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Sent on: Tuesday, May 12, 2020 12:32:21 PM
To: Conlon, Brian <Brian.Conlon@reading.gov.uk>
CC: Chalmers Anne <Anne.Chalmers@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk>
Subject: 200328 -Outline Vastern Court Caversham Road Reading

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Planning ref: 200328

Outline planning permission for Demolition and redevelopment to comprise up to 115,000 sqm GEA in one or more land uses comprising Residential (Class C3 and including PRS), Offices (Use Class B1(a), development in Use Classes A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away), C1 (hotel), D1 and D2 (community and leisure), car parking, provision of new plant and renewable energy equipment, creation of servicing areas and provision of associated services, including waste, refuse, cycle storage, and lighting, and for the laying out of the buildings

Thank you for consulting me on the planning application above. I have liaised with Police colleagues, analysed crime data, reviewed the submitted documents unfortunately I have not been able to visit the site.

Although I do not wish to object to the proposals, I do have some observation in relation to community safety/crime prevention design. If these are not addressed I feel that the development may not meet the requirements of;

- The National Planning Policy Framework 2018, Section 12 'Achieving well-designed places', point 127 (part f), which states that; 'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments... create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible... and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience'. And;

Observations

HVM to the rear of Reading Station: The boundary lines of the Former Royal Mail depot site, the taxi drop off and bus return route of Trooper Potts Way and this proposed development converge at 'Station Square' and the North entrance of Reading Station.

I understand that the site will be accessed via Caversham Road but from the information provided it is unclear how accidental or deliberate vehicle intrusion from the 'Avenue' the pedestrian 'Station Square or Reading Station building will be prevented. From the documents provided I cannot identify protection will be compromised. As detailed plans come forward I ask that Dynamic Vehicle Assessment be conducted Details of this assessment must be submitted to and approved by TVP CTSA (Counter Terrorism Security Advisor) and CPDA (Crime prevention design Advisor)

Station Square: I appreciate that this is outside of the applicants redline, however activities and use of this space could affect this and adjoining proposed and existing developments.. An operational security management plan may be need to provide a cohesive, use/operational relationship between all the sites that converge on to the Square, these could include emergency vehicle access policies & procedures as well as separate fire and incident evacuation points. Detail should be confirmed with RBC Emergency Planning & Risk Management Officer/ TVP CTSA and CPDA.

Block B/C Parking: Has sufficient setback been designed into the 'Secondary Street?'. Parking should be setback from the building facia and include design features that prevent accidental or intentional vehicle intrusion.

In addition the above observations relate to access and street design/layout, any reserved matters application relating to this development would need to consider;

DAS: It appears that the current Design and Access Statement (DAS) does address crime and disorder. As detailed plans come forward I ask the DAS 'Demonstrate how development will create accessible and safe communities.

Landscaping scheme – The landscaping scheme should ensure that natural surveillance across the development and to/from dwellings is not compromised especially in relation to the open spaces and footpaths. As a general point trees should not impinge upon street lighting. Tree positions, habit and final growth height/spread should be considered to avoid this.

CCTV: CCTV from the documentation provided I cannot identify if public realm formal surveillance is being considered early engagement with RBC is recommended if a tie-in with the town centre system is required. Consultation with RBC Emergency Planning Officer is recommended and an a CCTV operational requirements study should be carried and bought forward within future detailed plans.

Block A Layout Mixed-Use Scheme: The design code states "Servicing for hotel use should be placed in proximity to the residential collection point to minimise refuse collection impact on Public Realm spaces". As detail design plans come forward I ask that access to different uses be physically separated from each other. There should be no opportunity to access the two independent uses via shared refuse or goods delivery facilities.

Block A if a mixed use Hotel plan is included, careful consideration should be given to access/egress (into/out of and through the Hotel), and how the design will 'safeguard' guest and member of the public, and recommend early consultation with CPDA.

Block B secondary residential access: I note form the plans provided that the Secondary residential access corridors include a right angle return which will inevitably restrict clear lines of site between the entrance and the lift area. Given the significant number of residents / guests living in and using the apartments I ask that a secondary internal access controlled door be included, to prevent tailgating into this private unobserved area residential core.

Block B and C: Vehicle access control into the inner courtyard or service yard is shown as being access controlled. Additional details regarding the style type and minimum physical

security requirements of these barriers (including pedestrian pass gates and means of access control) should be included within future detailed plans

Active surveillance :

Block B/C: The design code states that “*Ground floor should provide retail and office uses to maximise active frontage*”, I am concerned that overnight and when the ‘office, retail or workshop(?) are closed this ‘Secondary St’ will be lack ground floor active surveillance. I appreciate the site constraints , but question if good levels of active surveillance will be achieved with the final build environment

Block C Gym: I have concerns that a substantial Gym will negatively impact on the active surveillance between Block C and public realm. As Gyms are rarely ‘full’, and as users of these facilities prefer a degree of privacy, obscure glass or advertising panels are usually fitted. Either way the façade is unlikely provide the active surveillance identified by the applicant

Blocks B/C parking – From the illustrative plans provided, on street parking is shown against the side elevation of the Block B and C. I have some concerns that this will further restrict (the proposed 25%) active surveillance between retail/commercial units and the public realm

For residential schemes: I would like to commend the applicant for a a proposed residential design which includes separate cores which in turn provide access to a small number of flats on each floor – this design can promote ownership, and community cohesion (where robust access control in included). However I note that within the applicants section on sustainability BREEAM for commercial is discussed , unfortunately I could not locate the same level of commitment for the residential blocks (please see my previous comment regarding the DAS).

Physical security and appropriate access control in to and through significant residential developments such as this will be critical in promoting sustainable communities, safeguarding residents, preventing, crime and ASB. Advice on how to achieve recommended best practices for large residential block blocks such as these can be found within SBD’s New Homes Guide.

As detailed plans come forward the authority may wish to condition that the development achieves the physical security standards/principles of SBD

The comments above are made on behalf of Thames Valley Police and relate to crime prevention design only. You may receive additional comments from TVP on other Policing issues regarding infrastructure etc. I hope that you find the above of assistance in determining the application and if you or the applicants have any queries relating to crime prevention design in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Anne Chalmers | Crime Prevention Design Advisor for Berkshire | Local Policing | Thames Valley Police

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