

## UPDATE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 7

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: December 11<sup>th</sup> 2019

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 191088

Address: Crowne Plaza Reading, Richfield Avenue, Reading, RG1 8BD

Proposal: Redevelopment of former Crowne Plaza Hotel car park and construction of new 132-bed hotel (Use Class C1), with associated access, car parking and landscaping.

Applicant: RBH Hospitality Management

Deadline: 02/10/2019

Extended Deadline: 13/12/2019

Planning Guarantee 26 week target: 1/1/2020

### RECOMMENDATION:

#### Amended refusal reasons (changed underlined):

- 1) The layout does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of vehicle parking. This could result in on-street parking/reversing movements on Caversham Road, Richfield Avenue, Thames Side Promenade, and the roads within the industrial areas off Richfield Avenue, adversely affecting road safety and the flow of traffic, in conflict with Reading Borough Local Plan Policies TR5 and TR3.
- 4) The design is not considered to be of a sufficiently high quality which responds positively to the context, and would not maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area. Its massing, height and appearance would be detrimental to the designated Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature (MLF), by virtue of being a dominant feature within that local landscape, especially with regard to the resultant cumulative effect with existing adjacent buildings, the impact on the setting of the Grade II listed registered park and garden of Caversham Court Gardens, and the views across the MLF, in particular from the north, especially from the St. Peter's Conservation Area, contrary to policy CC7, EN5, EN7, EN11 and EN13.

## 1. AMENDED INFORMATION

### *Conservation Consultant's Comments*

- 1.1 Comments from the Council's Conservation Consultant have been received and are consistent with the officer views and that of CADRA, i.e. that the site "*is an important riverside location and the proposals are considered to harm the setting of the Caversham Court Gardens, which is a Grade II listed registered park and garden, and views from the recently extended St. Peter's Conservation Area along Caversham Bridge.*" This supports the recommended refusal reason no.4 from the main report, which has been amended slightly as above.

### ***Transport***

1.2 Paragraph 6.49 of the main report states that the submission documents conclude that development would result in a negligible increase in total person trips undertaken during the local transport network peak hour, which the applicant considers would not result in a significant impact on the operation of the local highway network nor impact severely on the capacity of the public transport network. RBC Transport Strategy has now clarified that the applicant's assessment in fact shows that there would be an increase in trips on an already congested network which would be material; and also that the applicant has not assessed the development accurately and therefore further assessment is required. This concern is however, considered to be sufficiently covered by the recommended reason for refusal 2 as set out in the main Agenda report.

1.3 With regard to the overspill parking concern, recommended refusal reason one has been amended, as above, to clarify that the roads affected would include Caversham Road, and the industrial area south of Richfield Avenue.

### ***Section 106***

1.4 Transport Strategy has confirmed that the requested contribution for an enhanced pedestrian crossing on Richfield Avenue (were the application to be otherwise considered supportable) would be £80,000.

### ***Equalities Impact***

1.5 Having further reviewed the floor plans, officers advise that there are 2x no. proposed disabled compliant (Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) accessible) rooms per floor, which would total 8 out of 132 or 6%, which is considered to be an acceptable level of provision. Therefore, the proposed scheme would comply with Policy CC7 and the layout would not have a detrimental effect on the key equalities protected characteristics. (Extract from floor plan below.)



### ***Conclusion***

1.6 The application is recommended for refusal for the reasons set out in the main report as amended above.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah