

UPDATE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 26th April 2017

ITEM NO. 10

Ward: Whitley

App No.: 160199

App Type: HYBRID

Address: Land at Madejski Stadium, Shooters Way

Proposal: "Outline application (all matters reserved apart from access to the site) for residential development (Blocks 1-6) to provide up to 422 residential units, comprising predominantly 1 and 2 bedroom apartments (Use Class C3) along with associated landscaping and car parking; and Detailed application for residential and mixed use development comprising:

- 196 residential units (within Block 7) (Use Class C3) including 164 dedicated parking spaces (of which 12 are accessible);
- Convention Centre and ice rink (Use Classes D1/D2);
- 246 bedroom hotel (Use Class C1) and up to 102 serviced apartments (Use Class C1);
- Decked car parking within Convention Centre;
- Flexible ancillary retail space (Use Class A1) (within Block 7 only);
- Flexible ancillary retail space (Use Class A3/A4) (within Convention Centre only);
- Multi storey car park including 1,972 sqm of office space (B1a) or 1,732sqm of office space (B1a) and 240 sqm of community space (D1 use);
- Public open space (including public square and public park) with associated street furniture and public art and directional signage to form part of wider outline public open space strategy;
- Associated access, landscaping, cycle parking, transport interchange and related infrastructure and engineering works;
- Ancillary facilities for storage, management facilities and plant
- Vehicular and pedestrian access; and
- Demolition of existing indoor training facility; and
- Enhancement of existing RFC Garden of Remembrance."

Applicant: Reading Prop Co.

Date valid: 4th February 2016

Major Application: 16 week target decision date: 26th May 2016

Agreed Extension of time date: 30th June 2017

Planning Guarantee: 26 week date: 4th August 2016

RECOMMENDATIONS

Amended:

- Delegate to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to **GRANT** Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives and subject to the satisfactory completion of a S.106 legal agreement.

or

- **REFUSE** permission should the legal agreement not be completed by the 30th June 2017 unless a later date is agreed by the Head of Planning Development & Regulatory Services.

AMENDED HEADS OF TERMS FOR SECTION 106 LEGAL AGREEMENT:

Employment Skills and Training

- Financial contribution of £231,083 or preparation of Construction skills ESP

Leisure/Open Space/Public Realm

- Provision of indoor training facility to replace the 'Dome' at Forest School under planning application reference 162285. To be provided linked to phasing.

Community Use

- The provision of D1 use within part of the area identified as office space, which could include a health centre - commitment to explore options with South Reading Clinical Commissioning Group.

AMENDED CONDITIONS:

Time

1. Detailed part of the permission - time limit for commencement - 5 years.
2. Outline permission - time limit for submission of first reserved matters - 7 years (by 2024), and a further 2 years for implementation (i.e. 9 years from the date of permission).
3. Outline permission - time limit for submission of all remaining reserved matters - 10 years (by 2027) and a further 2 years for implementation (i.e. 12 years from the date of permission).

Construction

2. The hours of noisy construction, demolition and associated deliveries shall be restricted to the hours of 08:00hrs to 18:00hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 09:00hrs to 13:00hrs on Saturdays with reduced times relevant to events and stadium use (for Monday to Saturday), and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays without prior approval from the Local Planning Authority.

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS:

1. Detailed plans to be submitted to and approved by the LPA, in consultation with Thames Valley Police to identify the type and style of appropriately rated vehicle security barriers/ blockers (to PAS 68/69).
2. Hours of use for different uses.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATIVE:

1. Requirement for a licensing application for A3 and A4 uses and how this would be controlled on match days.

1. ADDITIONAL/ UPDATED INFORMATION

Amended Description

- 1.1 The description has been amended slightly to incorporate the use classes as originally set out in the application form. In addition, part of the proposed office space at the end of the multi-storey car park was identified from the outset (within the Planning Statement) as having the potential to accommodate some community use. As the potential for community use is included as one of the recommended heads of terms it is necessary to include D1 use within the description of development, which has been amended above.
- 1.2 This change does not, however, have any detrimental environmental effects as assessed through the submitted Environmental Impact Assessment. A Statement from the Applicant is included in Appendix 1 to this update report.

Conditions/ S106

- 1.3 Thames Valley Police has requested an additional condition regarding the submission and approval of security barrier details. This is included in the recommendation above.
- 1.4 Since the submission of the original committee report there has been further discussion with the applicant regarding suitable timescales for implementation of the overall scheme, and the submission/ implementation of reserved matters applications. These are included in the recommendation above.
- 1.5 A policy compliant figure for S106 financial obligations for an employment, skills and training plan (in accord with the Council's adopted SPD) for construction is now included in the recommendation above. With regard to a financial contribution for an End User ESP, this would be calculated on the basis of agreed employment density figures for each use and would form part of detailed discussions and negotiation for the S106 legal agreement.
- 1.6 The recommended community use heads of term has been amended to refer to specific D1 uses, and to align with the suggested wording amendment of the description in this regard, as described above. Reference to D2 in the original report should be disregarded as this was an error.
- 1.7 In the main report there was a recommended condition for the submission and approval of an Operational and Servicing Management Plan, to include hours of use for all uses, for deliveries, waste collection, hours of lighting for operational uses, and suggested uses of Royal Elm Square. After further consideration specifically of how the A3 and A4 use classes will operate it is recommended to include a separate condition which deals with hours of use. An informative is also included to ensure that the applicant is advised of their obligation to secure relevant licensing permission which would be separate to any planning conditions.
- 1.8 The recommended condition for the submission and approval of a Construction Management Statement has been amended so that it refers to linking construction times to events/ stadium use.

Transport

- 1.9 Further to questions raised by Transport as set out in paragraphs 7.87 to 7.92 of the main report, the applicant has provided additional information, as summarised below.
- 1.10 The Transport officer highlighted that the outcome of the transport model assessment was that delays would occur at several junctions along the A33 Corridor.
- 1.11 With regard to the pm peak period and increased delays at the A33/ Imperial Way Roundabout the applicant has submitted updated Event Management Plans (Rev D rec 21/4/17), which have reduced parking and include additional mechanisms to reduce traffic on the network. Transport has confirmed that this is acceptable.
- 1.12 Issues were raised by Transport regarding the potential conflict between an event and football match. The Event Management plans include that events on match days would finish by 3pm. This would be kept under review and updated as required. Transport has confirmed that this is acceptable.

- 1.13 The Transport officer confirmed that any development should not detrimentally affect public transport that already and would continue to serve the site. Plans have been provided to show that two way bus access through the site would be maintained, which resolves the concern raised.
- 1.14 The impact to the surrounding network in the AM and PM Peaks have been fully assessed and the Transport officer deems this as acceptable.
- 1.15 The Transport officer confirms that this impact would be managed through the Event Management Plans (EMPs) and an annual review of the EMPs is recommended as a condition, so that any revisions to the bus numbers, parking allocations, timings could be assessed. The proposal now includes a link to Bluetooth data, collected annually, along the A33 corridor, to not only assess finish times of events but whether changes in the EMPs would be required and could be undertaken.
- 1.16 It is noted that updated Event Management Plans would be required to take into account the parking allocation requirements for the AM Peak period. These measures are confirmed within PBA's submitted Technical Note 046 and would be submitted as a condition requirement.
- 1.17 A contribution towards the provision of additional bus priority measures along the A33 corridor has been secured as part of this proposal in order to encourage commuters to change their mode of travel. As a result this would reduce congestion levels along this route above what has been included with the assessment undertaken by the applicant and has been deemed acceptable.
- 1.18 Transport has confirmed that any impact would be mitigated by the proposed contribution and the measures that would be secured and enhanced through the monitoring of the Event Management Plans.
- 1.19 The proposed security measures for the site include for stopping vehicles at the perimeter of the site. Transport sought clarification of the detail of this. The Applicant has responded as follows, which Transport has confirmed would be acceptable subject to its inclusion within the EMPs.

“High security measures that require stopping vehicles at the very perimeter of the site are only likely to be required for high risk events and at high threat levels e.g. the Tory Party conference. These are likely to be very infrequent events. Furthermore the higher security of an event, it is expected that the number of uncontrolled vehicles allowed on site, and therefore requiring intensive screening, will be reduced.

As has been demonstrated with the transport assessment of Royal Elm Park, the means to move thousands of football supporters or conference attendees by bus can also be used at high security events. This would allow for reduced on-site parking when comprehensive vehicle screening at the site entrance reduces entry flows.

As the site has two entrance points, the site can be split to allow lower security levels checks through one entrance (e.g. official and pre checked/cleared vehicles) and higher security checks via the other access. This would provide the option to have variable levels of screening of different users (and for different car parks within the site) and allows for balanced management of the access points.

In terms of management on the highway, temporary variable message signs on the A33 and other approaches can warn drivers of which access to use or when only

pre-authorized vehicles are allowed which will reduce the number of vehicles that may be need to rejected.

In some security situations not every vehicle has to be searched in order to make this layer of security a visible deterrent to hostile vehicles trying to access the site. This method would be employed at when very high security checks are not required and when security/threat levels determine it as an appropriate level of response. "

- 1.20 Final comments have been received from Highways England who state that *"Highways England has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the strategic road network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such Highways England works to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.*

In the case of this development proposal, our interest is in the M4.

Having examined the above application and the current supporting information provided to date we do not offer any objections to this proposal. However, if there were to be any subsequent changes to the local road network (in particular the A33) we would wish to be consulted to determine any potential direct or indirect impacts to the operation of the M4 junction 11.

We fully support any conditions the council might implement, such as Travel Plans, Construction Management Plans and Event Management Plans."

Leisure/ Open Space

- 1.21 In paragraphs 7.236- 7.240 of the main report there was reference to the proposed relocation of the indoor 'Dome' to Forest School in Wokingham, the subject of a separate application with that council. Sport England has now removed its objection to Wokingham's application and to RBC's application subject to a requirement that the reprovision of the dome at Forest School is provided prior to the loss of the dome and its use on this site. RBC's legal officer has confirmed that this requirement should be included within a S106 obligation and Sport England have confirmed acceptance of this approach.

Private Sector Housing

- 1.22 The applicant has provided a response to comments made by the Environmental Protection Officer (documented in paras 4.38 and 4.39 of the main report), with regard to fire escape and stacking.
- 1.23 With regard to the former point, the applicant's fires strategy consultants (Arups) have confirmed that the studio units on drawings PL-72 and PL-76 are acceptable in terms of fire escape and therefore the layouts were not amended. The building would have residential sprinklers, and therefore escape distances in excess of standard Part B regulations would be achievable with the proposed fire strategy. Updated drawings have been provided to show the required door.
- 1.24 In terms of stacking and potential noise and disturbance the applicant has confirmed that sufficient sound insulation would be installed between the units, where bedrooms of units are located above or under a living room of a different unit, in order to mitigate any likelihood of disturbance. This is considered acceptable.

Consultation responses

- 1.25 The Business and Hospitality Association requested that their comments be reported in an update as they were unable to attend and speak. The points they raise reiterate original comments as submitted during the course of the application, and is summarised below.
- 1.26 Although the Association is in favour of and supports the economic development and progress of Reading, that they consider the proposed scheme would provide, the Association believes that the current proposals are *“insufficient/inadequate”* with respect to traffic and transportation matters. They consider that the project would *“aggressively impact the sheer volume and the flow of traffic upon completion [along A33].”*
- 1.27 A further email of support was received from the General Manager of the Oracle Shopping Centre (26/4/17). This is included in its entirety in Appendix 2 to this update report.

Conclusion

- 1.28 The recommendation is as on the main report and the amendments as documented above.

APPENDIX 1: Letter From ARUP Regarding Environmental Statement

Ms. A. Amoah
Principal Planner
Planning Department
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading
BERKSHIRE
RG1 2LU

Our Ref: 24116/A5/AM

26th April 2017

Dear Alison,

PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE 160199 ROYAL ELM PARK (LAND AT MADEJSKI STADIUM) - MATTERS RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Further to recent discussions with my colleague Gemma Care in relation to the provision of D1 use within the Multi-Storey Car Park building, we have undertaken a review, in conjunction with the Applicant's consultant team, and can confirm that this does not alter the findings of the Environmental Statement (ES). This review is discussed further below.

Provisions of D1 use and Review of the findings of the ES

As stated above, a portion of the B1 use proposed within the Multi-Storey Car Park could be provided as small scale D1 use, the precise use within this class is yet to be determined and thus the review has been necessarily broad and assumptions regarding precise use are stated, where they apply, in the text below.

The parameters for the development (Land Use, Movement, Building heights, Ground Levels, Finished Floor Levels) remain unaltered. The following disciplines, therefore, do not require consideration:

- Townscape;
- Ecology;
- Water Environment;
- Land Contamination;
- Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing; and
- Wind Microclimate.

The remaining disciplines of the ES (Socio Economics, Transport and Access, Air Quality, Noise and Vibration) include assessments which are influenced by floorspace split and are discussed further below.

Socio Economics

The assessment of operational phase employment and effects on primary healthcare provision both warrant consideration.

In terms of effects on operational phase employment stated within the ES, whilst fewer jobs would be generated by the B1 Office space, additional jobs would be generated by D1 use (e.g. contract workers including cleaners, maintenance workers, etc. and depending on the precise D1 use, the potential for doctors, nursing staff etc.). Overall it is considered that the effects on employment from the proposals would remain as stated within the ES (major – moderate beneficial) would not alter as a result of the provision of D1 uses.

In relation to effects on primary healthcare, the existing assessment identified a lack of sufficient primary healthcare within reasonable distance of the site leading to an adverse effect that would require mitigation

via developer contributions. As mitigation for this effect, financial contributions were proposed. Should the D1 use be in the form of primary healthcare provision (e.g. a doctors' surgery) then this would provide mitigation in place/in part of/in addition to this financial contribution and therefore residual effects would remain as stated within the ES (negligible).

Transport and Access

For the purposes of this review and the scale of D1 uses being considered, a doctors' surgery (two consulting rooms) has been considered by the Applicant's transport consultant Peter Brett Associates. Of all the potential D1 uses, this use is the most trip-intensive with respect to traffic and therefore the robust case for assessment.

Drawing a worst-case assumption of no allowance for internalised trips that would arise from residents of the proposed development using the D1 use (and any associated reduction in external trips to and from the site), the change in use results in a small increase in expected peak hour vehicle trips. This equates to 20 two-way in the morning (AM) peak and 16 two-way in the afternoon/evening (PM) peak. In respect of daily flows, there are modest increases in person and vehicle trips with an additional 234 two-way vehicle trips and 357 person trips throughout the day. This presents an increase from 7.34% to 7.79% (AADT) in relation to the figures presented within the ES and update note (submitted June 2016) submitted to RBC.

This percentage vehicle increase in daily trips of 0.45% does not influence the findings of the ES. Assessment thresholds utilised within the assessment are not exceeded and the assessment presented in the ES remains unaltered.

Air Quality and Noise and Vibration

Increases to daily traffic flows would be 0.45% and would not materially affect the assessment of operational vehicle flows set out within the ES. The findings set out within the Air Quality and Noise and Vibration chapters of the ES would remain unaltered.

In terms of air quality, D1 uses are more sensitive to air quality impacts than B1 uses. As stated in the Air Quality ES Chapter, pollutant concentrations across the site were predicted to be below even the most stringent of the relevant objectives, so there would be no implications for the ES in this regard.

In summary, the items detailed in this letter do not alter the overall findings of the ES or constitute or warrant the provision of further environmental information or evidence within the meaning of Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011, as amended.

If you have any queries in relation to the above information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Malcomson

ANDREW MALCOMSON

Associate Environmental Planner

cc. Nigel Howe, Reading Football Club
Scott Witchalls, Peter Brett Associates
Stephen Charters, Peter Brett Associates
Gemma Care, Barton Willmore
Kim Cohen, Barton Willmore

APPENDIX 2: Further Public Comment - Support

“I understand that the planning application for the Royal Elm Park development proposals is scheduled to be heard by the Planning Applications Committee on Wednesday. As the General Manager of the Oracle Centre, I would like to add my voice to those supporting this development. I very much hope that the committee will throw its weight behind the recommendation of the planning team and grant planning permission.

Royal Elm Park is exactly the sort of ambitious development Reading needs if it is to maintain its commercial momentum and continue to attract new investment and jobs, particularly as we begin to face the uncertainties of Brexit. Reading isn't just competing against other cities and regions in the UK, it's also competing internationally. Reading has been phenomenally successful in attracting world-class companies to the area in recent years, which has been of immense benefit to the wider economy, encompassing hospitality, services and of course retail. Part of the reason the Oracle has been as successful as it has, is due to the arrival of those companies and their staff and the additional local jobs that they have continued to generate as they expand local supply chains and continue to grow.

The convention centre that the football club is proposing is exactly the sort of major commercial asset that Reading needs to ensure that the attraction for companies to move to the area and invest continues. For all our success to date, we cannot rest on our laurels.

London, the midlands, the North West and north east all have major convention centres to help them attract inward investment; it's time Reading and the Thames Valley joined them. Our recent investment in refreshing the Oracle's riverside frontage, bringing new restaurant offerings to the town centre, has been pursued in a similar vein; it's all about striving to keep our nose ahead of the competition.

If this development is built, investors will see it as a powerful vote of confidence in Reading's future, to the benefit of the whole of our town. I strongly urge the council to show its support and vote in favour of the development. “