

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 09/10/2019

Ward: ABBEY

App No: 191310/REG3

Address: Weirside Court, Orts Road, Reading RG1 3JZ

Proposal: Glazed platform lift covering an area of 4 m² with overall dimensions 2.05 m deep and 1.92 m wide; supported on steel frame clad in white powder coated aluminium laid on low red brick plinth and brown brick cill to match existing facing and feature brickwork, surrounding a lift pit not exceeding 200mm depth. Clear and opaque glass to front side walls, capped with flat roof; guttering and fascia to match existing.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Date validated: 12/08/2019

Target date: 07/10/2019

Extension agreed: 16/10/2019

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT full planning permission subject to conditions, to include:

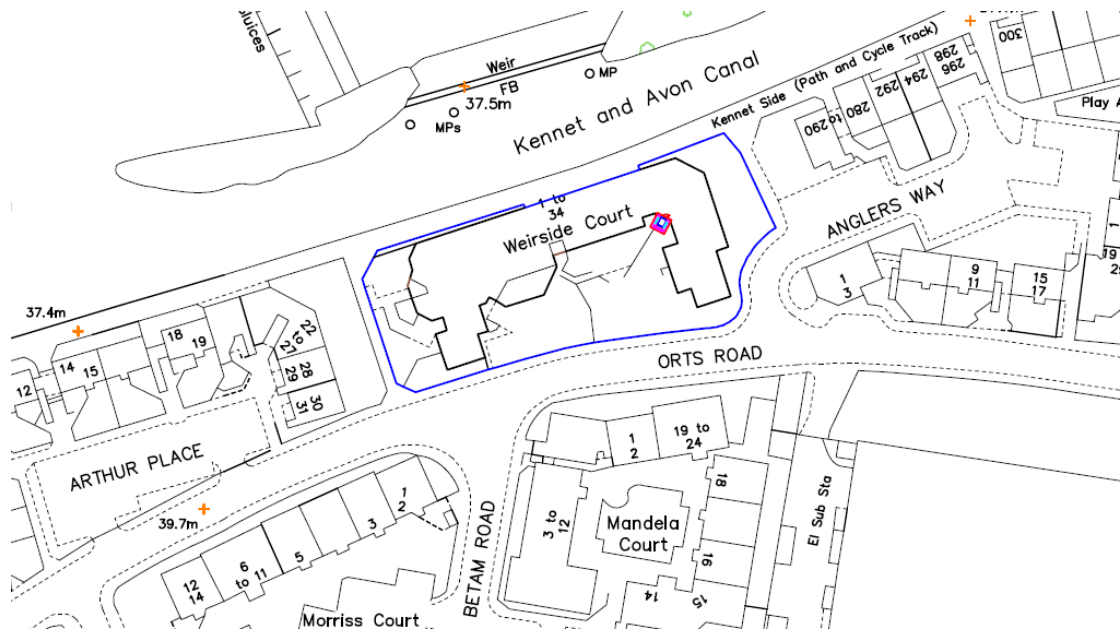
1. TL1 three year time limit for implementation
2. Approved plans
3. Materials to be used externally
4. Standard hours of construction and demolition
5. Retention of lift and maintenance

Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Need for Building Regulations approval
3. Positive and proactive
4. Environment Agency permit required

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site is located in a predominantly residential area, east of the town centre. The site is located within an urban area of flats and houses.
- 1.2 The site comprises a four storey block containing flats. The U-shaped arrangement fronts onto a parking court. The rear of the site fronts Kennet Side.
- 1.3 Weirside Court is a Council-owned Sheltered Housing premises providing residential accommodation for elderly persons in 32 self-contained flats.



Site Location Plan

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for works to accommodate installation of a new platform lift at the north-eastern corner of the parking court, situated on the inside corner of the elevation facing Orts Road. This involves a glazed platform lift to be supported on a low red brick plinth and brown brick cill to match existing facing and feature brickwork with clear and opaque glass to front and side walls and white powder aluminium cladding supporting the steel frame, capped with a flat roof and guttering and fascia to match existing.
- 2.2 The new lift will increase the total gross floor area of the building by 4 m² with overall dimensions of 2.05 m deep and 1.92 m wide.
- 2.3 The application is being referred to Planning Applications Committee for a decision as Reading Borough Council is the applicant.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 None relevant.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 The Environment Agency expressed no objection to the application, but noted that an environmental permit or exemption will be required as per the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 for any activities taking place:
 - On or within 8 m of a main river, is it?
 - On or within 8 m of a flood defence structure or culverted main river, or
 - In a floodplain more than 8 m from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure if planning permission has not been granted.
- 4.2 A site notice was displayed from 21st August 2019. No comments have been received.

- 4.3 Building Control and RBC's access officer were consulted. No comments have yet been received but any comments which are subsequently received will be reported to your meeting

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

- 5.2 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008, as altered 2015)

Policy CS5: Inclusive Access

Policy CS7: Design and the Public Realm

Policy CS35: Flooding

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, as altered 2015)

Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity

Policy DM7: Accommodation for Vulnerable People

New Reading Borough Local Plan (expected adoption November 2019)

The new local plan's policies are now considered to be advanced now the Inspector's report on the Modification has been received. Adoption of the New Local Plan is anticipated to be at Full Council on 4 November. Relevant policies regarding access, design, flooding, amenity and accommodation are as follows:

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

EN18: Flooding and Drainage

H6: Accommodation for Vulnerable People

These policies largely continue the themes of existing planning policies and do not introduce any new requirements that would be relevant to this application.

6. APPRAISAL

(i) Character and Appearance

- 6.1 The proposed works are fairly modest and would preserve the form and proportions of the existing building and would sit comfortably within the existing parking court. The site of the proposed lift is partially paved, partially landscaped with a low garden wall. From Orts Road, the proposal would not appear dominant or out of context with the existing character of the area. It is considered that the proposed materials would be appropriate in terms of colour and texture. As such, the proposal would not cause harm to the character of the area. The proposal would therefore accord with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy.

(ii) Residential Amenity

6.2 The proposed works would improve the standard of accommodation within the building generally. The proposals would not result in harm to the amenity of occupiers of the building itself or nearby residential dwellings. The works would not affect the amenity of existing dwellings as the lift would be located away from any nearby room. From Orts Road, the proposed lift would be somewhat obscured given the U-shaped parking court. The amenity of neighbours would be protected during construction and demolition phases by the recommended restriction on hours of work for condition, rather than informative. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document.

(iii) Flooding

6.3 The exact location of the lift is located within Flood Zone 1 and the application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment. Although the proposed lift is considered to be zone 1 compatible, the applicant will pursue some measures of flood resilient construction, including:

- Under floor services shall be in a non-corroding material or within non-corrodible waterproof ducts.
- Provision of engineering brick and 1:3 cement: sand mortar for outer leaf to DPC Level.
- Use in-situ concrete ground bearing slab and walls, minimum 150mm thick to lift pit construction.
- Location lift hydraulic/traction plant above 37.40m AOD.

6.4 Additionally, the Environment Agency has expressed no objections.

6.5 Therefore, the proposals are in accordance with Policy CS35 of the Core Strategy.

(iv) Access and Accommodation for Vulnerable People

6.6 At present, persons with mobility issues access the accommodation via an existing internal passenger lift which has come to the end of its useful life. The provision of a new lift would improve the quality of accommodation for current and future occupiers. It will comply with Building Regulations detailing design approaches to meet the needs of disabled people.

(v) Equality

6.7 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 and disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. 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. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed 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.

Plans considered:

Flood Risk Assessment (received 12/08/2019)
 Design and Access Statement (received 12/08/2019)
 Drawing No: WSC (L) 001 - Location Plan(received 12/08/2019)
 Drawing No: WSC (L) 002 - Block Plan (received 12/08/2019)
 Drawing No: WSC (L) 003 - Existing Floor Plans (received 12/08/2019)
 Drawing No: WSC (L) 004 - Proposed LG Floor Plan (received 12/08/2019)
 Drawing No: WSC (L) 005 - Existing Elevations (received 12/08/2019)
 Drawing No: WSC (L) 006 - Proposed Elevations (received 12/08/2019)
 Drawing No: WSC (L) 007 - Proposed Floor Plans (received 12/08/2019)
 Drawing No: WSC (L) 008 - Section (received 12/08/2019)

Case Officer: Sarah Burr

