce the consumption of resources and materials and includes that *"All major non-residential developments .. meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible"* and that *"Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective."*
- 6.16 The supporting text (para 4.1.4) accepts that *"some types of development, such as industrial uses, warehouses and schools might find it more difficult to meet these standards. In these cases, developments must demonstrate that the standard to be achieved is the highest possible for the development, and at a minimum meets the BREEAM 'Very Good' standard."*
- 6.17 Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change, requires that *"all developments demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change."*
- 6.18 Policy CC4: Decentralised Energy states *"Any development of more than 20 dwellings and/ or non-residential development of over 1,000 sq m shall consider the inclusion of decentralised energy provision, within the site, unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is not suitable, feasible or viable for this form of energy provision"*. Supporting text in para. 4.1.19 states that this policy would mainly apply in Central Reading.
- 6.19 Policy CC5 requires minimisation of waste during construction and the life of the development.
- 6.20 The proposed design promotes *'reduced CO2 emissions from delivered energy consumption by minimising operational energy demand through best-practice measures'*. The following actions are proposed:
- Incorporate energy efficiency measures and best practice design
  - Incorporate recycled materials and materials with low embodied energy impact
  - Incorporate water efficiency measures
  - Incorporate measures to reduce waste.
  - Incorporate measures to encourage sustainable transport
- 6.21 The Sustainability report submitted by Couch Perry Williams conducted an appraisal of measures that would be feasible and not all options were

available due to the limitations of the site. Officers are satisfied that the measures that are proposed would be sufficient to meet sustainability policy requirements, subject to conditions regarding the submission and approval of a post construction BREEAM report, as included in the Recommendation above.

(vi) S106

6.22 In accordance with Policy CC9 and TR2, the following obligation has been considered:

- Employment, Skills and Training - construction and end user

6.23 Due to the continued provision of employment and the existing use of half the site in B2 use, in this instance it is not considered reasonable to request any S106 contribution. The applicant will be encouraged to work with Reading UK CIC to prepare employment Skills Plans.

(vii) Equalities impact

6.24 In determining this application 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 in the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the 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.

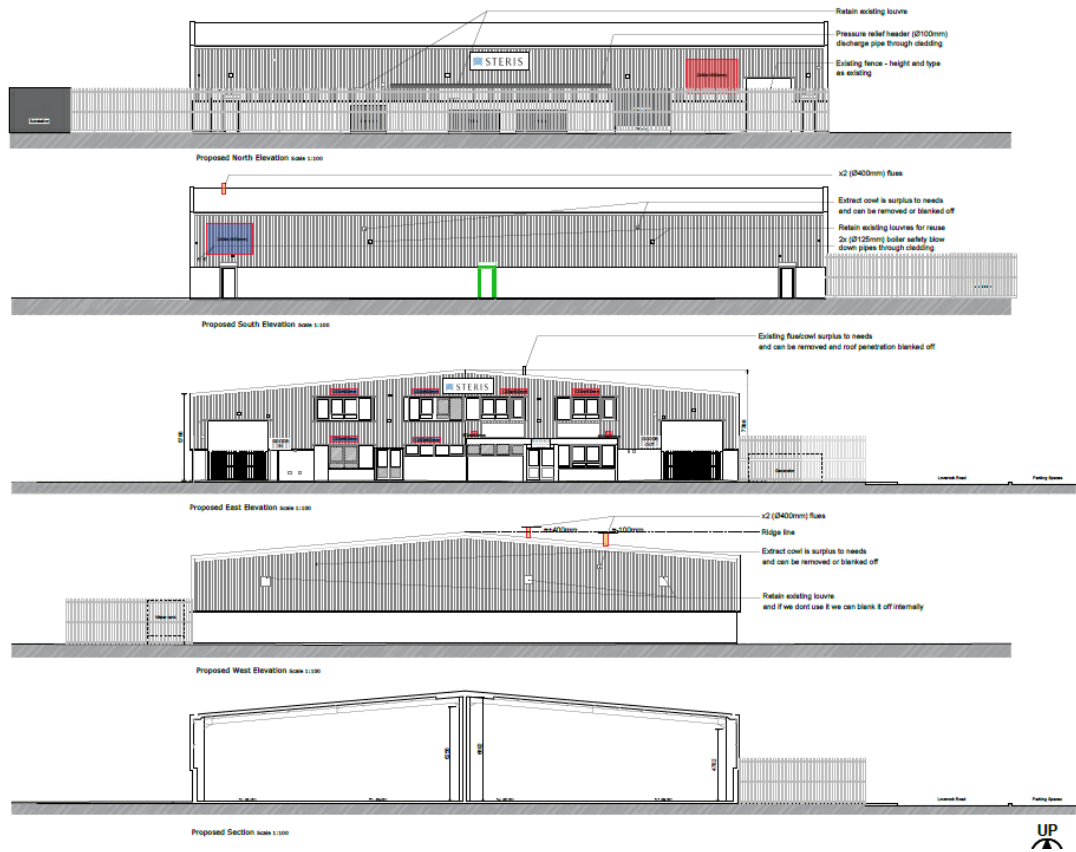
## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

7.1 The proposal is considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions. Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant to obtain additional information in relation to the proposed development.

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes



## Proposed elevations



## Proposed floor plans

