

UPDATE REPORT:

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 5 DECEMBER 2018

ITEM NO. 8

Ward: Abbey
App Nos.: 181652/REG3 & 181653/REG3
Address: Former Reading Family Centre, North Street/Weldale Street, Reading

Proposals:

181652/REG3: Outline - erection of a 2.5, 3.5 and 4.5 storey building comprising 47 apartments (including 30 per cent affordable housing) in a mix of one, two and three-bedroom units. Landscaping, cycle and car parking with associated works (all matters reserved except layout and means of access).

181653/REG3: Outline - erection of a 2.5, 3.5 and 4.5 storey building comprising 47 apartments for affordable housing in a mix of one, two and three-bedroom units. Landscaping, cycle & car parking with associated works (all matters reserved except layout and means of access).

RECOMMENDATION (AMENDED):

(Strikethrough text is text to be removed from main agenda Recommendation.)

Subject to the completion of a satisfactory Section 106 unilateral undertaking ~~legal agreement~~ ... [then this section as per main report]

181652/REG3:

- ~~1. The development shall provide no more and no less than 47 units~~
2. Not less than: 30%/14 no. of the units hereby permitted shall be provided as social rented affordable housing (unit split to be to LH Authority approval). All units to be provided/transferred to the Council/Registered Housing Provider no later than first occupation of any open market unit. All units only to be used as affordable housing in perpetuity
3. A contribution of £3,500 to cover the costs of preparing, advertising and thereafter implementing a Traffic Regulation Order to alter the parking restrictions on Weldale Street to provide an on-street reserved parking space for a car club vehicle (CS20, CS24).
4. A contribution of £15,000 towards the costs of funding a car club for up to three years (CS20, CS24).
5. Provision of a construction phase Employment and Skills Plan or payment in lieu of £7,065 (CS11).

181653/REG3:

- ~~1. The development shall provide no more and no less than 47 units~~
2. Not less than: 100%/47 no. units hereby permitted shall be provided as social rented affordable housing (unit split to be to LH Authority approval). All units to be provided/transferred to the Council/Registered Housing Provider no later than first occupation of any open market unit. All units only to be used as affordable housing for a minimum period of ten years from the date of provision/transfer (CS16).
3. A contribution of £3,500 to cover the costs of preparing, advertising and thereafter implementing a Traffic Regulation Order to alter the parking restrictions on Weldale Street to provide an on-street reserved parking space for a car club vehicle (CS20, CS24).

4. A contribution of £15,000 towards the costs of funding a car club for up to three years (CS20, CS24).
5. Provision of a construction phase Employment and Skills Plan or payment in lieu of £7,065 (CS11).

Additional conditions

- Reserved Matters application(s) to indicate no more than 47 units
- Additional landscaping conditions L2A (adjusted), L2b, L3, L6a (see below)

Additional informatives

- TRO required

1. UPDATED HEADS OF TERMS

1.1 The Recommendation above proposes a number of revisions to the Heads of Terms (HoT), following further input from internal consultees and the Council's Planning Solicitor. A brief explanation of each of the revisions follows.

- The s106 obligation will need to be in the form of a unilateral undertaking and not a s106 agreement. This is because the Council is the sole owner of the application site. The application is in the name of the applicant/developer of the Thames Quarter site (Lochailort), although the Council is a joint applicant (hence these are 'REG3' applications). Lochailort does not have a direct interest in the land/application site but it has an option to purchase if these planning applications both receive planning permission. On the basis of the above, the Council's Planning Solicitor advises that the correct procedure is via a unilateral undertaking.
- The amended HoT has also removed the term, 'social rented' on the basis that the LPA's role is to secure no less than the policy requires (ie. a mix of affordable housing types as per the Council's adopted SPD) and therefore on reflection, it is considered that such a restriction would exceed policy requirements.
- Both applications are designed to deliver a fixed amount of units (47) and this can be adequately controlled by a planning condition to inform the submission of detailed reserved matters. This is no longer required to be in the HoT..
- Application 181652 is the 30% affordable housing scheme and part of its purpose is to propose a policy-compliant stipulation of affordable housing and this would be provided 'in perpetuity'. The approach for application 181653 is slightly different. This must reflect the requirements as set out in the signed s106 agreement for the Thames Quarter (162166/FUL) planning permission, which is to provide affordable housing on the site for a minimum of ten years and members should note that that agreement was signed on the basis of the specific viabilities associated with that scheme. This limitation therefore reflects the culmination of negotiations on viability and the extent of affordable housing the Thames Quarter site could provide.
- The cost associated with reserving an on-street car parking space for a car club vehicle and a necessary Traffic Regulation Order process is confirmed. Also the contribution level towards the car club itself is provided. This contribution is in order to 'pump-prime' a car club for a period of up to three years, by which time it is hoped that the club would be able to be commercially-run. The contribution

may alternatively be put towards another car club already running in the central Reading area.

- 1.2 With the alterations to the Heads of Terms indicated above, officers are content that these meet the requirements of the relevant regulations for planning obligations and meet the Local plan Policies as set out.

2. TREES AND LANDSCAPING

- 2.1 The Natural Environment Team has considered the revised tree information and in summary, advises that the revised plan, specifically in terms of the Root Protection Area (RPA) of the Norway Maple, appears a reasonable assumption. However, the corner of the building impinges into the RPA. That impingement will be greater than shown as excavation for the foundations will extend out further than the building line. With the current layout being so close to and impinging into the RPA, a strong Arboricultural Method Statement will be required, including arboricultural on-site supervision, to deal with any potential harm to roots and potential root severance. Tree protection, ground protection and special ground/root protection measures will be necessary. Specialist root severance/removal may be required and again, this will need to be under arborist supervision.

- 2.2 The landscaping principles shown are however, acceptable, the details of which can be agreed via condition. If this is otherwise considered to be a supportable scheme, the NE Team recommends that the following conditions would be appropriate (to both applications):

L2a (Landscaping - When details need to be submitted for approval (but The submitted details shall be in line with the principles shown on Landscape Concept Plan received 27/11/18 9527-KC-XX-YTREE-LCP01RevC),

L2b Landscaping implementation,

L3 Standard Landscaping Maintenance and

L6a Arboricultural method statement needed.

3. CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- 3.1 There are two typos in paras 6.11 and 6.14. At 6.11, it should note that the design concern mentioned was also a concern of the Design Review Panel (DRP). At 6.14, the end of the first sentence should read, "*...has sought to provide the crescent towards the junction in order to frame the tree*".
- 3.2 The main report should have mentioned that this application was subject to a member (unaccompanied) site visit.
- 3.3 Please also note: no CIL applies to outline applications (it is calculated at REM stage).

Plans: 181652 & 181653

Design & Access Statement 061807-LOC

061807-PRE-APP-ELE 2 Rev C - illustrative elevation - North Street

061807-PRE-APP-ELE Rev C - illustrative elevation - Weldale Street

061807-FP - Floor Plans

Case Officer: Richard Eatough