

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 1st June 2022

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 220125/LBC

Address: Oxford Road Primary School, 146 Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7PJ

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for proposed works to Oxford Road Community School - repairs and refurbishment to the pitched roof and replacement of bitumen felt covering to a number of small flat roofs.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Deadline: 27/04/2022 - Extension of time agreed

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Listed Building Consent.

Conditions:

1. LB1 - Time Limit Listed Building (works)
2. LB2 - Approved Plans
3. MLC - Listed Building Materials (to be submitted and approved)

Informatives:

1. IF1 - Positive and Proactive
2. IF5 - Terms and Conditions
3. Any additional works affecting fabric of listed building will require listed building consent
4. Bats

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Oxford Road Primary School is located on the northern side of Oxford Road at the junction of Oxford Road and George Street. The property is a two story Grade II Listed building built of redbrick with a tiled pitched roof and a number of small bituminous felt flat roofs. Within the site's immediate surrounding area are residential properties of various forms. The site is located within Castle Street/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area and an Air quality Management area. There are a number of trees within the side boundary however these are not subject to Tree Preservation Order.

1.2 The Listing description for Oxford Road Primary School is as follows:

“An impressive group of buildings set behind contemporary wall and railings. Built in 1880-3 by Morris and Stallwood extended by Stallwood in 1894 they form a homogenous architectural group and a fine example of educational history. Red brick, red brick and tile dressings, tile roofs and ridge cresting. Two buildings, later linked by corridor. Attached perimeter wall and railings to Oxford Road elevation. Brick parapet wall and square piers with faceted caps. Cast iron railings and gates of paired shafts with trefoil heads above small quatrefoil panels, alternate with rectangular panels with spiral”.

- 1.3 The Castle Street/Russell Street/Oxford Road Area Appraisal note describes Oxford Road Primary School as a striking well maintained Grade II Listed building which provides a positive and active focal point for the surrounding neighborhood. The building has retained its original wooden windows and railings.
- 1.4 This application has been referred to committee as the proposed works are for a Council-own application.
- 1.5 The site location plan is as shown below:

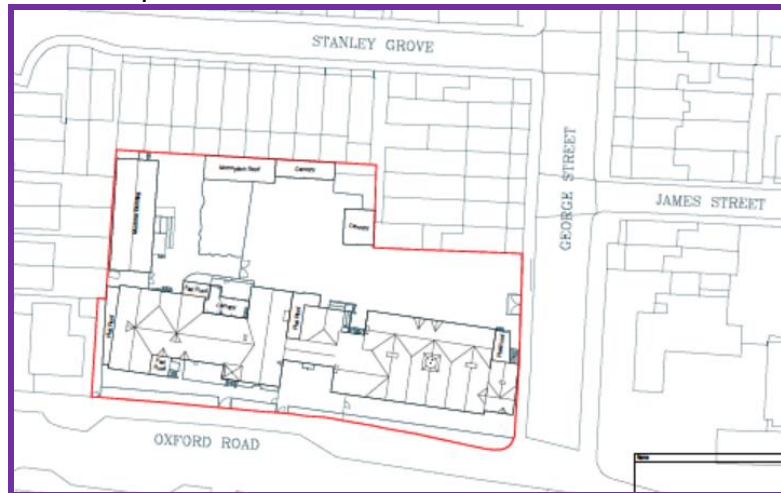


Figure 1: Location Plan (not to scale)

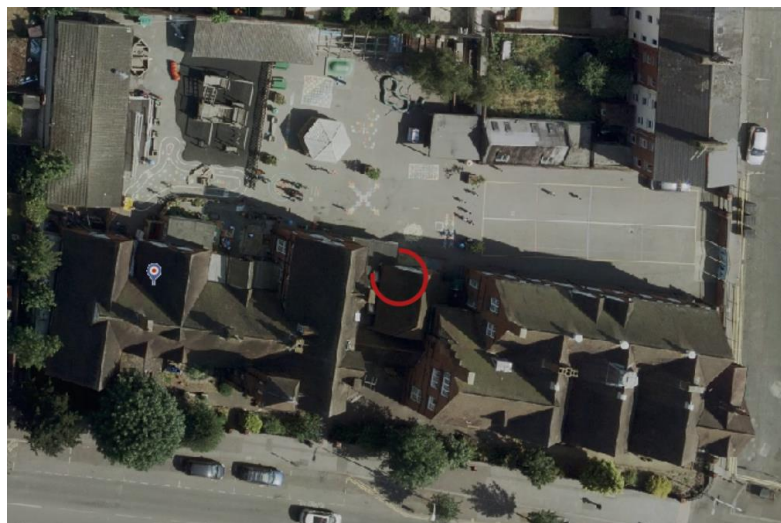


Figure 2: Oxford Road Primary School Aerial View

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The pitched roof currently has a large number of slipped or missing tiles. Previous repair works have been done to the roof. The decorative ridge tiles are damaged in a number of locations and some replacement with modern (non-matching) tiles has already taken place. The tile hung tympana (decorative area) to the gables appear in relevantly good condition, compared to the rest of the roof. Where the loft space is accessible there is remains of a previous underlay below tiles in very poor condition, possibly a straw and plaster torching. Continuation of emergency patch repairs would be uneconomical and risk water damage to the structure below. The felt flat roof above the boiler room and toilets on

west elevation has reached the end of their expected life. The boiler room roof also has significant vegetation, evidence of cracking to the felt and damage to lead flashings, possibly by vandals attempting to steal the material.

- 2.2 Accordingly, Listed Building Consent is sought for the proposed repairs and refurbishment of the pitched roof and replacement of bitumen felt covering to a number of small flat roofs. No other alterations are being proposed as part of the application.
- 2.3 The following plans and supporting documents were submitted as part of this application:

Location Plan E04948-O-001
Received 27th January 2022

Existing West Elevation Rev A
Existing South Elevation Rev A
Existing North Elevation Rev A
Existing East Elevation Rev A
Site Plan E04948-O-002
Existing Roof Make up Rev A E04948-O-003
Proposed Roof Make up Rev A E04948-O-004
Received 3rd March 2022

Oxford Road Community School Design and Access Statement
Received 23rd March 2022

Oxford Road Community School Bat Survey Report dated September 2021
Received 3rd May 2022

- 2.4 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL): The proposal is not CIL liable

3. PLANNING HISTORY

060462 - To provide an access ramp for disabled persons at rear of building
- Permitted - 14/ 3/2007

061145 - To provide an access ramp for disabled persons - permitted - 14/
3/2007

090867 - Pre-application advice for proposed works to listed building to
accord with the requirements of the Fire Officer - 14/ 9/2009

120186 - Erection of temporary modular classroom on Great Knolly Street,
recreation ground and associated play space - 26/ 6/2012

121622 - Provision of 1 temporary Classroom / Nursery Unit and associated
external works (annex to Oxford Road Primary School) - permitted - 19/
7/2012

940140 - Replacement temporary building (kitchen and dining room).
Regulation 3 - permitted - 17/ 5/1994

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Historic England - No comments received at the time of reporting.
- 4.2 RBC Conservation and Urban Design Officer - No concerns were raised regarding the proposed works and as such no objections.
- 4.3 RBC Ecology - A bat survey report was requested and this was submitted by the agent on 3rd May 2022. Having reviewed the report, RBC ecologists were satisfied that the survey had been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the proposed works would be unlikely to affect bats. Therefore there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.
- 4.4 Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee - No comments received
- 4.5 **Public**

Adjoining properties at Foxglove Gardens, George Street, Stanley Grove, and Oxford Road were notified of the application by letter. A site notice was also sent to the agent to be displayed at the application site.

No letters of representation have been received.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 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 a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.3 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”.
- 5.3 In addition, the following national and local planning policies and guidance are relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 - Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
National Planning Guidance 2014 onwards

5.4 Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019):

- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

5.5 Other Relevant documentation/guidance/legislation

Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal
(2020)

Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1:
Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic
England, 2016)

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2:
Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)
Principles of Conservation (Historic England, 2008)
Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British
Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015).

6 APPRAISAL

The application is assessed in terms of the following:

- Design and impact on setting of the heritage assets

Design and impact on setting of the heritage assets

- 6.1 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires that all development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is situated.
- 6.2 The building is a Grade II Listed building and lies within the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area as such there is a duty imposed by Section 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regard to the desirability to preserve heritage assets in terms of setting, special architectural historic interests as well as preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 6.3 The proposed roof works would involve the following:
- 6.3.1 Pitched Roofs
- Careful removal of existing tiles including ridge tiles and hip tiles along with mortar from ridges / verges.
 - The removed tiles will be sorted, and any re-usable tiles stored for re-use.
 - Tile hung tympana to the gables will be inspected and if there are signs of 'nail sickness' then the tiles will be numbered and removed for re-use.
 - If necessary, to remove tile hung tympana to replace fixings they will be reinstated using the number system on removal to maintain original appearance.
 - Existing lead work to valleys and flashings will be removed and sent for recycling.
 - Features such as cupolas and vent stacks will be retained in place and protected.
 - Existing cast gutter and downpipes if sound will be cleaned and painted.
 - UPVC rainwater goods and any defective cast will be replaced with new matching cast iron. Wherever possible existing gutter brackets will be re-used if sound.
 - A new tiled roof covering will be installed with a mixture of retained and replacement tiles, replacement tiles being mixed in. Ridge tiles will be fixed with lime mortar.
 - New lead will be installed to valleys, flashings and other detailing. (Code 6 to valley gutters, Code 5 for Chimney flashings & Code 4 for step flashings

& soakers).

- While access is available, any repairs required to masonry chimneys or timber work will be completed. This will be accessed once access obtained.
- A breathable sarking felt, and new timber battens will be installed to all pitched roofs.
- Where insulation has already been added above suspended ceilings no new insulation will be added.
- In portions of the building where vaulted ceilings remain, insulation will be added following the guidance of Historic England guide (HEAG070 Insulating Pitched Roofs at Rafter Level). Mineral wool insulation will be placed between the rafters and above ceilings. A breathable vapour control barrier will be placed over the rafters and a counter batten added above the vapour control layer to ensure adequate ventilation space.

6.3.2 Proposed works on the flat roofs

- Strip up and remove existing felt covering and lead.
- Install new insulation to current Building Regulations. Forming gutters in roof surface where features e.g., windows prevent
- 150mm upstand.
- Install new reinforced bitumen membrane
- Install Ublifex Lead Alternative Flashing, due to ease of access to low level flat roofs, there is a high probability of lead theft from this area.

6.4 The above schedule of works is considered to be generally satisfactory. The proposed works would be limited to the roof. The proposal would utilise salvaged roof tiles and other roofing materials. In cases where this would not be possible, the use of a like for like replacement materials is proposed. However, to ensure that the proposed replacement materials match the existing ones, samples will be required to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. A condition to secure this is recommended.

6.5 Whilst the use of bituminous flat roofing is a generally poor quality buildings material, these are for limited parts of the building and are essentially a like-for-like replacement. The use of a lead substitute for these low-level elements is acceptable in this instance, given the susceptibility to theft.

6.6 No other part of the building would be affected by the proposal and thus no harm to the internal or external of the listed building. In addition, the proposed works would preserve the character and setting/views of the Conservation Area within which the building is located.

6.7 In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed works would not have detrimental impact on the setting or character of the listed building and conservation area within which it is located, and the proposal therefore complies with the requirements of Section 66 and 72 of the Town and Country (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the statutory duties of the Council in this regard have been discharged.

Other matters

6.8 Whilst bats are not a relevant planning consideration to this LBC application, the applicant was advised to undertake a bat survey as this was

considered prudent advice, where bats are a protected species and the works involve extensive works to a historic roof. The study has found no evidence of bats and the ecologist is satisfied with the standard of the study. The works are to be conducted to a building which is also within a Conservation Area, however, impacts on the Conservation Area are not relevant to a LBC application.

Equalities Impact

6.9 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.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed roof repairs and refurbishment have been carefully considered in the context of national and local planning policy and guidance and other supplementary planning documents and have been found to be acceptable. Therefore, the listed building consent application is recommended for approval subject to conditions detailed above.

Case Officer: Beatrice Malama

Plans considered:

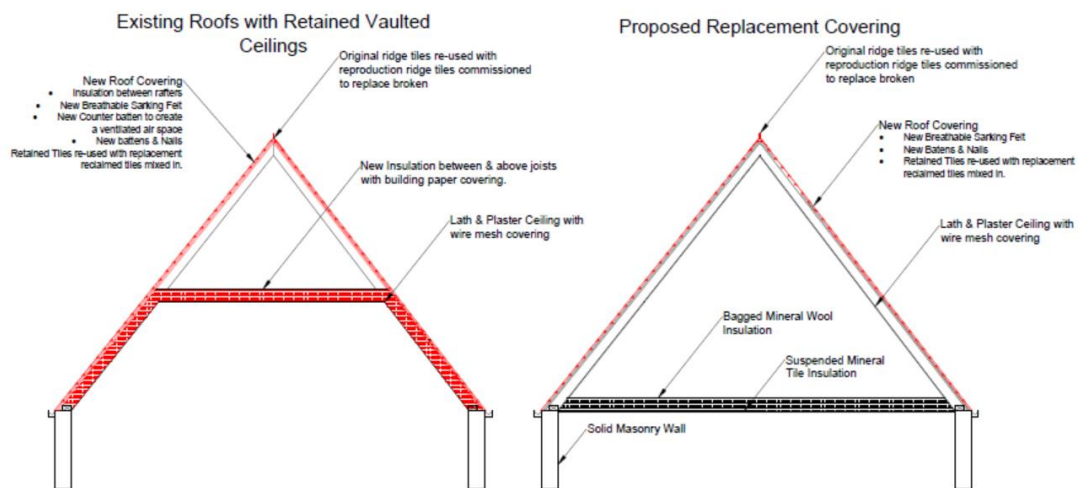


Figure 3: Proposed Roof Makeup

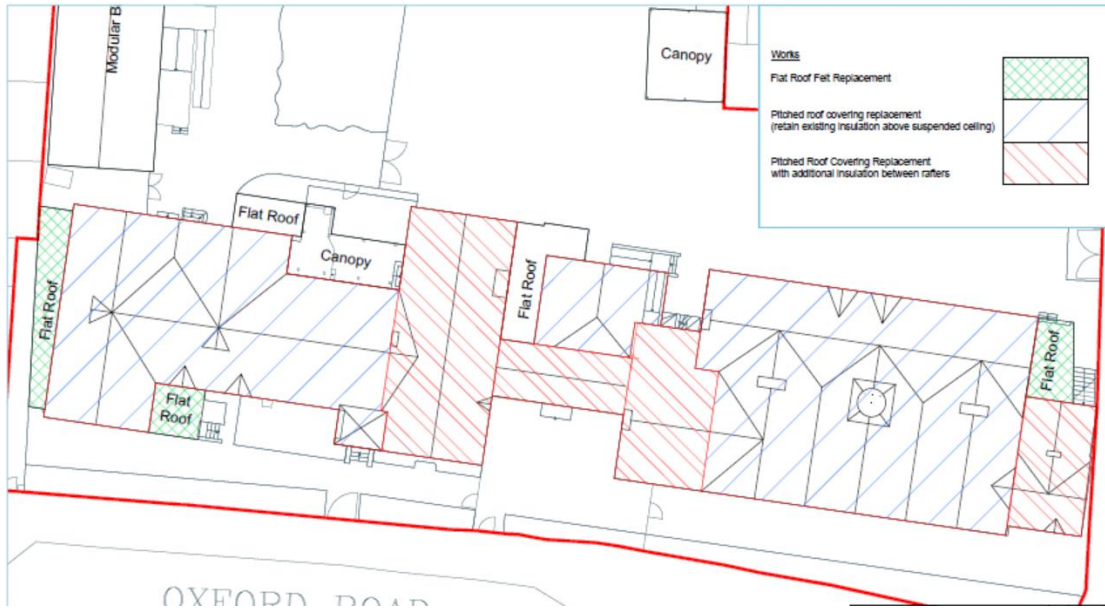


Figure 4: Proposed Roof works (not to scale)