

## UPDATE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021

ITEM NO. 12

Ward: Abbey

App No: 210349/FUL

Address: 115 Chatham Street, Reading, RG1 7JX

Proposal: Demolition of the existing buildings on site and erection of a 3 - 5 storey building to provide 54 residential units (Class C3). Provision of private and communal external amenity areas, car and cycle parking and refuse storage.

Applicant: Archel Homes Ltd

Received Date: 4 March 2021

13 Week Target Date: 18 Aug 2021

### RECOMMENDATION:

Amend Recommendation on main report as follows:

Delegate to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services (HPDRS) to:

- i) **GRANT** full planning permission subject to
- ii) ~~(1) no objection being raised by RBC's Ecology consultants to the satisfactory submission of a Bat Survey, and~~
- iii) **(1)** satisfactory completion of the Section 106 agreement;

Or;

- i) Refuse full planning permission if ~~sustainability~~ **ecology** matters not resolved or the S106 agreement is not completed by 18 August 2021 (unless the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agrees to a later date for completion of the legal agreement)

S106 to include Heads of Terms as set out in the Main Report with the following amendment:

- The car club usage should be reviewed on an annual basis **(for 5 years)** to establish whether a second vehicle is required **due to demand generated by residents of the approved development.**

### **CONDITIONS:**

#### Additional conditions:

32. NOISE ASSESSMENT & MITIGATION FACE BAR (TO BE SUBMITTED)
33. VEGETATION CLEARANCE OUTSIDE NESTING SEASON

## Ecology matters

No objection was received from RBC Ecology to the submitted Bat Survey and Assessment (Aspect Ecology Ltd, July 2021) subject to those additional conditions listed above.

### **Transport matters**

The area fronting on to Chatham Street has now been adopted as Public Highway to allow the planting and entrances through the S142 licence, should permission be granted.

### **Representations**

The following representation letter/statement submitted on behalf of Mr S Stanton (owner of The Butler public house) has been included below in full:

*Dear Mr Conlon,*

***RE: PLANNING APPLICATION 210349; 115 CHATHAM STREET***

*On behalf of our Client, Mr S Stanton (owner of the Butler public house), we are writing to you to object to the application 210349.*

*The application is within a site identified for development or change through policy CR12(c) of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2019.*

*The reasons for objection are:*

#### ***1. Overlooking impact***

*Whilst the applicant makes reference within their design and access statement to the existing permission the objector has for 14 boutique hotel rooms with external courtyard amenity space at the Butler (180365/FUL, determined 5th March 2019), there is no assessment as to how this permission has been respected within the application 210349.*

*The development within application 210349 contains both windows to habitable rooms and an external roof area accessed from residential properties facing east, looking directly towards the objector's land. At first and second floor levels of the applicant's scheme, the windows are only 3.5m from the boundary and in some instance, the overlooking windows are the only provision of light / views to habitable rooms.*

*This compromises the achieved permission 180365/FUL, as the design will allow overlooking into part of the approved proposals and permit views from the amenity space into this applicant's residential spaces.*

*The proposals therefore would compromise and blight any potential development of our site, against the direction of item vii of CR12.*

## **2. Live music and cultural events**

*In light of this being a fully residential application, please be aware that the Butler is a pub that always has, and always will, promote live music and cultural events. Without live music, the Butler would not be a financially viable establishment. It is important in accessing this application that these rights are both returned and even promoted and protected by Reading Borough Council.*

*This is relevant for the reasons set out in item 1 above - this application having residential rooms and spaces directly in line with the Butler and therefore affected by the music played.*

## **3. Current planning on the Butler site**

*As the Council is aware - through correspondence with Richard Eatough, Ethne Humphries and Jonathan Mullis over the last 2 years - the adjoining owner of the Grade 2 listed building the 'Butler' has been and is currently working up a scheme for the adjoining site following receipt for approval of a 'boutique' hotel in 2019 (application 180365/FUL).*

*This scheme revolves around our client responding to the pre application advice given to us on 29th May 2020 by Ethne Humphries and colleagues, where it relies on the ability to gain natural light coming from the west (ie from the direction of 115 Chatham Street).*

*Whilst this application for 115 Chatham Street is unlikely to directly impact on the pre-application proposals submitted to Reading Borough Council, we would request that the concept of sourcing natural light from the westerly direction for future applications is not restricted due to permittance of east facing windows providing views for habitable rooms. This would again be in accordance with item vii of policy CR12.*

## **4. Impact on the Listed Building**

*Policy EN1 of the Local Plan states that historic features, which includes Listed Buildings, will have their settings protected and enhanced by any applications which may affect them. Being only 3.5m from the shared boundary, we feel that this application should include an assessment of any potential harm to the Listed Building caused by the application before determination can be made.*

*We believe that this request is further supported as Reading Borough Council have placed significant weight to the importance of the Butler as a local heritage asset, in accordance with policy EN4, in the past.*

*This is also supported by Policy CR12 item v - where the areas of transition should conserve and, where possible, enhance listed buildings and their settings.*

*Without a written assessment by the applicant, the impact of the proposal and any level of harm caused to the Butler, cannot be qualified.*

#### **5. Greater Pedestrian Permeability**

*As with the pre-applications for the site at 10 Eaton Place and that for the Butler, the planning officer(s) requested that we worked in conjunction with their office and the adjoining developer to achieve development across both sites that was harmonious between them and was in keeping with the aim of Policy CR12 item ii.*

*To date no such conversations have taken place with our client in relation to this and so we would therefore request that this joint approach is looked at again prior to the current application being considered any further.*

*We believe that there is a good opportunity to open up the eastern boundary of this application with the Butler and Eaton Place beyond through a co-ordinated approach in compliance with figure 5.4 of the Local Plan.*

*We would also be very happy to meet with officers and the applicant in the coming weeks and show them the proposals we have for our site in order that they can consider these in parallel with their existing application in process.*

*Finally, and for the purposes of good record can we please have written confirmation of receipt of this objection and look forward to your earliest response.*

*Yours Sincerely,*

**Tony Mullin**

**Case Officer - Brian Conlon**