

Reading Borough Council

Outline Development Framework Yeomanry House, Reading

Outline Development Framework

Director of Environment and Neighbourhood
Services

May 2017



www.reading.gov.uk



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Yeomanry House Outline Development Framework

Introduction

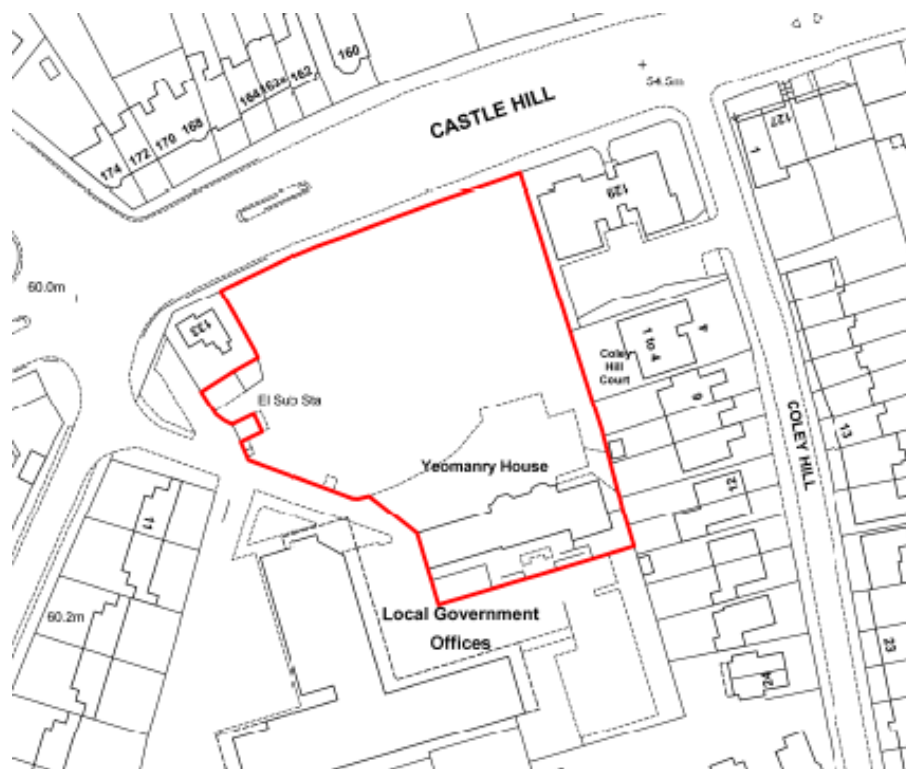
The Council has produced this document to informally guide prospective purchasers considering the acquisition of the site of Yeomanry House. The framework for the future use of the site provides the opinion of Council planning officers and takes account of current planning policies. It includes the advice of the Council's Conservation Advisor. This is not a formal Supplementary Planning Document. It has not been the subject of public consultation, nor has it been formally approved by the Council.

Yeomanry House is a large early 19th century house that was taken over by the Berkshire Yeomanry in about 1906. Shortly afterwards an indoor Riding School was built, later used as a drill hall. After the First World War the site was occupied by various units of the Territorial Army until 1967. The drill hall was demolished in the 1990s and its site is now occupied by the adjoining Berkshire Record Office.

At present the majority of Yeomanry House is occupied by the Council's Registration and Bereavement Service. This includes offices for registrars and a room for weddings and other ceremonies. The west wing of the building houses the Berkshire Family History Society.



Reading Borough Council is intending to sell the building and some of the land within its curtilage. The Berkshire Record Office will remain as a separate site in its current use.



Extent of area for sale.

Description of site and surroundings

Yeomanry House is located within the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area. As noted in the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area appraisal (Published 2004) Castle Hill is the principal street, notable for its varying width, hilly topography, and substantial Georgian buildings which lie on either side. Yeomanry House is one of these important Georgian buildings.

Yeomanry House is Grade II listed and dates from the early 19th century. For details of the listing entry, see: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1321962>.

The principal part of the building is two storeys, stucco finished with a moulded cornice and a balustrade carried right across under a slate roof. The two storey east wing has ground floor windows in arched recesses. There is a three storey later (late C19) wing to the west.

Within the east end of the building the interior includes many features of architectural and historic interest including stairs, cornicing, ceiling roses, fire places, doors and architraves, windows and window shutters and skirting boards, basement doors and flooring, plus an attic level.

To the north of the site lies an open lawn, with an important group of trees situated between the lawn and Castle Hill.

Planning History

- 960875/LBC (96-00968-LBC). Demolition of east block in order to eradicate dry rot, remove asbestos tiles and clear a disused building in a poor state of repair. Observations sent. 20 March 1997.
- 970911/FUL (97-00926-FUL). New record office building for the Royal County of Berkshire and associated staff / public car parking following extensive demolitions within grounds. Granted. 10 March 1998.
- 970912/LBC (97-00927-LBC). Alterations and demolition of rear extensions to Yeomanry House. Demolition of redundant buildings in grounds. Granted by Secretary of State. 17 February 1998.
- 090637/LBC (09-01019-LBC). Provision of replacement rear door, new handrail and widening of footpath. Granted by Secretary of State. 30 October 2009.

Policy Background

Key national policy guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework:

Part 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Part 12 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Further guidance, which may be of relevance to future proposals for this site, can be found in Planning Practice Guidance:

- Air Quality
- Climate Change
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- Design
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Hazardous Substances
- Health and wellbeing
- Land Stability
- Light pollution
- Natural Environment
- Noise
- Renewable and low carbon energy
- Travel plans, transport assessments and statements in decision-taking
- Use of Planning Conditions

Core Strategy policies of particular relevance include CS7 (Design and the Public Realm), CS18 (Residential Conversions), CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking), CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment), CS34 (Pollution and Water Resources), CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology) and CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands).

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) policies of particular relevance include DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity), DM5 (Housing Mix), DM8 (Residential Conversions), DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space), DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters) and DM19 (Air Quality)

Relevant supplementary planning guidance includes the Residential Conversions SPD and Parking Standards and Design SPD.

Yeomanry House is allocated in the draft Local Plan:

YEOMANRY HOUSE, CASTLE HILL

Change of use of listed building to residential use or to potential office or restaurant use.

Development should:

- *Avoid detrimental effects on the significance of the listed building and the Conservation Area;*
- *Address noise impacts on residential use;*
- *Address air quality impacts on residential use; and*
- *Avoid adverse effects on the wooded frontage to Castle Hill.*

Site size: 0.44 ha 10-14 dwellings

Heritage issues

Future proposals for the site will need to address the listed status of the building, and its position within the Conservation Area. Any areas of new development could have the potential to impact buried archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric period through to the post-medieval.

A Heritage Statement should be produced in support of any future planning/listed building applications, which considers not only the impact on the Listed Building and Historic Environment Setting, but also the archaeological and historical background of the site and the potential for the proposals to impact archaeological remains. The research should consult the Historic Environment Records and other documentary evidence, such as historic mapping.

Other potential constraints

Trees:

Paragraph 5.1 of the Conservation Area appraisal for Russell Street/Castle Hill states: *'Front gardens and mature trees make a major contribution to views along Castle Hill'*. The appraisal makes a special note of *'the Extensive trees in front garden to Yeomanry House, Castle Hill'* (marked on the Townscape Appraisal map) among the *'most significant street and garden trees'*, with Yeomanry House being an *'important focal point'* (5.6). Paragraph 8.5 recommends that *'Gardens should always be preserved, especially where they surround a listed building or a Building of Townscape Merit'*.

Castle Hill/Bath Road are noted in the Council's adopted Tree Strategy as a *'treed corridor'* with the A4 from Castle Hill to Bath Road up to (and including Prospect Park) being designated as an *'area of high Treescape value'*. Objective 2 of the Strategy seeks to protect and enhance important landscape features, which would apply to the trees within the grounds of Yeomanry House.

Given the importance of the treed setting of Yeomanry House, the trees have been surveyed in preparation for a TPO which is currently under discussion. This will recognise the importance of the trees on the Castle Hill frontage for both their amenity

value on this primary route but also for the importance for the setting of the listed building. The development potential for the site is very limited by the tree/landscape setting constraints.

Transport Issues:

The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. Typically this zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone. Any future development should provide vehicle and cycle parking in accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD.

Access to the site is provided from Coley Avenue in the form a 4.8m unadopted road. This access is shared with the Berkshire Record Office. Given the proximity to the Castle Hill/Bath Road signalised junction, the Council's Transport Strategy Section would not support any development which increases vehicular trips to and from the site.

Other issues:

Other issues that will be considered as part of any future development include impact on neighbouring uses, quality of accommodation (if residential), bin storage, and noise/odours/extraction equipment if restaurant. If a 'centre use' such as a restaurant is proposed an impact assessment or sequential test may also be required.

Development Framework

The main consideration in any future proposal will be the protection and enhancement of the listed building and its setting, and the setting of the wider Conservation Area.

Although relatively large in area the site is constrained by the various heritage designations and the presence of high quality, mature trees to the north.

A limited, low level extension to the rear, at the western end of the building, may be possible to replace the demolished rear extensions/outbuildings. However, it is considered unlikely that any other extensions would be permitted to the building.

Development opportunities to the area to the north (front) of Yeomanry House are unlikely given the contribution this space makes to the setting of the listed building and the Conservation Area, and the presence of the important protected trees. Therefore, it is considered there are no opportunities for development outside of the footprint of the existing building, other than the potential for a small extension as noted above. The need to ensure that vehicular trips are not increased is also a limiting factor.

Some limited changes may be acceptable to the interior of the main part of the building and the eastern wing. However, given the wealth of original features within this part of the building, such changes would need to be sensitive, and would need to prioritise retention/reinstatement of the original historic layout of the building, and the protection of original historic fabric.

There are fewer items of interest in the later west wing of the building and therefore there may be more scope for internal alterations and reconfiguration in this part of the building.

Administration for Pre- App and a Planning Application

It is strongly recommended that any potential redevelopment proposals gain detailed pre-application advice from the local planning authority prior to submission of a formal planning application. Details of this service, including fees, can be found on the Council's website at:

http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1190/Pre-Application-Enquiry-Form/pdf/Pre-app_Nov_2016.pdf

Prior to the submission of any application reference should be made to the Council's Planning Application Checklist:

http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/2660/Validation-Checklist-Updated-Dec-2016/pdf/Validation_Checklist_Final_Dec_16.pdf.

This document explains that some items of information will now be required before officers validate a planning application.

Consultations will be undertaken with internal consultees, and possibly external consultees, and any responses will be taken into consideration during the determination of the application.

Applications for the creation of fewer than 10 dwellings, or for a non-residential change of use of less than 1,000 square metres, would be minor applications. Such applications fall to be considered under delegated powers, unless called into Planning Applications Committee by Councillors. Applications for 10 dwellings or more, or for a non-residential change of use of 1,000 square metres, would be major applications. Such applications are considered by Councillors at Planning Applications Committee.

Future proposals for the site may be CIL liable, but there may not be a charge if there is no new floorspace.

Future proposals may be subject to a Section 106 Agreement. For more information please see the following documents:

Affordable Housing SPD:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1063/Affordable-Housing-Supplementary-Planning-Document-Adopted-July-2013/pdf/Affordable-Housing-Supplementary-Planning-DocumentJul13.pdf>

Employment, Skills and Training SPD:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1064/Employment-Skills-and-Training-Supplementary-Planning-Document-Adopted-April-2013/pdf/Employment-Skills-And-Training-Supplementary-Planning-DocumentApr13.pdf>

Section 106 SPD:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/1067/Draft-Section-106-Planning-Obligations/pdf/S106-Planning-Obligations-SPD-Adopted-April-2015.pdf>