

From: Markwell, Jonathan

Sent: 02 October 2020 10:23

To: Craig Pettit <Craig.Pettit@bartonwillmore.co.uk>; Caroline McHardy <Caroline.McHardy@berkeleygroup.co.uk>

Subject: 55 Vastern Road, Reading (200188) - energy

Dear Mr Pettit / Ms McHardy,

Further to previous discussions, please see in full the follow-up Element Energy review, responding to the additional information submitted by Hodkinson following the initial review. In particular, you will note Element Energy's fundamental concern remains in relation to the proposed direct electric heat supply, rather than more efficient and lower-carbon heat generation technologies.

Most significantly, Element Energy are clear that the proposals do not comply with RBC policy as:

- There is no decentralised energy system,
- There is no use of heat pump technology,
- The development is not prepared for connection to a future DH network in Reading town centre.

There are also a number of other concerns which are raised, including for example a lack of agreement regarding the cost assessments of the heating options and the versions of SAP used.

The Council's Sustainability Manager Ben Burfoot has considered the Element Energy review and, in short, concurs with the findings, in particular in that the lack of district energy does not comply with policy. More specifically, Ben advises that it is essential that the site remains compatible with the intention to connect high density town centre dwellings to heat networks where the lowest carbon emissions are achieved. Whilst the passivhaus fabric first approach is welcomed in principle, the domestic hot water demand cannot be reduced so easily and therefore it is essential for low carbon district heating solutions in this location to be realised. The policy seeks to ensure this and, in short, your proposed strategy is detrimental to this outcome.

Furthermore, it is advised that when a district energy network is developed, this site must be connectable. The river is of key strategic significance to extract heat from the river and it would be expected for you to fully consider this resource not only for your own site but as part of a larger system (it is suggested for example that a water source heat pump could be the most appropriate technology, with a 'slim jim' plate heat exchanger in the river enabling the heat pump to be closed loop - a location under the walkway that goes to the pedestrian bridge appears in principle to be an ideal location for this - whilst at the same time acknowledging that clear that this has been identified as an approach which fits in with the strategic location but it wouldn't necessarily be the only way of your proposal meeting the policy requirements). Ideally you would be forming the first phase of a network coming from the river and the location of your site makes this entirely logical.

As such, significant concerns remain in relation to this component of your proposals and, in short, significant changes are considered to be required in order for this element of your proposals to be supported by officers. You are invited to reflect on the attached report and provide a full response on all matters (for example, it is noted that not all of the originally sought further information was included in your latest submission and this remains as another shortcoming) with alterations to your proposed strategy which seeks to

address the identified shortcomings. Should you wish to undertake a standalone meeting with Element Energy and specialist officers first to help inform your subsequent response, please let me know (with view to this potentially being set up for some point next week hopefully)? An alternative option would be for you to decide that you do not wish to submit any further information and you wish for the application to advance based on the information submitted to date? Accordingly, I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Markwell
Principal Planning Officer
Planning Section | Directorate for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices,
Bridge Street,
Reading,
RG1 2LU

07971 015 688

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [YouTube](#)



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