

To: Councillor Livingston (Chair)  
Councillors Brock, Duveen, Gavin, Hopper,  
Maskell, McKenna, Page, Pearce, Robinson,  
Singh, Vickers, J Williams and R Williams

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17 April 2018

Your contact is: **Simon Hill - Committee Services**

**NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE - 25 APRIL 2018**

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday 25 April 2018 at **6.30 pm in the Council Chamber**, Reading. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

Please note that with regard to the planning applications, the order in which applications are considered will be at the Chair's discretion, and applications on which members of the public have requested to speak are likely to be considered first.

**AGENDA**

	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>WARDS AFFECTED</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
1. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 APRIL 2018		-	1
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-	-	-
3. QUESTIONS	-	-	-
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	DECISION	BOROUGHWIDE	8
5. PLANNING APPEALS	INFORMATION	BOROUGHWIDE	11
6. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL	INFORMATION	BOROUGHWIDE	15
7. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE	INFORMATION	BOROUGHWIDE	24
8. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT- DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE	INFORMATION	BOROUGHWIDE	27

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9.	DRAFT REVISED NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND ASSOCIATED CONSULTATIONS	DECISION	BOROUGHWIDE	35
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**Planning Applications to be determined**

Item(s)	Action	Ward(s)	Page
10	DECISION	ABBEY	57
11	DECISION	CAVERSHAM	73
12	DECISION	KATESGROVE	87
13	DECISION	TILEHURST	165

At this point, the following motion will be moved by the Chair:

“That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following Item on the agenda, as it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.”

	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>WARDS AFFECTED</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
14	PLANNING ENFORCEMENT QUARTERLY UPDATE	DECISION	BOROUGHWIDE 181

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Members of the public who participate in the meeting will be able to speak at an on-camera or off-camera microphone, according to their preference.

Please speak to a member of staff if you have any queries or concerns.

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## BOROUGH WIDE

### SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED

#### Planning Applications Committee - 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Item: 10  
Page No: 57  
Ward: Abbey  
Application Number 172295  
Application Type Full Planning Approval  
Applicant H3G & EE Ltd c/o Arqiva  
Address Site Outside, 41 Minster Street, Reading, RG1 2JB  
Proposal Upgrade of existing rooftop base station comprising the relocation of an existing antenna and the provision of additional 3 No antennas together with feeder cables, steelworks and ancillary development thereto.  
Recommendation Application Permitted

Item: 10  
Page No: 57  
Ward: Abbey  
Application Number 172296  
Application Type Listed Building Consent  
Applicant H3G & EE Ltd  
Address Electricity Sub Station At British Telecom, 41 Minster Street, Reading, RG1 2JB  
Proposal Upgrade of existing rooftop base station comprising the relocation of an existing antenna and the provision of additional 3 No antennas together with feeder cables, steelworks and ancillary development thereto.  
Recommendation Application Permitted

Item: 11  
Page No: 73  
Ward: Caversham  
Application Number 180204  
Application Type Householder  
Applicant Mr G Frost  
Address 79 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 6DS  
Proposal 2-storey rear extension (resubmission of 171302)  
Recommendation Application Permitted

Item: 12  
Page No: 87  
Ward: Katesgrove  
Application Number 172213  
Application Type Full Planning Approval  
Applicant KK Property Investments Ltd  
Address 112 London Street, Reading, RG1 4SJ  
Proposal Demolition of existing building and erection of 2 x class C3 residential apartment blocks comprising 6.No. flats  
Recommendation Application Refused

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## BOROUGH WIDE

### SCHEDULE OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED

Planning Applications Committee - 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Item:	13
Page No:	165
Ward:	Tilehurst
Application Number	180094
Application Type	Full Planning Approval
Applicant	Zainabiya Reading Centre
Address	Equity House, 4-6 School Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5AL
Proposal	Change of use from B1 (offices) to D1 (non-residential institution) for use as a community facility offering space for worship, training, education and meetings with associated works which include an extension to the front and a low boundary fence to demark the site area at the front.
Recommendation	Application Permitted

## KEY TO CODING OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

1. Planning application reference numbers are made up of 2 parts.
  - 1.1 The number begins with the year e.g. 15
  - 1.2 This is followed by a consecutive number, showing what number the application is in any year (e.g. 150128).
  
2. The following is a key to existing officers with their direct dial telephone numbers.

GF1	-	Giorgio Framalico	9372604
KAR	-	Kiaran Roughan	9374530
LEB	-	Lynette Baker	9372413
JW6	-	Julie Williams	9372461
RJE	-	Richard Eatough	9373338
JPM	-	Johnathan Markwell	9372458
SDV	-	Steve Vigar	9372980
CR2	-	Claire Ringwood	9374545
CJB	-	Christopher Beard	9372430
SGH	-	Stephen Hammond	9374424
MDW	-	Mark Worringham	9373337
AJA	-	Alison Amoah	9372286
SEH	-	Sarah Hanson	9372440
RSC	-	Ralph Chakadya	9372993
BXP	-	Boja Petkovic	9372352
MJB	-	Mathew Burns	9373625
HB3	-	Heather Banks	9374175
EH1	-	Ethne Humphreys	9374085
SKB	-	Sarah Burr	9374227
TRH	-	Tom Hughes	9374150
SFB	-	Susanna Bedford	9372023
NW2	-	Nathalie Weekes	9374237
TF1	-	Tom French	9374068

**GUIDE TO USE CLASSES ORDER**  
and Permitted Changes of Use (England)

Use Classes (Amendment) Order 2005	Use Classes Order 1972	Description	General Permitted Development (Amendment) Order 2005
<b>A1</b> Shops	Class I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, dry cleaners, internet cafes, etc.</li> <li>Pet shops, cat-meat shops, tripe shops, sandwich bars</li> <li>Showrooms, domestic hire shops, funeral directors</li> </ul>	No permitted changes
<b>A2</b> Financial and Professional Services	Class II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies</li> <li>Professional and financial services, betting offices</li> </ul>	Permitted change to A1 <i>where a ground floor display window exists</i>
<b>A3</b> Restaurants and Cafes		Restaurants, snack bars, cafes	Permitted change to A1 or A2
<b>A4</b> Drinking Establishments		Pubs and bars	Permitted change to A1, A2 or A3
<b>A5</b> Hot Food Take-Aways		Take-Aways	Permitted change to A1, A2 or A3
<b>Sui Generis</b>		Shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles, retail warehouse clubs, laundrettes, taxi or vehicle hire businesses, amusement centres, petrol filling stations	No permitted change
<b>B1</b> Business	Class II  Class III	(a) Offices, not within A2 (b) Research and development, studios, laboratories, high tech (c) Light industry	Permitted change to B8 <i>where no more than 235m</i>
<b>B2</b> General industry	Class IV-IX	General industry	Permitted change to B1 or B8 <i>B8 limited to no more than 235m</i>
<b>B8</b> Storage or Distribution	Class X	Wholesale warehouse, distribution centres, repositories	Permitted change to B1 <i>where no more than 235m</i>
<b>Sui Generis</b>		Any work registrable under the Alkali, etc. Works Regulation Act, 1906	No permitted change
<b>C1</b> Hotels	Class XI	Hotels, boarding and guest houses	No permitted change
<b>C2</b> Residential Institutions	Class XII Class XIV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential schools and colleges</li> <li>Hospitals and convalescent/nursing homes</li> </ul>	No permitted change
<b>C2A</b> Secure residential institutions		Prisons, young offenders institutions, detention centres, secure training centres, custody centres, short-term holding centres, secure hospitals, secure local authority accommodation or use as military barracks.	No permitted change
<b>C3</b> Dwelling houses		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single occupancy or single households (in the family sense);</li> <li>No more than six residents living as a single household where care is provided;</li> <li>No more than six residents living as a single household where the building is managed by a local housing authority, a registered social landlord, a police authority, a fire authority, or a health service body.</li> </ul>	Permitted to change to C4
<b>C4</b> Houses in multiple occupation		Use of a dwellinghouse by between three and six residents, who do not form a single household (in the family sense) and share basic facilities (toilet, bathroom or kitchen).	Permitted to change to C3
<b>Sui Generis</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>House in multiple occupation with more than six residents</li> <li>Hostel</li> </ul>	No permitted change

<b>D1</b> Non-Residential Institutions	Class XIII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Places of worship, church halls</li> <li>• Clinics, health centres, creches, day nurseries, consulting rooms</li> <li>• Museums, public halls, libraries, art galleries, exhibition halls</li> <li>• Non-residential education and training centres</li> </ul>	No permitted change
	Class XV		
	Class XVI		
<b>D2</b> Assembly and Leisure	Class XVII	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cinemas, music and concert halls</li> <li>• Dance, sports halls, swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums</li> <li>• Other indoor and outdoor sports and leisure uses, bingo halls, casinos</li> </ul>	No permitted change
	Class XVIII		
<b>Sui Generis</b>	Class XVII	Theatres, nightclubs	No permitted change





Present: Councillor Livingston (Chair);

Councillors Brock, Duveen, Gavin, Hopper, Maskell, McKenna, Page, Pearce, Robinson, Singh, Vickers, J Williams and R Williams.

#### RESOLVED ITEMS

##### 67. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

##### 68. SITE VISITS

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted, at the meeting, a schedule of applications to be considered at future meetings of the Committee to enable Councillors to decide which sites, if any, they wished to visit prior to determining the relevant applications.

Resolved -

That the under-mentioned applications together with any additional applications which the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services might consider appropriate, be the subject of unaccompanied site visits, subject to it being confirmed that it would be possible for Councillors to access the Portman Road site:

##### 180319/FUL - PORTMAN ROAD

Application for 215 dwellings with associated access, cycle path provision, parking, landscaping and open space provision, following demolition of existing buildings.

##### 180094/FUL - EQUITY HOUSE, 4-6 SCHOOL ROAD, TILEHURST

Change of use from B1 (offices) to D1 (non-residential institution) for use as a community facility offering space for worship, training, education and meetings with associated works which include an extension to the front and a low boundary fence to demark the site area at the front.

##### 69. PLANNING APPEALS

###### (i) New Appeals

There had been no appeals lodged.

###### (ii) Appeals Recently Determined

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted details of six decisions that had been made by the Secretary of State, or by an Inspector appointed for the purpose, which were attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

(iii) Reports on Appeal Decisions

There were no reports on appeal decisions.

Resolved -

That the outcome of the recently determined appeals, as set out in Appendix 2, be noted.

70. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details in Table 1 of nine pending prior approval applications, and in Table 2 of eight applications for prior approval decided between 22 February 2018 and 16 March 2018.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

71. OBJECTION TO A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER AT 62 OAK TREE ROAD

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on an objection to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) No. 10/17 relating to 62 Oak Tree Road. A copy of the TPO plan was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that a TPO had been served in 2006 on 60 Oak Tree Road (122/06) to protect a line of 35 beech trees along the rear boundary as a result of the submission of an outline planning application. Objections to this had been received from the owners of 133 Overdown Road and 3 Larkswood Close, which had been considered at Planning Applications Committee in September 2006 and the TPO had subsequently been confirmed.

Following confirmation of the TPO at 60 Oak Tree Road in 2007, an application to prune all branches overhanging 3 Larkswood Close up to the full height of the trees had been submitted by the owners of 3 Larkswood Close. Following the refusal of these works, lesser works being approved, a subsequent appeal had been allowed.

In October 2017, an application had been made by 3 Larkswood Close to again prune all branches overhanging from 60 Oak Tree Road to their full height. On the basis of the previous appeal decision, officers had approved this work. As had been mentioned in 2007, the owners of 3 Larkwood Close had indicated that they would like to reduce the height of the trees, but the owner's approval had not been given.

The report stated that the group of Beech trees extended into 62 Oak Tree Road, these having not been included in the 2006 TPO as the site had not been included in potential development. Due to concerns about the potential work that might be carried out to these trees, a TPO had been served on 12 December 2017 to protect a line of six Beech trees.

An objection to the TPO had been made by the residents of 3 Larkswood Close, details of which were set out in the report, along with officers' comments on the objection.

That report concluded that it was considered that the line of beech trees at Number 62 did not differ from those already protected at Number 60 and that the TPO was reasonable to ensure protection of the whole line of trees. It was therefore recommended that the TPO be confirmed.

Resolved - That the Tree Preservation Order be confirmed.

## 72. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee considered reports by the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services.

Resolved -

- (1) That, subject to the conditions now approved, permission be granted under planning legislation and, where appropriate, under the Advertisement Regulations, as follows:

### 180269/FUL - 2-176 KENNET WALK

Replace all existing double glazed timber windows to the front of blocks A (property numbers 2-96) and block B (property numbers 98- 176).

It was reported at the meeting that no responses to the public consultation had been received by the end of the consultation period.

Granted as recommended.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended.

Comments received and considered.

### 172236/NMA - GREEN PARK VILLAGE, LONGWATER AVENUE

Non material amendment to planning permission 10/01461/OUT (102172) to change the phasing plan, parameter plans and the Design and Access Statement with regard to blocks within Phase 6B.

Non-Material Amendment agreed as recommended.

Additional condition and informatives as recommended in the report.

Additional condition that each residential block should not be occupied until the approved parking areas for that block were available for parking.

Additional informative to confirm that this new parking areas condition was added to the outline permission and therefore applied to all subsequent phases.

Comments received and considered.

### 171017/REM - GREEN PARK VILLAGE PHASE 6B

Application for approval of reserved matters for Phase 6B for 120 dwellings following outline approval (10/01461/OUT) (amended).

Granted as recommended.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended.

Comments received and considered.

- (2) That, subject to the requirements indicated, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to determine the following applications under planning legislation:

180075/VAR - 79 SILVER STREET

Demolition of existing building and erection of a part 3 and part 4 storey (plus basement level) building to provide 56 student studio rooms (sui generis use class) with associated ancillary services and landscaping works without complying with condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission 170685 to introduce a larger basement area to allow an increase to 61 student studio rooms.

The issue of planning permission to be dependent on the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 6 October 2018 (unless a later date be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report.

In the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended in the report.

Comments and objections received and considered.

Objector Catherine O'Hare, and the applicant's agent Geoff Wright, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

171019/FUL - GREEN PARK VILLAGE PHASE 6A

A planning application for residential led mixed-use development comprising the construction of 339 residential apartments (Class C3), 556 sqm (GIA) local retail units (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5), residents' gym and associated car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes, services and infrastructure, landscaping and other associated works (Phase 6A) (amended).

The issue of planning permission to be dependent on the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 30 April 2018 (unless a later date be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report.

In the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended.

Comments and objections received and considered.

- (3) That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the carrying out of the following developments be authorised, subject to the conditions now specified:

180185/REG3 - 1 REDESDALE COURT, BAMBURGH CLOSE

Various external and internal refurbishments including the complete replacement of non-loadbearing elevations to the front and rear including insulation, windows and doors; the replacement of gutters, fascia and soffits; and internally, the installation of new kitchens and bathrooms.

Granted as recommended.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended.

Comments received and considered.

- (4) That the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government be consulted on the following application and supporting papers in accordance with paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009:

171023/FUL - MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS, UPPER WOODCOTE ROAD, CAVERSHAM

Erection of 2FE primary school (350 pupils) with associated landscaping, multi-use games area (MUGA), car and cycle parking, and servicing.

An update report was tabled at the meeting which gave details of further consideration of the timing of the payment of the commuted sum for mitigation works within the Heads of Terms of the Section 106 agreement; it was clarified verbally at the meeting that in paragraph 1.2 of the update report, the word “any” had been omitted and the relevant section should have read “...officers have suggested to the applicant that the payment of the commuted sum is disconnected from the start of the school and made upon any disposal of the land by the Trust to the ESFA. The applicant has agreed to this alteration.”

The update report also gave details of updated responses from consultees and new issues raised, with officer comments. It also gave details of further correspondence received since the publication of the original report and set out a table summarising new issues which had been raised and officer responses to those issues. It was reported at the meeting that the number of responses received to the re-consultation since the publication of the original report missing in paragraph 3.1 of the update report was approximately 242 in support of the proposal and 485 objection responses.

The recommendation had been amended to update the Heads of Terms for the Section 106 agreement accordingly and to recommend a new condition regarding public access into the playing fields along the Hewett Avenue boundary. It was reported verbally at the meeting that officers had decided that this new condition was not needed as formalisation of this access could be undertaken as part of the mitigation works. It was also reported verbally that an additional Head of Terms

was required to be added under Transport Improvements in relation to moving two of the bus stops on the A4074 Upper Woodcote Road.

A verbal update was also given at the meeting addressing residual objections. In response to the objection that the proposed building was not in line with building regulations, it was stated that this was not a planning matter. In response to concerns about the loss of the picnic area near the play area, it was stated that this could be re-provided within the mitigation and enhancement works somewhere within the playing fields.

That the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant permission in the event that:

- i) The Secretary of State decided not to call in the application for determination; or
- ii) The period in which the Secretary of State may respond under paragraph 11 of the Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 expired.

The issue of planning permission to be dependent on the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement/unilateral undertaking by 30 May 2018 (unless a later date be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services), to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report, with the following amendments:

- The amendments set out in the update report;
- An additional Head of Terms relating to the moving of two bus stops as reported verbally at the meeting;
- Amendment of the first paragraph of the Open space mitigation provisions to read:  
“Provision of a commuted sum of £375,000 towards improvements to the Mapledurham Playing Fields, to be used only for the following mitigation works purposes (index-linked from the date of permission and payable upon any disposal of the land by the Trust to the ESFA):”;
- An additional Head of Terms under the Open space mitigation provisions:  
“5. Provision of continuity/transitional arrangements plan for existing main user of the Playing Fields (Caversham Trents Football Club).”

That the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to make any further necessary small amendments to the details of the Heads of Terms.

In the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission.

Conditional planning permission and informatives as recommended in the report, with the amendment to Condition 18 set out in the update report, but not the new condition regarding public access.

Comments and objections received and considered.

Rebekah Jubb on behalf of objectors Mapledurham Playing Field Action Group,

## PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES - 4 APRIL 2018

Daniel Pagella on behalf of supporters The Heights Primary School Trust, Mike Ibbott on behalf of the applicant and Ward Councillor Isobel Ballsdon attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

(Councillor Hopper declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item. Nature of interest: Councillor Hopper was a member of the Mapledurham Management Committee.)

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.25 pm).

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	25 APRIL 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	4
TITLE:	POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS		
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
AUTHOR:	KIARAN ROUGHAN	TEL:	0118 9374530
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To identify those sites where, due to the sensitive or important nature of the proposals, Councillors are advised that a Site Visit might be appropriate before the meeting of the next Committee (or at a future date) and to confirm how the visit will be arranged.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you resolve to visit the sites which will be identified by officers in a paper in the update Agenda on the day of the forthcoming Planning Applications Committee and confirm if there are any other sites Councillors consider necessary to visit before reaching a decision on an application.
- 2.2 That you confirm how the site will be visited, unaccompanied or accompanied, and if accompanied agree the site visit date and time.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The potential list of agenda items submitted since the last meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be provided with the update Agenda on the day of forthcoming Planning Applications Committee. Where appropriate, I will identify those applications that I feel warrant a site visit by the Committee prior to formal consideration of the proposals.
- 3.2 Councillors may also request a site visit to other sites on that list if they consider it relevant to their ability to reach a decision on the application.
- 3.3 Officers may also recommend a site visit if they intend to report a normally delegated application to the Committee for a decision.
- 3.4 A site visit may also be proposed in connection with a planning enforcement issue which is before the Committee for consideration.



- 3.5 Site visits in the above circumstances should all take place in advance of a Committee decision and should only be used where the expected benefit is substantial.
- 3.6 A site visit is only likely to be necessary if the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans and any supporting material including photographs taken by officers (although, if this is the case, additional illustrative material should have been requested); or, there is a good reason why the comments of the applicant and objectors cannot be expressed adequately in writing; or, the proposal is particularly contentious.
- 3.7 Accompanied site visits consist of an arranged inspection by a viewing Committee, with officers in attendance and by arrangement with the applicant or their agent. Applicants and objectors however will have no right to speak but may observe the process and answer questions when asked. The visit is an information gathering opportunity and not a decision making forum.
- 3.8 Recently Councillors have expressed a preference to carry out unaccompanied site visits, where the site is easily viewable from public areas, to enable them to visit the site when convenient to them. In these instances the case officer will provide a briefing note on the application and the main issues to be considered by Councillors when visiting the site.
- 3.9 There may also be occasions where officers or Councillors request a post completion site visit in order to review the quality or impact of a particular development.

#### 4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 Planning services contribute to producing a sustainable environment and economy within the Borough and to meeting the 2015 -18 Corporate Plan objective for “Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.” Under the heading, Neighbourhoods, the Corporate Plan aims to improve the physical environment - the cleanliness of our streets, places for children to play, green spaces, how we feel about our neighbourhood and whether we feel safe, have a sense of community and get on with our neighbours.

#### 5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 5.1 Statutory neighbour consultation takes place on planning applications.

#### 6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Officers when assessing an application and when making a recommendation to the Committee, will have regard to its duties Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None arising from this report.

## 8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The cost of site visits is met through the normal planning service budget.

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reading Borough Council Planning Code of Conduct.

Local Safety Practice 2013 Planning Applications Committee site visits.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	25 APRIL 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	5
TITLE:	PLANNING APPEALS		
AUTHOR:	KIARAN ROUGHAN	TEL:	0118 9374530
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	Kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report notifications received from the Planning Inspectorate on the status of various planning appeals.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note the appeals received and the method of determination as listed in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.2 That you note the appeals decided as listed in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 2.3 That you note the Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions provided in Appendix 3 of this report.

3. INFORMATION PROVIDED

- 3.1 Please see Appendix 1 of this report for new appeals lodged since the last committee.
- 3.2 Please see Appendix 2 of this report for new appeals decided since the last committee.
- 3.3 Please see Appendix 3 of this report for new Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions since the last committee.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 Defending planning appeals made against planning decisions contributes to producing a sustainable environment and economy within the Borough and to meeting the 2015 -18 Corporate Plan objective for “Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.”

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

5.1 Planning decisions are made in accordance with adopted local development plan policies, which have been adopted by the Council following public consultation. Statutory consultation also takes place on planning applications and appeals and this can have bearing on the decision reached by the Secretary of State and his Inspectors. Copies of appeal decisions are held on the public Planning Register.

## 6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Where appropriate the Council will refer in its appeal case to matters connected to its duties Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Public Inquiries are normally the only types of appeal that involve the use of legal representation. Only applicants have the right to appeal against refusal or non-determination and there is no right for a third party to appeal a planning decision.

## 8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Public Inquiries and Informal Hearings are more expensive in terms of officer and appellant time than the Written Representations method. Either party can be liable to awards of costs. Guidance is provided in Circular 03/2009 “Cost Awards in Appeals and other Planning Proceedings”.

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Planning Appeal Forms and letters from the Planning Inspectorate.

## APPENDIX 1

### Appeals Lodged:

WARD: THAMES  
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/17/3191092  
CASE NO: 170775  
ADDRESS: 90 Oakley Road, Caversham  
PROPOSAL: Erection of 2 X 2-bed flats. Demolition of existing garage  
CASE OFFICER: Susanna Bedford  
METHOD: Written Representation  
APPEAL TYPE: Refuse Planning Permission  
APPEAL LODGED: 27.03.2018

## APPENDIX 2

### Appeals Decided:

WARD: CAVERSHAM  
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/17/3191154  
CASE NO: 171534  
ADDRESS: St John's Lodge, 4 Star Road, Caversham  
PROPOSAL: Partial demolition of an external wall and the erection of a single storey rear extension.  
CASE OFFICER: Ethne Humphreys  
METHOD: Written Representation  
DECISION: DISMISSED  
DATE DETERMINED: 21.03.2018

WARD: CAVERSHAM  
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/Y/17/3191155  
CASE NO: 171341/LBC  
ADDRESS: St John's Lodge, 4 Star Road, Caversham  
PROPOSAL: Internal and external alterations associated with partial demolition of external wall and erection of single storey rear extension  
CASE OFFICER: Ethne Humphreys  
METHOD: Written Representation  
DECISION: DISMISSED  
DATE DETERMINED: 21.03.2018

WARD: CAVERSHAM  
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/17/3183456  
CASE NO: 170574  
ADDRESS: 8 Ardler Road  
PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing bungalow and construction of 2 x 2 storey semi-detached houses

CASE OFFICER: Ethne Humphreys  
METHOD: Written Representation  
DECISION: DISMISSED  
DATE DETERMINED: 21.03.2018

WARD: PEPPARD  
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/D/17/3190230  
CASE NO: 171112  
ADDRESS: 22 Marchwood Avenue  
PROPOSAL: Single storey front single garage  
CASE OFFICER: Richard Eatough  
METHOD: Written Representation  
DECISION: DISMISSED  
DATE DETERMINED: 22.03.2018

WARD: ABBEY  
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/C/17/3178555  
CASE NO: -  
ADDRESS: 18-18A Waylen Street  
PROPOSAL: Single storey front single garage  
CASE OFFICER: Chris Beard  
METHOD: Enforcement Written Representation  
DECISION: DISMISSED  
DATE DETERMINED: 04.04.2018

### APPENDIX 3

Address Index of Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

No reports available this time.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	25 APRIL 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	6
TITLE:	APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL		
AUTHOR:	LYNETTE BAKER & JULIE WILLIAMS		
JOB TITLE:	AREA TEAM LEADERS	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk">Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:Lynette.baker@reading.gov.uk">Lynette.baker@reading.gov.uk</a>

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of new applications and decisions relating to applications for prior-approval under the amended Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (GPDO 2015).

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At your meeting on 29 May 2013 a report was presented which introduced new permitted development rights and additional requirements for prior approval from the local planning authority for certain categories of permitted development. It was agreed then that a report be brought to future meetings for information and to include details of applications received for prior approval, those pending a decision and those applications which have been decided since the last Committee date.

4 TYPES OF PRIOR APPROVAL APPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The categories of development requiring prior approval under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015, or amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England)(Amendment) Order 2016 that are of most relevance to Reading Borough are summarised as follows:

- Householder development - single storey rear extensions. GPDO Part 1, Class A1(g-k).
- Change of use from A1 shops or A2 financial & professional, betting office, pay day loan shop or casino to A3 restaurants and cafes. GPDO Part 3 Class C.
- Change of use from A1 shops or A2 financial & professional, betting office or pay day loan shop to Class D2 assembly & leisure. GPDO Part 3 Class J.
- Change of use from A1 shops or A2 financial and professional or a mixed use of A1 or A2 with dwellinghouse to Class C3 dwellinghouse. GPDO Part 3 Class M\*
- Change of use from an amusement arcade or a casino to C3 dwellinghouse & necessary works. GPDO Part 3 Class N
- Change of use from B1 office to C3 dwellinghouse GPDO Part 3, Class O\*.
- Change of use from B8 storage or distribution to C3 dwellinghouse GPDO Part 3, Class P

- Change of use from B1(c) light industrial use to C3 dwellinghouse GPDO Part 3, Class PA\*
- Change of use from agricultural buildings and land to Class C3 dwellinghouses and building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building to the C3 use. GPDO Part 3 Class Q.
- Change of use of 150 sq m or more of an agricultural building (and any land within its curtilage) to flexible use within classes A1, A2, A3, B1, B8, C1 and D2. GPDO Part 3 Class R.
- Change of use from Agricultural buildings and land to state funded school or registered nursery D1. GPDO Part 3 Class S.
- Change of use from B1 (business), C1 (hotels), C2 (residential institutions), C2A (secure residential institutions and D2 (assembly and leisure) to state funded school D1. GPDO Part 3 Class T.
- Temporary use of buildings for film making for up to 9 months in any 27 month period. GPDO Part 4 Class E
- Development under local or private Acts and Orders (e.g. Railways Clauses Consolidation Act 1845). GPDO Part 18.
- Development by telecommunications code system operators. GPDO Part 16.
- Demolition of buildings. GPDO Part 11.

4.2 Those applications for Prior Approval received and yet to be decided are set out in the appended Table 1 and those applications which have been decided are set out in the appended Table 2. The applications are grouped by type of prior approval application. Information on what the estimated equivalent planning application fees would be is provided.

4.3 It should be borne in mind that the planning considerations to be taken into account in deciding each of these types of application are specified in more detail in the GDPO. In some cases the LPA will first need to confirm whether or not prior approval is required before going on to decide the application on its planning merits where prior approval is required.

4.4 Details of any appeals on prior-approval decision will be included elsewhere in the agenda.

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 Changes of use brought about through the prior approval process are beyond the control or influence of the Council's adopted policies and Supplementary Planning Documents. Therefore it is not possible to confirm how or if these schemes will contribute to the strategic aims of the Council.

## 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Statutory consultation takes place in connection with applications for prior-approval as specified in the Order discussed above.

## 7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Where appropriate the Council must have regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.



7.2 There are no direct implications arising from the proposals.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None arising from this Report.

## 9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Since the additional prior notifications were introduced in May 2013 in place of applications for full planning permission, the loss in fee income is estimated to be £923,388

(Office Prior Approvals - £849,041: Householder Prior Approvals - £58,992: Retail Prior Approvals - £5580: Demolition Prior Approval - £2135: Storage Prior Approvals - £5350: Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval - £1886: Shop to Leisure Prior Approval - £305)

*Figures since last report*

Office Prior Approvals - £0: Householder Prior Approvals - £824

9.2 However it should be borne in mind that the prior notification application assessment process is simpler than would have been the case for full planning permission and the cost to the Council of determining applications for prior approval is therefore proportionately lower. It should also be noted that the fee for full planning applications varies by type and scale of development and does not necessarily equate to the cost of determining them.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015

Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England)(Amendment) Order 2016.

Table 1 - Prior-approval applications pending @ 13 April 2018

Application type CLASS A - Householder

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Target Determination Date	Comments	Equivalent planning application fee
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180571	22 Newport Road, Reading, RG1 8EA	Abbey	Rear extension measuring 4.3m in depth, with a maximum height of 3.5m, and 2.7m in height to eaves level.	29/03/2018	09/05/2018		£206
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180460	15 Hemdean Rise, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7SA	Caversham	Rear extension measuring 4.3m in depth, with a maximum height of 4.0m, and 3.0m in height to eaves level.	13/03/2018	23/04/2018		£206
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180502	21 St Saviours Road, Reading, RG1 6EJ	Minster	Rear extension measuring 4.957 metres in depth, with a maximum height of 4.0 metres, and 2.871 metres in height to eaves level.	18/03/2018	01/05/2018		£206
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180504	453 Basingstoke Road, Reading, RG2 0JF	Whitley	Rear extension measuring 6 metres in depth, with a maximum height of 3 metres, and 2.5 metres in height to eaves level.	20/03/2018	30/04/2018		£206

Prior Notification applications pending

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Target Determination Date	Comments
Prior Notification	172192	Reading West Footbridge, Reading West Station, Reading	Battle	Prior Approval under Part 18 Class A to Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (the GPDO) for reconstruction of the footbridge to provide the necessary clearance for the OLE which is to run underneath the structure.	07/12/2017	01/02/2018	

Demolition Prior Approval applications pending

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Target Determination Date	Comments
Demolition Prior Approval	180217	20 Hosier Street, Reading, RG1 7JL	Abbey	Application for prior notification of proposed demolition.	02/02/2018	02/03/2018	

Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval applications pending

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Target Determination Date	Comments	Equivalent planning application fee
Shop, Financial, Betting, Pay day, Casino to Restaurant/Cafe - Class C	180323	172 Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7PL	Battle	Notification of Prior Approval for a Change of Use from Office (Class A2) to a cafe (Class A3).	20/02/2018	23/04/2018		£366

Office to Residential Prior Approval applications pending - None

Retail Prior Approvals applications pending - none

Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval applications pending - None

Telecommunications Prior Approval applications pending - None

Storage to Residential Prior Approval applications pending - None

Table 2 - Prior-approval applications decided 16 March 2018 to 13 April 2018

Application type CLASS A - Householder

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Decision Date	Decision
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180391	164 Cressingham Road, Reading, RG2 7LW	Church	Rear extension measuring 6m in depth, with a maximum height of 4m, and 3m in height to eaves level.	28/02/2018	10/04/2018	Prior Approval NOT REQUIRED
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180427	7 Foxhays Road, Reading, RG2 8ND	Church	Rear extension measuring 6.0m in depth, with a maximum height of 2.8m, and 2.6m in height to eaves level.	08/03/2018	05/04/2018	Prior Approval NOT REQUIRED
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180452	10 Lancaster Close, Reading, RG1 5HB	Redlands	Rear extension measuring 4.2m in depth, with a maximum height of 3.5m, and 2.1m in height to eaves level.	09/03/2018	10/04/2018	Prior Approval NOT REQUIRED
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180374	40 Crescent Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5AH	Tilehurst	Rear extension measuring 4.5m in depth, with a maximum height of 2.8m, and 2.4m in height to eaves level.	27/02/2018	28/03/2018	Prior Approval NOT REQUIRED

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Decision Date	Decision
Householder Prior Approval - Class A, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180422	38 Crescent Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5AH	Tilehurst	Rear extension measuring 4.5m in depth, with a maximum height of 2.8m, and 2.6m in height to eaves level.	07/03/2018	28/03/2018	Prior Approval NOT REQUIRED

#### Office to Residential Prior Approval applications decided

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Decision Date	Decision
Office use to dwelling house - Class O, Part 1 GPDO 2015	180139	1 Station Road / 22 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1LG	Abbey	Change of use 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors of building from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 11 dwellings.	24/01/2018	21/03/2018	Application Permitted

#### Demolition Prior Approval applications decided

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Decision Date	Decision
Demolition Prior Approval	172095	Mercedez Centre, Richfield Avenue, Reading, RG1 8EQ	Abbey	Application for prior notification of proposed demolition.	23/11/2017	12/04/2018	Prior Approval Notification - Approval

Retail to Residential applications decided

Application type	Application reference number	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Decision Date	Decision
Retail Prior Approval	180038	Building at the rear of, 180 Wantage Road, Reading, RG30 2SJ	Norcot	Notification for Prior Approval for a Proposed Change of Use of a Building from Class A1 (shops) to C3 (dwellinghouses) to comprise one dwelling.	04/01/2018	23/03/2018	Prior Approval Notification - Refusal

Storage to Residential Prior Approval applications decided - None

Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval applications decided - None

Prior Notification applications decided - None

Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval applications decided - None

Telecommunications Prior Approval applications decided - None

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & SPORT

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	25 APRIL 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	7
TITLE:	QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE - Quarter 4, 2017/18		
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	KIARAN ROUGHAN	TEL:	0118 937 4530 (74530)
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk">kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk</a>

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the quarterly report for Q4 (January - March) of 2017/18. The report sets out the Council's current performance against government criteria for designation and corporate indicators where they vary from the government criteria.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The main measure used by the Secretary of State in assessing a local planning authority's performance in determining planning applications is the percentage of decisions on applications made:

- (a) within the statutory determination period; or
- (b) within such extended period as has been agreed in writing between the applicant and the local planning authority;

These measures are applied separately to major applications and to non-major applications. There are also quality measures that relate to appeal decisions which are reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.

Performance indicators and targets

- 4.1 The following table provides monitoring information against the relevant quarterly corporate indicators:



Table 1 RBC Planning Service Quarterly Performance Indicators for 2017/18

Description	Target	15-16	16-17	Q1 17-18	Q2 17-18	Q3 17-18	Q4 17-18
Percentage of major applications decided within: (i) statutory 13/16 weeks, or (ii) the extended period agreed with the applicant. (NB note that a risk of designation occurs where 40% or fewer of their decisions on major applications are made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant).	60%	85% (17/20)	89% (42/47)	83% (5/6)	100% (5/5)	88% (7/8)	100% (10/10)
Percentage of minor applications decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period agreed by the applicant.	65%	71% (143/ 201)	74% (166/ 223)	83% (45/ 54)	94% (61/ 65)	85% (57/ 67)	88% (42/ 48)
Percentage of other applications decided within statutory 8 weeks	80%	54% (366/ 676)	59% (457/ 769)	64% (94/ 147)	66% (129/ 196)	76% (147/ 194)	69% (110/ 161)
Percentage of other applications decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period as agreed by applicant.	80%	73% (493/ 676)	85% (657/ 769)	97% (142/ 147)	95% (187/ 196)	95% (185/ 194)	74% (119/ 161)
Percentage of householder applications (not for prior approval) decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period agreed by the applicant.	80%	75% (342/ 457)	62% (308/ 499)	98% (104/ 106)	96% (129/ 135)	95% (94/ 117)	75% (79/ 106)
Percentage of householder applications (not for prior approval) decided within statutory 8 weeks.	80%	55% (249/ 456)	86% (430/ 499)	66% (70/ 106)	69% (93/ 135)	72% (84/ 117)	96% (102/ 106)
Planning Enforcement: % of enforcement complaints resolved within appropriate deadline according to priority	60%	66% (178/ 269)	82% (244/ 299)	66% (35/ 53)	83% (70/ 84)	77% (40/52)	86% (55/64)
Appeal performance - % allowed as a total of all appeals (a lower % figure is better)	30%	27% (9/ 33)	20% (8/41)	33% (2/6)	13% (1/8)	10% (9/10)	33% (4/12)
Major application appeal performance - % allowed as a total of all appeals (NB note that a risk of designation occurs where more than 20% of major applications decisions are overturned on appeal. (a lower % figure is better)	20%	0% (0/0)	0% (0/0)	0% (0/1)	0% (0/0)	0% (0/0)	0% (0/0)

Comments on planning application performance and workload

4.4 The key results for Quarter 4 of 2017/18 are as follows:

- A total of 331 planning applications were validated during Quarter 4 compared to a total of 302 in the same period during 2016/17. The total number of applications validated during Quarters 1-4 was 1276 compared to a total of 1266 in the same period during 2016/17, a very small increase.
- The Council's performance overall remains steady and generally well above the target levels.
- Enforcement performance remains above target;
- Performance on appeals remains good.

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 Planning services contribute to producing a sustainable environment and economy within the Borough and to meeting the 2018 Corporate Plan objectives for "Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active."

## 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Statutory consultation takes place on planning applications and appeals and this can influence the speed with which applications and appeals are decided. Information on development management performance is publicly available.

## 7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

- 7.2 In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics, it is considered that the development management performance set out in this report has no adverse impacts.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The collection and monitoring of performance indicators is a statutory requirement and a requirement of DCLG. In addition a number of the work related programmes referred to in this report are mandatory requirements including the determination of planning applications and the preparation of the development plan.

## 9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE & SPORT

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	25 APRIL 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	8
TITLE:	ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE - 2017/18		
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	KIARAN ROUGHAN	TEL:	0118 937 4530 (74530)
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk">kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk</a>

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide details of performance in development management (applications, appeals, enforcement and associated services) during 2017/18.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report provides information on the performance of the Planning Service for the year 2017/18 as a whole. Short reports on quarterly performance are also presented to Committee throughout the year.

4. PLANNING APPLICATION PERFORMANCE

Performance indicators and targets

- 4.1 Statutory time targets provide time periods within which planning authorities should decide planning applications. The 2017/18 corporate performance indicators set uses a number of DCLG indicators which are based on these statutory time targets.
- 4.2 The determination of planning applications is monitored in relation to the statutory target timescales, i.e.
- 60% of “Major” applications to be determined in 13 weeks (note that where an application is subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment, a 16 week limit applies);
  - 65% of “Minor” applications to be determined in 8 weeks; and
  - 80% of “Other” applications to be determined in 8 weeks.

Since 2011, the government has allowed local authorities to agree Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) or simple extensions of time with applicants for major applications. These allow the above statutory targets to be set aside (see relevant National Planning Policy Guidance). New Indicators introduced in 2017 allow for all applications to be accompanied by a PPA or an extension of time to meet the target regardless of the time taken. For

consistency, and as PPA's and extensions of time can be agreed for any application, the same indicator is now used in respect of Minor applications and Other categories including householder applications.

4.3 Since 2011, the Government has operated the Planning Guarantee. This is intended to give a clear time limit within which all planning applications should be decided including where an appeal has been made. The Guarantee is that, in principle, no application should spend more than 26 weeks with either the LPA or the Planning Inspectorate. As a development of the Planning Guarantee the government has set criteria against which it will designate local planning authorities. Designation would mean that certain applications can be made directly to the Secretary of State for determination. These criteria were extended during 2016. The changes are set out in the DCLG document "Improving and for the 2017 threshold and assessment period involve the following measures:

- (i) the speed with which the authority deals with major applications;
- (ii) the speed with which the authority deals with non-major applications;

The previous measure of the extent to which decisions on major applications are overturned at appeal will not be assessed for the 2017 assessment. However for 2018, the assessment will include this measure for both major and non-major applications.

4.4 The thresholds for (i) is now 50% or fewer of major applications determined within 13 weeks over the previous 2 year period (but excluding PPA applications and those where the applicant has agreed an extension of time with the LPA). For (ii), the threshold is 65% over the same 2 year period. These thresholds have been met comfortably. As can be seen from the reports on performance below, the Council's performance is significantly above the thresholds.

4.5 It is important to ensure that prior approval applications are decided within the prescribed 42 or 56 days otherwise prior approval is given by default. This indicator is reported in Table 2 below.

Table 1. RBC Performance Indicators 2017/18 for the Planning Service compared with previous years.

Description	Frequency	Target	14 -15	15-16	16-17	17-18
Percentage of major applications decided within: (i) statutory 13/16 weeks, or (ii) the extended period agreed with the applicant. (NB note that a risk of designation occurs where 40% or fewer of their decisions on major applications are made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant).	Q	60%	64%	85% (17/20)	89% (42/47)	93% (27/29)
Percentage of minor applications decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period agreed by the applicant.	Q	65%	66%	71% (143/201)	74% (166/223)	88% (205/234)
Percentage of other applications decided within	Q	80%	62%	54%	59%	69%

Description	Frequency	Target	14 -15	15-16	16-17	17-18
statutory 8 weeks				(366/676)	(457/769)	(480/698)
Percentage of other applications decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period as agreed by applicant.	Q	80%	77%	73% (493/676)	85% (657/769)	90% (633/698)
Percentage of householder applications (not for prior approval) decided within statutory 8 weeks.	Q	80%	67%	55% (249/456)	62% (308/499)	75% (349/464)
Percentage of householder applications (not for prior approval) decided within (i) statutory 8 weeks or (ii) the extended period agreed by the applicant.	Q	80%	81%	75% (342/457)	86% (430/499)	88% (406/464)
Planning Enforcement: % of enforcement complaints resolved within the relevant Enforcement Plan target period from the date of receipt.	Q	60%	52%	66% (178/269)	82% (244/299)	79% (200/253)
Appeal performance - % allowed as a total of all appeals (a lower % figure is better)	Annual	30%	26%	27% (9/33)	20% (8/41)	18% (8/43)
Major application appeal performance - % allowed as a total of all appeals (NB note that a risk of designation occurs where more than 20% of major applications decisions are overturned on appeal. (a lower % figure is better)	Annual	20%	0%	0% (0/0)	0% (0/0)	0% (0/1)

4.7 Table 2 below sets out performance by application type and indicator for those DCLG indicators that are not covered in the RBC Performance Indicators 2017/18 for the Planning Service.

TABLE 2 Other DCLG Planning Application Performance Measures

Indicator	Target	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Percentage of MAJOR applications decided within statutory 13/16 weeks.	60%	50%	28%	47%	28% (13/47)	7% (2/29)
Percentage of MINOR applications decided within statutory 8 wks.	65%	61.5%	43%	53%	41% (92/225)	42% (99/234)
Percentage of ALL applications decided within (i) 26 weeks or (ii) extended period agreed by applicant	100%	79.2%	97.8%	87%	93% (973/1041)	89% (1271/1425)
Percentage of	100%	100%	100%	97%		

applications for PRIOR APPROVAL decided within the statutory period (42 or 56 days).					96% (128/133)	96% (130/135)
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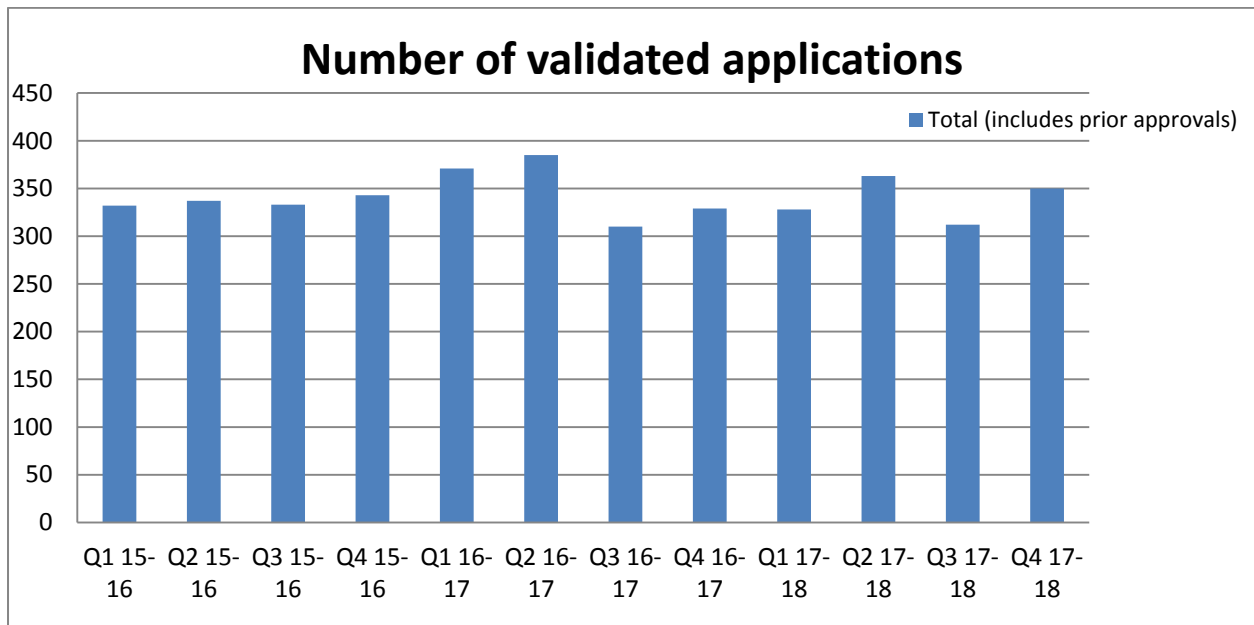
4.9 The total number of decisions by different application types is shown in Table 3 and is compared to previous years. As can be seen the number of applications decided in 2017/18 rose compared to 2016/17 mainly as a result of an increase in “other” applications including householder applications. However, this only makes up for the significant fall in such applications during 2016/16. There was a fall in the number of major applications.

TABLE 3: Number of decisions made annually by application type since 2014/15

	Major	Minor	Other	Total	Householder Prior-approv.	Office to Res. Prior approv.	Grand Total
2014/15	18	139	651	808	46	35	889
2015/16	36	201	692	929	60	52	1041
2016/17 (% change compared to 2015/16)	48 (+92%)	227 (+4%)	615 (-29%)	890 (-20%)	94 (+11%)	24 (-33%)	1008 (-19%)
2017/18 (% change compared to 2016/17)	29 (-40%)	225 (-1%)	698 (+13%)	952 (+7%)	67 (-28%)	21 (-13%)	1040 (+3%)

The number of office to residential prior approvals fell quite significantly. The number of office to residential prior approvals have also continued to fall away, presumably because the number of opportunities for such conversion are now more limited.

4.10 The following chart shows the overall number of valid applications received since 2013/14 including prior approvals and householder applications:



Although figures vary between quarters, the number of validated applications rose in 2017/18 compared to 2016/17 (a total of 1345 compared to a total of 1395 in 2016/17).

A total of 95 prior approval applications were validated in 2017/18, compared to 128 in 2016/17. As indicated above Office to Residential prior approvals have also continued to slow further compared to 2016/17.

#### Planning applications performance 2017/18

- 84.8% of all applications were granted permission.
- Performance in relation to determining Major applications has continued to improve compared to the performance during 2016/17 and earlier years, with extensions of time continuing to be sought more systematically for applications that go over the 13 week target. The numbers being determined within 13 weeks have however continued to fall, reflecting the complexity of many of the major applications determined during the year and officer efforts to negotiate high quality proposals that are policy compliant.
- Performance on Minor applications is slightly above the performance in 2016/17, again because extensions of times are being sought more systematically. The determination of applications within the 8 week target remains comparatively low as many of these applications are affected by the policy requirement to provide affordable housing.
- Performance on Other applications including householder applications has improved in percentage terms for applications with extensions of time and in terms of the target 8 weeks.
- Enforcement performance shows a slight reduction compared to last year but it should be noted that there was a significant improvement last year compared to previous years.
- There still remains some room for improvement in performance in terms of meeting statutory target timescales albeit that performance against timescales agreed with the applicant through extensions of time remains very satisfactory.

#### Other Development Management Applications

4.12 The Council also receives requests for pre-application advice, for approval of details required to discharge of conditions attached to planning permissions and for approval of works to trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders and in trees in Conservation Areas. Table 5 shows the number of each type of application received since 2013/14.

**TABLE 4: No. of applications received for miscellaneous development management advice or approval.**

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Pre-application advice	177	209	219 (+5%)	198 (-10%)	233(+18%)
Approval of details required by condition, ADJ LPA, NMA, EIA SCO and SCR.	283	313	355 (+13%)	388 (+9%)	390(+15%)
Works to TPO/CA trees	174	178	187 (+5%)	207 (+11%)	202(-2%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>761 (+9%)</b>	<b>793 (+4%)</b>	<b>825(+4%)</b>

Applications for pre-application advice have increased significantly during the year when measured against earlier years. However other applications have generally continued to increase indicating continuing buoyant planning and development activity across the Borough.

#### Planning Appeals

4.13 The Council’s Indicator for Appeals in Table 1 shows that performance for appeals continues to be well within the target. The percentage of major decisions not overturned (allowed) at appeal remains at 0%. This means that the council remains below the government’s “Designation” level. The number of appeals during 2017/18 is consistent with earlier years. The number of appeals allowed at 18% (8/43) remains well below the target maximum of 30%.

4.14 The following table provides some further detail for 2017/18:

**TABLE 5: Section 78 Appeals against the refusal of planning permission**

	Year 2014/15	Year 2015/16	Year 2016/17	Year 2017/18
APPEALS LODGED	16	36	39	38
NUMBER OF APPEAL DECISIONS	12	36	40	43
APPEALS ALLOWED	3	8	8	8
APPEALS DISMISSED	8	25	32	34
SPLIT DECISIONS	0	0	0	0
APPEALS WITHDRAWN	1	3	0	1



## Planning Enforcement

- 4.15 The Planning Enforcement Service has one corporate performance indicator. Performance against this indicator is provided in Table 1. For 2016/17, performance was very good with 79% of enforcement complaints being resolved within 13 weeks of receipt against a target of 60%.
- 4.16 Table 6 below provides more detailed information on cases received and enforcement activity during 2015/16 compared to previous years. In 2017/18 the number of cases (246) rose slightly compared to the previous year. The service has continued to close a significant number of cases; and the number of cases on hand at the end of the year remains at the much lower level established last year.

**TABLE 6: Planning Enforcement statistics**

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Total number of enforcement cases received	340	289	294	246	251
No. of cases closed	312	295	353	339	252
No. of cases on hand at end of year	306	340	281	183	181
Enforcement notices	4	3	5	8	6
Planning contravention notices	24	14	11	10	11
Breach of condition notices	1	1	1	1	0
Section 215 notices	0	0	0	0	0
Listed Building Enforcement notice	0	0	0	0	0
Temp Stop Notice	0	0	0	0	0
Stop Notice	0	0	0	0	0
Appeals against enforcement notices	1	3	1	3	3
New enforcement prosecutions	1	1	0	1	1

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 Planning services contribute to producing a sustainable environment and economy within the Borough and to meeting the 2018 Corporate Plan objective for “Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.”

## 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Statutory consultation takes place on planning applications and appeals and this can influence the speed with which applications and appeals are decided. Information on development management performance is publicly available.

## 7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics, it is considered that the development management performance set out in this report has no adverse impacts.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The collection and monitoring of performance indicators is a statutory requirement and a requirement of DCLG. In addition a number of the work related programmes referred to in this report are mandatory requirements including the determination of planning applications and the preparation of the development plan.

## 9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Specific initiatives referred to will be met from existing budgets.

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	25 APRIL 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	9
TITLE:	DRAFT REVISED NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND ASSOCIATED CONSULTATIONS, MARCH 2018		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
	COUNCILLOR LIVINGSTON		CHAIR, PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARD:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	KIARAN ROUGHAN	TEL:	0118 9374530
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	<a href="mailto:kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk">kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk</a>

#### 1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 A draft Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Department for Housing Communities and Local Government (DHCLG) on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018. The revised NPPF is intended to set out how various reforms upon which the government has previously consulted, such as various initiatives in the Housing White Paper published in February 2017 will be taken forward. The main thrust of the revised NPPF is to provide more housing to meet current high levels of unmet need for housing.

1.2 At the same time, DHCLG published several other documents including:

- National Planning Policy Framework Consultation Proposals (which seeks to explain the main changes)
- Draft Planning Practice Guidance which includes a lengthy section on Viability;
- A consultation on “Supporting housing delivery through developer contributions”
- A Housing Delivery Test Draft Measurement Rule Book
- Government response to the Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places consultation.

1.3 This report briefly summarises the contents of the draft Revised NPPF and the other consultation documents. It considers some of the possible implications for the planning system as it currently operates and specifically implications for this Council. The report asks Committee to note the NPPF and the other consultation documents. It seeks agreement to a draft recommended response to the consultations.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Committee notes the contents of the Draft Revised NPPF and associated documents published by DCLG in March 2018 and the various proposed changes to the planning system.

2.2 That Committee approves the general thrust of the Council's recommended response to the consultation and other proposals as outlined in Section 4 of this report with the final comments to be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development

### 3. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

3.1 The long awaited draft Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published by the Department for Housing Communities and Local Government (DHCLG) on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018, along with a number of associated documents. These documents follow on from the White Paper on Housing which was presented to Parliament in 2016. The White Paper set out how the Government intends that more housing is provided in the future under the title “Fixing Our Broken Housing Market.” Planning Applications Committee agreed the Council’s consultation response to the White paper in April 2017. Further detail on a number of these reforms was set out in *Planning for the right homes in the right places* in September 2017.

3.2 The Draft Revised NPPF is presented as a complete revised document. A separate document, titled “National Planning Policy Framework Consultation proposals,” describes the main revisions in the document chapter by chapter. It also sets out 40 consultation questions on which the government is seeking responses. These 40 questions are also provided on a separate form that can be filled in and emailed to DHCLG. Annex 1 contains a copy of this form. It is not proposed that the Council respond on every question, which would take considerable time and resources. However there are a number of aspects of the revised NPPF that are of particular relevance to Reading Borough and the Council proposes to respond in these areas having regard to relevant questions in the consultation.

3.3 The other associated documents that were published at the same time as the Draft Revised NPPF have differing consultation processes:

- The consultation on “Supporting housing delivery through developer contributions” sets out 34 formal questions to which consultees are asked to respond. A copy of the draft recommended response is attached at Appendix 2;
- The Draft Planning Practice Guidance for Viability is assumed to be a consultation document although no formal consultation responses are sought. The Council’s brief draft comments on the document are set out in Appendix 3;
- The Housing Delivery Test Draft Measurement Rule Book is described as a Draft methodology to calculating the Housing Delivery Test but again no formal consultation responses are explicitly sought. The Council’s brief draft comments on the document are set out in Appendix 4.

3.4 The Draft Revised NPPF:

- makes a number of structural changes, in particular dividing the document into clear chapters;
- incorporates policy proposals on which the Government has previously consulted;
- incorporates additional proposals on which this document is consulting.

There are a significant number of changes to the current NPPF. The more significant changes are set out below.

3.5 **Achieving sustainable development:** The wording of the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11) has been reordered to reflect the way that plan and decision-making are approached in practice. The draft text also sets out an expectation for objectively assessed needs to be accommodated unless there are strong reasons not to, including any unmet needs from neighbouring areas.

- 3.6 **Assessing housing need:** paragraph 61 requires that strategic plans should be based on the local housing need assessment and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should be taken into account when establishing this figure. The quantum of development needing to be accommodated would be established through a new requirement to produce statements of common ground between neighbouring councils.

In terms of decision-making, the new text states that, if there is no development plan or the relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless the site is on a defined list of protected assets. The NPPF puts forward such a list of assets which includes green belt, ecological designations, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees.

- 3.7 **Viability:** Paragraph 173 in the original, which aims to ensure viability and deliverability, has been replaced by new paragraph 58. It now states:

*“Where proposals for development accord with all the relevant policies in an up-to-date development plan, no viability assessment should be required to accompany the application. Where a viability assessment is needed, it should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.”*

In addition, paragraph 34 notes that the local plan must set out where further viability assessments might be required at the planning application stage. DHCLG has also produced separate Draft Planning Practice Guidance for Viability which is considered in more detail below.

- 3.8 **Delivering a sufficient supply of homes:** This new chapter brings forward a number of initiatives from MHCLG, which have been consulted on over the last three years. It references a standard methodology for assessing housing numbers set out in planning practice guidance. The methodology consulted on before Christmas was designed to be simpler than currently exists, which will help remove long protracted delays at Examination and speed up the plan making process, which needs to happen in order to bring certainty to the market in the shorter term. The methodology is still to be finalised. There is also a requirement for plan policies to address the housing requirements of groups with particular need - students and people who rent their homes. Another point refers to local authorities taking a flexible approach to applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where this would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site for housing.

- 3.9 **Housing delivery test:** The Secretary of State has stated the one of the biggest shifts" in the new approach is, "a change in culture, towards outcomes achieved - the number of homes delivered- rather than on processes like planning permissions". As a consequence, the draft NPPF introduces a Housing Delivery Test. This will measure net additional dwellings provided in a local authority against the homes required, using national statistics and local authority data. The Secretary of State will publish Housing Delivery Test results every November. As noted, the government has published a separate document which sets out a detailed rulebook for measurements against the delivery test.

The housing delivery test, which aims to assess actual home completions - measured using official figures for net additional dwellings over a three-year period - against councils' housing requirements. From 2020, if an authority's delivery rate falls below 75 per cent of its housing requirement, a presumption in favour of sustainable development kicks in and planning applications will then be judged against the NPPF rather than the local plan. DHCLG has also produced a separate Housing Delivery Test Draft Measurement Rule Book to explain this test in more detail.

- 3.10 Paragraph 78 provides that authorities should consider imposing a planning condition to bring forward development within two years. It also encourages local planning authorities to consider why major sites have not been built out when considering subsequent planning applications.

- 3.11 There are a number of proposed changes for plan making which include:
- A new plan-making framework which allows authorities to define and plan for strategic priorities possibly by local planning authorities working together;
  - A requirement for authorities to review plan policies every 5 years following the date of adoption;
  - A new requirement to prepare and maintain a Statement of Common Ground, as evidence of the duty to cooperate;
  - A number of changes to the tests of 'soundness' - including strengthening the 'effective' test to emphasise effective joint working, as evidenced by the Statement of Common Ground;
  - Tightening the evidence which is expected to support a 'sound' plan, to allow for a more proportionate approach.
- 3.12 **Affordable housing:** The definition of affordable housing has been widened in Annexe 2 of the NPPF. The requirement to provide for starter homes is now included, and the new policy now expects a minimum of 10% for affordable home ownership across the board (not specifically starter homes). This will include shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). It also includes for discounted market sales housing that is sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households. Paragraphs 63 and 64 incorporate the Ministerial Statement of 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014 on affordable housing contributions restricting authorities from seeking such housing on sites of 10 or less dwellings.
- 3.13 **Densification around transport hubs:** The draft seeks a significant uplift in prevailing densities, unless this would be inappropriate. Local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make effective use of land, in areas where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs. The draft also includes a policy to make it easier to convert retail and employment land to housing where this would be a more effective use and proposes a policy for making more effective use of empty space above shops and in other situations where land and buildings could be used more effectively. A future consultation is promised to seek views on a possible permitted development right for upwards extensions to create new homes.
- 3.14 The sequential approach to town centre uses is amended to make clear that out-of-centre sites should be considered only if suitable town centre or edge-of-centre sites are unavailable or not expected to become available within a reasonable period. The draft says such sites do not have to be available immediately, in order to avoid prejudicing town centre or edge of centre sites that are in the pipeline. It removes the expectation that office developments over a certain floorspace threshold outside town centres are subject to an impact assessment.
- 3.15 On transport proposed changes include:
- New wording on the variety of ways in which transport should be considered as part of the planning process;
  - That policies on parking standards should now also take into account the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles;
  - A new policy that maximum parking standards should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network.
- 3.16 **Air quality:** Paragraph 179 suggests that planners should take into account the "presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones". "Opportunities to improve air

- quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement.” As far as possible, opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage.
- 3.17 Green Belt/brownfield: The draft NPPF maintains strong protections for green belt land. Planning authorities must fully examine "all other reasonable options" for meeting their identified development needs before releasing green belt.
- 3.18 Measures towards achieving higher levels of delivery of housing are the subject of the major changes in the draft Revised NPPF. However, there are a number of other proposed changes:
- Changes to local plan-making including to the tests of soundness;
  - References to promoting social interaction and healthy lifestyles through planning;
  - Promoting sustainable transport including a tightening of policy to link sustainable transport with opportunities to increase densification;
  - Increased emphasis on achieving well designed places including referencing the use of design codes and specific standards such as Building For Life.
  - That great weight should be given to the conservation of a heritage asset irrespective of whether the potential harm to its significance amounts to ‘less than substantial harm’ or ‘substantial harm or total loss’ of significance .
- 3.19 The Government’s new Draft Planning Practice Guidance for Viability sets out the Government’s recommended approach to viability assessment for planning in relation to viability for policy making and for decisions. The new draft policy guidance expects all viability assessments to reflect a recommended approach to be set in revised national planning guidance and says all viability assessments should be made publicly available. The guidance says plans can set out when and how review mechanisms may be used to amend developer contributions to help account for significant changes in costs and values, and how any significant increase in overall value should be apportioned between the local authority and the developer.
- 3.20 The guidance indicates that the role for viability assessment is primarily at the plan making stage. Plans should be informed by evidence of infrastructure and affordable housing need and an assessment of viability that takes into account all relevant policies, local, and national standards including for developer contributions. Viability assessment should not compromise the quality of development but should ensure that policies are realistic and the total cumulative cost of all relevant policies is not of a scale that that will make development unviable.
- 3.21 The guidance indicates that it is important to consider the specific circumstances of strategic sites within the plan, perhaps through individual site specific viability assessments.
- 3.22 The guidance indicates how values and costs should be calculated. This is standard advice and relates to standard methodologies. The major area of new clarification in the guidance is how land value is to be defined for the purpose of viability assessment. The new draft guidance recommends that the ‘existing use value plus’ (EUV+) method is used to calculate benchmark land value at the stage when the local authority sets its local plan policies. As part of this calculation, a premium for the landowner will be calculated, and separately, a suitable return for the developer will be calculated. However, the clear recommendation that EUV+ should be used the main basis for calculating the benchmark land value is a significant step.
- 3.23 EUV is the value of the land in its existing use together with the right to implement any development for which there are extant planning consents. Existing use value is not the price paid and should disregard hope value. Existing use values will vary depending on the

type of site and development types. There are other factors that will be taken into account in determining the benchmark land value but EUV is proposed as the starting point.

3.24 Even more significant is the government recommendation that “land value should fully reflect the total cost of all relevant policy requirements including planning obligations and, where applicable, any Community Infrastructure Levy charge.” This means that land values should account for all policy requirements including requirements for affordable housing. Too often developers have ignored policy requirements in an assumption that viability is the be all in determining what is provided as part of a development. The guidance still allows land values to be informed by comparable market evidence of current uses, costs and values wherever possible. However, it states that “Where recent market transactions are used to inform the assessment of benchmark land value there should be evidence that these transactions were based on policy compliant development. This is so that previous prices based on non-policy compliant developments are not used to inflate values over time.” The guidance sets out:

- How should Existing Use Value be established for viability assessment?
- How should the premium to the landowner be defined for viability assessment?

The guidance re-affirms that the premium to the landowner has to take account of the policy compliant land value.

3.25 The draft guidance sets out that an assumption will be made that the return to the developer “may be 20% of GDV” for the purposes of plan making, in order to establish viability of the development plan policies. A lower figure of 6% of GDV “may be more appropriate in consideration of delivery of affordable housing in circumstances where this guarantees an end sale at a known value and reduces the risk”. And it is also acknowledged that different figures may be appropriate for different development types, for example build to rent.

3.26 The draft guidance provides policy guidance on the use of review mechanisms. “For large or multi-phased development, review mechanisms can be used to capture increases in scheme value that occur over the lifetime of a development.” It indicates that plans should set out how any significant increase in the overall value of a large or multi-phased development will be apportioned between the local authority and the developer.

3.27 The guidance allows for different circumstances such as for the build for rent product where the economics are different to building for sale. The guidance indicates that any viability assessment should be prepared on the basis that it will be made publicly available other than in exceptional circumstances. The government intends to produce a standard executive summary template for such appraisals with a view that this is published as part of the application process. There is also guidance on how local authorities should monitor and report infrastructure and other provision in Section 106 agreements to better promote accountability. The proposals also require developers to provide open book viability assessments in order to improve transparency and accountability.

3.28 The DHCLG publication, “Supporting housing delivery through developer contributions” indicates that, “...it is clear that the current system of developer contributions is not working as well as it should. It is too complex and uncertain. This acts as a barrier to new entrants and allows developers to negotiate down the affordable housing and infrastructure they agreed to provide.” The document sets out the key objectives that the Government is seeking to achieve to make the system of developer contributions more transparent and accountable by:

- Reducing complexity and increasing certainty;
- Supporting swifter development;



- Increasing market responsiveness;
- Improving transparency and increasing accountability;
- Allowing the introduction of a Strategic Infrastructure Tariff to help fund or mitigate strategic infrastructure, ensuring existing and new communities can benefit.

3.29 The consultation document proposes a series of measures:

- streamline the process to set or revise a CIL charging schedule by removing the need for 2 separate consultations and linking the process up with the local plan process;
- Lifting the section 106 pooling restriction for authorities that have adopted CIL or for those authorities where house prices are low, meaning that CIL cannot be feasibly charged or where development is planned on several strategic sites and there is a need for combined pooling of infrastructure.
- Further refinements to the operation and administration of the CIL charge;
- Allow CIL charging schedules to be set based on the existing use of land with simplified charging for complex sites;
- Indexing residential development to regional or local authority house prices instead of to national figures so that changes are more responsive to local market conditions;
- There are also proposals for more detailed reporting of CIL income and spending through a requirement for the publication of Infrastructure Funding Statements.
- In the light of the success of Mayoral CIL in London which is being used to fund the building of the Queen Elisabeth Line/Crossrail, the Government proposes to allow combined authorities and joint committees, where they have strategic planning powers, to introduce a Strategic Infrastructure Tariff.

At Annex 1 to the document, DHCLG has set out a total of 34 questions on which it is seeking answers.

#### 4.0 COMMENTARY / CONSULTATION

- 4.1 A separate document, titled “National Planning Policy Framework Consultation proposals,” describes the main revisions in the document chapter by chapter. It also sets out 40 consultation questions on which the government is seeking responses. These 40 questions are also provided on a separate form that can be filled in and emailed to DHCLG. Annex 1 contains a copy of this form. It is not proposed that the Council respond on every question, which would take considerable time and resources. However there are a number of aspects of the Draft Revised NPPF that are of particular relevance to Reading Borough and it is proposed the Council responds in these areas having regard to relevant questions in the consultation.
- 4.2 The Draft Revised NPPF largely consolidates various measures that have previously been the subject of consultation. As expected the draft Revised NPPF continues to emphasise the use of brownfield land and densification within urban areas. Other changes propose various refinements to the system, with promises to speed things up and clarify processes. There is welcome additional advice on achieving higher design quality and the need for applicants to undertake pre-application discussions.
- 4.3 The main thrust of the revised document is intended to help increase house building rates. The Council has previously commented on the new standard methodology for assessing housing need. The methodology has not yet been finalised, but the Draft NPPF requires provision to be planned on the basis of meeting these identified needs. There are additional measures to strengthen the duty to cooperate through which it is intended that authorities will undertake strategic planning to best meet identified housing needs in an area. However, this is still somewhat inadequate as a means for proper strategic planning or satisfactorily dealing with cross boundary issues.

- 4.4 The draft Revised NPPF will place further pressure on local authorities not only to get their local plans in place but also to ensure that delivery of new housing is taking place as forecast. The requirement for a minimum 5 year housing land supply has been refined and will continue to facilitate considerable unplanned development solely on the basis that insufficient housing land exists at a particular point in time. Added to this is the new Housing Delivery Test which will add a further presumption in favour of housing development where delivery falls significantly below delivery targets.
- 4.5 A significant concern for the Council will be the widening of the definition of affordable housing to include various intermediate and discounted sale products (these include starter homes, discounted market sales housing such as shared ownership and other low cost/discounted homes for sale products sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value). It also includes reference to Affordable Private Rent for Build to Rent Schemes. These changes will inevitably have an adverse impact, potentially diluting the provision of affordable rental accommodation for those least able to afford housing in the current market (i.e. those who need social rented or affordable rent housing). The government may want to offer more low cost home ownership routes but this should not be at the expense of affordable rental provision. It also has impacts on assessing viability in local plans which is discussed in more detail below.
- 4.6 The Council should object to new Paragraphs 63 and 64 which incorporate the ministerial Statement of 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014 on affordable housing contributions. Reading Borough Council, along with West Berkshire Council, challenged this statement in the High Court. The High Court clearly came to the conclusion that this was not good policy and that its stated purpose was not justified by the evidence. It was subsequently upheld in the Court of Appeal. However, the Court of Appeal decision did not alter that conclusion of the High Court that it was not good policy and we should continue to press that this policy is severely flawed and inhibits the provision of much needed and viable affordable housing.
- 4.7 The Council previously raised concerns that continued restrictions on the release of green belt land is a serious barrier to development of low grade land for much needed housing in highly sustainable locations close to existing urban centres. However, the NPPF largely maintains the existing presumption against development in the Green Belt unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 4.8 Officers have concerns that the general statement about taking a flexible approach to applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight will lead to very poor, high density developments where inadequate levels of daylight and sunlight provide unsatisfactory living conditions and have implications for the health of those living in them.
- 4.9 The new guidance and the associated draft methodology for calculating viability fill an obvious current vacuum in policy advice and, for the most part, will be a significant improvement over the current situation. There is no doubt that the current lack of policy guidance on how to calculate viability has enabled the development industry to reduce affordable housing provision mainly by inflating the appropriate land value through the use of benchmark values (i.e. arguing that the value of a site should be based solely on market transaction prices for other similar sites). Local authorities have long argued that land values should be based on existing use values and policy compliance. The new guidance moves very much in that direction with its reference to EUV plus (Existing Use Value with an uplift to persuade a landowner to sell) and to benchmark values based on policy compliant provision. The new guidance is, therefore, generally to be welcomed. However, EUV plus needs to be more tightly defined, in particular on how to calculate the 'plus' part of the equation. The guidance also firmly indicates that an assumption of a 20% profit level on sale housing for developers is appropriate. Our experience is that this can be negotiated downwards and we would argue for a more fluid profit level assumption related to whether a scheme is policy compliant.

4.10 Committee is asked to note the commentary on the NPPF and associated DHCLG consultation documents within this report and to agree that a draft response be prepared on the basis of the matters referred to in this section in relation to selected questions in the Consultations. The full list of questions on the NPPF consultation is set out in Appendix 1. Commentary will be formulated in relation to the other consultations on viability, the Housing Delivery Test and Developer Contributions, as appropriate. The final response will be agreed by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport. Members should note that the closing date for consultation responses is 10th May 2018. Committee should also note that there are on-going discussions with the other Berkshire Authorities about submitting joint representations on the draft guidance on Housing Delivery Tests and associated matters.

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The Planning Service contributes to the Council's strategic aims in terms of:

- Seeking to meet the 2018 Corporate Plan objectives for "Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active."
- Seeking to meet the 2018 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing homes for those in most need."
- Seeking to meet the 2018 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing infrastructure to support the economy."

## 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Only minor reference is made to these matters in the changes proposed.

## 7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Where appropriate the Council must have regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 There are no direct implications arising from the proposals.

## 8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 These are dealt with in the Report.

## 9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following papers referred to in the report were published by DHCLG on their website in March 2018.

[National Planning Policy Framework: draft text for consultation](#)

[National Planning Policy Framework: consultation proposals](#)

[Draft planning practice guidance](#)

Sets out our proposed changes to the NPPG arising from the changes to the NPPF including viability.

[Housing Delivery Test: draft measurement rule book](#)

[Supporting housing delivery through developer contributions](#)

# Consultation response form

This is the response form for the consultation on the draft revised National Planning Policy Framework. If you are responding by email or in writing, please reply using this questionnaire pro-forma, which should be read alongside the consultation document. The comment boxes will expand as you type. Required fields are indicated with an asterisk (\*)

## Your details

First name*	Kiaran
Family name (surname)*	Roughan
Title	Planning Manager
Address	Civic Offices, Bridge Street
City/Town*	Reading
Postal code*	RG1 2LU
Telephone Number	01189 374530
Email Address*	Kiaran.roughan@reading.gov.uk

Are the views expressed on this consultation your own personal views or an official response from an organisation you represent?\*

## Organisational response

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please select the option which best describes your organisation. \*

### Local authority (including National Parks, Broads Authority, the Greater London Authority and London Boroughs)

If you selected other, please state the type of organisation

Please provide the name of the organisation (if applicable)

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Question 1

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 1?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development

### Question 2

Do you agree with the changes to the sustainable development objectives and the presumption in favour of sustainable development?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 3

Do you agree that the core principles section should be deleted, given its content has been retained and moved to other appropriate parts of the Framework?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 4

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 2, including the approach to providing additional certainty for neighbourhood plans in some circumstances?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Chapter 3: Plan-making

### Question 5

Do you agree with the further changes proposed to the tests of soundness, and to the other changes of policy in this chapter that have not already been consulted on?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Question 6**

Do you have any other comments on the text of chapter 3?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## **Chapter 4: Decision-making**

### **Question 7**

The revised draft Framework expects all viability assessments to be made publicly available. Are there any circumstances where this would be problematic?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Question 8**

Would it be helpful for national planning guidance to go further and set out the circumstances in which viability assessment to accompany planning applications would be acceptable?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Question 9**

What would be the benefits of going further and mandating the use of review mechanisms to capture increases in the value of a large or multi-phased development?

Please enter your comments below

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Question 10**

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 4?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Chapter 5: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

### Question 11

What are your views on the most appropriate combination of policy requirements to ensure that a suitable proportion of land for homes comes forward as small or medium sized sites?

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 12

Do you agree with the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development where delivery is below 75% of the housing required from 2020?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 13

Do you agree with the new policy on exception sites for entry-level homes?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 14

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 5?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Chapter 6: Building a strong, competitive economy

### Question 15

Do you agree with the policy changes on supporting business growth and productivity, including the approach to accommodating local business and community needs in rural areas?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**



Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Question 16**

Do you have any other comments on the text of chapter 6?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## **Chapter 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres**

### **Question 17**

Do you agree with the policy changes on planning for identified retail needs and considering planning applications for town centre uses?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Question 18**

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 7?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## **Chapter 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities**

### **Question 19**

Do you have any comments on the new policies in Chapter 8 that have not already been consulted on?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Question 20**

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 8?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## **Chapter 9: Promoting sustainable transport**

### **Question 21**

Do you agree with the changes to the transport chapter that point to the way that all aspects of transport should be considered, both in planning for transport and assessing transport impacts?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

Click here to enter text.

### **Question 22**

Do you agree with the policy change that recognises the importance of general aviation facilities?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

Click here to enter text.

### **Question 23**

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 9?

Click here to enter text.

## **Chapter 10: Supporting high quality communications**

### **Question 24**

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 10?

Click here to enter text.

## **Chapter 11: Making effective use of land**

### **Question 25**

Do you agree with the proposed approaches to under-utilised land, reallocating land for other uses and making it easier to convert land which is in existing use?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

Click here to enter text.

### Question 26

Do you agree with the proposed approach to employing minimum density standards where there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

Click here to enter text.

### Question 27

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 11?

Click here to enter text.

## Chapter 12 : Achieving well-designed places

### Question 28

Do you have any comments on the changes of policy in Chapter 12 that have not already been consulted on?

Click here to enter text.

### Question 29

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 12?

Click here to enter text.

## Chapter 13: Protecting the Green Belt

### Question 30

Do you agree with the proposed changes to enable greater use of brownfield land for housing in the Green Belt, and to provide for the other forms of development that are 'not inappropriate' in the Green Belt?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

Click here to enter text.

### Question 31

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 13?

Click here to enter text.

## Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

### Question 32

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 14?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 33

Does paragraph 149b need any further amendment to reflect the ambitions in the Clean Growth Strategy to reduce emissions from building?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### Question 34

Do you agree with the approach to clarifying and strengthening protection for areas of particular environmental importance in the context of the 25 Year Environment Plan and national infrastructure requirements, including the level of protection for ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 35

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 15?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### Question 36

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 16?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Chapter 17: Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

### Question 37

Do you have any comments on the changes of policy in Chapter 17, or on any other aspects of the text in this chapter?

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 38

Do you think that planning policy in minerals would be better contained in a separate document?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### Question 39

Do you have any views on the utility of national and sub-national guidelines on future aggregates provision?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Transitional arrangements and consequential changes

### Question 40

Do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

[Click here to enter text.](#)

### **Question 41**

Do you think that any changes should be made to the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites as a result of the proposed changes to the Framework set out in the consultation document? If so, what changes should be made?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

Click here to enter text.

### **Question 42**

Do you think that any changes should be made to the Planning Policy for Waste as a result of the proposed changes to the Framework set out in the consultation document? If so, what changes should be made?

**Please select an item from this drop down menu**

Please enter your comments here

Click here to enter text.

## **Glossary**

### **Question 43**

Do you have any comments on the glossary?

Click here to enter text.

# ABBEY





## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 10

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 25 April 2018

Ward: Abbey

App No.s: 172295/FUL & 172296/LBC

Address: 41 Minster Street

Proposal: Upgrade of existing rooftop base station comprising the relocation of an existing antenna and the provision of additional 3 No antennas together with feeder cables, steelworks and ancillary development.

Applicant: H3G & EE Ltd c/o Arqiva

8 week target decision date: 13 April 2018

Extension of time date: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018

### RECOMMENDATION

172295/FUL

Grant Full Planning Permission

#### CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE

1. Full - time limit - three years
2. Standard approved plans condition

#### INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE

1. Positive and proactive informative
2. Listed Building Consent ref. 172296 relates to this permission

172296/LBC

Grant Listed Building Consent

#### CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE

1. Full - time limit - three years
2. Standard approved plans condition

#### INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE

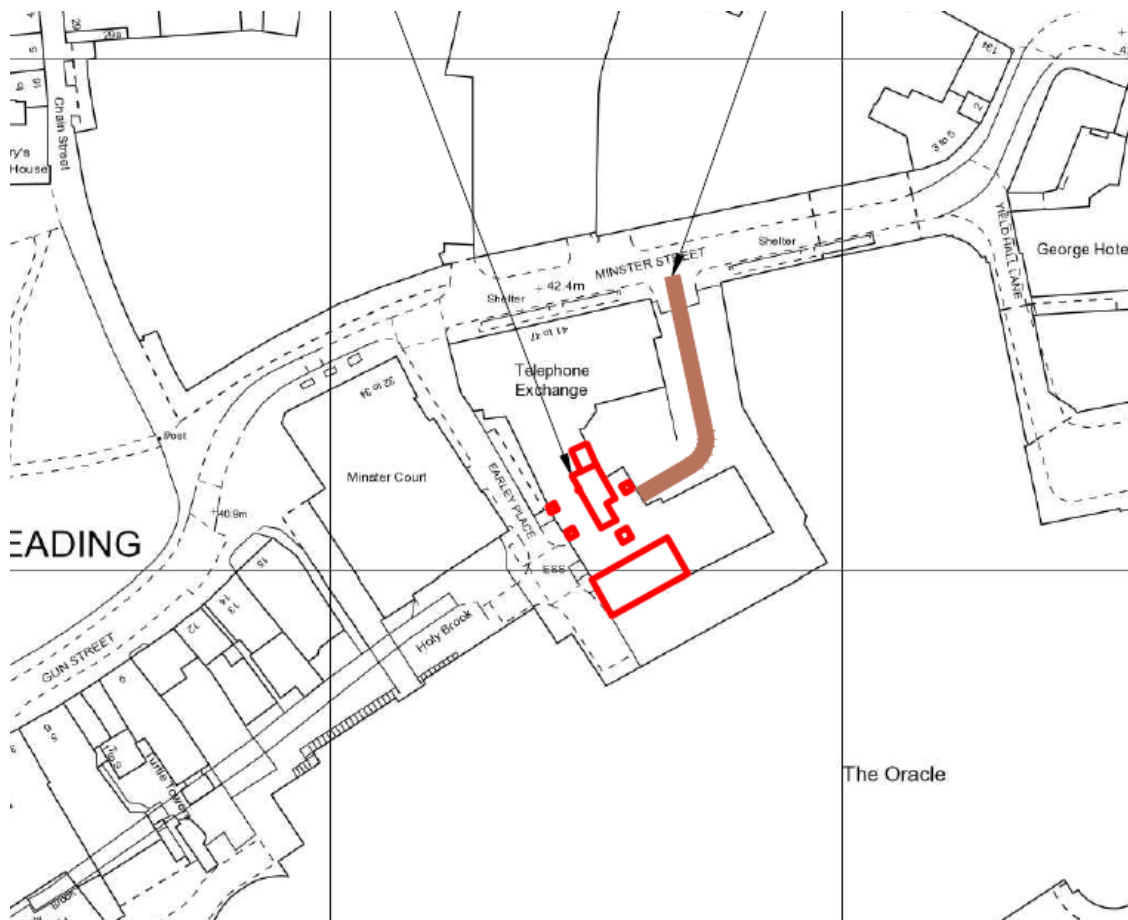
1. Positive and proactive informative

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application relates to the large Grade II listed BT Telephone Exchange building located at 41 -47 Minster Street, Reading. The three-storey building constructed circa 1900 is finished in red brick with stone dressings in an attenuated Georgian style. The Telephone Exchange was extended to the rear with a significant extension constructed circa 1960. There is significant existing telecommunications equipment to the roof levels of the building.

- 1.2 The site is located near the town centre and is surrounded by similar large buildings including John Lewis and The Oracle Centre (5-6 storeys). No. 41 is three storeys high facing Minster Street and five 5 storeys high at its rear.
- 1.3 The site is located within the Reading Central Area, Central Core in the Primary Shopping Area and within an existing designated Active Frontage. It is also adjacent to the eastern boundary of St. Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area. Parts of the site are within flood zones 2 and 3.
- 1.4 Full planning permission is required for the development because 'Permitted Development Rights' do not apply to telecommunications development within the curtilage of listed buildings.
- 1.5 The applications are required to be determined by Planning Applications Committee because they relate to telecommunications development to a listed building and which is located within a conservation area.

### Site Location Plan



## 2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The applications seek full planning permission and listed building consent for upgrading of an existing rooftop telecommunications base station comprising the

relocation of an existing antenna and the provision of additional 3 No antennas together with feeder cables, steelworks and ancillary development.

2.2 The proposed works relate to the rooftop of the later 1960's extension to the listed building.

2.3 The main elements of the proposed upgrade works are:

- Repositioning of existing 1 No. antenna onto new 2.5m high pole;
- Upgrading of existing rooftop base station through the provision of additional 3 No. antennas on steelworks;
- Upgrading of existing rooftop cabinet;
- Provision of 3 No. Remote Radio Units (RRU) and 6 No. BOB unit to be fixed to steelworks at rooftop level; and
- The installation of cabling and associated works.

2.4 The works are proposed by H3G and EE as part of an upgrade to the existing base station to update the site's capacity and extend coverage

2.5 A declaration has been submitted by the applicant confirming compliance with the International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) guidelines.

### 3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Relevant Planning History:

010200 - Communications switch room with existing building and installation of ventilation louvres to side elevation - Granted.

010354 - Installation of ventilation louvres to the side elevation (LBC) - Granted

010064 - Removal of three windows at 2nd floor level and installation of louvres into openings - Granted

011012 - Removal of 3 no windows at 2nd floor level and fitting louvres to openings (LBC) - Granted

011282 - Installation of new double door and ventilation louvres to front elevation and ground floor level - Granted

060124 - Installation of new louvres - Granted

060689 - Installation of new louvres (LBC) - Granted

100600 - To replace 5 windows on the ground floor with aluminium louvres to allow ventilation into and out of the telephone exchange - Granted

100263 - Listed Building Consent to replace 5 windows on the ground floor with aluminium louvres to allow ventilation into and out of the telephone exchange (LBC) - Granted

130638 - Installation of 3 ventilation louvres on the first floor west elevation -  
Granted

161433 - Removal of 3no.fixed window panes on the ground floor and replacement  
with aluminium weather louvres to match existing - Granted

### 3. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 RBC Transport - No objections.

4.2 Public consultation:

- Two site notices was displayed at the site. No letters of representation have been received.

### 5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

5.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

5.3 The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

#### 5.4 National Planning Policy Framework

Part 5 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure  
Part 7 - Requiring good design

#### 5.5 Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008, 2015)

CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)  
CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)  
CS35 (Flooding)

#### 5.6 Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, 2015)

SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)  
DM21 (Telecommunications Development)

#### 5.7 Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009)

RC5 (Design in the Centre)

## 6. APPRAISAL

6.1 Policy DM21 states that proposals for telecommunications development will be permitted provided that:

- They do not have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area;
- The apparatus will be sited and designed so as to minimise its visual impact by the use of innovative design solutions such as lamp column ‘swap-outs’ or concealment/camouflage options; and
- Alternative sites and site-sharing options have been fully investigated and it has been demonstrated that no preferable alternative sites are potentially available which would result in a development that would be less visually intrusive.

*Impact on Visual Amenity, Historic Character of the Listed Building and setting of the Conservation Area*

6.2 The application site contains an existing roof top telecommunications base station where there is already significant telecommunications equipment and apparatus.

6.3 Much of the proposed equipment would be sited upon existing supporting infrastructure within the roof top base station or is replacing existing equipment with similar. Where new additional structures are proposed these would be located within the existing base station area and the highest element of the proposed new equipment (including the proposed new 2.5m high pole) would be set 1.5m below the highest element of the existing equipment. The proposed new equipment, by its nature and as per the existing roof top equipment, is narrow and slim and not considered to be visually prominent.

6.4 Located to the rear roof of modern extension to the listed building and within an already established telecommunications base station it is not considered that the modest proposed replacement and additional equipment would result in any material harm to the historic character of the listed building. As a roof top installation the existing base station is not readily visible from Minster Street or surrounding roads and only from very specific longer distance views. In this context the additional/replacement equipment would be viewed in the setting of the existing, more significant roof top equipment, and the proposals are not considered to result in any material harm to surrounding visual amenity or the setting of the adjacent St Marys Butts/Caste Street Conservation Area.

6.4 The proposal is considered to accord with Policies DM21, CS7, CS33 and RC5.

*Alternative Sites*

6.5 The re-use of existing sites and site sharing by different operators, such as that currently proposed, is in accordance with paragraph 43 of the NPPF and is within the spirit of Sites and Detailed Policies Document Policy DM21 which encourages

the replacement of one structure with another to minimise the visual impact. On this basis, and taking into account the lack of visual harm identified above, it is considered that an alternative site is not required for the proposed development.

- 6.6 The proposal is considered to accord with Policy DM21.

*Flooding*

- 6.7 A small part of the rear of the site is located within flood zone 2 and flood zone 3. A flood risk assessment has been submitted as part of the application. This demonstrates that as roof level equipment to an existing building and telecommunications base station the proposals would not result in an increased risk of flooding.

- 6.8 The proposal is considered to accord with Policy CS35.

*Equalities impact assessment*

7. In determining this application the Committee is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

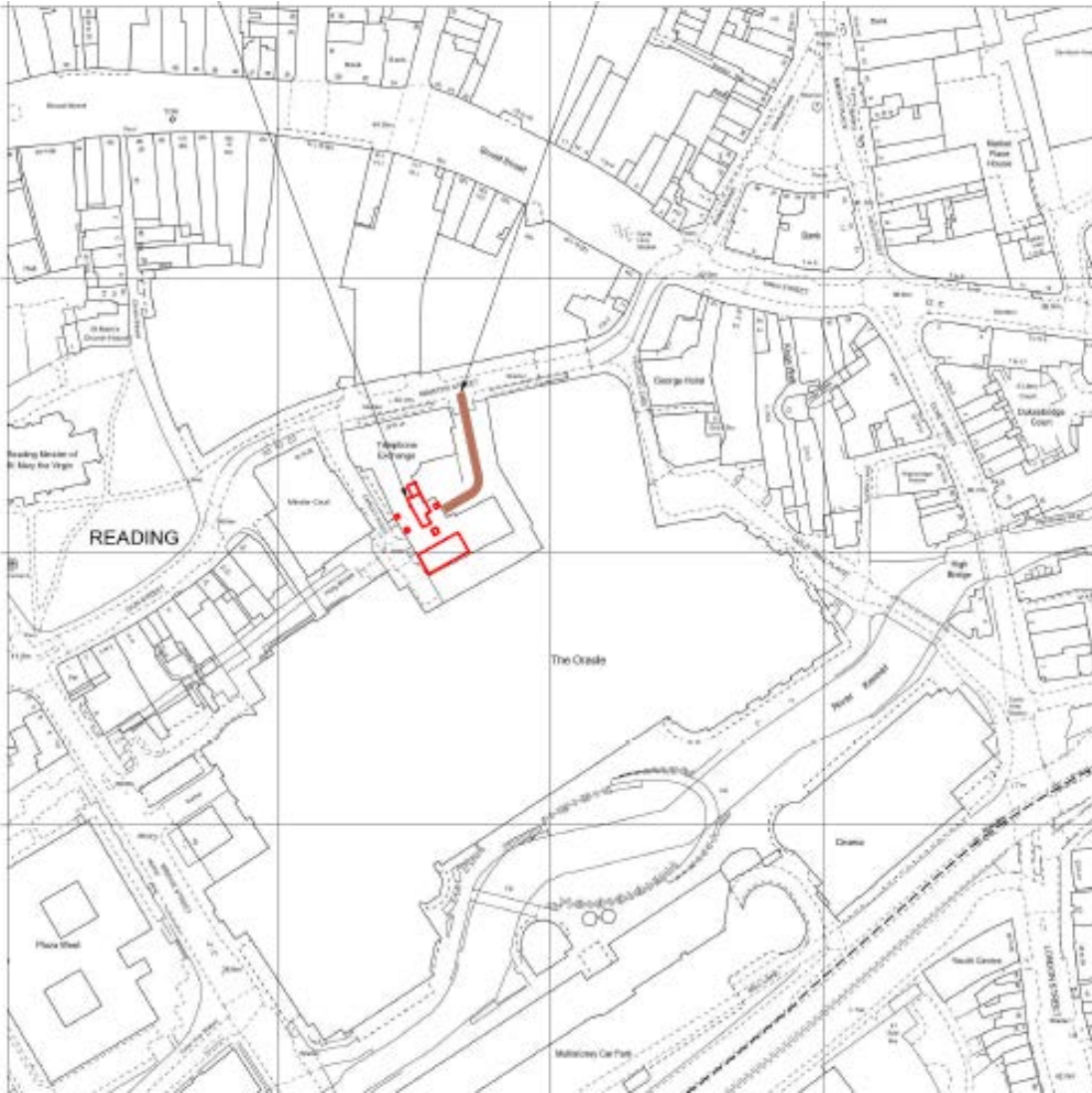
8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposal is considered to comply with Policies CS7 and CS33 of the Core Strategy (2008, 2015), Policy DM21 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012, 2015), Policy RC5 of the Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009) and the National Planning Policy Framework as assessed above. It is therefore recommended that planning permission and listed building consent be granted, subject to conditions.

Drawing no.s:

167370-00-004-ML001 rev 1 - Location Plan  
167370-02-100-MD011 rev 11 - Site Plan Proposed  
167370-02-101-MD011 rev 11 - Equipment Plan Proposed  
167370-02-150-MD011 rev 11 - Elevation Proposed (south-east elevation)  
167370-02-155-MD011 rev 11 - Elevation Proposed (north elevation)  
167370-02-155-MD011 rev 11 - Elevation Proposed (north-west elevation)  
167370-02-153-MD011 rev 11 - Elevation Proposed (south-west elevation)  
167370-02-151-MD011 rev 11 - Antenna Schematic Proposed

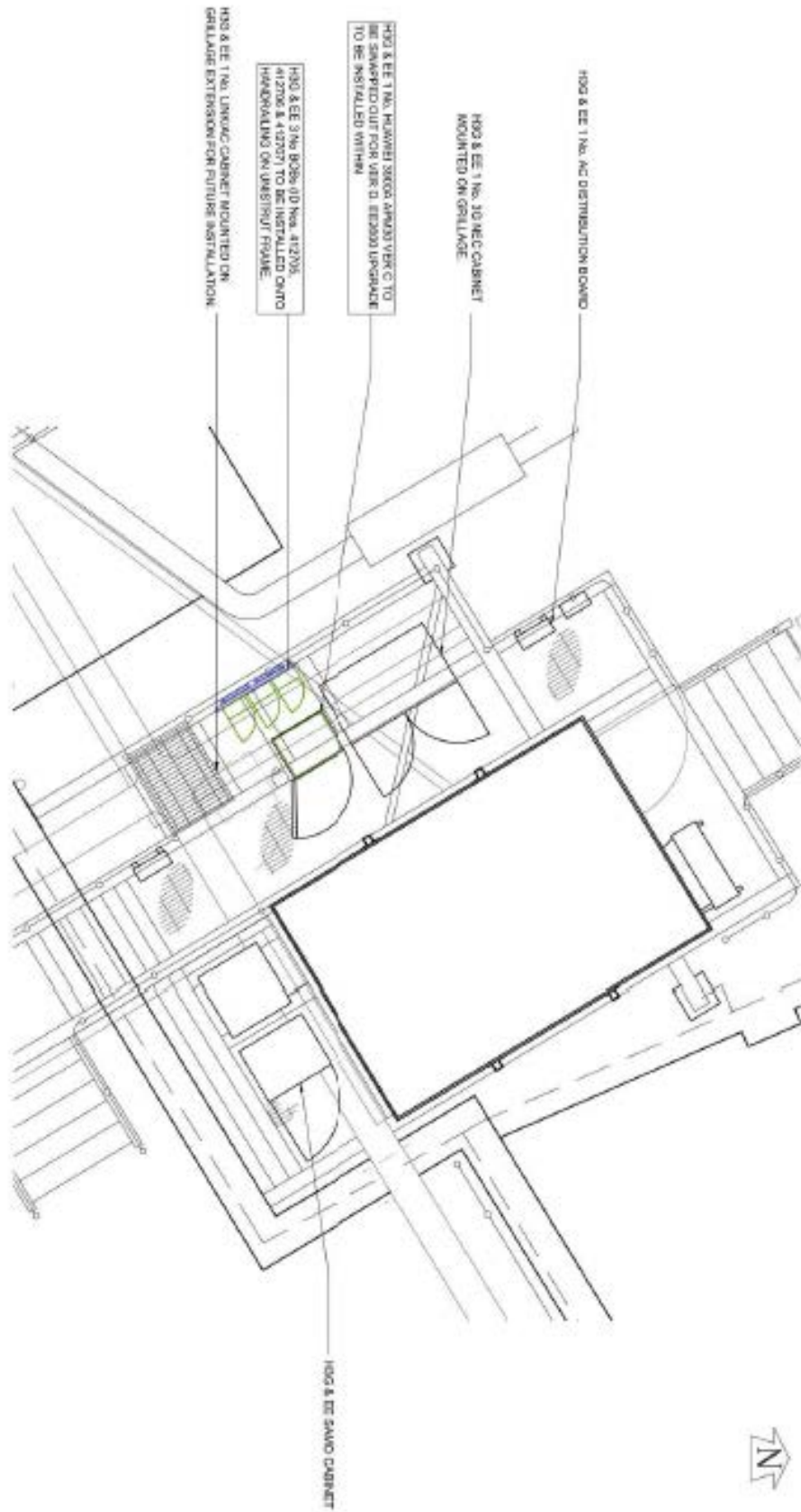
Case Officer: Matt Burns



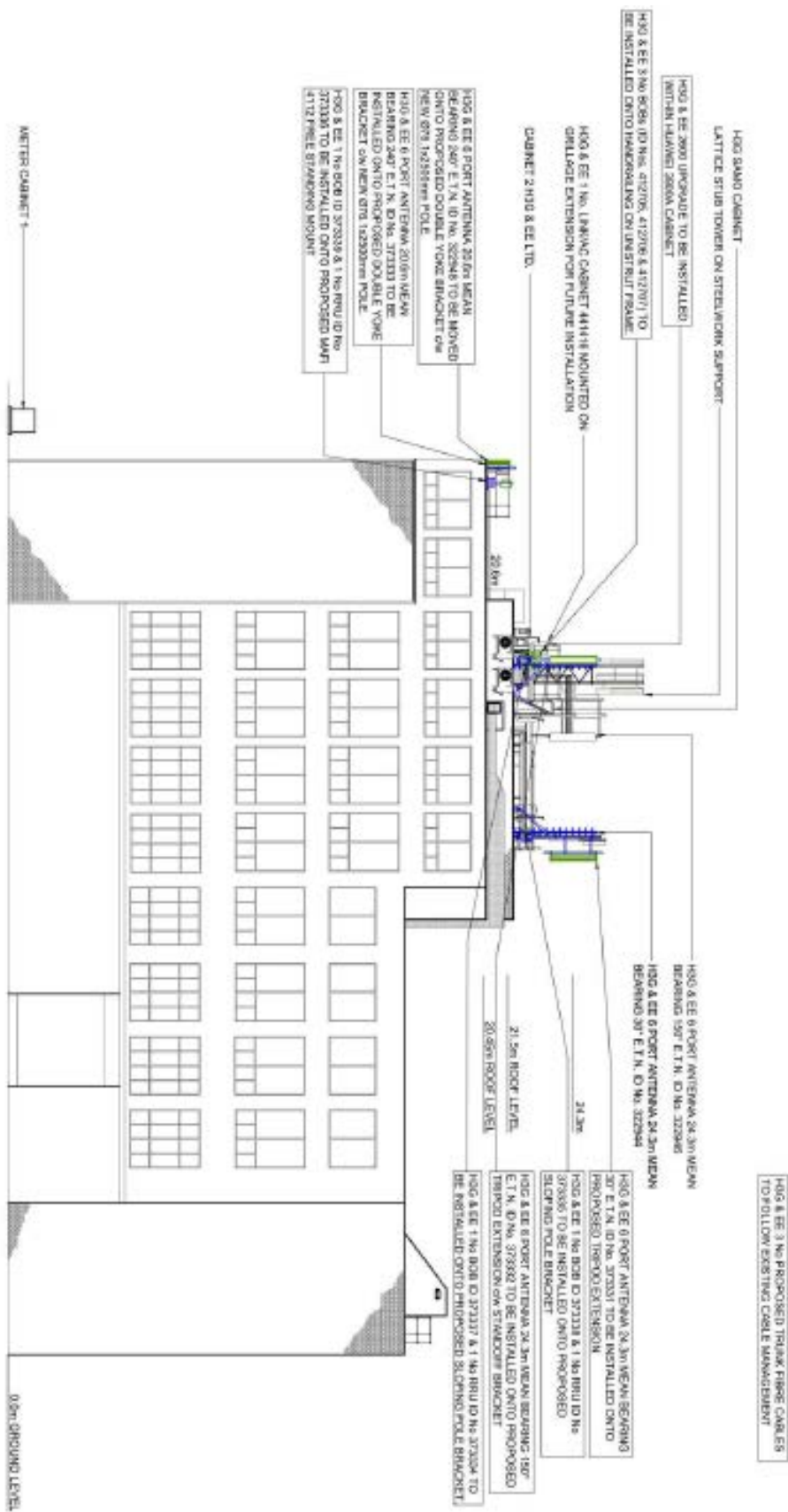
Site Location



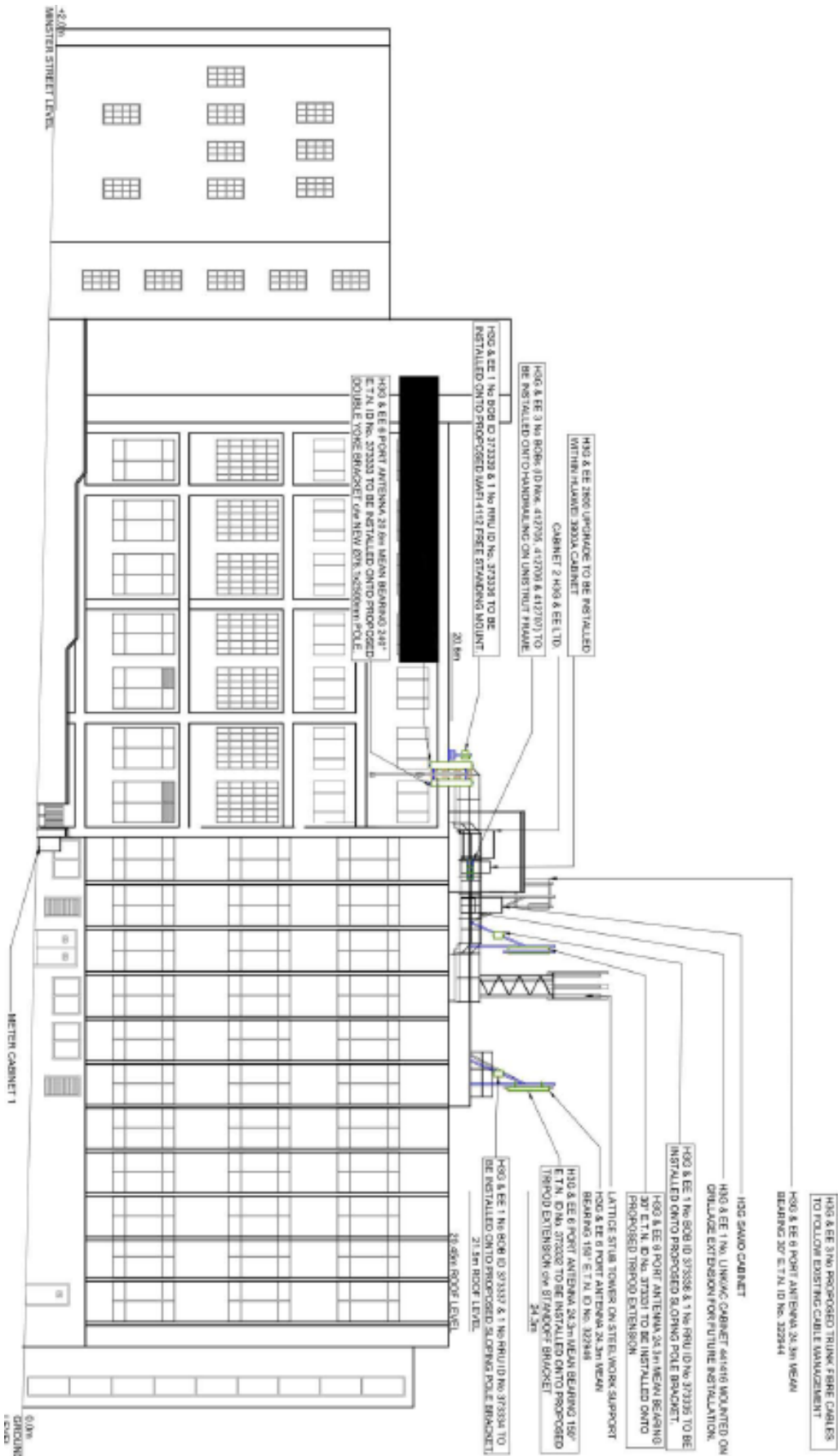




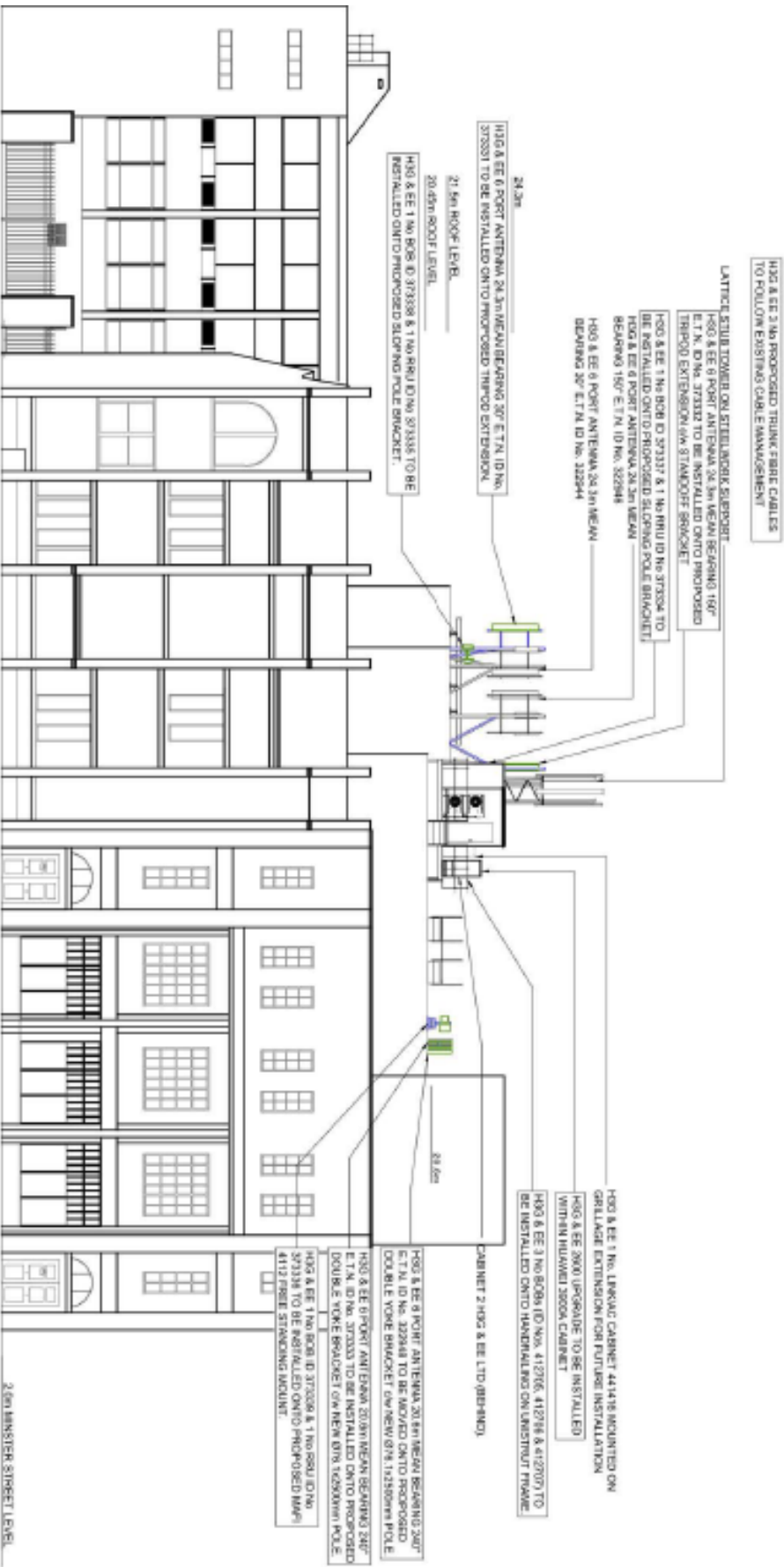
Equipment Cabinets



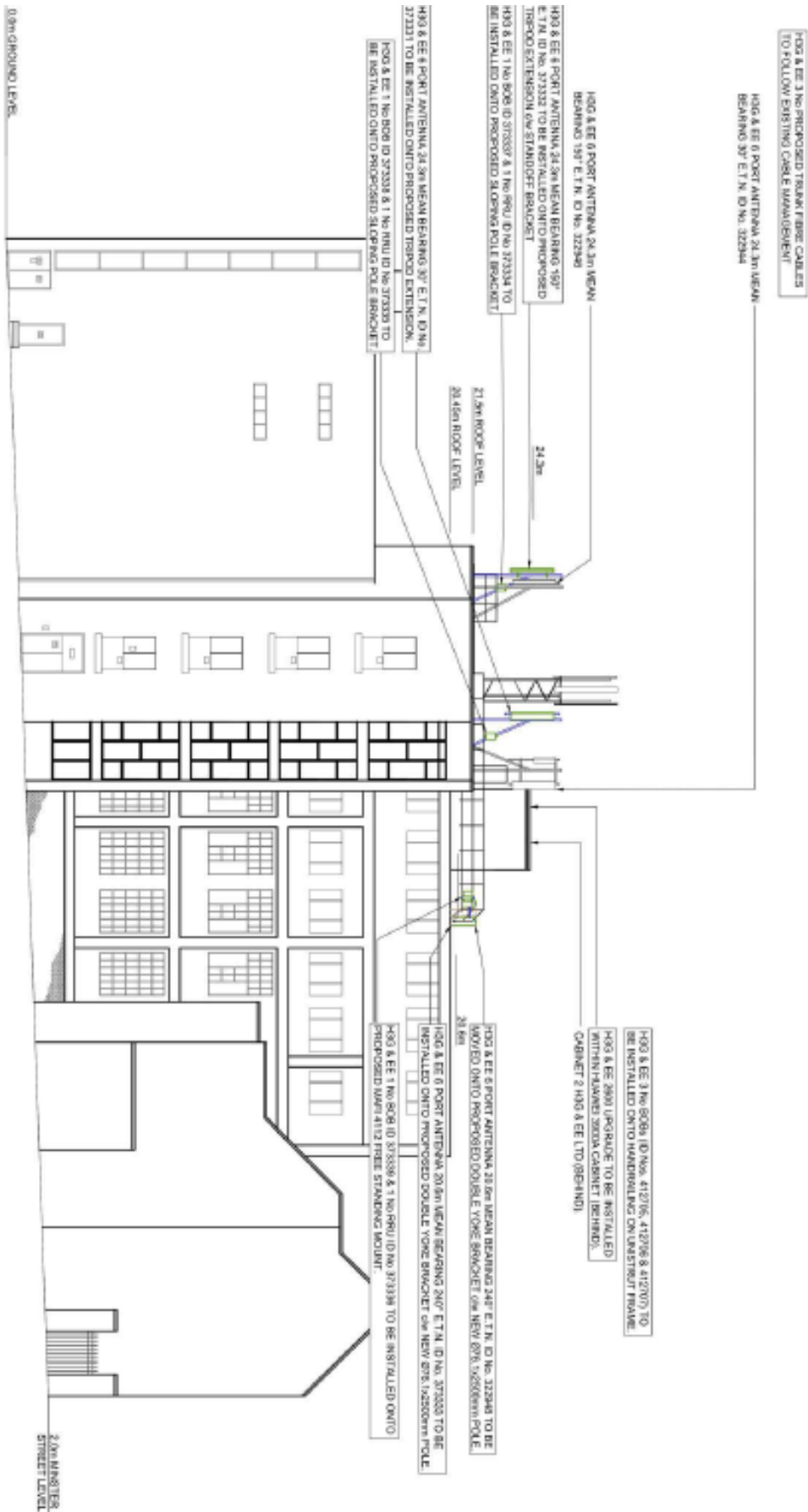
Proposed south-east elevation



Proposed south-west elevation



Proposed north-east elevation



Proposed north-west elevation



# CAVERSHAM





## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018

ITEM NO. 11

Ward: Caversham  
App No.: 180204  
App Type: HOU  
Address: 79 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 6DS  
Proposal: First floor rear extension  
Applicant: Mr Gavin Frost  
Date valid: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018  
Minor Application: 8 week target decision date: 29<sup>th</sup> March 2018

### RECOMMENDATIONS

GRANT planning permission subject to conditions and informatives.

#### CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

1. Time
2. Material Samples
3. Plans
4. No Additional Windows
5. Additional height to be added to fence on boundary with no. 77

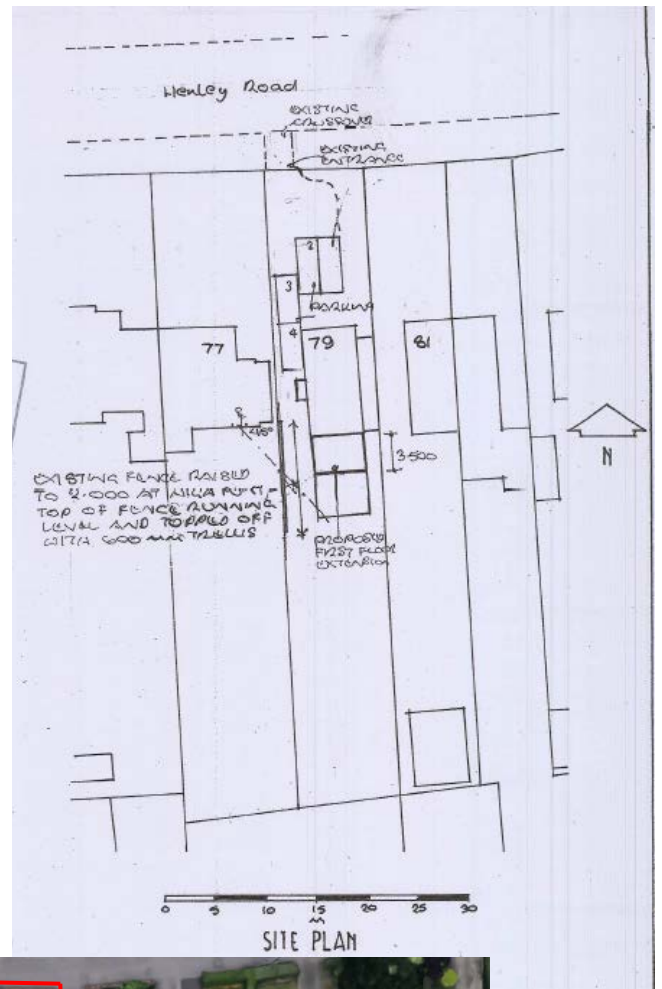
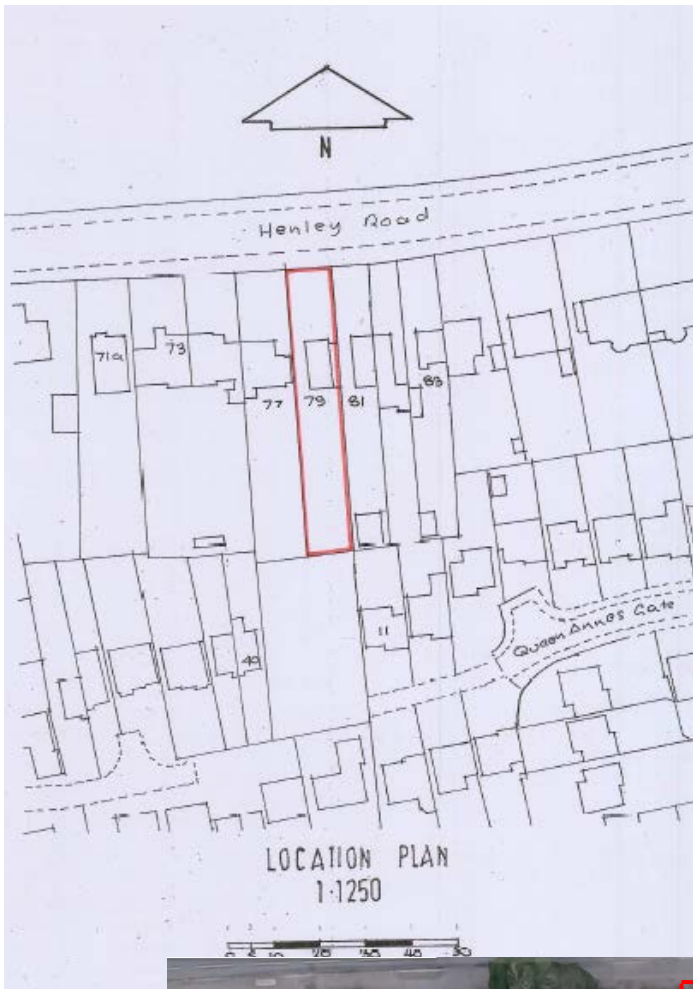
#### INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

1. Terms and Conditions.
2. Building Regulations
3. Construction and Demolition
4. Encroachment
5. Works Affecting Highways
6. Positive and Proactive

### 1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The application relates to a two storey, pitched roof, detached property on the south side of Henley Road. The property is a red brick, Victorian property with tan brick detailing, which is different in character to both neighbouring properties which appear to be of more recent construction. Although of a different design to the neighbouring properties the application property is of a similar depth and set back from the road. The property is orientated towards the west, with the front door and large arched, first floor windows facing towards the neighbouring property of 77 Henley Road. The property is set further away from this boundary than that with the other neighbouring property 81 Henley Road. To the front of the property, there is a bay window at ground floor level and two narrow first floor windows with a higher centrally located circular window above. There is driveway parking to the front of the property, and a single storey, lean to conservatory/storage space addition between the eastern elevation and the boundary with 81 Henley Road.
- 1.2 Originally, this property had a very large rear garden in comparison to neighbouring properties, being very long and wider at the bottom than it is closer to the property. In October 2017 planning permission was granted (171070) to construct 2 dwellings on the lower part of the garden with access from Fairfax Close, shortening the plot of 79 Henley Road to be the same as that of the neighbouring properties at 77 and 81 Henley Road.

- 1.3 Also, originally there was a bay window at ground floor level to the rear of the property and no first floor rear facing windows. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 a decision was issued by the planning department that the single storey extension which had been proposed under the larger home extensions scheme did not require prior approval, and could be built under Permitted Development. This extension has now been built out. This single storey extension has a depth of 8m, a max. height of 4m and an eaves height of 2.5m. Although the built out extension complies with the above dimensions, as stated in the prior approval decision notice, there are a number of differences between the built out scheme and that submitted under the prior approval application. These are a pitched, rather than hipped, roof to the southern end of the extension, the inclusion of side windows to both sides of the extension and an element of flat roof immediately adjacent to the original application property (this has been left to allow for the construction of the proposed first floor extension which is the subject of this application). Following discussions with the Planning Enforcement team it was considered that the only element for which we would pursue enforcement action would be the flat section of roof. However, action will not been taken on this until this current application has been determined. Given that the pitched (rather than hipped) roof is not considered to have any notable impact on neighbouring properties and the side facing windows would be considered to constitute permitted development had they been inserted after the extension had been complete, it is not considered expedient to pursue enforcement action on these points. (N.B. An enforcement investigation made in June 2017 has already considered the side facing windows, and the above conclusion was reached.)
- 1.4 The application was called in by Councillor Lovelock due to neighbour objections, particularly regarding privacy.



## 2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 This is an application for a first floor extension to the rear of the property, to be constructed on top of part of the existing ground floor extension.
- 2.2 The extension is to project 3.5m from the rear of the existing property. An arched window, to match those found on the west facing elevation of the original house, is proposed to the rear elevation of the extension. No side facing windows are proposed. It is proposed that the ridge height and eaves height of this element will be set down 100mm from those of the main house.

2.3 It is proposed that the materials, detailing and fenestration will match that of the existing property.

2.4 It is also proposed to increase the fence height along this boundary with no. 77 to 2m topped off with a 0.6m trellis. 77 Henley Road has a raised patio to the rear, and the occupiers of this property have raised concerns that the side facing windows inserted in the ground floor extension will reduce their privacy.

2.5 The following plans, received 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018, have been assessed:

- Drawing No: 17/62/01 rev B - Existing Floor Plans and Elevations
- Drawing No: 17/62/02 rev A - Proposals Drawing

### 3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

171302/HOU - First floor extension (rear). Withdrawn 28/09/2017

171070/FUL - Erection of two dwellings with associated hard surfacing and landscaping. Permitted 19/10/2017

170730/CLP - First floor rear extension. Withdrawn 25/07/2017

161789/HPA - Rear extension measuring 8m in depth, with a maximum height of 4m, and 2.5m in height to eaves level. Prior approval not required 03/11/2016

150151/FUL - Erection of two detached dwellings with associated hard surfacing and Landscaping. Refused 09/09/2016. Appeal dismissed 13/3/2017

### 4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Statutory:  
None

4.2 Non-Statutory:

Ecologist: No objection.

The application site comprises a detached house where it is proposed to construct a two-storey rear extension. The proposed extension will affect the rear gable end only and appears to fall below the existing apex. Considering the extent of the proposed works and the good condition of the building, it is unlikely that the proposals will adversely affect bats or other protected species. As such, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

Highways: No objection subject to informative.

The site is located in Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically, these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route' which provides high quality bus routes. The parking required for a 3 bedroom dwelling within this zone is 2 parking spaces.

Plans submitted indicate the proposed rear extension does not change or impact on the existing parking arrangements. The plans illustrate that there is sufficient space at the front of the property on an area of hard standing to accommodate more than two vehicles off road, which would comply with our standards.

Transport does not have any objections to this proposal, subject to the works affecting a highway informative.

4.3 Public/ local consultation and comments received

Two letters of objection received from 2 properties (No's 77 and 81A Henley Road). Objectors raised the following concerns:

- Application should be for both ground and first floor extension

*Case Officer response - The ground floor extension has been completed, and therefore the current application is considered as separate from the ground floor extension. Although the completed ground floor extension has not been completed entirely in accordance with the details submitted under prior approval application 161789, this issue is discussed above in paragraph 1.3.*

- Overshadowing of patio of no.77
- Overlooking of no.77 from side facing ground windows, and overlooking of garden from rear facing first floor window
- Overlooking of 81A's garden, decking and a bedroom window
- Light pollution from proposed windows

*Case Officer response - The impact of light spill from the glazing proposed for this extension is considered to be limited, within normal householder levels and would not warrant the refusal of this application.*

- Belief that first floor side windows will be added in the future

*Case Officer response - This is not considered to constitute a viable reason for refusal. Side facing windows are not proposed under the current scheme and a condition will be attached, should consent be granted, removing permitted development rights for side facing first floor windows (permitted development allows for such windows if they are obscure glazed and fixed shut above 1.7m.). Should side facing windows be added at first floor level in the future, the windows would be a breach of condition, and any harm caused would be assessed with a view to potential enforcement action. The applicant was advised under withdrawn application 171312 that such windows would be considered unacceptable; they were subsequently removed from the plans.*

- No consideration given to surface water disposal

*Case Officer response - This is a Building Control issue, not a planning concern and therefore cannot form a reason for refusal of a planning application.*

- More than 50% of the plot is being developed

*Case Officer response - If it were proposed that built form would cover over 50% of the plot, that would be considered to be overdevelopment and unacceptable. However, in this case, even if the works to construct two new houses to the far south of the site are included, the proposed built form would cover significantly less than 50% of the plot. As such, it is not considered that the plot is being overdeveloped.*

- Concerns regarding impact on bats

*Case Officer response - An Ecologist has been consulted by RBC on this application and they have stated that bats are unlikely to be adversely affected and they have no ecological concerns with regards to this proposal.*

These issues not responded to above are considered in the appraisal below.

## 5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the "presumption in favour of sustainable development"

5.2 The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008)

CS7: Design and the Public Realm

CS24: Car/Cycle Parking

CS36: Biodiversity and Geology

DM4: Safeguarding Amenity

DM9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents:

Residential Conversions SPD (2013)

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

## 6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- Impact on amenity of neighbouring properties
- Impact on character of the application property

### Amenity

#### *77 Henley Road*

- 6.1 Concerns have been put forward with regards to the impact of the proposals on various aspects of the amenity of the occupiers of the neighbouring property at 77 Henley Road. With regards to overlooking, it is considered that the first floor rear facing window would not have an unacceptable overlooking impact on 77 Henley Road; it is considered that the relationship between the proposed window and the neighbouring properties would be normal for this sort of situation between neighbouring properties and would be no more harmful in terms of overlooking than the existing rear facing windows of the neighbouring properties. No side facing windows are proposed, and as stated above (in response to neighbour concerns) a condition is recommended should permission be granted removing permitted development rights for side facing first floor windows (permitted development allows for such windows if they are obscure glazed and fixed shut above 1.7m.) as it is considered that given the relative proximity of 77 Henley Road, any future side facing windows would need to be carefully assessed to ensure that they would not cause issues of overlooking or perceived overlooking.
- 6.2 Although the ground floor extension at the application property has been completed and the current application is only considering the first floor extension, the applicant proposes to erect a 2m fence topped with a 0.6m trellis along the boundary with 77 Henley Road, to mitigate any overlooking or perception of overlooking of no. 77, given the privacy concerns regarding the existing side facing windows of the ground floor extension. The height of this fence is not considered harmful to the amenity of no.77 given the existing raised patio and the relative ground levels and as such the proposed fence is supported in this instance as an appropriate measure to mitigate against any potential overlooking from the ground floor side facing windows. We recommend that this fencing is secured by condition.
- 6.3 With regards to overshadowing it is considered that due to the orientation of the properties, with a south facing outlook to the rear, the separation distance between the properties (approx. 5m) and the limited depth of this first floor proposal, the extension would not cause an unacceptable loss of light to the occupiers of no.77. The extension avoids a 45 degree line taken from the centre of the closest window to a habitable room at no.77, which is an accepted indication of whether unacceptable loss of light will be caused. It is considered that the extension may cause some level of shading to the rear terrace of no.77 in the morning, however this is not considered to be sufficiently harmful to refuse the application.

- 6.4 With regards to the extension potentially forming an unacceptably overbearing feature, it is considered that the separation distance between the properties and the limited depth of the extension (considering it is at first floor level) ensure that the extension would not be unacceptably overbearing on the occupants of no.77.

#### *81 Henley Road*

- 6.5 As the other immediate neighbour to the application site, the impact on the amenity of the occupiers of 81 Henley Road should also be considered. With regards to overlooking, it is considered that the impact on this property will be similar to that on no.77 as discussed above, and there would be no unacceptable overlooking impacts from the proposed extension. Again, the condition removing permitted development rights for side facing first floor windows is recommended for the elevation facing 81 Henley Road, for the same reasons as stated for the 77 Henley Road elevation.
- 6.6 With regards to overshadowing it is considered that due to the orientation of the properties, with a south facing outlook to the rear, the separation distance between the properties (approx. 4.5m) and the limited depth of this first floor extension, the proposal would not cause an unacceptable loss of light to the rear windows of this property and the amenity area immediately to the rear of the property. It is considered that the first floor element of the proposal will have some level of negative impact in terms of light levels on the side facing bedroom window at this property. However, given that window currently looks straight onto the side wall of the application property, and a view of the current end of the application property can only be gained at an oblique angle from this window, it is considered that the impact of the proposed first floor extension on light levels to this room would be limited. This window would be far more affected if it were proposed that the eaves height of the application property were to be increased. As such, it is not considered that loss of light to the first floor side facing window of this property warrants refusal of this application.
- 6.7 It is considered that given the proximity of the proposed extension to the boundary with no.81 and the cumulative effect of having an existing extension at no.81A along the other boundary to no.81, the overbearing effect of the extension on this property will be greater than on no.77. However, it is considered that the separation distance between the properties and the limited depth (considering it is at first floor level), mitigate this and ensure that the extension would not be unacceptably overbearing on the occupants of no.81.

#### *81A Henley Road*

- 6.8 Lastly, concerns have also been put forward with regards to the impact of the proposal on the amenity of the occupiers of 81A Henley Road. It is considered that any overbearing, overshadowing or overlooking effects on this property would be very minor given the separation distance between no.81A and the proposed extension and the orientation of the properties. It is therefore considered that the amenity of the occupiers of this property would not be unacceptably affected.

#### **Character of the application property**

- 6.9 The proposals put forward under withdrawn application 171302, proposed a deeper first floor element, a ridge line to match that of the main house and a roof to the ground floor element which was hipped up to a flat roof. These proposals were considered to cause unacceptable harm to the character of the property. It was considered that the depth of the proposed extension and the fact that it has not been set down from the height of the main house would result in a proposed property which would appear excessively elongated which would extend beyond the logical limits of the property. It was also considered that the proposed roof of the single storey element failed to integrate satisfactorily with the two storey element of the proposal.
- 6.10 It is considered that the proposals put forward under the current application have satisfactorily resolved the issues raised under the previous application. The reduction of

the depth of the first floor element from 5m to 3.5m and the slight drop in ridge and eaves height from that of the main roof (0.1m), allows the first floor element to appear subservient to the main house. The amended design for the roof of the ground floor element is considered to integrate better with the main house, reflecting its simple roof form. The detailing and fenestration of the building is also proposed to reflect that of the original property, which will help to visually unite the new and original elements of the property. Although the first floor element is not insignificant and the proposals considerably increase the floor space of the original house, it is considered that given the above elements of the design which seek to lessen harm to the character of the application property and the location of the extensions to the rear of the property, it is considered that the character of the application property will not be caused unacceptable harm by the proposed extensions.

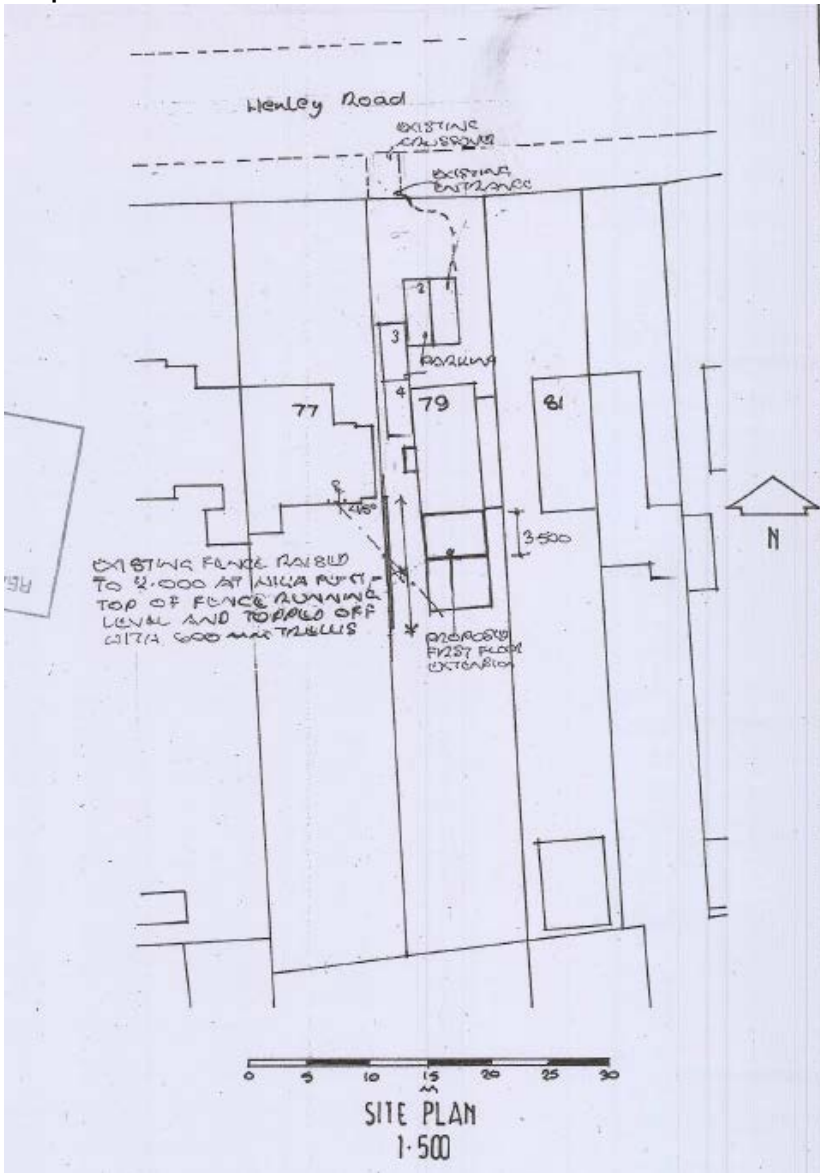
## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 It is concluded that the proposed extension has overcome the concerns of the previous application at this site and is in accordance with Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy and Policies DM4 and DM9 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document. Therefore, for the reasons set out above, this development is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

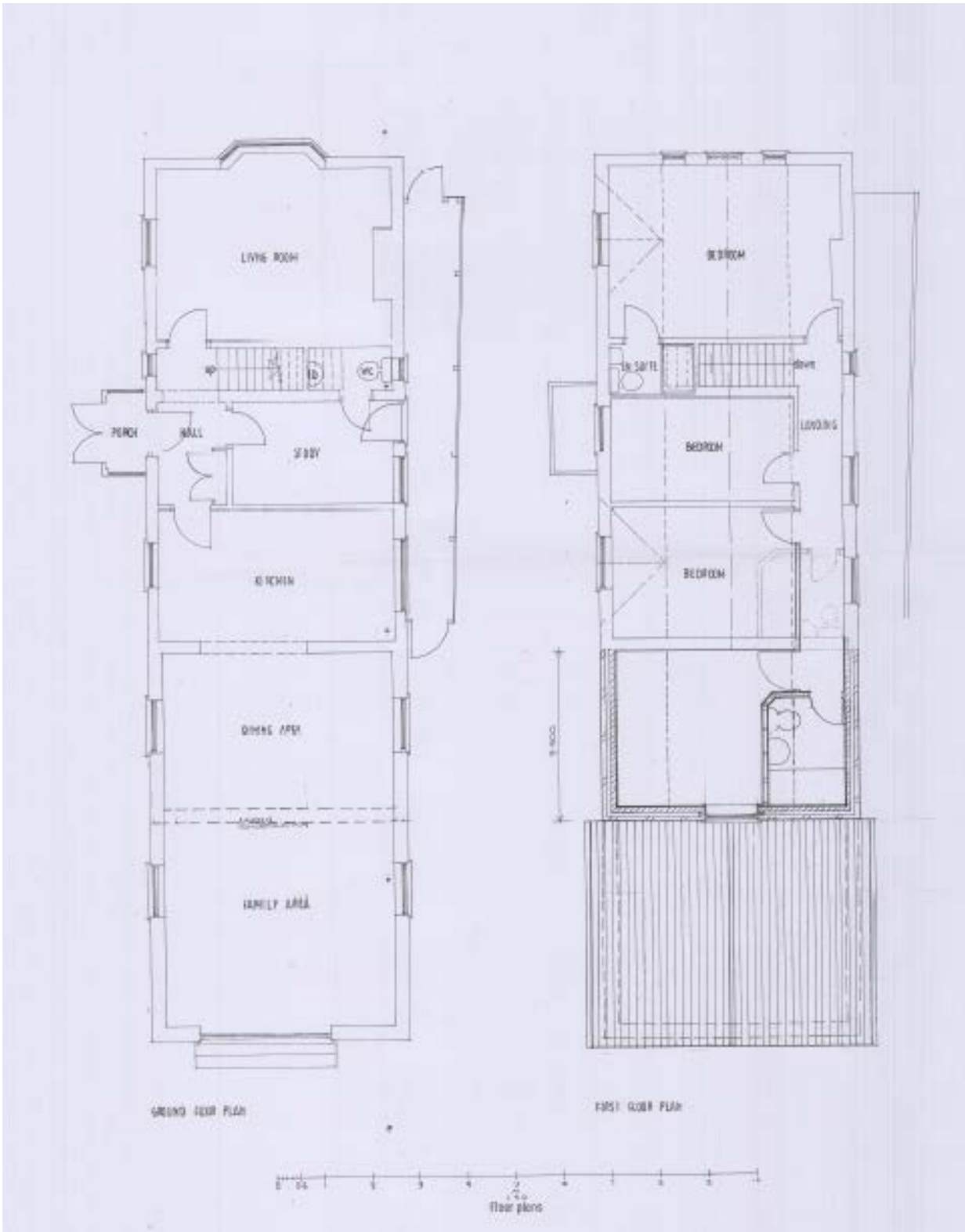
Case Officer: Heather Banks



Proposed Site Plan



Proposed Plans



# Proposed Elevations



Photo taken from garden of 81 Henley Road (N.B. this was taken during withdrawn application 171302, when the ground floor extension was still under construction)



Photo taken from patio to the rear of 77 Henley Road. (N.B. this was taken during withdrawn application 171302, when the ground floor extension was still under



construction)

# KATESGROVE



## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 12

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 25 April 2018

Ward: Katesgrove

App No.: 172213

Address: After Dark Nite Club, 112 London Street, Reading

Proposal: Demolition of existing building and erection of 2 x class C3 residential apartment blocks comprising 6.No. flats

Applicant: KK Propety Investments Ltd

Application 8 week target decision date: 6 February 2018

### RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons:

1. The proposal, in terms of its layout, height, bulk and massing would result in cramped and visually dominant overdevelopment of the site, out of character with the existing pattern of development. This would have a significant detrimental impact on the rear setting of principal Listed Buildings on London Street, failing to preserve or enhance views in this part of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The proposal is considered contrary to Core Strategy policies CS7, CS33, Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) policy RC5.
3. The development would fail to provide a suitable standard of residential accommodation in terms of quality and security of approach, natural surveillance, privacy, amenity space and bin storage. The proposal is considered contrary to Core Strategy Policies CS3, CS5, CS7, CS20, RCAAP Policies RC5, RC9, RC14, Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) policies DM4 and DM10 and the Parking and Design SPD.
4. The development will result in a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing residential properties in Nelson Mews and at 118-128 London Street, through visual dominance and overbearing effects of the development. The proposal is considered to be contrary to RCAAP Policy RC9, SDPD Policy DM4.
5. The development has failed to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing in the Borough. The proposal is considered contrary to SDPD Policy DM6 and the Affordable Housing SPD.

### Informatives:

1. Plans refused



2. Reason for refusal 5 could be overcome by a Section 106 agreement.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site relates to the After Dark night club, which lies to the rear of 110-114 London Street in central Reading (Listed Grade II). The frontal buildings on London Street are in B1(a) (architects' office) use for No. 110 and A2 (Financial and Professional Services) use as employment agency in No. 114. No. 114 now has its primary access from the covered passageway between 110 and 114. The site offered for development, however, is not being promoted in connection with the frontal buildings or any other adjoining site. No. 108 (to the north) is also listed and is in office use and may be vacant. The development to the south, 118-128 London Street, is a modern block of serviced apartments.

1.1 The site is located within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. It consists of a long, narrow building, which occupies the majority of the site, connected by walls and 'temporary' canopy structures to 110 and 114 and extends all the way to St. Giles Close. The building has had a long and varied history and is made up of a number of elements. The two storey building at the entrance houses the ticket office, cloakrooms, bar and part of the dancefloor at ground floor and storage rooms and a manager's office at first floor. It has a shallow hipped roof and may be of Victorian construction, although much altered. Then after a slightly raised single-storey section, the building continues westwards with a large flat roofed single-storey element which at the western end has a parapet roof. There are various other small flat-roofed extensions. The southern wall (externally) features some interesting brick arches which appear to be indicative of a former industrial use.





Site Location



View of After Dark Club from St. Giles Close



View of historic wall on southern boundary, from 118-128 London St. car park



Listed Buildings at 110 and 114 London Street, with passageway entrance to the After Dark Club in the centre of the building

## 2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission to demolish the existing nightclub building and erect 2 three storey residential blocks each containing 3 flats (6 flats total).

- 2.2 The two proposed residential blocks (A & B) would be sited either side of a central landscaped communal courtyard area. Block B would be sited closest to the rear of nos 110 and 114 London Street, sited 3m (at the closest point) from the rearmost elevation of these properties. Block A would front St Giles Close to the rear of the site. Access to the residential blocks would be obtained from via both the existing passageway from London Street and also from St Giles Close.
- 2.3 The proposal would retain the historic wall along the southern boundary of the site with the car park of nos 118-128 London Street.
- 2.4 Both the residential blocks would be regular in footprint and three storeys in height with a hipped roof and recessed top floor of accommodation. Materials are proposed as the red brick up to two storey level and grey brick for the recessed third storey level together with grey slate roof tiles for both blocks. First and second floor balconies would face onto the central communal courtyard area.
- 2.5 In terms of accommodation, the proposal would provide 5 x two bedroom flats and 1 x one bedroom flat.
- 2.6 The proposal is for a car free development with no car parking spaces proposed. Bin and cycle storage is proposed to the central courtyard area.

### 3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Relevant planning history is as follows:

161935 - Demolition of existing night club and erection of 10 new residential Class C3 apartments (5 x 1 bed and 5 x 2 bed) with courtyard garden, cycle and bin storage: Planning permission refused for the following reasons:

- (1) *The proposal is a poor design solution in terms of its layout/location and height, bulk and massing. This would have a significant detrimental impact on the rear setting of Listed Buildings on London Street, failing to preserve or enhance views in this part of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. In addition, the general crampedness and lack of opportunity for landscaping, no active frontage to the streetscene/failure to connect visually to the site frontage of St. Giles Close and failure to relate to the existing pattern of development will produce a development which is neither comprehensive nor sympathetic to the character of the area. For these reasons the proposal is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) Sections 7 and 12; Reading Borough LDF: Core Strategy (2008, amended 2015) policies CS3 (Social Inclusion and Diversity), CS5 (Inclusive Access), CS7 (Design and the Public Realm), CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment); and Reading Borough LDF: Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009) policies RC5 (Design in the Centre) and RC14 (Public Realm).*

- (2) *The development would produce substandard accommodation in terms of quality and security of approach, natural surveillance, adequate light levels, privacy, access for all, amenity space and cycle parking, contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework Section 7; Reading Borough LDF: Core Strategy Policies(2008, amended 2015) policies CS3 (Social Inclusion and Diversity), CS5 (Inclusive Access), CS7 (Design and the Public Realm), CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking); Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009) policies RC5 (Design in the Centre), RC9 (Living in the Centre), RC14 (Public Realm) and Reading Borough LDF: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) (2012, amended 2015) policies DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity) and DM10 (Private and Communal Amenity Space), and the Council's Revised Parking and Design SPD (2011).*
- (3) *The development will result in a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing residential properties in Nelson Mews and at 118-128 London Street, through detriment to privacy and overlooking, and the visual dominance and overbearing effects of the development, contrary to the Reading Borough LDF: Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009) policies RC9 (Living in the Centre) and Reading Borough LDF: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) (2012, amended 2015) Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity).*
- (4) *The development has failed to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing in the Borough, contrary to Reading Borough LDF: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) (2012, amended 2015) Policy DM6 (Affordable Housing) and the Council's Affordable Housing SPD (2013).*
- (5) *The development has failed to either provide a construction phase Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) or a contribution towards the provision of an ESP and has therefore failed to mitigate the harm caused to the local employment market as a result of the development, contrary to Reading Borough LDF: Core Strategy (2008, amended 2015) policies CS9 (Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities), CS13 (Impact of Employment Development); and Reading Borough LDF: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) (2009, amended 2015) Policy DM3 (Infrastructure Planning) and the Council's Employment, Skills and Training SPD (2013).*

#### 4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Transport Strategy: does not object to the application, subject to conditions such as requiring a construction method statement (CMS), details of cycle parking and details of bin storage.

RBC Environmental Protection: does not object to the application, subject to conditions relating to construction impacts and contaminated land.

Historic England: does not consider no. 112 to be covered by a listing.

RBC Natural Environment Team (Tree Officer): does not object subject to securing a suitable landscaping scheme by way of condition. The Cypress tree next to the site on St. Giles Close is not protected and not in good condition and there would be no objection to its removal.

RBC Ecologist: is content with the bat survey and does not object to the application.

Berkshire Archaeology: does not object subject to a condition to require implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development.

RBC Conservation Consultant: The proposed development would not enhance or preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and is considered to harm the significance of Listed Buildings contrary to considerations as set out in sections 72(1) and section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and would fail to meet the requirements of the NPPF, the PPG and RBC Policy CS33.

The Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) has provided objections/comments and these are summarised as follows:

*This proposal will involve the demolition of 112 London Street, a heritage and community asset which has been in use for at least 200 years. The replacement proposed is a poorly designed flat development which would have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Market Place/ London Street Conservation Area and the adjacent listed buildings at 110 and 114 London Street.*

#### *Detail*

*112 London Street lies within the Market Place/ London Street conservation area. A development on this site should protect and enhance the historic environment which the poor design in this application does not do.*

*The building ceases to be used as a club design solutions should be sought which retain it at the heart of any future development, by reason of its importance to the physical and community heritage of Reading and London Street.*

*The setting of listed buildings 110 and 114 London Street will be negatively impacted by the unsympathetic design of the proposed development on this site, its height and proximity to these buildings.*

*Although at the time of the last application for this site (169135) Historic England stated that 112 London Street is not mentioned in the Historic England listing of 110-114 London Street (1113530), there is evidence of common ownership from*

1800 to 1918. Connections between the buildings on London Street continue thereafter; for a large part of the twentieth century the building (112) was the Foresters Hall and the Ancient Order of Foresters had offices at 110 London Street. To exclude 112, which includes the flagged passageway, from the listing appears artificial and we would urge that further investigation is carried out.

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee is pleased to note that this proposal includes retention of the southern boundary wall of the site. This wall, which was part of the Huntley Boorne and Stevens tin works, is an important reminder of Reading's industrial heritage.

Whilst the proposal represents some improvement on the previous submission it is our view that:

The design is bland, functional and poor quality and jars with other buildings in the area whether historic or modern. A truly imaginative solution is required if this site is to be redeveloped.

The development appears cluttered and claustrophobic with little natural light for occupants. The building and location is ideal for its current use as a dark club where minimal daylight is required.

The view from London Street down the flagged stone passageway mentioned in the Market Place/ London Street conservation area appraisal, will be of a blank red brick wall entirely out of keeping with the frontage.

The proposed development is considerably taller than the After Dark Club which will affect the setting of listed buildings at 110 and 114 London Street from the rear and residents of those properties. The resulting mass is unacceptable.

It is our belief that the applicant should try harder and that this application should be refused.

#### Public consultation

No.s 108, 110, 110a, 114 and 118-128 London Street, 5-11 Nelson Mews and 28-34 St Giles Close were notified of the application by letter and a site notice was also displayed at the application site.

32 letters of objection and 8 letters of general comments have been received raising the following issues:

#### Cultural and historic

- The After Dark has for long time been part of Reading's history and many famous acts have played here. This is Reading's 'Cavern Club'. It would be a terrible loss to the character of the town.
- The provision of housing does not outweigh the community benefits of the club



- The After Dark is a valued local Reading independent nightclub and should be protected from development. Considers that the building should be listed as a Local Heritage Asset. *Officer comment: this is a separate process and not related to this planning consideration*
- The proposal does not seek to improve the neglect which has occurred in the passageway and the present poorly-maintained drains
- The proposal would adversely affect ventilation to the frontal listed buildings, to the detriment of their historic fabric.
- The proposal would not allow a suitable gap to allow the maintenance of the rear of the historic buildings
- To the rear of 114 there is a basement vault which abuts the application site. Sensitive building works should be carried out in this area, particularly as this may well lead to the historic wall on the southern side of the application site.
- Consider that the building forms part of the curtilage listing of the London Street frontal buildings.
- Note that the workshop side wall is to be retained; ideally the less decorative factory wall fronting St Giles Close would also be retained and incorporated within any design.
- The plans indicate the levels of the site will be brought down to a level to match Prince Regents House to the rear of no. 108 London Street - this will interfere with the foundations of surrounding historic buildings and walls and archaeological remains.
- An assessment of the historic relationship between no. 112 and no.s 110 and 114 London Street has been submitted to demonstrate that no. 112 should form part of the listing or curtilage listing of the listed frontal buildings.

#### Planning and land uses

- The proposal has not sufficiently addressed the reasons for refusal given for the previous planning application at the site (ref. 161935).
- Does not agree that residential is a suitable land use, given surrounding mix of land uses
- Flats would put further strain on parking/transport infrastructure, schools and doctors. *Officer comment: schools and transport infrastructure payments would be collected by the Community Infrastructure Levy, were permission to be granted. The local NHS trusts and individual surgeries will plan for demand for additional practices*
- Existing distinctive land uses in the area should be retained
- The proposal should include affordable housing
- There is already a surplus of these luxury flats in Reading
- These are not really low cost flats
- The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure protection of the vitality of town centres and this proposal does not do this
- Use other free brownfield sites for redevelopment instead. *Officer comment: this is not a reason to preclude the redevelopment of this site*
- Club owners should not be forced from town centres by rising rents.

- The application was submitted around Christmas time to attract less attention. *Officer comment: the Local Planning Authority cannot control when applications are submitted.*
- Note policies which require a case to be demonstrated to justify loss of leisure and cultural facilities relate to sites outside the Reading Centre Area (where the site is located) but consider that they should relate to this application - *Officer comment: Policy DM15 and Policy RL6 of the Emerging Draft Local Plan are clear that the policies relate to sites outside the defined Reading Central Area only and as such cannot be considered in determination of this application.*
- The Government has suggested it is to introduce new legislation to protect independent music venues - *Officer comments: the Government is currently consulting on an amended NPPF (not yet published) - this references music venues but in terms of not placing the onus on existing music venue operators to address noise concerns if new housing is located nearby - rather the onus should be on the housing developer - as such this would not be directly relevant to the current proposal.*
- There is shared ownership/shared access rights arrangement over the passageway.

#### Design merit of the proposal

- The building contains elements of historical and architectural merit which should be conserved
- The units would have a poor standard of accommodation in terms of internal environment, poor daylight and poor views, outlook, privacy, security of approach natural surveillance and access to amenity space.
- Siting of bin store within the communal courtyard would be unpleasant in terms of odour.
- The building should be locally listed: *Officer comment: this is a separate procedure to the planning application process.*
- Concern for impact on adjacent Listed Buildings
- Present building is not subordinate to the backs of the Listed Buildings, when seen from St. Giles Close
- The design is not reflective of the Conservation Area and will not preserve it
- The proposal will adversely affect light levels and outlook to the buildings on London Street
- Concern for the waste disposal arrangements and the waste capacity and disturbance to the passageway
- The proposal would appear over-dominant to no. 108 London Street and no. 118-128 London Street presenting largely blank flank façades.
- The proposal does not mention any repair or replacement of existing heritage stones in the shared passageway.
- The proposal does not mention how the gates belonging to 114 will be managed or protected - there is not agreement for shared use.
- 114, 112 and 110 all have access to the rear passageway for onto St Giles Close which is obstructed by temporary structure - seek rear access back for fire escape. *Officer comment - this would be a civil matter between neighbouring occupiers - fire escape provision would not be a material planning consideration but would*



however be subject to separate building regulations standards for the relevant units.

- No detailed landscaping provided.
- Overlooking to Nelson Mews.
- Loss of light to the rear windows of no. 114.

#### Transport and parking

- Not suitable to have no parking

#### Economic and social

- Has a full social/financial/cultural appraisal of the existing and proposed land uses been conducted? The After Dark also provides associated business for other establishments nearby. *Officer comment: the Planning Acts do not require such an appraisal to be undertaken and unless relevant planning issues emerge, such would not be relevant to the material planning considerations to the determination of this planning application*
- No drainage/sewerage details have been submitted with the application. *Officer comment: such details are not required in consideration of the planning application.*
- The venue attracts visitors to Reading and has a positive impact on our economy
- Entire social groups exist because of the club - this would be a significant loss of culture, night life and history.
- References Matt Rodda MP's objection to the previous application (ref. 161935) and concerns regarding loss of the 'much love music venue'.
- Refers to Policy CR4 of the emerging draft Reading Local Plan - Leisure Culture and Tourism in Central Reading - *Officer comment: this is an emerging policy that has not yet been adopted and as such does not carry full weight - nonetheless the policy refers to siting of new facilities in the Reading Central area and does not discuss retention of existing facilities.*

#### Other

- Concerns for impact on nearby homes and businesses during construction. *Officer comment: this can be covered in a comprehensive Construction Management Statement (CMS), via condition*
- The Council should not even be considering this planning application and constantly allowing the proposals to be re-run. *Officer comment: the Council cannot prevent a planning application from being submitted and is obliged to determine valid applications*
- The Council should not be taking such services away. *Officer comment: this is a private night club, not a Council service.*
- *The application site includes land which is not in the applicant's control.*
- *Noise complaints will have been made by interested parties wishing to see the application succeed.*

2 letters of support for the application have been received raising the following issues:

## Support

- There is a need for 2 and 3 bedroom flats in Reading which is only increasing. The need for housing outweighs the current land use.
- The night club use is noisy and disruptive.
- The existing night club building blocks two fire exits to the rear of the London Street frontage buildings.

## 5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

5.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

5.4 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

### 5.5 National

National Planning Policy Framework (2012):

Section 2: Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Section 4: Promoting sustainable transport

Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Section 7: Requiring good design

Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance

### 5.6 Reading Borough LDF: Core Strategy (2008, amended 2015)

CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design)

CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)

CS5 (Inclusive Access)

CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CS14 (Provision of Housing)

CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix)  
CS20 (Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy)  
CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)  
CS25 (Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development)  
CS32 (Impacts on Community Facilities)  
CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)  
CS34 (Pollution and Water Resources)  
CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology)  
CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

5.7 Reading Borough LDF: Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009, amended 2015)

RC5 (Design in the Centre)  
RC7 (Leisure, Culture and Tourism in the Centre)  
RC8 (Drinking Establishments)  
RC9 (Living in the Centre)  
RC14 (Public Realm)

5.8 Reading Borough LDF: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) (2012, amended 2015)

SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)  
DM1 (Adaptation to Climate Change)  
DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)  
DM6 (Affordable Housing)  
DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)  
DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)  
DM15 (Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses)  
DM18 (Tree Planting)  
DM19 (Air Quality)

5.9 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Employment, Skills and Training (2013)  
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)  
Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)  
Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)

5.10 Other relevant documents

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (20xx)  
Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic England, 2016)  
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015)

## 6. APPRAISAL

### 6.1 The main issues for consideration in this planning application are:

- i. Proposed loss of night club
- ii. Heritage considerations
- iii. Suitability of the design response in this sensitive area
- iv. Quality of residential accommodation
- v. Impact on adjoining properties
- vi. S.106 contributions and CIL

#### i. Proposed loss of night club

- 6.2 There has been a nightclub/dance hall use on this site for a very long time and this is the established planning use of the premises/site. However, it is sited in a relatively dense urban area where there are now likely to be many more residential properties in close proximity than in the past. Were a planning application now received for this change of use (to a night club), such is unlikely to be given planning permission as it is essentially a non-conforming use in this area which contains residential uses.
- 6.3 As a recognition of the disturbance that night clubs can cause (noise, vibration, anti-social behaviour, etc.) night clubs have their own planning use class and they are a *sui generis* or 'unique' use. Therefore, its removal from the area and replacement with a residential use is supported when assessed against Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity), providing that the replacement scheme is itself acceptable.
- 6.4 Officers have received a large amount of objections from members of the public seeking to protect the After Dark in situ and also ask that it be given some sort of policy protection, for instance, the same as that applied to public houses or community facilities. Firstly, it should be born in mind that these premises could - without any control by the Planning Department - be operated by a completely different club and one which is not so popular with the public or the amenities of surrounding neighbours.
- 6.5 Secondly, this is not a community use or a public house outside the town centre area, therefore there is no conflict with adopted planning policies CS31 or DM15 which protect these types of uses from redevelopment.
- 6.6 The club is in a mixed residential/office/retail area and during its hours of operation, has the potential to cause considerable residential disturbance. The Council's Licensing and Environmental Protection teams advise that the number of complaints from the After Dark club is actually very low. Overall however, the removal of this non-compatible land use from a location where there is potential to

cause nuisance is supported and other Council policies seek to ensure that such uses are situated in the central part of the town centre.

6.7 Some objectors have asked for the club to be considered as an Asset of Community Value. This is a separate process and is not relevant to this planning assessment.

6.8 Overall, officers identify no planning policy conflict with the principle of removing the night club use from this area. The principle of this was established under the previous application for redevelopment of the site (161935) to which loss of the existing facility did not form a reason for refusal of the application.

ii. Heritage considerations

6.9 The applicants heritage statement identifies the southern wall on the application site which can be seen from the car park of the served apartments at no. 118-128 London Street as the last remaining remnant of what was the large tin works factory complex in the St. Giles Close area and has at some point been joined to the hall building with a flat roof, leaving a covered passageway along the southern flank of the site. The wall has characteristic blind windows and flattened arches, reminiscent of a Victorian factory wall. The wall is an important surviving physical and cultural marker of the Huntley, Boorne & Stevens tin works, which made the tins for Huntley & Palmers Biscuits. The production of biscuits was one of the three main industries that made Reading famous in the Victorian period. The boundary wall is to be retained as part of the current application.

6.10 During consideration of the previous application (see Appendix 2 and 3) there was significant discussion as to whether or not this remaining wall element and indeed no. 112 itself formed part of the listing or curtilage listing of the building fronting London Street. Advice was sought in this respect from Historic England who advised that the listing description refers to 110 *and* 114 not 110 *to* 114. They commented that whilst mention is made of a passage to the Oddfellows Hall that simply states that there is a passage, it does not imply that the hall is included in the listing. As such it was considered, at the time, that there was not ground to refuse the previous application on failure to appropriately identify and consider all heritage assets.

6.11 However, the officer report at the time did acknowledge that this was not a definitive response from Historic England and rather just an assessment of the wording of the listing rather than any detailed review of the historic context/history of the site.

6.12 The applicant's heritage assessment has considered the current proposal on the basis of the officer committee report for the previous application (161935) which, following an update report (see Appendix 3), removed a reason for refusal relating to failure to identify the historical significance of the building. As such a listed building consent application has not been submitted.

6.13 Since the submission of the planning application, further investigation of the building has been undertaken by the Planning Department with the Council's

Conservation Consultant along with valuable input from the CAAC and also various detailed objections which have been received (Appendix 1). This research has been very helpful to further inform the overall consideration of the building's status. A summary and commentary of what is known of the buildings history is set out in paragraphs 6.13 and 6.14.

- 6.14 The present building has been used in approximately its present envelope and use (as a night club) for the past 40 years or so. Historical information seems to indicate that the use of the taller element of the building at least, was originally used as a church hall (St Giles) from about 1800. The footprint of the existing taller element of the building is reflective of that shown on historic maps dating as far back as 1879. The building was also used as auction rooms, a chapel and later a dance hall, a hall in association with the Ancient Order of Foresters at No. 110 (listed building to the front of the site) and then its present use as a night club. There have been various extensions over the years, mostly in the Twentieth Century and in particular the north-west corner, where an area of the rear garden of No. 108 appears to have been assimilated into to the premises. The taller element of the present building also displays historic brickwork - Flemish bond with burnt headers and a hipped slate roof.
- 6.15 The listing of no.s 110 and 114 describes the passage leading to the 'Oddfellows Flail' [sic] (this is thought to be a typo and should read, 'hall' (see appendix 1). The date of the frontal buildings (circa. 1790) chimes with the earliest records in the Local Studies Library for activity on the site (use of 112 London Street as St. Giles Young Christian Association hall from about 1800). On site, there are linking side walls to the edges of the site which physically attach the hall to the frontal buildings (and may also link underground as well) and the entrance canopies to the club link the two structures. The precise boundaries are not always easy to determine from the listing description, but it would also seem odd for the listing to cover the passageway/alley and mention the hall to the rear, but not intend for it to be included. Research provided also indicates that the three buildings (no. 110, 112 and 114) were in single ownership from the early nineteenth century to 1918.
- 6.16 Historic England guidance note 10 - Listed Buildings and Curtilage (February 2018) sets out that the 3 main factors to be taken into account when assessing whether a structure or object is within the curtilage of a listed building are:
- the physical layout of the listed building and the structure;
  - their ownership, both historically and at the date of listing; and
  - the use or function of the relevant buildings, again both historically and at the date of listing
- 6.17 In officers' opinion it is apparent that there are some links between the London Street frontal buildings and no. 112 both in terms of history and ownership. Elements of the existing building on site also display historic features that could chime with small hall building known to have been in this location.

- 6.18 However, Historic England have again reviewed the evidence summarised above and have advised that they can see no sound reason to consider no. 112 London Street to be listed and have commented as follows:

*'To be considered curtilage the Courts have held that a structure must be ancillary to the principal building, that is it must have served the purposes of the principal building at the date of listing, or at a recent time before the date of listing, in a necessary or reasonably useful way and must not be historically and independent building. Where a self-contained building was fenced or walled-off from the remainder of the site at the date of listing, regardless of the purpose for which it was erected and is occupied, it is likely to be regarded as having a separate curtilage. The structure of building must still form part of the land, and this probably means that there must be some degree of physical annexation to the land.'*

*'110 and 114 are listed as a pair of late 18th century townhouses. While the passage to the hall is mentioned the hall is not explicitly included in the list description. 112 seems to have been walled off from 110 and 114 at the date of listing. It had a completely separate entrance, through the passage and there appears to have been no interconnection between the two. On that basis I think it fair to conclude that 112 is an independent building with its own curtilage, regardless of the fact that 110 and 112 were occupied by the same organisation. Furthermore, 112 was not ancillary to 110. They may have shared the same occupier for a time but surely the principal building for the Ancient Order of Foresters was the hall, and their offices were ancillary to the hall rather than vice versa.'*

- 6.19 Given this is Historic England's interpretation of its own listing description and also the additional evidence referred to above and in Appendix 1, this opinion should be given weight.
- 6.20 As such officers conclude, as per the previous application and based upon the evidence available at this time, that there is not sufficient ground to refuse the application on the failure of the applicant's heritage assessment to appropriately identify and consider all heritage assets.
- 6.21 There is currently uncertainty in relation to the underground connections which may exist between the frontal buildings and the club building. As far as is known, the club has no cellar area. However, the vault to the rear of No. 114 appears to be abruptly cut off at the start of the easternmost wall of the club above and the vault may in fact continue westwards. This vault also has what appears to be a capped access hatch at ground level, which may also have allowed some kind of connection to the club building in the past. There are concerns that the condition of the premises and the passageway may be leading to damage to adjacent buildings. This is Civil concern of itself, but it may also be indicative of underground connections between the buildings which are not currently apparent.

Suitability of the design response in this sensitive area

- 6.22 The applicant's heritage statement has assessed the proposal in terms of the impact of the development upon on the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and surrounding conservation area, as the Council must do also.
- 6.23 It is important to note that contrary to the previous application (See Appendix 2) the current proposal seeks to retain the unlisted former tin factory boundary wall on the boundary with the car park of no. 118-128 London Street. This is considered a positive element of the proposed development. The two proposed residential blocks would be set 1m in from the boundary with the wall element to remain in situ.
- 6.24 The present hall building is in a relatively poor state of repair and there appears to have been a great many changes over the years (most may be unauthorised). The building's mostly single storey haphazard nature is not generally a positive contribution to the street-scene of St. Giles Close.
- 6.25 Officers and the Council's Conservation Consultant disagree with the applicant's heritage statement which states that the proposed development possesses a height, scale, mass and bulk that is appropriate for the secondary nature of the site and would remain subservient to the listed buildings. The heritage statement also considers that the contemporary style of the buildings would differentiate to the high quality listed buildings.
- 6.26 At present the club building is only single storey and officers acknowledge that the backs of the frontal listed buildings include poor modern elements of limited aesthetic value. However the replacement building would be three storeys in height and would represent a significant uplift in massing above the existing situation. Officers do not consider that a building of this height and massing together with limited 3m separation to the rear of nos 110, 114 and also 108 would achieve the required level of subservience to these listed buildings and would instead result in an overly bulky and dominant addition harmful to their settings and contrary to Policy RC5, CS7 and CS33.
- 6.27 In addition, the design and appearance of the proposal, based on the drawings provided, is considered to appear of poor quality and unsympathetic to its buildings historic setting. The irregular window proportions and placement, poor integration of the recessed third storey with elements of flat roof, together with large blank facades to either flank elevation together with the massing and lack of separation are considered to exacerbate further the harm to the settings of the rear of the listed buildings. Whilst there are some less aesthetically pleasing additions to the rear of the London street frontal buildings, the 1980's office developments properties are at least set well away from the rear of the frontage buildings, respecting their settings. The buildings to rear of no. 106 and 108 have a separation of 8m and 10m between two storey elements and whilst being attached to the rear of the frontal buildings this is via modest link corridor additions. The massing of these neighbouring additions is also less dominant at two storeys only whilst there is also a step down in levels to the element at the rear of no. 106.



- 6.28 In terms of both design and massing the proposal appears to take its cues from the Home Court development to the rear of no. 96 London Street which also fronts on to St Giles Close but is not listed (albeit adjoined by two grade II listed buildings). The Home Court development is separated from the rear of no. 96 by a distance of over 10m. The 3m lay off to the rear of the listed buildings at no. 110 and 114 is considered to be highly insufficient.
- 6.29 In terms of footprint the existing building fills the entire rear of the site. Whilst the proposal is split in to two separate blocks, separated by a central courtyard both the separation to the rear of no.s 110 and 114 and also that to the St Giles Close frontage at the height and level of massing proposed is considered to appear as a significant overdevelopment contrary to Policy CS7, CS33 and RC5.
- 6.30 Officers do not object to the conclusions of the applicant's heritage statement with regard to the lack of harm to the setting of the grade II listed buildings at no.s 7, 9 and 11 Church Street which are located some 40m to the north of the site and no. 104 London Street given the limited indivisibility and separation.
- 6.31 The proposed height, scale and mass of the proposed block would overshadow the rear façade of the historic buildings to the front and dominate their settings. In doing so, the proposed apartment block design would not achieve the requirement to 'preserve or enhance' the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.32 Although the site is located within the Conservation Area, it is acknowledged that the Area is mainly concerned with the London Street frontage and then includes some associated land to the rear. Most of St. Giles Close is not in the Conservation Area. Nevertheless, the development will have an impact on views into and within the Area and the development needs to be suitable in terms of the impact on the Area's setting.
- 6.33 Whilst the present building is a generally poor feature in the conservation area, in terms of its immediate frontage on St. Giles Close, its principal impact from the rear is comparatively limited, given its utilitarian and single-storey frontage and views to the upper floors of the rear of the frontage buildings to London Street are maintained. The proposal, at three storeys in height, would further obstruct views from within the conservation area to the rear elevations of the London Street listed buildings.
- 6.34 The character of St Giles Close is of a series of small-scale buildings, mostly residential, some offices. There are many 1980s/1990s infills and some small houses, including townhouses. Nevertheless, there is intimacy to the scale of the surroundings and the applicant's development with two blocks of significant scale is not considered to reflect the prevailing pattern of development and would be out of keeping with the character of the surrounding area. The prevailing pattern of development respects site frontages: sited either along the London Street frontage; as a subservient extension to that frontage; or relates to St. Giles Close. This development seeks to link all three, creating an overdevelopment which would

fail to be successfully assimilated into the area. This is an overdevelopment which appears cramped, whether experienced from outside or inside the site and is considered harmful to the historic character of the conservation area contrary to Policies CS7, CS33 and RC5.

- 6.35 The proposal, in terms of its layout, height, bulk and massing would result in cramped and visually dominant overdevelopment of the site. This would have a significant detrimental impact on the rear setting of principal Listed Buildings on London Street, failing to preserve or enhance views in this part of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The proposal is considered contrary to Core Strategy policies CS7, CS33, Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) policy RC5.

iv. Quality of residential accommodation

- 6.36 The narrow nature of the site and cramped form of development results in narrow alleyways (1m in width) either side of both proposed residential blocks with access into block A located off one of these alleyways. This is considered to be a poor quality approach and access to design the development. The narrow width of the alleyways would make passing difficult and unpleasant and in terms of crime and disorder potentially unsafe with poor levels of natural surveillance, particularly during night time. This would also form, what is considered to be an unsafe route between London Street and St Giles Close. The proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy CS7.
- 6.37 Whilst the flank elevations of both blocks would be subject to minimal and small high level glazing only such that overlooking and privacy from the alleyways would not be an issue, the ground floor units facing into the internal courtyard (habitable rooms windows) would suffer from poor privacy conditions from users of the courtyard or those passing through. Whilst planting is shown in-front of these windows this is not considered to mitigate these concerns given the intricate nature of the courtyard area and ability for people to pass through the site. This is considered contrary to Policies DM4 and RC9.
- 6.38 At first and second floor level habitable rooms of units within both blocks would face each other across the communal courtyard at a distance of 12m. Policy DM4 recommends that back to back distances between residential dwellings should achieve a minimum separation of 20m but does acknowledge that circumstances on some sites will allow dwellings to be closer without a detrimental impact upon privacy. The urban context of the site is acknowledged but the 12m separation would fall well below the recommended standard whilst the proposed small balcony areas facing into the courtyard areas to both blocks would also facilitate greater potential for overlooking and loss of privacy between units. This is considered contrary to Policies DM4 and RC9.
- 6.39 The units proposed are considered to be of adequate size and to be served by sufficient outlook and daylighting whilst the mix of units (5 x 2 bed and 1 x 1 bed) is also considered to be acceptable and to accord with Policies DM4 and RC9.

- 6.40 The principle of the provision of communal amenity space is considered to be acceptable for flats in the centre of Reading as per Policy DM10 and this area is also considered to provide satisfactory potential for landscaping (Policies CS7 and RC5) details of which could be secured by way of condition. However, there are concerns as to how usable this space would be in terms of the level of privacy afforded to the ground floor units facing in to the courtyard area and also the siting of a large bin store and associated odour from this, particularly on hot days. There are also concerns with regard to safety in this confined space given the open access from St Giles Close. The proposed courtyard space is considered to provide a poor standard communal amenity space and to be contrary to Policy DM10.
- 6.41 Transport officers have also commented that the proposed bin store would be located more than the recommended 15m from access point to the site. This would be the case for both collection from St Giles Close or London Street. This distance is recommended to avoid stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. The proposal would only marginally exceed this distance (16.5m from St Giles Close) and therefore it is likely that this issue could be addressed. Bin store details could be secured by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 6.42 No car parking is provided and the Highway Authority is satisfied that none is required in this proposal in this sustainable central Reading location. A condition would be attached to any consent to prevent access to future occupiers of the units to parking permits to prevent adding to the already high levels of parking to surrounding roads to accord with Policies DM12, CS20 and CS24.
- 6.43 In accordance with the adopted Parking SPD, the development is required to provide a minimum of 0.5 cycle parking spaces for each dwelling which should be in a conveniently located, lockable, covered store. This therefore equates to a minimum of 3 cycle parking spaces for this proposed development. Plans submitted illustrate cycle parking provision located within a courtyard area for 6 cycles with access provided from St Giles Close and London Street. The planned provision exceeds the number required by the current adopted parking standard. It is considered reasonable to secure precise details of the type of cycle parking to be provided by way of condition to ensure this accords with Councils standards should planning permission be granted.
- 6.44 Overall in this respect, the development would fail to provide a suitable standard of residential accommodation in terms of quality and security of approach, natural surveillance, privacy, amenity space and bin storage. The proposal is considered contrary to Core Strategy Policies CS3, CS5, CS7, CS20, RCAAP Policies RC5, RC9, RC14, Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) policies DM4 and DM10 and the Parking and Design SPD.

v. Impact on adjoining properties

- 6.45 There is a flatted development accessed from St. Giles Close known as Nelson Mews which sits at an angled relationship to the rear car park serving 119-128 London Street and this has residential accommodation over a bridge for car access on the

first, second and third floors. The rear elevation of no. 118-128 (serviced apartments), which adjoins no. 114, faces onto its rear car park with the application site and proposed development located 90 degrees to the north set 1m from the site boundary where the old factory wall is to be retained. No. 108 London Street (including Prince Regent House to the rear) and no. s 110 and 114 are in office use.

- 6.46 Other than a small number of high level windows the proposal does not incorporate any side facing habitable windows to either block. There is not considered to be any undue overlooking or loss of privacy to Nelson Mews, no. 118-128 London Street or no.s 108, 110 and 114 London Street.
- 6.47 The windows to the east elevation of block B facing the rear elevations of no. 110 and 114 London Street at a distance of 3m would also either again be small high level windows or larger windows which would serve the entrance door and stairwell access only. These windows could be required to be obscurely glazed to prevent any undue overlooking between the office accommodation and London Street frontal buildings. The separation between the rear windows to Block A of the proposed development, which face into the courtyard area, and the facing windows of no. 108 and 118-128 London Street (over 20m) is considered to be sufficient to prevent any detrimental overlooking. In this respect the proposal is not considered to result in any undue overlooking or loss of privacy to surrounding properties.
- 6.48 The height, depth and proximity of Block B to the rear elevation of no. 118-128 London Street, sited at a 90 degree angle and only 1m from the site boundary, is considered to appear visually dominant and overbearing to the closest serviced apartment windows of this property. Outlook from these closest windows would be of a three storey blank brick wall of 10m in depth. Whilst these adjacent units are serviced apartments they can be subject to stays of up to 3 months and occupants warrant an adequate standard of amenity. The scale and proximity of the proposed development is considered harmful to the amenity of the occupiers of this building by way of visually dominant and overbearing impact contrary to Policy DM4 and RC9.
- 6.49 Proposed Block B is also considered to adversely affect light levels to the rear elevation of 108 London Street, however, this building is believed to be in office use, therefore effects on light levels to this building (or indeed 110 or 114) is not considered to be harmful enough to be of concern.
- 6.50 The angled relationship of block A with Nelson Mews to the south is also of concern. The three storey flank elevation of block A would be located 11m from the facing elevation and windows of the flats at Nelson Mews which is a three/four storey building. Officers consider that the introduction of block A here, given the separation distances, would result in a visually dominant and overbearing form of development to the occupiers of Nelson Mews and harm to their amenity contrary to Policy DM4 and RC9.

6.51 Overall, in the above respects, the development is considered to result in a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing residential properties in Nelson Mews and at 118-128 London Street, through visual dominance and overbearing effects of the development. The proposal is considered to be contrary RCAAP Policy RC9, SDDP Policy DM4.

vi. S.106 contributions and CIL

6.52 This would be a CIL-liable development and the necessary form has been submitted.

Affordable housing

6.53 Affordable housing would be required at a level of 20% in accordance with Policy DM6 and the Council's SPD: 'Affordable Housing'. For a development of six units of new build, this equates to one on-site unit plus a financial contribution in lieu, or an off-site contribution.

6.54 The applicant is proposing an off-site contribution at policy compliant level. Given the difficulties with the practicality of providing a single on site unit securing an off-site contribution is considered appropriate in this instance.

6.55 Whilst this level of contribution has been offered, given the number of other outstanding officer concerns with the proposed development, a section 106 legal agreement to secure the required level of contribution has not been progressed and would therefore represent a further reason for refusal of the application in line with Policy DM6.

Other matters

Sustainable drainage

6.56 A sustainable drainage strategy report has been submitted. The site is presently hard surfaced and otherwise covered by a predominantly flat-roofed building. There is currently no permeability directly into the ground and therefore no water flow retention. This will be improved in the development by ensuring that the open areas are permeable, bringing about an improvement in run-off rates. This is acceptable and accords with Policy CS35 and this National requirement to improve water attenuation rates.

Ecology

6.57 The Council's Ecologist has reviewed the submitted daylight bat survey and is content that there is no risk to bats and accordingly, there is no conflict with Policy CS36.

Equalities Act

6.58 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and

civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

#### RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE planning permission for the reasons set out in the recommendation box on the first page of this report.

Case officer: Matt Burns

Plans:

Drawing no.s

PL-01 - Site Plan

PL-02 - Proposed Floor Plans

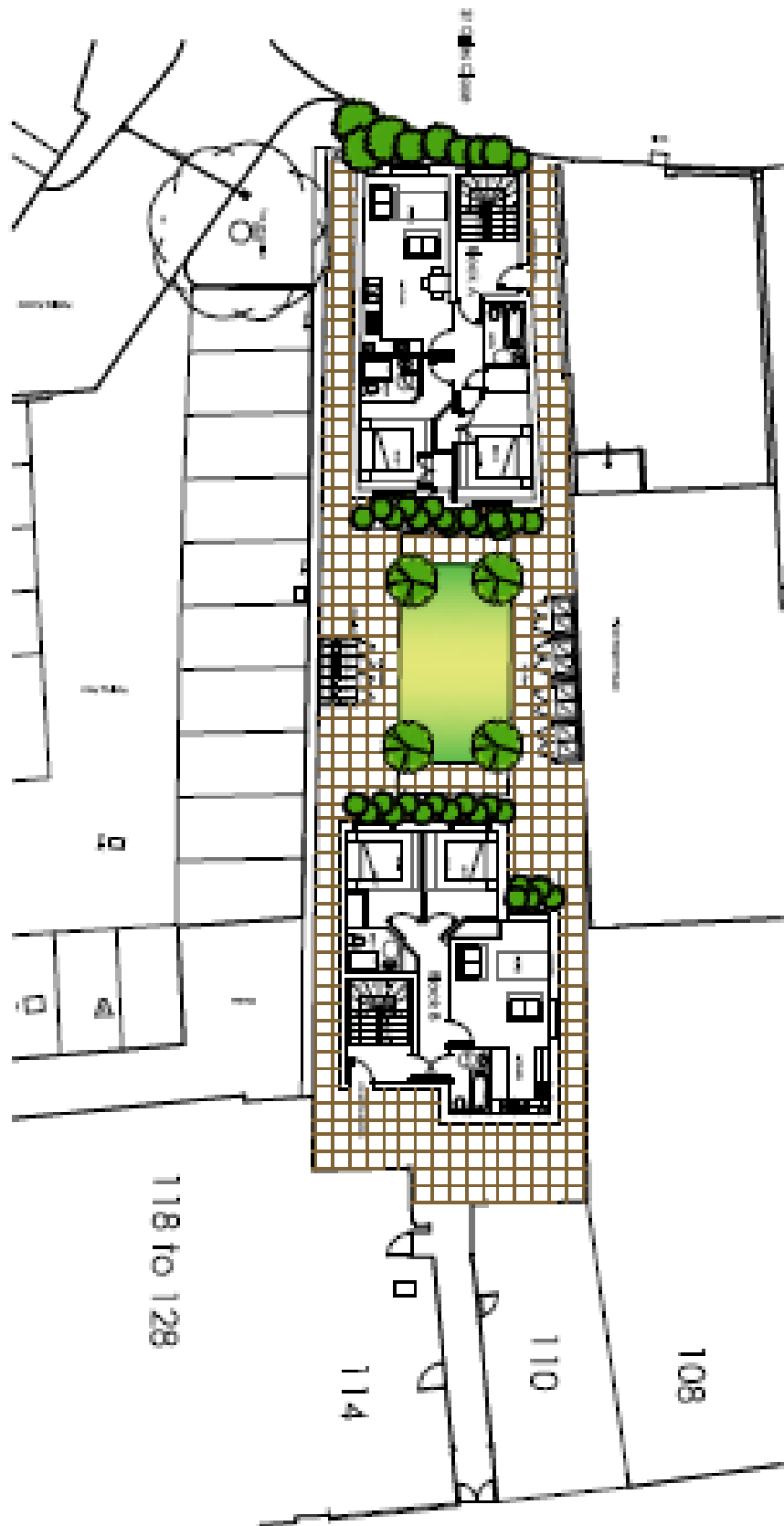
PL-04 - Block A Proposed Elevations (Block A)

PL-04 - Block A Proposed Elevations (Block B)

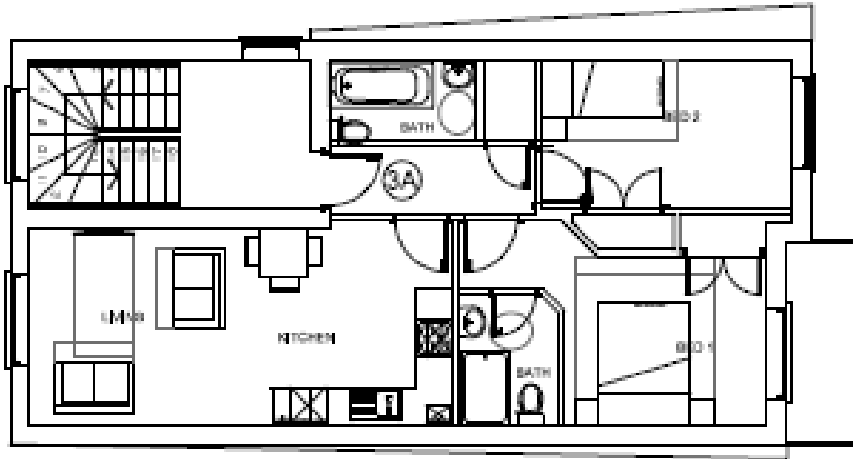
PL-05 - Street Elevation

PL-06 - Street Elevation

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017

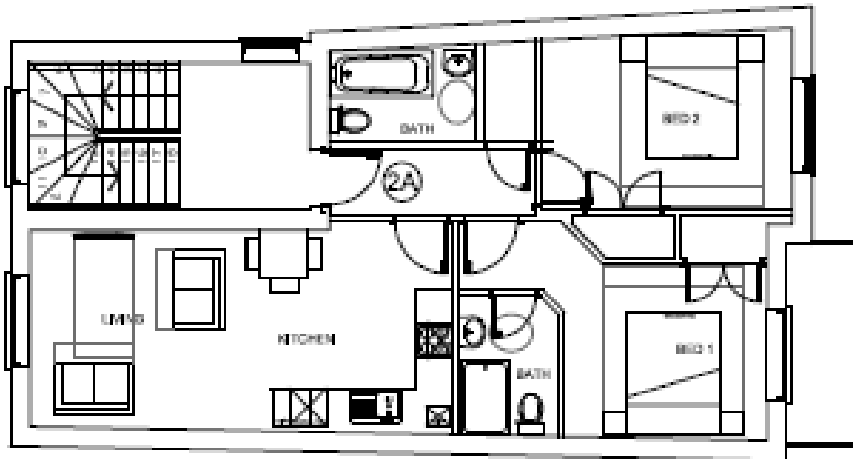


Proposed Site Plan



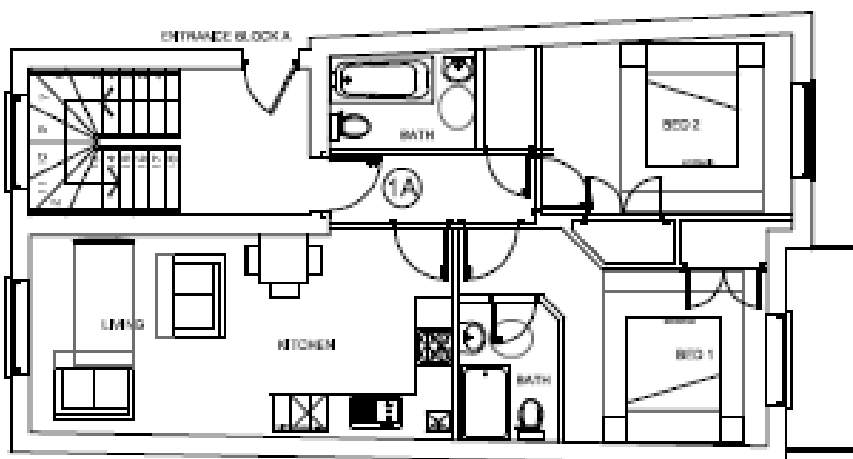
Second Floor Plan

2bed @ 58sqm



First Floor Plan

2bed @ 63.2 sqm

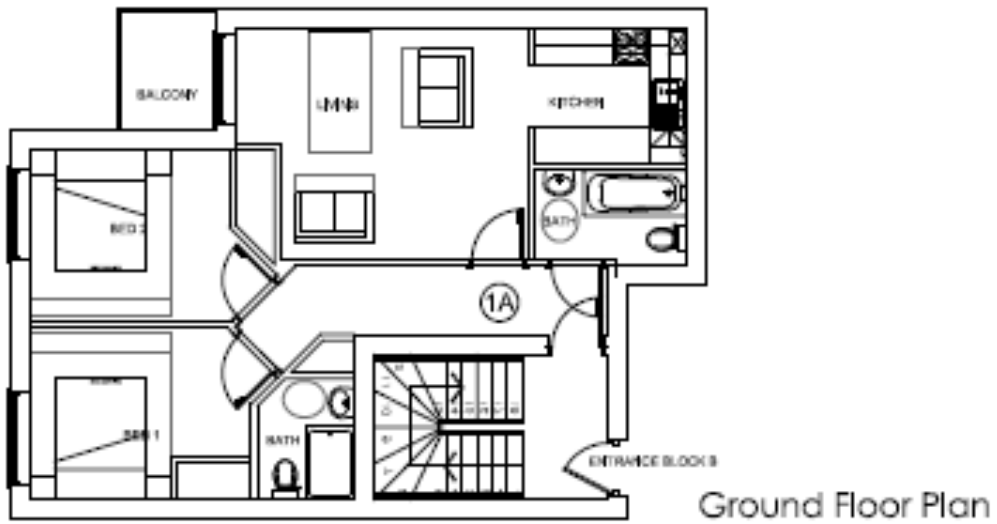
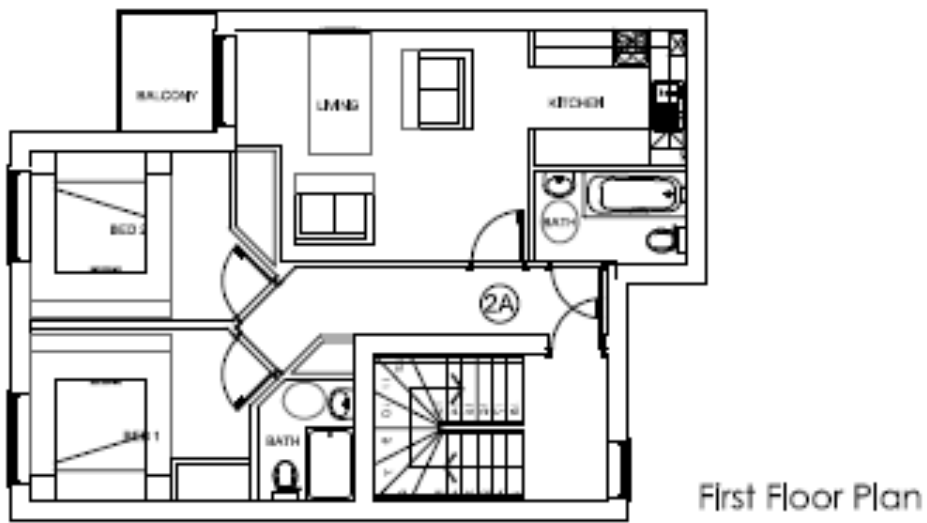
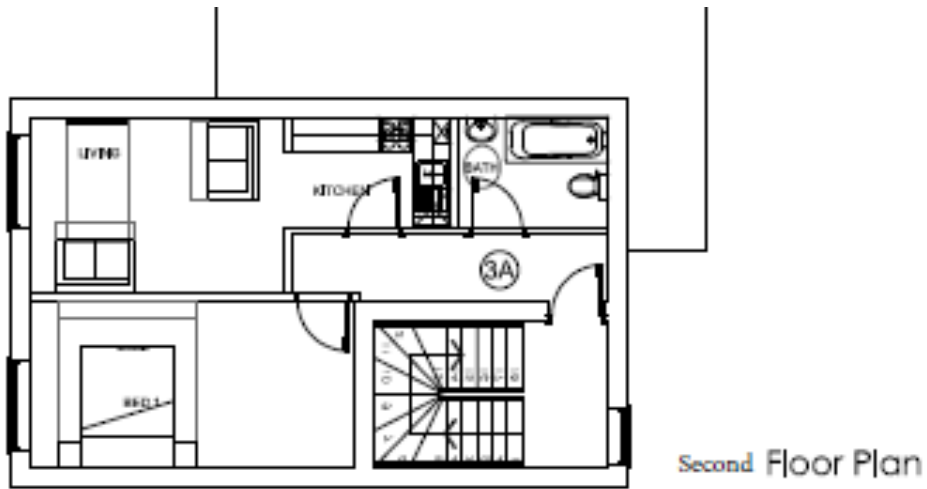


Ground Floor Plan

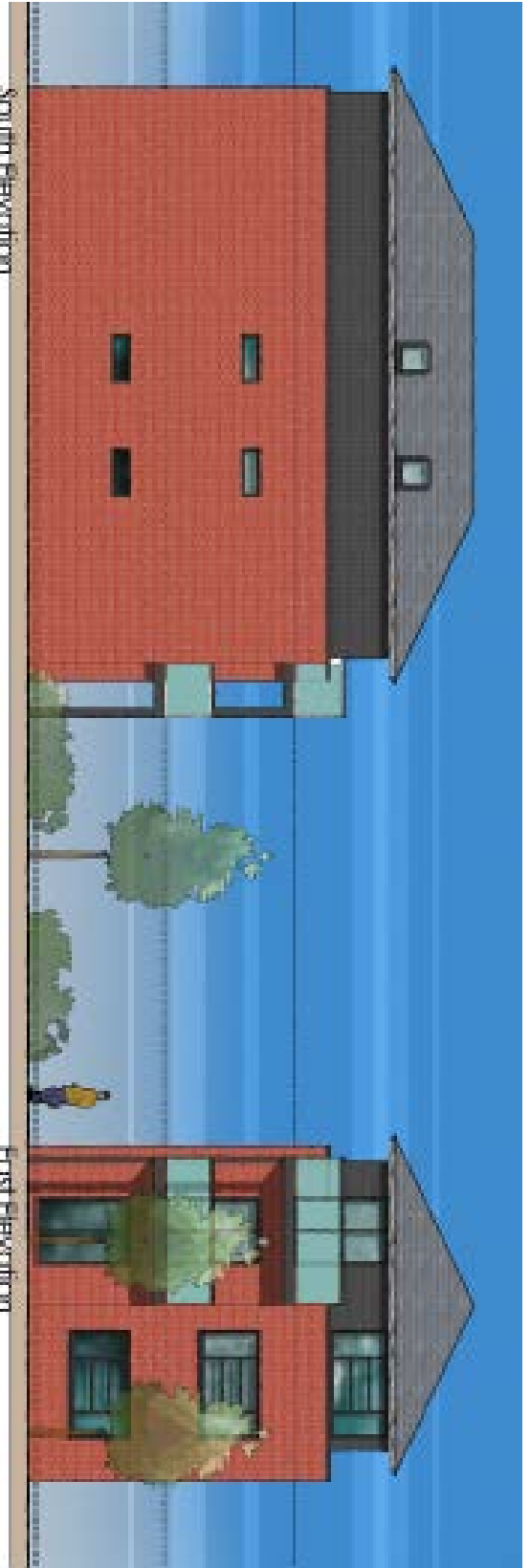
2bed @ 63.2 sqm

Proposed Floor Plans - Block A



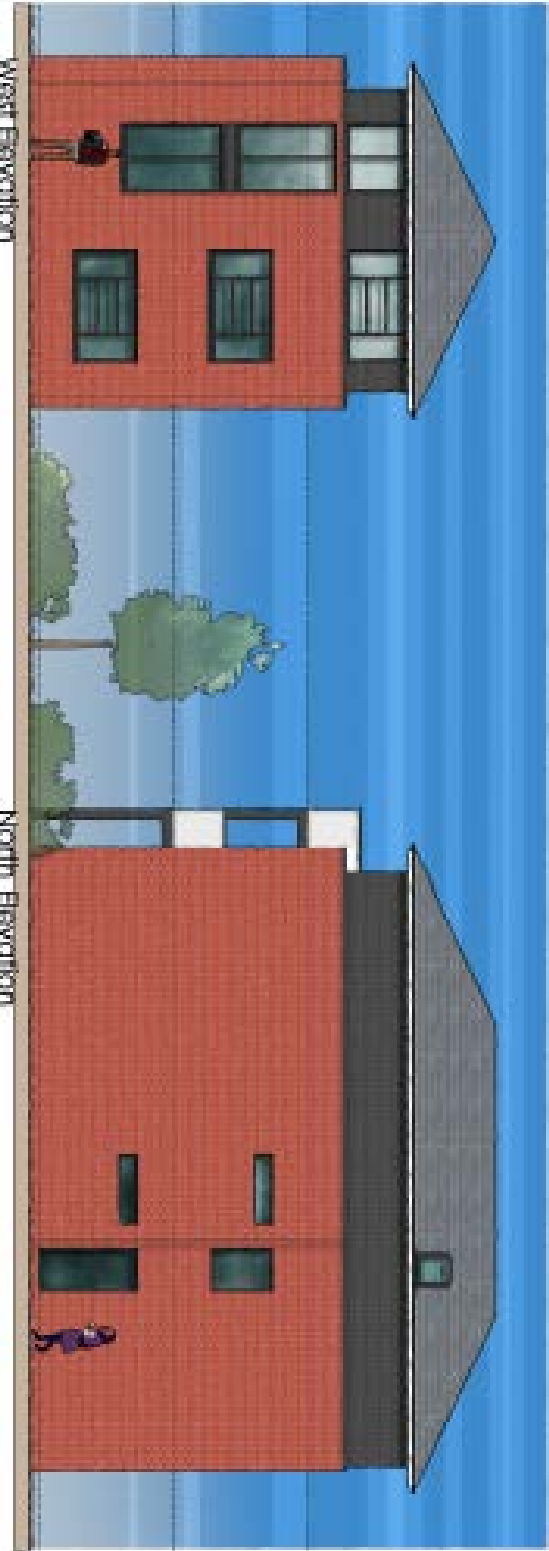


Proposed Floor Plans - Block B



South Elevation  
Block A

East Elevation



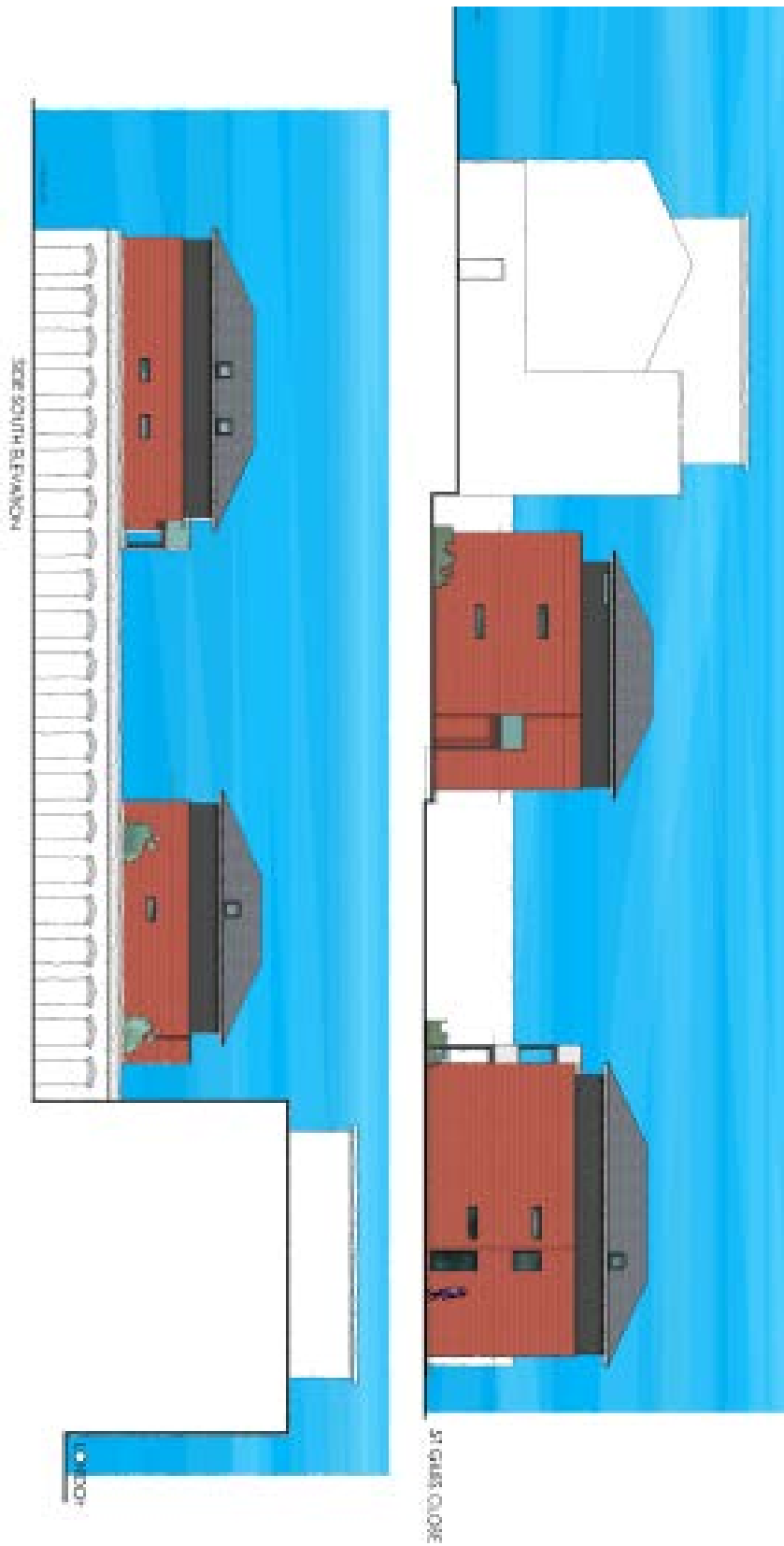
West Elevation

North Elevation

Proposed Elevations - Block A



Proposed Elevations - Block B



Proposed Street-Scene



Proposed Street-Scene

## APPENDIX 1

### LISTING INFORMATION

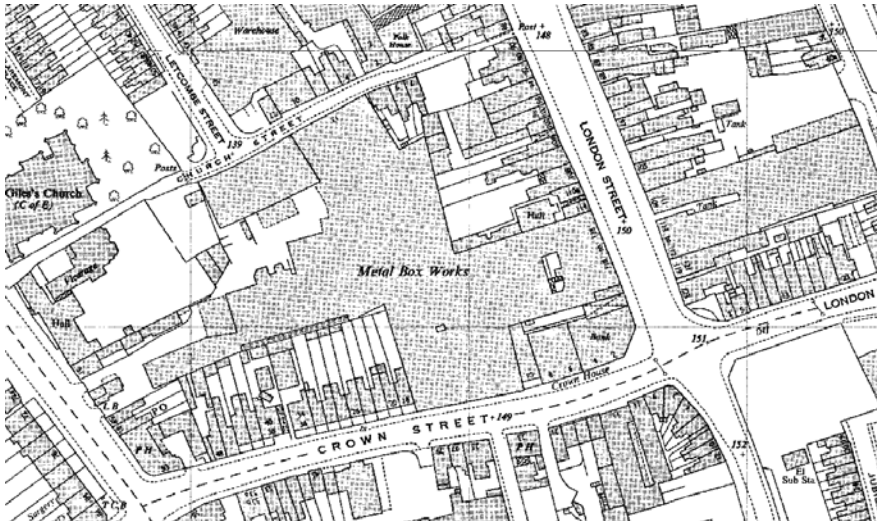
View of the Tin Works in 1926, during visit by the Prince of Wales (Reading Library collection), showing characteristic 'flattened arches' in the side walls.



#### APPENDIX4 Listing description:

LONDON STREET 1. 5128 (West Side) Nos 110 and 114 SU 7172 NE 4/187 II 2. Circa 1790. 3 storeys. Stucco fronted with stucco moulded cornice. Old tile roof. Glazing bar sash windows, 5 on upper floors. Only one (of the 2 previously mentioned) contemporary shopfronts remains on ground floor plus the 3 doorways in centre with cast-iron balcony (diagonal pattern with cast lead rosettes) supported on cut brackets (wood) extending right across. On each side of No 114's shop and dividing the doorways are slender reeded wooden Corinthian engaged columns. Centre door, which has rectangular fanlight with design of ovals, is passage entrance leading to Oddfellows' flail.

APPENDIX 5 O.S. plan from 1960, showing extent of the Metal Box Works coming up against the application site. Note that the extent of the hall appears to be limited to the two-storey element on site and that the western extent of the site is narrower. The rear of 108 London Street appears to include part of the area which is now part of the night club.



### TIMELINE FOR 112 LONDON STREET (THE AFTER DARK CLUB)

#### PREVIOUS USES OF THE AFTER DARK CLUB OR SITE 1800-1970s

112 London Street was, before renumbering c. 1880s, 60 London Street.

Information below is at 6 January 2018.

The exact building (or rebuilding) date of the hall is unknown. The existing building may be early nineteenth century.

No research has been undertaken of the site before 1800.

Date	use / tenants or occupiers/ events if known
1800-1812	St Giles Young Christian Association (1)
at least by 1817 -?	Unitarian Chapel (14)
early nineteenth century	Whole site owned by Mr Sims (14)
1829	Auction Rooms (1)
1837	St Giles Young Mens Christian Association (1)
1839	Primitive Methodist Chapel (1)
1847-56	Baptist Chapel (1)
1862-66	Chapel and Public Rooms (1)
1865-71	St Giles Young Mens Christian Association (1)
1874	St Giles Church of England Society (1)
1871-1900	St Giles Hall (1)
1888	110,112 and 114 London Street sold 27 September (1)
1914	Outbreak of First World War. Opened up for use of soldiers and sailors passing through Reading as a recreation room. (2)
1915	Collection for a new St Giles' Hall suspended during the war (3)
1918	Advertised for auction with 110 and 114 London Street by the Trustees of the Late H.B.Blandy J.P. (4)
c 1920	London Street Pavilion (cinema) (15)
1924	Foundation Stones of new St Giles Hall (now County School of Dancing) on Southampton Street laid.
1925	110 & 112 Ancient Order of Foresters District Offices (5)

9. Kelly's Directory 1964
10. Kelly's Directory 1967
11. Kelly's Directory 1968
12. Kelly's Directory 1975
13. Reading Forum thread accessed 6 November 2016.
  
14. William Silver Darter *Reminiscences of Reading* pp 97, 99-100 (William Silver Darter's 'Reminiscences of Reading' originally published as 'by an Octogenarian' is the repository of a multitude of tidbits about Reading in the nineteenth century. Having grown up and worked on London Street before retiring to the Christchurch Road, considerable weight should be given to what William Darter has to say about London Street. Page numbers below refer to the British Library Historical Print edition.
  - i) *"In a former paper I alluded to the erection of a new Chapel at the upper part of London Street, which is now known as St Giles' Hall. Prior to its erection there was a small place of worship near the present structure..."*(p99)  
 The 'former paper' states: *"On this occasion a service [probably 1817] was held at the newly-erected Unitarian Chapel in London Street (now known as St Giles' Hall)."*(p97)
  - ii) *"Up to about the year 1814 were at the London Street entrance to the Unitarian Chapel two very old houses with small shop windows which were probably built in the reign of Elizabeth [I]. These, as also the small chapel I have referred to, were the property of Mr Sims, at that time a builder of repute, whose business premises were in Mill Lane. He removed the two old buildings and erected the two modern-style houses and shops with balconies, from one of which Fyshe Palmer made his maiden speech to the Liberals of our Borough in the reign of George the Third"* (p100)
  
15. David Cliffe *From Picture Palace to Penny Plunge, Reading's Cinemas*. published Two Rivers Press 2016.



**2. Evidence that 110, 112 and 114 London Street are within the same curtilage and so should all be included in the listing.**

**2.1 Ownership** A timeline of the history of the property is set out in Appendix 1. From this it is apparent that the plot on which the three properties stand was in single ownership from the early nineteenth century until 1918.

**2.2 Sequence of building** It is probable that 112 London Street was built before 110 and 114 were built. Over the years it has served many community uses as a church, church hall, Foresters Hall, dancing school and club. During its life, extensions and additions have been made to the building which make it difficult to know what the exterior of the internal core looks like. A portion of the garden of an adjoining property was also added sometime after 1879 (see map).



St Giles Hall 1879

**2.3 Cellars** Papers presented to the planning committee and available on the LPA planning portal (161935) indicate that cellars are shared between 114 and 112 London Street.

**2.4 Passageway** The passageway from the street to 112 that passes at the ground floor level of 110 and 114 London Street also provides access and a right of way for these two properties.



**Flagged passageway from London Street providing side access to 110 and 114 and access to 112.**

## COMMITTEE REPORT

<b>BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES</b> <b>READING BOROUGH COUNCIL</b> <b>PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7 December 2016</b>	<b>ITEM NO.</b>
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**Ward:** Katesgrove

**App No.:** 161935

**Address:** After Dark Nite Club, 112 London Street, Reading

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing night club. Erection of 10 new residential Class C3 apartments (5 x 1 bed and 5 x 2 bed) with courtyard garden, cycle and bin storage.

**Applicant:** RJIS Ltd.

**Date received:** 13 October 2016

**Major Application 8 week target decision date:** 12 January 2017

### RECOMMENDATION:

**REFUSE** planning permission for the following reasons (summarised and without full policy wording):

1. The application has failed to identify or fully consider the impact on the Listed Building and no justification has been provided for the absence of this. The submitted Historic Impact Assessment fails to accurately attempt to identify any historical significance to the existing building; in addition it dismisses any surviving evidence, preferring to show that the lack of evidence indicates that the club building is of little architectural value and disassociated from its surrounding and site-specific historical context. No associated Listed Building Consent has been submitted to accompany the planning application. In the view of the Local Planning Authority, the application has been inaccurately presented and has failed to fully quantify the effects on all Historic Assets (NPPF Section 12; National Practice Guidance, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, Core Strategy policies CS7; CS33).
2. The proposal is a poor design solution in terms of its layout/location and height, bulk and massing. This would have a significant detrimental impact on the rear setting of principal Listed Buildings on London Street, failing to preserve or enhance views in this part of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. In addition, the general crampedness and lack of opportunity for landscaping, no active frontage to the streetscene/failure to connect visually to the site frontage of St. Giles Close and failure to relate to the pattern of development will produce a development which is neither comprehensive nor sympathetic to the character of the area. For these reasons the proposal is contrary to policy NPPF Sections 7 and 12, Core Strategy policies CS3, CS5, CS7, CS33, Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) policies RC5, RC14.
3. The development would produce substandard accommodation in terms of quality and security of approach, natural surveillance, adequate light levels, privacy, access for all, amenity space and cycle parking, contrary to the NPPF Section 7, Core Strategy Policies CS3, CS5, CS7, CS24, RCAAP Policies RC5, RC9, RC14, Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) policies DM4 and DM10, Parking and Design SPD).

4. The development will result in a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing residential properties in Nelson Mews and at 118-128 London Street, through detriment to privacy and overlooking, and the visual dominance and overbearing effects of the development (RCAAP Policy RC9, SDPD Policy DM4).
5. The development has failed to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing in the Borough (SDPD Policy DM6, Affordable Housing SPD).
6. The development has failed to either provide a construction phase Employment and Skills Plan (EMP) or a contribution towards the provision of an EMP and has therefore failed to mitigate the harm caused to the local employment market as a result of the development (Core Strategy policies CS9, CS13, SDPD policy DM3, Employment, Skills and Training SPD).

Informatives:

1. plans refused
2. Note that the Roof Level on the plans is not a floor level, but an attic space
3. An application for Listed Building Consent should also have been submitted
4. Reason for refusal 4 could be overcome by a Section 106 agreement.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site relates to the After Dark night club, which lies to the rear of 110-114 London Street in central Reading (Listed Grade II). The frontal buildings on London Street are in B1(a) (architects' office) use for No. 110 and A2 (Financial and Professional Services) use as employment agency in No. 114. No. 114 now has its primary access from the covered passageway between 110 and 114. The site offered for development, however, is not being promoted in connection with the frontal buildings or any other adjoining site. No. 108 (to the north) is also listed and is in office use and may be vacant. The development to the south, 118-128 London Street, is a modern block of serviced apartments.
- 1.1 The site is connected to the frontal buildings on London Street via the passageway and for the reasons set out in this report, the site is considered to be part of the Listed Building/its curtilage. The site is located within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. It consists of a long, narrow building, which occupies the majority of the site, connected by walls and 'temporary' canopy structures to 110 and 114 and extends all the way to St. Giles Close. The building has had a long and varied history and is made up of a number of elements. The two storey building at the entrance houses the ticket office, cloakrooms, bar and part of the dancefloor at ground floor and storage rooms and a managers' office at first floor. It has a shallow hipped roof and may be of Victorian construction, although much altered. Then after a slightly raised single-storey section, the building continues westwards with a large flat roofed single-storey element which at the western end has a parapet roof. There are various other small flat-roofed extensions. The southern wall (externally) features some interesting brick arches which appear to be indicative of a former industrial use.



View of After Dark Club from St. Giles Close



View of historic wall on southern boundary, from 118-128 London St. car park



Listed Buildings at 110 and 114 London Street, with passageway entrance to the After Dark Club in the centre of the building

## 2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission to demolish the existing nightclub and erect a new residential block which would accommodate ten dwellings. The

block would largely replicate the footprint of the existing nightclub, with all dwellings having a north and south outlook. The block would connect to the rear of the historic buildings on London Street by pedestrian access using the existing passageway. To the rear of the building, a small walled courtyard area would front onto St. Giles Close.

- 2.2 The building would extend perpendicular from the frontage buildings on London Street and the second floor would have a Mansard-type roof with raised 'fire-break' walls and balconies out onto the area behind a parapet wall. Materials are proposed to be brick or render, with a slated second floor (the mansard roof). The stated design intention is for the development to have the appearance of a 'mews'.
- 2.3 In terms of accommodation, the proposal would provide five one-bed flats along the ground floor level accessed from front doors which face out onto a side alleyway. The same alleyway also gives access to five further front doors to the upper units, which are two-bedroom 'upside-down' maisonettes, with bedrooms on the first floor and open-plan kitchen/living/dining areas on the second floor. The floorplans also appear to show a further floor above, although this has been confirmed as being a low-height attic space only.
- 2.4 Supporting documentation submitted with the planning application includes:
  - Design and Access Statement (DAS)
  - Heritage Impact Study (HIS)
  - Archaeological assessment
  - Bat survey
  - 3D CGI images of the proposal
  - SUDS report
  - Light impact assessment
  - Sustainability statement
  - Transport Statement
  - Arboricultural method statement and tree protection report
  - CIL form

### 3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Relevant planning history is as follows:

160428 Proposed demolition of former 'After Dark' club and erection of new building containing 12 residential apartments. Pre-application advice supplied 22 June 2016.

### 4. CONSULTATIONS

#### (i) Statutory:

**English Heritage** has been consulted on this planning application as in the view of officers, it involves a substantial demolition of an attached/curtilage building to a Listed Building. Any response received will be set out in the Update Report.

**RBC Transport Strategy** does not object to the application, subject to conditions such as requiring a construction method statement (CMS) and cycle parking.

(i) **Non-statutory:**

**RBC Environmental Protection** does not object to the application, subject to conditions relating to construction impacts. Also advises that the club is well-run and given the urban location, complaints are relatively low, with five complaints in relation to noise being received since 2003.

**RBC Licensing** advises that the last record of complaint was in 2012 which was to do with noise. Licensing officers last attended the premises in 2012 and there were no significant issues, nor in visits in 2010 and 2007. Licensing are likely to visit the premises in the near future but it is a very low risk venue which causes very few issues for Licensing. There have been issues with other premises in London Street but nothing to do with the club. Given the late hours the club operates to and its proximity to residents, it seems to be well-run.

**RBC Environmental Health** has raised concerns for light levels in some of the units. Does not consider that the daylight levels as presented in the light report have been calculated correctly with reference to surrounding obstructions, as they appear to be too positive.

**RBC Natural Environment Team (Tree Officer)** advises that a landscaping scheme would be required. Has read the arboricultural assessment. The Cypressus tree next to the site on St. Giles Close is not protected and not in good condition and there would be no objection to its removal.

**RBC Ecologist** is content with the bat survey and does not object to the application.

**Berkshire Archaeology** advises that the Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment submitted with the application provides detailed information regarding the known archaeological potential of the area and the previous uses of the proposal site through historic mapping. The report finds that the proposal site, situated off London Street which is medieval in origin, is located within an area of high archaeological potential for the medieval and post-medieval periods. Previous archaeological investigations in the area have shown that there is a good potential for medieval and post-medieval finds and features to survive and the assessment has shown that there has been some form of development within the site since the early 16th Century.

The assessment takes into account the numerous phases of development that have occurred on site and considers it likely that the continuous redevelopment of the site will have damaged below-ground archaeological deposits, although follows this by stating that nearby archaeological investigations have found some of the deposits can survive.

In addition to the information provided in the desk-based assessment further information has been provided that shows that the neighbouring property, 114 London Street, has a vaulted cellar that seems to abut the boundary of 112 London Street, although there is a suggestion that this may be linked into the wall of the existing club.

We agree that the site is located within an area of high archaeological potential and that it is also possible that later development on the site may have disturbed earlier remains, however there is currently no clear evidence that this is the case. The report suggests a watching brief is undertaken during ground works, however although we agree that archaeological investigations are required, we would recommend that a trial trench is excavated following demolition of the existing building to ground level. This would provide clear information regarding the survival of below ground archaeological deposits



and if they do survive allow adequate opportunity for these to fully investigated and recorded.

*Officer comment: points noted, these conditions could be applied to any permission.*

**Reading Civic Society** has not provided a response on this application and it may be included within the CAAC response below, but any separate response which is provided will be set out in the Update Report

**Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA), Thames Valley Police** has raised the following significant concerns with the application:

Two access points are shown, both are shown as gated leading to narrow enclosed alleyway, that connects London Street and St Giles Close. It is unlikely these gates will be secured (please see below), this route will provide a desire line for unauthorised individuals through what should be a private residential areas.

The gates shown on London Street are purely symbolic and will not or cannot be secured to define the private residential space as businesses either side of 'red line' appear to have legitimate access into the passageway.

Public/private space is confused as staff or residents from 110 and 114 have legitimate access into what should be a private area.

If the inner gates are secured and the outer gates (London Street) left open, this will provide an areas of seclusion with no active surveillance over it. This could easily become an area where individuals could gather unobserved.

I also note that a significant number of bins store are shown (for just ten flats). At this point it appears that some of these are for commercial use. If this is the case, commercial and residential activity within the same space is likely to be problematic.

The Council's **Conservation Consultant** has reviewed the submitted Historic Impact Study (HIS) and responds as follows:

Part of the site is located within *Area 1: London Street* of the Conservation Area.

### ***Listed Buildings***

The main Listed Buildings close to the proposed development site are as follows:

- Grade II Listed 110 London Street
- Grade II Listed 114 London Street
- Grade II Listed 108 London Street

### ***Market Place/London Street Conservation Area***

Area 1 London Street includes a few remaining 16th/17th century buildings including Nos. 49-53 London Street, listed grade II, which has an 18th century front on an earlier, timber-framed building and no. 88 London Street which has a jettied first floor to Church Street. Nos. 49/51 London Street contains 17<sup>th</sup>. century panelling.

110 and 114 London Street include an historic shop front.

### ***Legislative and Planning Policy Framework: Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990***

Recent legal cases relating to issues of the setting of listed buildings have established that under section 70(3) the general power to grant planning permission under section 70(1) is expressly subject to sections 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Section 66(1), in the determination of applications affecting the setting of a Listed Building, states that:

*'in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'*

In the case (2014) of East Northamptonshire District Council v. Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (known as the 'Barnwell Manor' case) the Court of Appeal held that section 70(1) was expressly subject to section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and that decision-makers should give 'considerable importance and weight' to the desirability of preserving setting of a listed building(s).

In the Barnwell Manor wind-farm case it was established that it did not follow that, if harm to a listed building was found to be 'less than substantial' under the balancing exercise in policies HE9 and HE10 (contained PPS5 which was then in force), that a decision-maker could ignore the overarching duty imposed by section 66 (of the Act).

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, fixtures and curtilage buildings, that is any object or structure which is fixed to the building or is within the curtilage and forms part of the land and has done so since before July 1948, are also treated as part of the building for the purposes of listed building control.

### ***Conservation Areas***

Section 69 of the Act imposes a duty on local planning authorities to designate as Conservation Areas any *'areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*.

Recent legal cases have established that under section 70(3) the general power to grant planning permission under section 70(1) is expressly subject to section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 72(1) provides that the local authority has a statutory duty that:

*'with respect of any building or other land in a conservation area.....special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'*

### ***Reading Borough Council Planning Policy***

Reading Borough Council Core Strategy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment states:

*Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. This will include:*

- *Listed Buildings;*
- *Conservation Areas;*
- *Other features with local or national designation, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and historic parks and gardens.*

Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located. and for the purpose of ensuring that work is appropriate to the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

Within para. 11.8 of the Core Strategy it also specifies that:

*The Borough Council is committed to protecting and where appropriate, enhancing the Borough's historic environment. This includes ensuring that buildings and features of Local architectural and historic interest (which are not necessarily recognised components of the historic environment) are taken fully into account and safeguarded...".*

Policy RC5 also reiterates that local heritage assets should be safeguarded and development must not only take account of them, but ensure it has "no adverse impact" on them.

Policy CS7: Design and the Public Realm relates to the general design of development within the borough and requires that:, *inter alia*, design should include *protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough.*

#### **RC5: DESIGN IN THE CENTRE**

*Applications for development within the Reading central area should demonstrate the following attributes:*

- *Development will build on and respect the existing grid layout structure of the central area*
- *Development will provide appropriate, well designed public spaces and other public realm*
- *The architectural details and materials used in the central area should be high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in areas local to the development site*
- *Development and any associated public realm should contribute to the diversity of the central area, be capable of easy adaptation over time to meet changing circumstances, and be designed to enhance community safety.*

#### **National Planning Policy Framework**

The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and a key dimension of 'sustainability' is defined as '...protecting and enhancing our...historic environment' (DCLG et al, 2012, para 7). The NPPF recognises the historic environment as comprising all aspects of the environment which have resulted from the interaction between people and places through time (DCLG et al, 2012, Annex 2: Glossary). The

elements of the historic environment that are considered to hold significance are called heritage assets (DCLG et al, 2012, Annex 2: Glossary).

The NPPF identifies Heritage Assets as:

*A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).*

Paragraph 132 states:

*When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.*

Significance is defined by the NPPF as '*the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest*'. This significance or value may be related to a heritage asset's archaeological, architectural and artistic or historic elements and can derive not only from its physical presence but also from its setting (DCLG et al, 2012, para 56). The NPPF details the main policies regarding heritage assets in Section 12, Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (DCLG et al, 2012).

Under paragraph 128, applicants for planning permission are required to describe the value of any heritage assets affected by a development, including any contribution made by their setting, at a level of detail proportionate to the assets' importance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal (positive and negative) on their value (DCLG et al, 2012, paras. 128); this information is provided in a heritage statement.

Paragraph 129. States:

*Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

The NPPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their value. Under paragraph 135, the effect of an application on the value of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application, making a balanced judgement with regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the value of the heritage asset (DCLG et al, 2012, paras. 135).

All heritage assets have a setting. The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

**Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

PPG states that local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets and in some areas, these heritage assets may be identified as ‘locally listed’ (DCLG et al, 2014, para. 39). These identified heritage assets may include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes which have a degree of value meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets (DCLG et al, 2014, para. 39).

The PPG states under ‘*Why is ‘significance’ important in decision-taking?*’ that:  
*Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.*

Under the discussion of ‘*How to assess if there is substantial harm?*’ the PPG offers:  
*What matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.*

### **Historic England Good Practice Advice**

Historic England has produced new guidance on the interpretation and implementation of the NPPF and PPG with regard to the historic environment in the form of:

- Historic England *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (Historic England, 2016);
- Historic Environment *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking* (Historic England, 2015a);
- Historic Environment *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England, 2015b); and
- Historic England *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 4: Tall Buildings* (Historic England, 2015c).

### **The Setting of Heritage Assets**

Historic England’s published document *The Setting of Heritage Assets* includes their methodology for the assessment of the impact on the settings of Listed Buildings from development proposals. They suggest the following process:

- Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
- Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance; and
- Step 4: explore the way maximising the benefits

Historic England’s guidance in *The Setting of Heritage assets* on appreciating the setting states:

*Because setting does not depend on public rights or ability to access it, significance is not dependent on numbers of people visiting it; this would downplay such qualitative issues as the importance of quiet and tranquillity as an attribute of setting, constraints on access such as remoteness or challenging terrain, and the importance of the setting to a local community who may be few in number. The potential for appreciation of the asset’s significance may increase once it is interpreted or mediated in some way, or if access to currently inaccessible land becomes possible.*

## ***Heritage Impact Study***

The proposed development consists of the demolition of No. 112 London Street (The After Dark Club) and replacement with a residential development of 10 units.

The submitted HIS suggests No. 112's significance in terms of Historic England's *Conservation Principles* as a meeting room and hall the remainder of the building is assessed as having no significance.

Under *Historical Value*, the HIS considers that there are no surviving historic features to provide an indication of the former uses of the site such as the Tin Works in this area. However, photographic evidence suggests that the remaining south wall to the site which includes a length of brick wall with segmental headed blind windows was originally part of the Huntley, Boorne and Stevens Tin Works factory. Further remnants of the factory may also remain on site. Under *Aesthetic Value*, the wall with segmental headed blind windows is described only as a 'pleasant but undistinguished feature'. The HIS has therefore not connected the significance of the remaining wall to the earlier function of the tin works.

There is also no wider discussion of the association of No. 112 site and the Listed Buildings on the London Street frontage in terms of whether the proposed site constitutes a curtilage listed building as it is within the curtilage and forms part of the land and has done so since before July 1948. The criteria useful to this assessment are:

- the historical independence of the building;
- the physical layout of the principal building and other buildings;
- the ownership of the buildings now and at the time of listing;
- whether the structure forms part of the land; and
- the use and function of the buildings, and whether a building is ancillary or subordinate to the principal building.

## ***Conclusion and advice***

Since the potential associations of No. 112 with the Listed Buildings Nos. 110 and No. 114 are not discussed, the issue of curtilage listing has not been fully explored in the HIS. In addition the remnants of the site associated with the Huntley, Boorne and Stevens Tin Works are not fully assessed.

The HIS cannot therefore be considered a full assessment of the significance of heritage assets affected by the proposed development and its impact on the settings of the Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The **Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)** has provided objections/comments and these are summarised as follows:

This property is rightfully considered a listed property by Reading Borough Council by association of curtilage with 110 and 114 London Street. The front passageway is specifically mentioned in the Listing as a unique feature of the property. It is also to be noted that the southern wall of the property is of particular historical interest to the area and thus of concern to the Conservation Area in which the property sits.

We concur with the considerable historical research undertaken by Evelyn Williams, who is one of our members, in substantiating the importance of the southern wall of this

property. Her research is submitted already for your consideration. It is her research that calls into question the Heritage Impact Study (HIS) section 10. The following sections are highlighted:

- “Historical Value

The contribution of the setting to the historical value of the buildings is considered to be limited, *especially as there are no surviving immediate historic features to provide an indication of the former uses such as the Tin Works in this area.* The 19th Century part of No 112 does have some historical value as a meeting room/hall *but the rest of the building is an undistinguished building of 20th century and is of no significance.*

- Aesthetic Value

No 112, in particular its modern flat roofed extension and the neighbouring car parks make only a limited contribution to the aesthetic value of the listed building. Immediately to the rear of the listed building the setting has been compromised by a commercial bin store and the porch and canopy to the front entrance of the After Dark Club and the general condition of the building. No 112 obscures views of the listed building from St Giles Close to such an extent only the roof of the listed building is a feature in the street scene. Furthermore the long views along St Giles Close are dominated by tall modern buildings and their associated car parks. *The brick wall with blank window openings along the southern boundary is a pleasant but undistinguished feature.*”

This wall is indeed a remaining wall of one of Huntley, Boorne & Stevens Tin Works workshops which has survived the demolition in the area over time. The demolition of this wall would represent almost the last vestige of this very important enterprise, which was a highly important portion of Reading’s industrial heritage. We are therefore aggrieved that the design presented proposes that the wall is demolished in its entirety and not incorporated into the design- except by the design reference to the arches on the proposed rear and southern elevations of the property. It is this “bow” to that incorporation of that element into the design, that gives us cause to wonder if they don’t indeed know that they are requesting the demolition of something far more important than a “*pleasant but undistinguished feature*” of an “*undistinguished building of the 20<sup>th</sup> century [that is] of no significance.*”

Additionally, with this being the case, we do not see proof that a sufficient design guidance and area study was taken to justify the selection of a mansard -roof “mews court” for this site. The following paragraphs from the Design and Access Statement provide the only real design guidance for the development of the property:

- 3.03 (*second one - note: there are two 3.03’s in the Design and Access statement.*) “Following pre-application advice given, the scheme has been designed to make full use of the available plot, whilst reflecting the best of the Conservation Area character. The new building has a smaller footprint than the existing buildings, and has been designed to have the character of a mews court, as is frequently found to the rear of the historic main frontage buildings. The active main frontage faces south, separated from the adjoining private residential car park by a low wall with railings and lighting columns which provide a secure lit pathway to each unit.

- 3.08 (Design and Access Statement) “Primary living accommodation is positioned on the southern side of the building to maximise natural light and provide an active outlook. All habitable rooms meet or exceed National Space Standards.

“As a reference to the only attractive established feature on the site - the recessed arches in the southern wall - archway detailing has been included in the feature walls enclosing the private amenity space. The applicant is also minded to seek approval to name the new building Oddfellows Court, and provide some details of the former use of the site on a permanent panel on the outside of the scheme”.

In regards to 3.03-it is insufficient in our mind that the design and development of a mansard- roof “mews court” should be therefore construed from the site and the area. Mansard roofs alone have no real point of reference in the area historically, at the very least, although a “mews scheme” could ostensibly be considered to at least have some merit in an off -street scheme.

In regards to 3.08, we are also of the understanding that the developer has gone through a pre-app process on this property. It is terribly unfortunate that that entire process was not undertaken with the knowledge of the importance of that south wall and the incorporation of that wall into the design. Surely this knowledge might have led to an entirely different type of design incorporating this wall. A more suitable name for the building would link to the building’s industrial heritage. We would therefore like to see a proposal of design ideally that would incorporate the historical south wall at the very least into the design of this property.

The application was also presented to the **Reading Design Review Panel** on 17 November 2016. The Panel’s response is not available at the time of writing but will be set out in the Update Report.

### **iii Serving Notice on landowners**

The application has served the requisite Notice on the owner of the club. However, officers are aware of the situation that the ownerships of the frontal buildings on London Street are separate and that there may be a shared ownership/shared access rights arrangement over the passageway. There may also be a situation of slight encroachment or ‘flying freehold’ in the area of the basement vault to the rear of No. 114. However, none of these matters indicate a clear departure from the applicant’s duty to serve Notice on Third Party landowners, therefore officers advise that the application should be considered in good faith. However, this is not to say that subsequent information may come forward which may question the approach taken.

### **iv Public consultation**

Site notices were erected on London Street and St. Giles Close and letters were sent to the following surrounding properties:

London Street: 108, 110, 110a, 114, 118-128

Nelson Mews: 5-11

St. Giles Close: 28-34

This planning application has been reported in the local media and as a result has attracted some 1,200 objections/observations at the time of writing. Officers are aware of an online petition against the proposed loss of the nightclub, but this has not been provided to officers. The Update Report will provide a fuller response on the numbers,



but the issues raised by objectors are set out below. Commentary on these objections is set out directly below or in the Appraisal.

### Cultural and historic

- The After Dark has for long time been part of Reading's history and many famous acts have played here. This is Reading's 'Cavern Club'. It would be a terrible loss in Reading's Year Of Culture.
- The After Dark has a regular charitable night. *Officer comment: this is not a planning consideration*
- The provision of housing does not outweigh the community benefits of the club
- The After Dark is a valued local Reading independent nightclub and should be protected from development. Considers that the building should be listed as a Local Heritage Asset. *Officer comment: this is a separate process and not related to this planning consideration*
- The proposal does not seek to improve the neglect which has occurred in the passageway and the present poorly-maintained drains
- The proposal would adversely affect ventilation to the frontal listed buildings, to the detriment of their historic fabric. *Officer comment: the proposal would not be attached to the frontal buildings, therefore such effects would not occur.*
- The proposal would not allow a suitable gap to allow the maintenance of the rear of the historic buildings
- To the rear of 114 there is a basement vault which abuts the application site. Sensitive building works should be carried out in this area, particularly as this may well lead to the historic wall on the southern side of the application site.

### Planning and land uses

- Does not agree that residential is a suitable land use, given surrounding mix of land uses
- Flats would put further strain on parking/transport infrastructure, schools and doctors. *Officer comment: schools and transport infrastructure payments would be collected by the Community Infrastructure Levy, were permission to be granted. The local NHS trusts and individual surgeries will plan for demand for additional practices*
- Existing distinctive land uses in the area should be retained
- The proposal should include affordable housing
- There is already a surplus of these luxury flats in Reading
- These are not really low cost flats
- Does not agree with the Council's policy of keeping nightclubs and other nightlife within the Central Core of the town
- The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure protection of the vitality of town centres and this proposal does not do this
- Use other free brownfield sites for redevelopment instead. *Officer comment: some other sites are noted by the objector which have for various reasons, not come forward for redevelopment, but this is not a reason to preclude the redevelopment of other sites*

### Design merit of the proposal

- The building contains elements of historical and architectural merit which should be conserved
- The units would have a poor internal environment, poor daylight and poor views

- The building should be locally listed. *Officer comment: officers consider that the site is currently protected by the listing which applies to 110 and 114 London Street and therefore locally listing the night club hall is not necessary.*
- Concern for impact on adjacent Listed Buildings
- Present building is not subordinate to the backs of the Listed Buildings, when seen from St. Giles Close
- The design is not reflective of the Conservation Area and will not preserve it
- The proposal will adversely affect light levels to the buildings on London Street
- Concern for the waste disposal arrangements and the waste capacity and disturbance to the passageway. Suggests that all servicing should occur from St. Giles Close

#### Transport and parking

- This is Zone 2, where there should be one parking space per flat
- Not suitable to have no parking
- Already a parking problem in the area with residents parking in office parking spaces
- Cycle parking is inadequate, contrary to CS24 and the SPD

#### Economic and social

- Has a full social/financial/cultural appraisal of the existing and proposed land uses been conducted? The After Dark also provides associated business for other establishments nearby. *Officer comment: the Planning Acts do not require such an appraisal to be undertaken and unless relevant planning issues emerge, such would not be relevant to the material planning considerations to the determination of this planning application*
- Does not believe that the present After Dark club is no longer viable. *Officer comment: it is not necessary for the developer to prove that the night club use is unviable in the planning consideration in respect of suitable land uses on this site*
- Concerned for security issues associated with the imminent closure *Officer comment: this is not a planning matter, but a public order/police consideration*
- No drainage/sewerage details have been submitted with the application. *Officer comment: although not required in relation to the consideration of the planning application, there may be a concern in relation to the Listed Building, see the Appraisal below.*

#### Other

- Concerns for impact on nearby homes and businesses during construction. *Officer comment: this can be covered in a comprehensive Construction Management Statement (CMS), via condition*
- The Council should not even be considering this planning application and considers that the Council must be corrupt for doing so. *Officer comment: this is a misunderstanding: the Council cannot prevent a planning application from being submitted and is obliged to determine valid applications*
- Why make the club staff unemployed when there are so many offices which could be converted? *Officer comment: this is a matter for the developer, it is not a planning consideration.*
- The Council should not be taking such services away. *Officer comment: this is a private night club, not a Council service.*
- The application site includes land which is not in the applicant's control.

## 5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

5.4 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

### 5.5 National

National Planning Policy Framework (2012):

Section 2: Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Section 4: Promoting sustainable transport

Section 6: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Section 7: Requiring good design

Section 10: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance

### 5.6 Reading Borough LDF: Core Strategy (2008, amended 2015)

CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design)

CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)

CS5 (Inclusive Access)

CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CS14 (Provision of Housing)

CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix)

CS20 (Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy)

CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)

CS25 (Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development)

CS32 (Impacts on Community Facilities)

CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)

CS34 (Pollution and Water Resources)

CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology)

CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

### 5.7 Reading Borough LDF: Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009, amended 2015)

RC5 (Design in the Centre)  
RC7 (Leisure, Culture and Tourism in the Centre)  
RC8 (Drinking Establishments)  
RC9 (Living in the Centre)  
RC14 (Public Realm)

5.8 Reading Borough LDF: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) (2012, amended 2015)

SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)  
DM1 (Adaptation to Climate Change)  
DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)  
DM6 (Affordable Housing)  
DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)  
DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)  
DM15 (Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses)  
DM18 (Tree Planting)  
DM19 (Air Quality)

5.9 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Employment, Skills and Training (2013)  
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)  
Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)  
Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)

5.10 Other relevant documents

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (20xx)  
Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic England, 2016)  
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015)  
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015)

## 6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues for consideration in this planning application are:

- i. **Proposed loss of night club**
- ii. **Heritage considerations**
- iii. **Suitability of the design response in this sensitive area**
- iv. **Quality of residential accommodation**
- v. **Impact on adjoining properties**
- vi. **S.106 contributions and CIL**

i. Proposed loss of night club

6.2 There has been a nightclub/dance hall use on this site for a very long time and this is the established planning use of the premises/site. However, it is sited in a relatively dense urban area where there are now likely to be many more residential

properties in close proximity than in the past. Were a planning application now received for this change of use (to a night club), such is unlikely to be given planning permission as it is essentially a non-conforming use in this area which contains residential uses.

- 6.3 As a recognition of the disturbance that night clubs can cause (noise, vibration, anti-social behaviour, etc.) night clubs have their own planning use class and they are a *sui generis* or 'unique' use. Therefore, its removal from the area and replacement with a residential use is supported when assessed against Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity), providing that the replacement scheme is itself acceptable.
- 6.4 Officers have received a large amount of objections from members of the public seeking to protect the After Dark in situ and also ask that it be given some sort of policy protection, for instance, the same as that applied to public houses or community facilities. Firstly, it should be born in mind that these premises could - without any control by the Planning Department - be operated by a completely different club and one which is not so popular with the public or the amenities of surrounding neighbours.
- 6.5 Secondly, this is not a community use or a public house outside the town centre area, therefore there is no conflict with adopted planning policies CS31 or DM15 which protect these types of uses from redevelopment.
- 6.6 The club is in a mixed residential/office/retail area and during its hours of operation, has the potential to cause considerable residential disturbance. The Council's Licensing and Environmental Protection teams advise that the number of complaints from the After Dark club is actually very low. Overall however, the removal of this non-compatible land use from a location where there is potential to cause nuisance is supported and other Council policies seek to ensure that such uses are situated in the central part of the town centre.
- 6.7 Some objectors have asked for the club to be considered as an Asset of Community Value. This is a separate process and is not relevant to this planning assessment.
- 6.8 Overall, officers identify no planning policy conflict with the principle of removing the night club use from this area and now turn to the heritage merits of the application.

ii. **Heritage considerations**

History of the application site and identifying the Historic Asset

- 6.9 Since the submission of this planning application, further investigation of the building has been undertaken by the Planning Department (with the assistance of Reading Library's Local Studies Library), the Council's Conservation Consultant and the CAAC (comments above) and also various detailed objections which have been received. This research has been valuable to inform the overall consideration of the appropriateness of the planning scheme and the merits of the accompanying

HIS document. No associated application for Listed Building Consent has been submitted with this planning application.

- 6.10 The present building appears to have been used in approximately its present envelope and use (as a night club) for the past 40 years or so. Historical information seems to indicate that the use of the taller element of the building at least, was originally used as a church hall from about 1800, although this may have been an earlier building. The building was also used as auction rooms, a chapel and later a dance hall, a hall in association with the Ancient Order of Foresters at No. 110 and then its present use as a night club. There have been various extensions over the years, mostly in the Twentieth Century and in particular the north-west corner, where an area of the rear garden of No. 108 appears to have been assimilated into to the premises.

The approach applied by the application's Historic Impact Study (HIS)

- 6.11 The HIS does not ascribe any particular importance to the southern wall on the application site, which as can be seen from the car park of the serviced apartments to 118-128 London Street, has characteristic blind windows and flattened arches, reminiscent of a Victorian factory wall. Officers are now satisfied that this is in fact the internal (north) wall of the tin works. This wall appears to be the last remnant of what was the large tin works factory complex in the St. Giles Close area and has at some point been joined to the hall building with a flat roof, leaving a covered passageway along the southern flank of the site. This wall, then, is an important surviving physical and cultural marker of the Huntley, Boorne & Stevens tin works, which made the tins for Huntley & Palmers Biscuits. The production of biscuits was one of the three main industries that made Reading famous in the Victorian period (Reading was known for its, 'beer, bulbs and biscuits').
- 6.12 The HIS describes the club building as being unlisted. In your officers' opinion, this approach is not considered to be correct for a number of reasons. Firstly, Nos. 110 and 114 London Street are listed together and the listing describes the passage leading to the 'Oddfellows Flail' [sic] (this is thought to be a typo and should read, 'hall', see Appendix 1. The date of the frontal buildings (circa. 1790) chimes with the earliest records in the Local Studies Library for activity on the site (use of 112 London Street as St. Giles Young Christian Association hall from about 1800). On site, there are linking side walls to the edges of the site which physically attach the hall to the frontal buildings (and may also link underground as well) and the entrance canopies to the club link the two structures. The precise boundaries are not always easy to determine from the listing description, but it would also seem to be perverse for the listing to cover the passageway/alley and mention the hall to the rear, but not intend for it to be included. English Heritage may be able to advise further, but the above forms the basis of the officer assertion that the After Dark Club building, despite its poor state of repair, is nonetheless protected by the listing.
- 6.13 There is currently uncertainty in relation to the underground connections which may exist between the frontal buildings and the club building. As far as is known, the club has no cellar area. However, the vault to the rear of No. 114 appears to

be abruptly cut off at the start of the easternmost wall of the club above and the vault may in fact continue westwards. This vault also has what appears to be a capped access hatch at ground level, which may also have allowed some kind of connection to the club building in the past. There are concerns that the condition of the premises and the passageway may be leading to damage to adjacent buildings. This is Civil concern of itself, but it may also be indicative of underground connections between the buildings which are not currently apparent.

- 6.14 In your officers' opinion, it is considered that the HIS fails to accurately attempt to identify any historical significance to the building, and also it dismisses any surviving evidence, preferring to show that the lack of evidence indicates that the club building is of little architectural value and is somehow disassociated from its surrounding and site-specific historical context. The principal concerns are summarised by the Conservation Consultant in his five bullet points in his comments and this should form part of the first reason for refusal of the application: that the application has failed to correctly identify the Historic Asset.
- 6.15 If not formally covered by the Listing, officers offer that the hall is also considered to be within the curtilage of the two listed buildings and in either event, the application has failed to correctly identify the Historic Asset. This is an important mis-reading and not in accordance with National policy and Historic England/English Heritage advice, the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act or the Council's Policy CS33.

**iii Suitability of the design response in this sensitive area**

- 6.16 The present hall building is in a relatively poor state of repair and there appears to have been a great many changes over the years (most may be unauthorised). The building's mostly single storey haphazard nature is not generally a positive contribution to the streetscene of St. Giles Close.
- 6.17 However, given the discussion in the section above, it is incorrect for the basis for a design solution to have dismissed all consideration being given to the inclusion/conversion of elements of the existing building fabric. At the very least, the tin works wall could fulfil a characterful role and no doubt practical purpose in any sympathetic redevelopment proposal.
- 6.18 Historic England has published the document, The Setting of Heritage Assets which includes their view on the assessment of the impact on the settings of Listed Buildings. In particular, they give a methodology for assessing the implications of development proposals. They suggest the following process:
- . Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
  - . Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
  - . Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance; and
  - . Step 4: explore the way maximising the benefits

- 6.19 The development would not generally be capable of views from London Street. The rear settings of the Listed Buildings on London Street would be most affected. At present the club building is only single storey and officers agree with the DAS' assertion that the backs of the frontal Listed Buildings include poor, modern elements. However, the proposal will not be suitable to the setting of the building, nor will the proposal be an improvement over the existing situation. A sympathetic proposal would either form a subservient addition to the backs of the frontal buildings, or else provide a meaningful layoff in order to protect the setting of the building. Although fairly unremarkable 1980s office developments, the buildings in the rear of the sites and 108 and 106 London Street are at least set well away from the frontage buildings on London Street, respecting their settings. The bulk of Prince Regent House at 108 also seems to have taken its cues for bulk and massing from the present club building at 112.
- 6.20 The proposed height, scale and mass of the proposed block would overshadow the rear façade of the historic buildings to the front and dominate their settings. In doing so, the proposed apartment block design would not achieve the requirement to 'preserve or enhance' the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.21 Although the site is located within the Conservation Area, the Area is mainly concerned with the London Street frontage and then includes some associated land to the rear. Most of St. Giles Close is not in the Conservation Area. Nevertheless, the development will have an impact on views into and within the Area and the development needs to be suitable in terms of the impact on the Area's setting.
- 6.22 Whilst the present building is a generally poor feature in the conservation area, in terms of its immediate frontage on St. Giles Close, its principal impact from the rear is comparatively limited, given its utilitarian and single-storey frontage and views to the upper floors of the rear of the frontage buildings to London Street are maintained. Therefore the proposal does not at least preserve views into and within the Conservation Area, so fails this specific test as set out in the Listed Buildings Act and Policy CS33.
- 6.23 The frontages of the buildings in the area are either heritage buildings, or larger flatted developments, but these are designed so as to be still generally cognisant of the prevailing building styles/massing and the general pleasing architectural rhythm of London Street.
- 6.24 St. Giles Close is a different character; a series of smaller-scale buildings, mostly residential, some offices. There are many 1980s/1990s infills and some small houses, including townhouses. Nevertheless, there is intimacy to the scale of the surroundings and the applicant's 'mews' style development attempts to provide a design which does not 'fit' the site available and has no design connection to St. Giles Close.
- 6.25 The HIS argues that as the mansard roof ridge will sit below the eaves of the frontal building it will thereby read as a subservient feature when viewed from St. Giles Close. This rather simplistic statement misses the fact that the proposal is in fact a very large block, some 32 metres long and three storeys in height. It is not



subservient, but a large and bulky perpendicular extrusion to the predominant pattern of development on London Street and markedly more bulky than adjacent extensions at Prince Regent House (No. 108) and Alder House or the present After Dark club. The prevailing pattern of development respects site frontages: sited either along the London Street frontage; as a subservient extension to that frontage; or relates to /fronts St. Giles Close. This development seeks to link all three, creating an overdevelopment which would fail to be successfully assimilated into the area.

- 6.26 The mews style development may be suitable in the correct context and has advantages of providing an intimate scale of development, but it is not suitable to provide a 'mews terrace', along a longitudinal site which has no connections north or south. This is an overdevelopment with an overwhelming sense of crampedness, whether experienced from outside the site or within. This is due to the aim to maximise the number of units on this long, narrow site, allowing no discernible landscaping relief, even.
- 6.27 In terms of a logical urban design expression, it would be unclear exactly how the building would be accessed, having no identifiable 'entrance', within its secluded approaches. This means that in terms of the logical key characteristics of development as set out in Policy CS7 - continuity and enclosure, legibility, etc. - the development fails to connect properly to either streetscape, being apparently hidden in a warren of alleyways. Once the boundary wall is provided, the southern alleyway will offer insufficient room even for residents to comfortably pass each other, particularly if someone has a pushchair, wheeled carrier, has a large bag or is in a wheelchair.
- 6.28 The contribution to the adjacent car park to the south would be one of oppression, through overbearing and poor design and proximity to this space, but with no discernible relationship to it. The CGI views attempt to show greenery in this car park which is somehow allied to the proposal, which is not and there is also no indication that the landowner is willing for the development to meaningfully address this space. There are times when a borrowing of outlook over an adjacent courtyard or street may be acceptable. A third party's car park unconnected to the scheme is not one of them.
- 6.29 Trees are not in abundance in this part of the Conservation Area or St. Giles Close. The Cypress tree to the rear next to the site has recently been poorly and severely pruned, allowing additional views from St Giles Close (and hence greater views of what would be a harmful proposal). A suitable development would contribute to softening the urban environment in the area/the conservation area and the layout offers no opportunity for this, particularly as a completely blank, tall wall is offered to St. Giles Close. This is not ameliorated by the attempt to insert arches into the garden wall.

#### Conclusion on heritage and urban design considerations

- 6.30 The discussion above indicates that more needs to be done in terms of examining the history of the building, the suitability of part demolition/conversion and the design pointers for a suitable development. The existing premises has some architectural/historical association merit and there may well be other interesting

aspects to the building which are not currently revealed. Indeed, the part eastwards is taller and provides a logical building area for development. However, the HIS has too quickly dismissed the historic importance of the existing structure. There is no justification provided in the HIS for failing to also submit an accompanying application for Listed Building Consent.

- 6.31 The design response, as a consequence, is poor and fails to relate to the pattern of development, be it surrounding buildings or spaces or the realistic spacing of development in the site. The reality is that any redevelopment opportunities which may arise from this site alone are going to be extremely limited, given its shape. For reasons of poor relationship to the settings of listed buildings and harm to the conservation area and streetscene, the proposal is contrary to the NPPF's chapters on design and heritage and policies CS3, CS5, CS7, CS33, RC5 and RC14.

iv. Quality of residential accommodation

- 6.32 From within the site and especially in the case of the ground floor dwellings, the development would produce a poor standard of amenity.
- 6.33 The long, narrow site has produced a cramped design which results in the units being accessed from the sides and long, gated alleyways, as if entering a jail complex. This would not be an inviting approach to these dwellings and particularly unpleasant at night. The Police's CPDA (Crime Prevention Design Advisor) also questions the motives of others trying to enter this space, the confusion over bins and the security provisions needed. It would also seem to be generally opening up a route between London Street and St. Giles Close, when none is safe. Again, the design of this external environment appears to be in conflict with the majority of good practice design considerations as set out in Policy CS7.
- 6.34 The feeling of being hemmed in within your cell for the ground floor one-bed flats will be compounded by other residents and visitors walking immediately past both front and rear habitable rooms, allowing no privacy or defensible space at all for these units. As a result, opening the windows in these flats will not be attractive, either from a security or privacy perspective. Footsteps may echo along these alleyways, particularly on the north side, where there are high walls.
- 6.35 The majority of habitable rooms in the development borrow light and outlook over the adjoining sites (the car park to the south and No. 108 to the north). Other rooms just have a poor internal outlook. This is unacceptable in terms of providing a comprehensive design solution. Living rooms to the ground floor flats would look straight into the adjacent car park, with the associated noise, lights, etc. disturbance which would be particularly undesirable at ground floor level and with occupants having no control over for example, large vehicles being parked in the adjacent spaces and fumes from exhaust pipes. The plans indicate a side wall with palisade fence over. Depending on the detailed design and construction of this, it may either create an oppressive boundary, not be solid enough to provide security, or have sufficient width but then further constrict the width to the access alleyway. Whichever it is, the overall experience for the occupants will be poor. The northern side of the site is dominated by walls of at least two metres in height with the tall side wall of Prince Regent House being much taller. This is a high parapet wall which from the finished floor levels of the ground floor units, is about six metres in height, for a length of 16.5 metres, at a tapering width, but between

one and 1.6 metres from the proposed dwellings. This existing structure is a significant site constraint and obstruction to light and outlook to the flats and the visible angle of sky will be extremely limited. The Council's Environmental Health Officer advises that suitable ADF (Average Daylight Factor) levels quoted in the light report for the ground floor rooms are unlikely to be achievable given surrounding obstructions (walls, cars, shrubs, etc.). The BRE guidance on daylight (Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, second edition, 2011, para. 2.1.6) advises that where obstruction angles are greater than 65 degrees, 'it is often impossible to achieve reasonable daylight, even if the whole window wall is glazed'. The sections indicate the ground floor obstruction is around 80 degrees and from first floor windows, circa. 60 degrees. The obstruction caused by Prince Regent House would therefore affect ground floor Flats 3, 5 and 7 severely, meaning that one of the two habitable rooms in these flats would be very dingy. Given the height of this flank parapet wall, first floor Flats 4, 6 and 8 would also have their second bedroom facing out onto the flank wall at the one metre distance and again, according to the sections produced, acceptable views of the sky will not be achieved, nor will there be a suitable outlook. These are not considered to be acceptable dual-aspect dwellings.

- 6.36 The 'landscaped amenity space' at the western end of the site is actually less than 24 square metres in total and the SUDS report indicates that this would be a mostly gravelled area. Sitting out with the bins in a high walled courtyard is likely to be neither comfortable nor pleasant and could well be a heat trap on warm days with smells from waste bins. It would therefore appear to fail most of the purposes of an amenity space as set out in Policy DM10. In the central Reading area, where external amenity spaces are to be provided within developments, they must be high quality and suitable for their intended purpose.
- 6.37 As well as privacy issues front and rear for the ground floor units, adequate natural daylighting may be a further concern. The submitted light report indicates that light levels will be adequate. However, there are various details that need to be noted. The ground floor bedrooms are north-facing with a very restricted outlook, as some one metre from their windows, there is a two metre high blank wall. To the south, large windows are needed to get some light in to the units, however, this will be compromised by the side wall/fence (whatever form this takes) and shadowing from parked vehicles. Flat 9 (ground floor, eastern end) is adjacent to 118-128 London Street and would be particularly dark as it would be right up against the frontal tall building and its 'outlook' would be straight into the landscaped area to the adjacent car park (the occupier of the flat would have no control over this area). This unit may have extremely low levels of natural daylight, despite its living space being south-facing.
- 6.38 The two-storey maisonettes have their bedrooms on the first floor, which does not make for ideal 'stacking', given that the entire one-bed flats are below. However, this may be able to be covered satisfactory under the Building Regulations. Room sizes are considered to be generally suitable, although there are some slight failures with regard to the National minimum technical housing standards (not formally adopted by this Council), however, this is not considered so harmful as to result in a reason for refusal. The mix of unit sizes is appropriate and accords with Policy RC9.

- 6.39 The bin arrangements at the eastern end of the site are also far from ideal, with the present arrangement of the commercial bins at the rear of 110 now being added to residential bins and this area being opened up to the residential approach to the flats from the passageway, contributing to the poor quality approach to the flats. However, the Highway Authority is content that bin collections can partly be undertaken from London Street and partly from St. Giles Close.
- 6.40 No car parking is provided and the Highway Authority is satisfied that none is required in this proposal in this sustainable central Reading location. The DAS describes the development as having 'generous secure cycle parking'. In fact, the area proposed for the bicycle storage area is inadequate in size to accommodate five bikes. Given that there is no other obvious place to accommodate them and there is nowhere else to put the store (unless the hard landscaped amenity space is to be reduced below its current 24 sq.m. and this is a feature of the development that is often repeated in the DAS and the HIS as a particular benefit) the development is substandard in terms of cycle parking. This is more concerning in this car-free development.
- 6.41 The development would therefore provide substandard accommodation in terms of quality and security of approach, security and surveillance, daylight levels to the lower flats, privacy (especially to the ground floor flats), access for all, usable and beneficial amenity space and adequate cycle parking contrary to policies CS7, RC5, RC9, DM4 and CS24.

v. **Impact on adjoining properties**

- 6.42 The proposal is considered to be unacceptable in terms of impacts on the amenities of surrounding residential properties in several respects.
- 6.43 There is a flatted development accessed from St. Giles Close known as Nelson Mews which sits at an angled relationship to the rear car park serving 119-128 London Street and this has residential accommodation over a bridge car access on the first, second and third floors. These flats would be directly overlooked by the westernmost units in the development, where the window to window distance is approximately 13.5 metres. The development proposes openings on the ground, first and second floors. Despite the angled relationship, the distance is considered to be insufficient to maintain a reasonable degree of privacy, even in a dense urban area. This situation is arguably worsened since the Cypress tree in between has been damaged and its crown reduced.
- 6.44 The south-facing balconies on the first and second floor of the development are an attempt to maximise light into these units but some of the units will have an unacceptable angled overlooking relationship with the serviced apartments at 118-128 London Street.
- 6.45 Flat 9 (ground floor) is adjacent 118-128 London Street and would be particularly dark (as described above) but it would also suffer poor privacy levels, having a serviced apartment window at 45 degrees to it at a distance of approximately four metres, potentially allowing overlooking at a close distance.

- 6.46 The poor lateral outlook over adjoining land would appear to stymie development opportunities to the North.
- 6.47 The height and depth of the building would also adversely affect light levels to the rear elevation of 108 London Street, however, this building is believed to be in office use, therefore effects on light levels to this building (or indeed 110 or 114) is not considered to be harmful enough to be of concern. Outlooks north and south from Flat 10 may be less than ideal, as the relationship to surrounding property windows is about 45 degrees at 10 metres distance.
- 6.48 Overall, in the above respects, the development would produce an unneighbourly development in terms of overbearing and overlooking/privacy to existing surrounding residential properties, contrary to policies CS7, RC5, RC9 and DM4.

vi. **S.106 contributions and CIL**

- 6.49 This would be a CIL-liable development and the necessary from has been submitted.

Affordable housing

- 6.50 Affordable housing would be required at a level of 30% in accordance with our Policy DM6 and the Council's SPD: 'Affordable Housing'. For a development of ten units of new build, this equates to three on-site units plus a financial contribution in lieu, or an off-site contribution.
- 6.51 In a one-page statement, the applicant is offering no affordable housing, on the basis that the Council's policies are not in line with National planning policy, which is not to require affordable housing on sites of ten units or less. In support of this, the applicant cites the recent appeal decision (July 2016) in respect of The Pond House pub, Oxford Road (appeal ref. APP/E0345/15/31417) where the appeal was allowed and no affordable housing provision was required by the Inspector.
- 6.52 The Council's position is as follows. West Berkshire District Council and Reading Borough Council applied for a judicial review of the Secretary of State's Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) to Parliament in 2014 on changes to national planning policy. Those changes sought to exempt developments of ten or less dwellings from planning obligations for affordable housing and social infrastructure contributions and to introduce a new measure known as the Vacant Building Credit. The High Court handed down its judgment on the case on 3 July 2015. The High Court found in favour of the challenge by the local authorities and quashed the amendments to the NPPG. The Secretary of State appealed the judgment and the Court of Appeal then quashed the decision of the High Court.
- 6.53 At its meeting of the Strategic Environment Planning and Transport (SEPT) Committee on 13 July 2016, the Council discussed the outcome of the Court of Appeal's decision on its challenge ([http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/5651/Item09-SEPT-C-Report-on-C-of-Appeal-judgement-05-16/pdf/Item09\\_SEPT\\_C\\_Report\\_on\\_C\\_of\\_Appeal\\_judgement\\_05\\_16.pdf](http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/5651/Item09-SEPT-C-Report-on-C-of-Appeal-judgement-05-16/pdf/Item09_SEPT_C_Report_on_C_of_Appeal_judgement_05_16.pdf)).

- 6.54 Having considered its options, the SEPT Committee agreed the following as the basis for determining planning applications where Policy DM6 of the SDPD is relevant:

*To implement Policy DM6 as currently adopted in the SDPD but excluding proposals that solely involve the conversion of an existing property, where the conversion involves the provision of 10 or less dwelling units (i.e. not HMOs), or the replacement of dwellings by the same number of replacement dwellings where there is no net increase.*

- 6.55 The applicant's affordable housing statement notes the Council's decision to apply its policy, but maintains that National policy should take precedence and claims that appeal decisions have not supported the Council's approach and therefore no viability assessment is supplied. Officers advise that its policy position is considered to be sound; cases such as The Pond House can and will be considered on their individual circumstances/viability merits and that the applicant's stance is in conflict with the Council's adopted policy. Accordingly, the application should be refused as being contrary to Policy DM6 of the SDPD (2012, 2015) and the Affordable Housing SPD.

#### Employment and skills

- 6.56 In accordance with adopted Policy CS13, an Employment and Skills Plan (EMP) would be required for the construction phase. Whilst the supporting documents cite the number of construction jobs which would be created, there is no commitment to the policy requirement, therefore there also needs to be a reason for refusal related to failure to provide an EMP or a contribution in lieu, contrary to Policy CS13 and the Employment Skills and Training SPD.

#### Other matters

##### Sustainability

- 6.57 Policies CS1, DM1 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD are relevant policy considerations. The application has been submitted with a sustainable construction and energy statement. This appears to officers to be lacking in various respects, but detailed advice from the Council's Sustainability Team is required and full commentary will be provided in the Update Report.

##### Sustainable drainage

- 6.58 A sustainable drainage strategy report has been submitted. The site is presently hard surfaced and otherwise covered by a predominantly flat-roofed building. There is currently no permeability directly into the ground and therefore no water flow retention. This will be improved in the development by ensuring that the open areas are permeable, bringing about an improvement in run-off rates. This is acceptable and accords with Policy CS35 and this National requirement to improve water attenuation rates.

### Ecology

- 6.59 The Council's Ecologist has reviewed the submitted daylight bat survey and is content that there is no risk to bats and accordingly, there is no conflict with Policy CS36.

### Equalities Act

- 6.60 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This is considered by officers to be an ill-conceived redevelopment proposal. It stems from a lack of recognition of the site's historic value and therefore effects on historic assets of value are given inadequate consideration. The shape of the site and the design approach has produced an overdevelopment. As a result, harm will be caused to the settings of the Listed Buildings, surrounding properties and amenities, views into and within the Conservation Area will not be preserved and within the site and the accommodation provided would be very poor. Policy requirements for affordable housing and construction skills development are not proposed to be met.
- 7.2 The concerns of objectors for the loss of the club are noted, but this is not considered to be a material consideration to this planning assessment. Whilst it is noted that the units would provide dwellings within the Borough as supported by Policy CS14 and the NPPF Section 6, this does not outweigh the other concerns in this report.
- 7.3 The officer recommendation is therefore to **refuse** planning permission.

**Case officer:** Richard Eatough

### Plans:

- 2956/201 Location plan
- 2956/202 Proposed site plan
- 2956/203 Existing site plan and ground floor plan
- 2956/204 Existing elevations

2956/205/C Proposed plans and sections

2956/206/C Proposed elevations

2956/207/B Proposed elevations

APPENDIX 1 CGI view of the proposal and existing view along northern alleyway








APPENDIX 2 Application plans

THE CLIENT IS ADVISED THAT THIS IS AN APPROXIMATE  
RENDERING OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT. IT IS NOT A CONTRACT DOCUMENT.



W&A GRAHAM ASSOCIATES  
ARCHITECTS

**MATERIALS**


ALL:  
 Feet - Brick  
 Stone cladding - White Stone  
 Cladding and Roofs - Brick

DETAILS 1 - 4:  
 Windows - Dark Wood  
 Doors - Dark Wood  
 Siding - White Stone

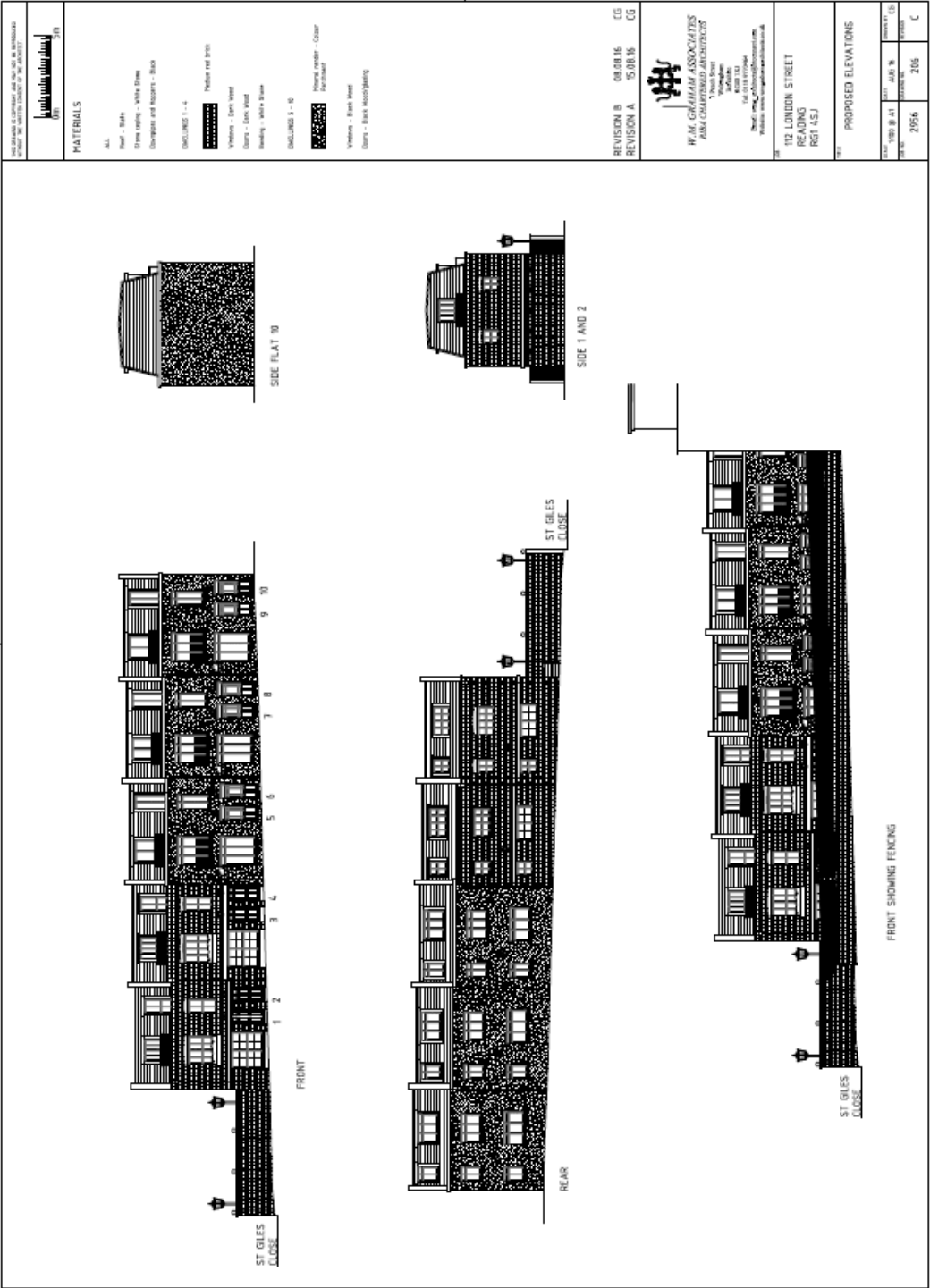
DETAILS 5 - 8:  
 Windows - Dark Wood  
 Doors - Black Accoya/Kapok

DETAILS 9 - 10:  
 Windows - Dark Wood  
 Doors - Black Accoya/Kapok

REVISION B 08.08.16 CG  
 REVISION A 15.08.16 CG



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PROPOSED ELEVATIONS

DATE: 08.08.16	BY: A.M.	NO. OF SHEETS: 10
DATE: 15.08.16	BY: C.G.	NO. OF SHEETS: 10
DATE: 20.08.16	BY: C.G.	NO. OF SHEETS: 10
DATE: 20.08.16	BY: C.G.	NO. OF SHEETS: 10
DATE: 20.08.16	BY: C.G.	NO. OF SHEETS: 10
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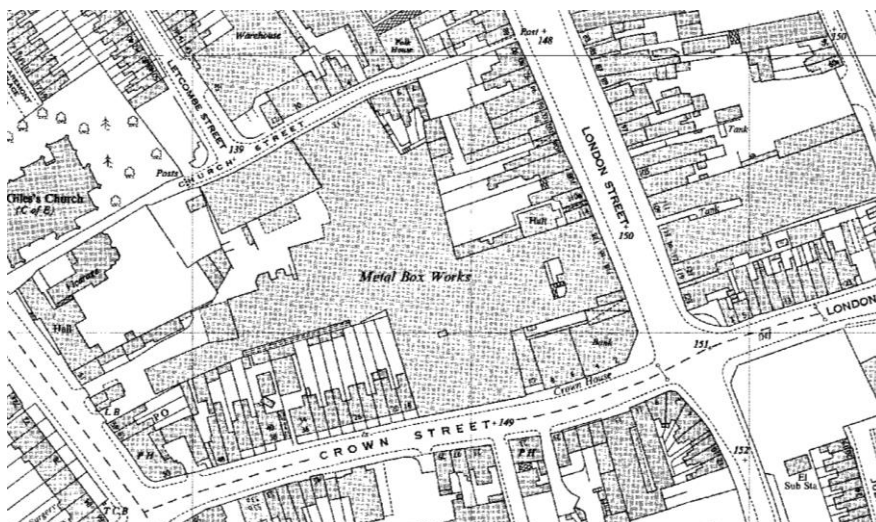
APPENDIX 3 View of the Tin Works in 1926, during visit by the Prince of Wales (Reading Library collection), showing characteristic 'flattened arches' in the side walls.



APPENDIX4 Listing description:

LONDON STREET 1. 5128 (West Side) Nos 110 and 114 SU 7172 NE 4/187 II 2. Circa 1790. 3 storeys. Stucco fronted with stucco moulded cornice. Old tile roof. Glazing bar sash windows, 5 on upper floors. Only one (of the 2 previously mentioned) contemporary shopfronts retracts on ground floor plus the 3 doorways in centre with cast-iron balcony (diagonal pattern with cast lead rosettes) supported on cut brackets (wood) extending right across. On each side of No 114's shop and dividing the doorways are slender reeded wooden Corinthian engaged columns. Centre door, which has rectangular fanlight with design of ovals, is passage entrance leading to Oddfellows' flail.

APPENDIX 5 O.S. plan from 1960, showing extent of the Metal Box Works coming up against the application site. Note that the extent of the hall appears to be limited to the two-storey element on site and that the western extent of the site is narrower. The rear of 108 London Street appears to include part of the area which is now part of the night club.



## UPDATE REPORT:

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES  
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7 December 2016

ITEM NO. 13

**Ward:** Katesgrove  
**App No.:** 161935  
**Address:** After Dark Nite Club, 112 London Street, Reading  
**Proposal:** Demolition of existing night club. Erection of 10 new residential Class C3 apartments (5 x 1 bed and 5 x 2 bed) with courtyard garden, cycle and bin storage.

### RECOMMENDATION (AMENDED):

Reason for refusal 1: delete.

Reason for refusal 2: remove word 'principal' from line 3.

## 1. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 **Historic England (HE)** has responded to their consultation. Their advice is that the listing description refers to 110 *and* 114 not 110 *to* 114. Whilst mention is made of a passage to the Oddfellows Hall that simply states that there is a passage, it does not imply that the hall is included in the listing. No. 112 is a separate building with a separate curtilage so in HE's view it should not be viewed as part of 110 and 114. Whatever the status of the building, there is still the impact of the proposals on the setting of the adjacent listed building and the conservation area to consider.
- 1.2 Officers have considered this response and discussed the issue with the Council's Conservation Consultant, who advises that officers should assess the proposal on the impacts of the setting of the Listed Building and the Conservation Area alone. Although the HE response is only referring to what is set out in the description rather than being the result of an in-depth investigation, HE's advice on how it interprets its own listing descriptions should be given some weight.
- 1.3 On the basis of the above, officers consider that whilst this is not a definitive response from Historic England, on balance, it is recommended that the statements relating to this issue put forward in the main Agenda report (paragraphs 6.9 - 6.15) and in the first reason for refusal regarding the identification of the Historic Asset should not be pursued and accordingly, the first reason for refusal should be removed. However, there are still considered to be significant concerns in terms of the impact on the settings of Listed Buildings, the Conservation Area and the streetscene of St. Giles Close and therefore reason for refusal 2 should be retained, but with a slight adjustment to acknowledge that 110 and 114 (alone) are the Listed Buildings and not the club building itself. This approach does not offer any protection to the remnant of the tin works wall, however.

## 2. CONSULTATIONS

- 2.1 The Council's **Sustainability Team** has provided commentary on the applicant's sustainable construction and energy statement. The application is technically just caught by the requirements for higher energy efficiency levels, being a Major application (ten dwellings or more). However, it is advised that since the withdrawal of the Code for Sustainable Homes in 2015, there is only a nominal requirement that could theoretically be asked for over and above the requirements of the Building Regulations.
- 2.2 The statement is considered to be quite basic, dismissing energy generation opportunities and confirming a low-energy and high insulation approach. It appears that this will conform with the insulation requirements of the Building Regulations, but not exceed them.
- 2.3 Officers have considered this concern and also considered whether this matter could be dealt with by condition. In conclusion, it is advised that given the uprated energy policy requirement is in this case very slight compared with what is already required under the Regulations, it would not be appropriate to attach a further reason for refusal or attempt to seek a condition which went beyond the Building Regulations.
- 2.4 In this instance and on balance, officers advise that in sustainability/energy terms, the submitted information is substandard, but the application does not raise conflict with policies CS1, DM1, DM2 or the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.
- 2.5 The report from the **Reading Design Review Panel (DRP)** has been received today. The DRP's points are summarised as follows:
- The Panel was disappointed that the proposal was not adequately presented in relation to its context, the extent of demolition/retention and the ease of access and amenity areas.
  - The information does not clearly support the viability of this as a stand-alone development site, with windows opening onto the adjacent car park (under separate ownership) and viability of access and ease of movement are problematic.
  - Access is restricted by the physical parameters of the Listed Buildings and a safe, secure route to the entrance, bicycle access and boundary treatment are of concern. The Panel suggests that the principles of, 'Secured By Design' are considered.
  - The reasons for choosing this 'clip art style', not to address the heritage or site context or indeed not to express the flats externally, etc. in the design, layout and elevational treatment, are not evident.
  - The DAS should have provided a clearer narrative for the design evolution.
  - There is no supporting evidence for the orientation of the flats. The flats overlook boundaries and land not in the applicant's ownership. The most open street frontage and amenity area [ie. to St. Giles Close] is blocked by a cycle store.
  - Concerned that some of the flats fall below the National minimum space standards guidance. The Panel was unconvinced by the applicant's argument that the quantum of units is necessary in viability terms, as no affordable housing is proposed, finance is at its cheapest in years and property prices are at their highest.

- There are potential privacy, internal layout and access issues which should be resolved, either by reorienting the dwellings or flipping them so that the upper floors contain studio flats with external amenity/roof access and the lower floors use top lighting, to increase natural ventilation and daylighting too. The latter would help to overcome the issue of facing out directly onto the boundary wall and enable the ground floor to use the ‘rear corridor’ [ie. the northern alleyway].

2.6 **Councillor Rodda** objects to the application and believes that this application is not appropriate for this site. He would like the applicant to rethink their approach and his concerns are as follows:

2.7 “The site may be a listed building and is in a conservation area; its use as a dance hall and then night club is longstanding and part of the area. These points need to be considered carefully and I hope this context will help inform discussion. The After Dark Club is a much loved and popular club which is part of Reading’s heritage. I believe that the nature of the club and the campaign to save it, which has considerable support across the Reading area, deserves to be recognised.

2.8 I would have thought these fundamental points would need to be taken into account first and would encourage planners and the committee to consider this very carefully. These points alone may well be grounds for turning the application down.

2.9 If development is still being considered despite these points I would like to add the following:

2.10 The applicant has not considered the need for social housing. Some applicants make generous offers of support which can have real value at a time when many local people are struggling to find a place to live.

2.11 The overall design and quality of the application does not live up to the standard I would hope for, for example, the housing proposed may not have access to a great deal of light.

2.12 I am not sure if more needs to be done to improve parking in the area as part of the application. The number of spaces proposed could be higher and I would have liked to have seen more spaces being proposed to help provide spaces for nearby residents, through section 106 or other agreements, if this is possible.

2.13 I also think the application could have included suggestions for making other improvements to the local environment, such as supporting play areas, recreation space and/or tree planting or other measures to improve the area for residents.

2.14 In addition, I would ask the planning department and the Committee to consider any additional points raised by residents and campaigners”.

### **3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION: FURTHER OBJECTIONS**

3.1 Three further objections have been received since the publication of the main Agenda report, raising two additional planning issues. One is a concern for the effect on the fabric of the listed buildings during construction. This is considered

to be planning consideration, but a Construction Method Statement could be adjusted to deal with these effects and any direct damage occurring would be a Civil matter between the individual landowners. The second issue is that the objector does not consider that the SUDS report has correctly identified the level of flows into the drainage system, as the club is only used on club nights, however, this is a misunderstanding. The SUDS system is a National requirement to reduce/attenuate stormwater rainfall flows, not foul sewage.

- 3.2 An objector does not consider that the applicant's suggested name of 'Oddfellows Court' is appropriate, but you are advised that this is not a material planning consideration.

#### **4. PETITION**

- 4.1 Officers are aware of a petition on the Change.org website with some 3227 signatures, under the heading, 'Save the After Dark club'. Whilst this report has not (at the time of writing) been formally presented to the Council, officers have been able to access and review the comments made. The vast majority of the comments are concerned for the cultural value of the After Dark club, with a number also mentioning economic benefit for the local area.
- 4.2 Officers advise that the petition should be noted by the Committee but it does not appear that it raises any further planning-related objections which have not already been covered in this report or the report on the main Agenda. Members are reminded that despite the strength of public feeling, the loss of the nightclub use, or this particular nightclub operator, are not material planning considerations in the assessment of this planning application.

#### **5. AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE**

- 5.1 From paragraph 6.50 of the main Agenda report, officers set out why the application is unacceptable for failing to supply affordable housing. The applicant has used the argument of the allowed appeal on the Pond House pub on Oxford Road as justification that the Council's application of the affordable housing policy is contrary to National planning policy.
- 5.2 For Members' information, since the publication of the main report, officers have received notification of another planning appeal decision, at 17 St. Barnabas Road. In that appeal, the Council produced detailed background information to demonstrate to the Inspector that the Borough has an affordability issue and that affordable housing is required, as an exception to the National requirement that developments of less than ten units or less are excluded from affordable housing. In that case, the Inspector found the Council's evidence compelling and dismissed the appeal. This is considered to support the Council's case for affordable housing on sites to which Policy DM6 applies, such as the After Dark site.

#### **6. CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS**



6.1 Members are asked to note the following errors in the main Agenda report:

- Reason for refusal 6: should say ESP for Employment and Skills Plan, not EMP.
- Paragraph 5.10: the date of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal is June 2006.
- Paragraph 6.25 refers to Prince Regent House (to the rear of No. 108 London Street) as an extension, but this in fact appears to be a free-standing building.

6.2 Members are also advised that on 24 November (one day before the Agenda deadline), the applicant attempted to submit a set of amended plans, a revised DAS and a revised Heritage Impact Statement (HIS), in order to pre-empt the formal comments of the Design Review Panel. Officers advise that this material was submitted too late in the consideration process and the applicant was aware that the application was being considered on the basis of the original plans and was advised to withdraw. The applicant has declined to withdraw the application, therefore the officer recommendation remains to refuse planning permission for the reasons set out in the main report as adjusted by this update report.

**Case Officer:** Richard Eatough



# TILEHURST



COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 13

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 25 April 2018

Ward: Tilehurst

App No.: 180094

App Type: Full

Address: Equity House, 4-6 School Road, Reading

Proposal: Change of use from B1 (offices) to D1 (non-residential institution) for use as a community facility offering space for worship, training, education and meetings with associated works. Part retrospective.

Applicant: Zainabiya Reading Centre

Date valid: 22/1/2018

Minor Application: 8 week target decision date: 19/3/2018 - extension to 30 April 2018 agreed.

Planning Guarantee 26 week date:

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant part retrospective planning permission.

Conditions to include:

Plans

To be carried out and retained in accordance with approved plans.

Hours of use

The premises as hereby approved shall not be used by members of the public outside the hours of 8am to 10:30pm on Mondays to Saturdays and 10am to 10:00pm on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

No amplified music

No amplified music shall be played at the premises at any time.

Air condition units

Within 4 weeks of the date of this permission the extract/ventilation systems shall have been installed in accordance with the approved plans and specifications and thereafter the extract/ventilation systems shall be permanently retained and maintained in accordance with the approved specifications.

Restriction on use - specified use

Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, the premises shall be used as a community facility offering space for a combination of worship, training, education and meetings activities for a maximum of 50 people only and for no other purpose (including a Mosque or any other purpose in the same Use Class of the Schedule to the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification.

Vehicle parking - plans to be approved

Within 4 weeks of the date of this planning permission:

The parking layout and boundary treatment as shown on the approved drawing, and signage to make clear that the parking spaces are for permit holders only, shall be provided and ready for use. Thereafter the parking bays and turning areas shall be kept free of obstruction and available for use at all times by car park permit holders only.

#### Car park management plan

The approved car park management plan, which includes a mechanism for issuing 6 parking permits only (1 spare for guests, deliveries, etc), and details of how visitors will be directed to make use of nearby public car parks, public transport and other forms of transport and which shall be easily available for view on the organisation's website and in their published literature shall be adhered to at all times while the approved use is in operation.

#### Bicycle parking - plans to be approved

Within 4 weeks of the date of this planning permission:

- (a) The bicycle parking shall be provided as shown on the approved plan.
- (b) Thereafter the bicycle parking facility shall be kept free of obstruction and available for the approved use at all times.

#### Bin storage

Within 4 weeks of the date of this planning permission the approved bin storage facilities shall be provided and the bin storage facility shall be retained thereafter for use by occupiers of the building at all times.

#### Travel Plan

Within 4 weeks of the date of this planning permission a Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The plan shall include a full analysis of the existing / proposed modal split for congregation/community members, reasons for the modal choice and detailed proposals for future transport provision with the aim of securing a reduction in car trips generated to and from the site and a consequent reduction of pressure on limited car parking spaces.

#### Obscure glazing at first floor

All windows at first floor level shall always be retained as *non-opening and with obscure glass* on parts below 1.7m as a minimum when measured from the floor level of the first floor.

#### CMS

Construction method statement required within 2 weeks of the date of this planning permission to manage the construction phase of the extension and works to the car park and boundary.

#### INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE

1. Positive and Proactive working
2. Adherence to conditions

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is a 178 sq.m two storey office building. A car parking area for about 10 vehicles lies to the front and side of the building.
- 1.2 As can be seen from the plan below it lies behind 8-10 School Road which is a building with 2 shops on the ground floor (newsagent and post office) and 4 flats above, converted recently following a change from office to residential prior approval application. Private parking for customers of the shops lies in the front forecourt while parking spaces for the residents lie at the rear of this building.
- 1.3 Members were advised to visit the site (unaccompanied but with a briefing note) so that they could see the site and local area before considering this report.



Site Plan (not to scale)

## 2.0 PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The application seeks retrospective planning permission to change the use of the existing building to provide community offices, meeting areas and prayer rooms. A small addition (1 sq.m) to provide an alcove on the ground floor is also proposed. The description of the proposed development has been amended to more accurately reflect the proposed use.
- 2.2 The supporting information explains that the applicants are Zainabiya Welfare Foundation, which is a registered charity since 2013. The Zainabiya Welfare Foundation is the only organization that represents the Shia sect of the Muslim community in the Reading Borough and surroundings. The aim of the foundation is to use the building for worship, social, educational and welfare uses. They have now confirmed that their main times of use would be:
- Thursday- 7.30pm -1030pm
  - Friday- 12noon -2pm
  - Sunday- 10.30am - 1pm
- Additional opening times will be added on main Islamic festive dates which will also be between the hours of 7-30pm - 10-30pm outside of office hours. There will be an average of 50 attendees & on Friday lunchtime an average of 15 attendees.
- 2.3 The intended use of the ground floor of the premises includes education and training for employment purposes. A leaflet produced by the applicant also describes bi-monthly careers training, a monthly GP walk in surgery and a weekly foodbank. It is expected that 3 volunteer admin staff will be employed.
- 2.4 The group had been meeting at premises on Bennet Road. However that use was unauthorised and as it was in a core employment area they were advised that they would not be granted planning permission to stay there.

## 3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

87/TP/45 & 87/TP/1190 - 2 Storey office block and parking. Allowed on appeal 1988.  
130853 Office Prior Approval to convert offices to 4no 2 bed flats. Approved Aug 2013

## 4.0 CONSULTATIONS

### (i) Statutory Consultation

None.

## (ii) Non Statutory Consultation

RBC Transport - updated following revised site plan:

This application is for a change of use of 4-6 School Road from Use Class B1 use to D1 place of worship. The site is located to the rear of the School Road Post Office and newsagent in the centre of Tilehurst. The Recreation Road public car park is within a short walk of the site which provides 96 pay and display car parking spaces (charges payable between Monday to Saturday, 10:00 - 15:00).

The applicant, Zainabiya Welfare Foundation, has confirmed that the proposed community services are every Thursday 7:30-10:30 PM, Friday 12-2 PM and Sunday 10:30 AM- 1 PM. Additional opening times will be added on main Islamic festive dates which will also be between the hours of 7:30- 10:30 PM outside of office hours. Aside from Friday lunchtime (12-2 PM), the Centre is normally closed for community use during the day time with some occasional office work on an ad hoc basis. The planning statement states that the evening and weekend services have an average of 50 attendees and the Friday lunchtime period has an average of 15 attendees.

In accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the proposed D1 use (Places of Worship) require a parking provision of 1 space per 8 fixed seats and/or 1 space per 16sqm of open hall. Based on the size of the building, the development would require a total parking provision of 11 parking spaces to meet the Council's adopted Parking Standards.

Vehicular access to the site is shared with the Post Office and newsagent which front onto School Road. The parking spaces associated with the Post Office are heavily used which results in vehicles parking on the access road and congestion occurring at the point of entry during busy times.

The application as amended includes the provision of 7 car parking spaces; following the reduction in parking the layout is now improved with all spaces to standard. However as previously requested a tracking diagram must be submitted to accompany this revised layout to ensure vehicles can enter and exit in forward gear. A revised drawing is therefore required. *Officer note - this is being provided and will be included in an update report.*

It is evident from the congregation size that the demand for parking will outstrip the availability of on-site parking. The applicant has stated that a parking marshall will be available, however, the planning statement does not provide enough information to address how the parking spaces will be managed. I am concerned that cars will initially try and park within one of the on-site parking spaces and then be turned away once all the spaces are full. This is likely to result in increased levels of congestion and conflicting turning movement close to the access. Given that the C402 School Road is a classified road and a main bus route through Tilehurst, the safety and efficiency of the classified road network must not be compromised. It should also be noted that School Road forms part of the Red Route 'no stopping' corridor which will be implemented along the bus route number 17. Therefore, a car park management plan must be submitted to ensure appropriate measures are put in place to prevent vehicles travelling directly to the site without a secured parking space. Appropriate measures may include a permit system to ensure that only permit holders/ disabled drivers access the site. A further statement has been provided on the car park arrangements, which mentions a permit scheme but this is not in sufficient detail and therefore a full Car Park Management Plan is still required. I would however be happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

The applicant has advised that all community members are requested to park their vehicles in the public car park located at Recreation Road (directions are provided on the



applicant's website). It should be noted that the majority of services (aside from the Friday lunchtime service) will be outside of typical weekday office hours, therefore, the evening and weekend services will not coincide with the peak opening hours of the local shops in the area when there is the highest demand for public car parking spaces. In the absence of any parking surveys, site visits have been undertaken on 16 March 2018 between 12-2pm to establish the current take up of spaces within the public car park and the limited waiting bays on Armour Road. During the site visit, the Recreation Road public car park had a minimum of 54 spaces available at all times and Armour Road had a minimum of 11 spaces available at all times. Therefore, there is ample capacity within the public car park to accommodate an increased demand for parking. It should be noted that a maximum of 8 vehicles were observed parked within the site during the observation period.

The place of worship is required to produce a Travel Plan to initiate modal shift away from the private car and towards more sustainable modes. A Travel Plan has been submitted which highlights details of all travel modes and how these will be distributed to visitors of the proposed building. This does not however include an assessment of how people currently travel to the site, does not include measures to promote alternative modes including car sharing amongst its congregation and does not provide incentives to encourage visitors to travel by foot, cycle and public transport where it is reasonable and practicable to do so. I am therefore happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

In line with promotion of sustainable modes, the development must make provision for secure cycle parking within site. In accordance within the adopted Parking Standards, 1 space per 50sqm should be provided with a covered shelter or store. This would require the provision of 4 spaces with the applicant proposing a provision of 6, this provision would not be able to be accommodated within the store but the required provision of 4 spaces would be. I am therefore happy that the cycle store is acceptable in principle. This would however require an amended plan which details what type of cycle storage is proposed and how access would be gained to the store. I would be happy for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.

Bin storage has been illustrated and deemed acceptable.

Please ask the applicants agent to submit suitable amended plans / information to address the above before determining the application.

RBC Environmental Health:  
No objection.

(iii) Public/local consultation and comments received

Letters were sent to:

School Road: flats and post office at 8-10; shop at 10a; 1-8 Appleshaw Court & Orchard Court, ASDA garage; Car Contacts; 17, 19 & 21.

Armour Road: 1-9 (odds);

Victoria Road: 3 & 3a

There has been well organised opposition to the proposal. A leaflet with "information" about an "Application for a mosque" has been widely distributed inviting residents to complete with their comments to send in to the Planning Section and a copy is appended to this report. There have been 291 individual comments submitted and a petition with 451 names has been received. With so many comments received (altogether there are about 740 objections including the petition) it is not possible in this report to record them individually. Members should note that there were multiple objections from some objectors. Also some objections received were very brief raising no issues other than saying "no" and some objectors provided insufficient contact details so these are not valid

representations. The following is a summary of the comments received, which mainly relate to five main themes:

#### Character of the area

- Tilehurst village is not the appropriate location for the proposed use and it would harm the village character of the area.
- Too big for Tilehurst Village Character of the closely built area will be harmed due to parking, noise and disruption

#### Congestion and parking

- parking along this road is already an issue
- Parking is impossible for the post office during the day time
- The area proposed is right on a traffic junction and could cause big traffic problems.
- Traffic in the village is horrendous at different times. There is already a Methodist church, a post office, nursery in Recreation Road, busy garage and pub nearby. Not a suitable place for a mosque too.
- There is not enough parking.
- This is a busy part of School Road with the post office at the front and access to site lying opposite a bus stop. With traffic entering and leaving the site combined with existing traffic congestion will get worse. There are not enough parking spaces on site.
- Just no room for all those cars and traffic

#### Disturbance to local people

- through late night use, noise and activity.
- Impact on local businesses and possible loss of shops and post office.
- Noise and disturbance for residents will be distressing and compromise their lives.

#### Not needed

- The area does not need more mosques.
- There is already a large mosque on Oxford Road. (*Officer - Many made this point*)
- The applicant comes from Lower Earley so they should find somewhere closer to them than Tilehurst.
- We don't need it, we don't want it.

#### Lack of integrity

- The use has started without getting the proper permission
- How can we be sure that conditions will be complied with
- They are already on site without planning permission so I feel that they do not respect the system.

There have been 3 communications in support welcoming the community facility:

- The majority of objections have been either ill-informed or racist
- Adequate parking arrangements have been made
- The Oxford Road mosque caters for a different branch of Islam so this is not a duplication
- The organisation behind it are very community minded providing a needed food-bank
- It is a reasonable use of an underused building
- RBC has a policy of inclusion and this should be applied here

Also a further three have raised concerns about how the comments have been submitted but not providing any view on the planning proposal itself.

## 5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 5.2 The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Guidance  
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Document, 2008.  
Policy CS11 (Use of Employment Land for Alternative Uses)  
Policy CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)  
Policy CS31 (Additional and Existing Community Facilities)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012)  
Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)  
Policy DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents  
'Revised Parking Standards and Design' (2011)

## 6.0 APPRAISAL

### Main considerations

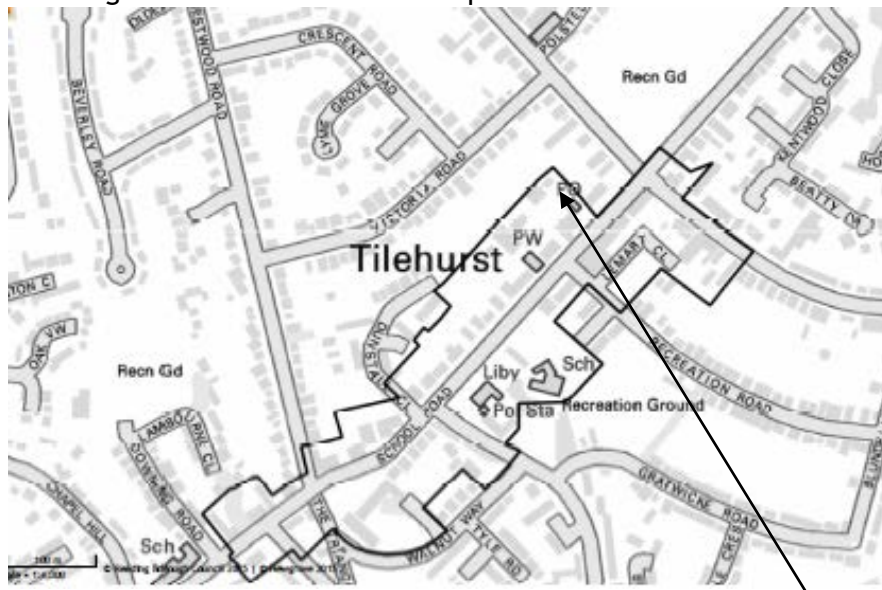
#### (i) Principle of development

- 6.1 This part retrospective planning application is seeking approval to convert the existing office building to a community facility to serve the needs of a religious group. The use apparently began before the application was submitted but the proposed physical change to the building and external layout has not been carried out. Policy CS11 defends employment land in core employment areas but accepts elsewhere that the need for housing or community facilities might outweigh retaining employment uses in some cases. Policy CS31 encourages new community facilities and expects them to be located where there is a choice of means of travel (including walking and cycling), and in existing centres where possible. Policy DM4 recognises that in a closely built up area like Reading there will be tensions between different types of development and seeks ways to manage these to protect local living environments.
- 6.2 Officers consider that there is no evidence of need for the office use in this location and the case that has been made to use it for a community facility complies with the requirements of Policy CS11. The principle of the proposed change of use is therefore acceptable. The rest of this report considers if the proposal complies with the other policies relating to new community facilities, parking and traffic and protecting residential amenity. In so doing it responds to the main grounds of objection from the public.

#### (ii) New Community Use

- 6.3 The application site lies in the identified district centre of Tilehurst Triangle. As noted by many objectors, the site is close to public transport routes. The stop for

the 17 and 28 buses lies opposite the site and a relatively short walk away is Tilehurst Triangle where there are bus stops for the 33 and 15 buses.



Location of application site within the Tilehurst Triangle District Centre

- 6.4 There are a number of shops and services close by and a large public car-park. There can be no doubt that the location meets the basic requirements of Policy CS1 by being in an existing centre where there is a choice of modes of transport, other facilities nearby so shared trips could be carried out and close to residential properties so potential users could walk to the facility.
- 6.5 The proposal is to convert this small building (178 sq.m over two floors) to a community use with the expectation that an average of 50 persons might attend events but typical attendance would be nearer to 15 - 20 people. Many of the objections received have reacted to the pro-forma objection leaflet by assuming that the proposal is to redevelop the site for a mosque (with dome and minaret) with 24 hour access for the public. Setting aside space for toilets, staircase, lobby and office/store the amount of space for public meetings is limited.
- 6.6 It is unfortunate that the applicant commenced using the building in advance of having this planning application considered. However, it did allow them to review how they would use the building based on this experience. The proposed core times are:
- Thursday- 7.30pm -1030pm
  - Friday- 12noon -2pm
  - Sunday- 10.30am - 1pm
- They hope to invite speakers and to arrange other events on main Islamic festive dates but these will also be between the hours of 7-30pm - 10-30pm or during the day time. At other times (i.e. normal office hours) the group hope to run sessions providing career, medical or finance advice and meetings for women and children. Other groups might also use the premises for meetings.
- 6.7 The number of people attending at any one time, the way the building is used and the times of use can all be controlled with planning conditions in the interests of protecting local amenities.
- 6.8 Officers have considered this application on the basis of the information provided by the applicant, having visited the site and the surrounding area. In the terms of Policy CS31 there are no grounds to oppose the community use as proposed on this site.

(iii) Character of the area

- 6.9 Many of the objectors referred to the character of Tilehurst being a small village where a mosque or an Islamic centre would be out of keeping or would introduce a use that would undermine the existing character of the area. Officers have no doubt that these concerns are sincerely expressed and it is clear that many commenting see Tilehurst as a village. However, in making the observation that as this is a busy part of the village with many facilities close by the new use will make it even busier they also inadvertently make the case that this is precisely where a community use should go - where other public and community facilities are. Concerns about the character of the area would be more valid were the proposed site in a wholly residential area.
- 6.10 Officers consider that the proposed change of use as described by the applicant and the minor physical alterations to the building will not have a physical impact on the character of the area. However, as other uses that would fall within a D1 use could have different impacts on the area officers advise that it would be reasonable and necessary to impose a restriction to prevent the building being used for anything other than that proposed.

(iv) Congestion and Parking

- 6.11 The transport officer comments are shown above. Following advice on the accessibility of the existing spaces an amended plan showing 7 spaces, plus cycle and bin storage has been provided with information on how the car park would be managed, by using permits allocated to those working at the site or with mobility problems. The principle of what is being proposed is accepted but more detail on how this would work in practice is needed to avoid visitors from attempting to park on site if they do not have a permit to do so. The applicant has responded to confirm that parking permits would be allocated with only 6 issued (one reserved for special guests, delivery, catering etc).
- 6.12 The transport officers confirm that School Road is a classified road and a main bus route through Tilehurst and that the safety and efficiency of the classified road network must not be compromised. It is acknowledged that this part of School Road can become very congested when a combination of factors occur (bus stop occupied, vehicles trying to access or leave the post office car park, vehicles trying to access or leave the petrol station, traffic queuing back from the traffic lights) but this is an existing situation and the existing office use when fully occupied would generate traffic and car parking needs. There are also other occasions at off peak times when there are no obstructions on the street. Given the indicated main times of use for the new community facility Officers consider that with an acceptable Car Park Management Plan and conditions to control the future use of the centre the parking and congestion concerns can be managed in accordance with Policy DM12.

(v) Disturbance to local people

- 6.13 The building lies about 26 metres west of the nearest residential properties above 8-10 School Road and in neighbouring Appleshaw Court. Properties in Victoria Road lie about 40 metres to the west and properties in Armour Road lie about 30 metres away to the north. The first floor windows of the application property are already fitted with obscure glazing (a conditional requirement when the office building was

allowed on appeal) and an air conditioning unit has been installed on the south elevation of the building where it faces the car dealership next door.

- 6.14 The proposed use has led to some public concern about noise and other disturbance for local residents. While the proposed use is claimed to be low key by the applicant there may be times, such as on “festive days”, when more activity may take place at the site. However, the applicant has confirmed that there will be no amplified music or singing and is content to have a condition to enforce that this is adhered to.
- 6.15 The applicant has confirmed that the recommended condition to limit the hours of use to 8am to 10:30pm on Mondays to Saturdays and 10am to 10:00pm on Sundays or Bank Holidays would be acceptable to them as this would cover their core activity times. Officers advise that these proposed hours are reasonable for this location and can be enforced with a planning condition.
- 6.16 Nearby residents will notice additional activity at the property associated with the new use but this needs to be seen in the context of the already busy area and the existing office, which might be expected to accommodate 17 people on a current typical ratio of 1 employee to 10 sq.m. Officers consider that with the measures proposed to limit parking on site to visitors with parking permits only and the proposed hours of use the disturbance caused to neighbours would be minimal. Therefore the proposal is in accordance with Policy DM4 of the SDPD.

(vi) Need for the facility & Equalities Act 2010

- 6.17 It is relevant at this point to refer to the Equalities Act 2010. The Public sector equality duty came in to force in April 2011 (s.149 of the Equality Act 2010) and public authorities are now required, in carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The key equalities protected characteristics identified by the Act include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

- 6.18 In opposing the proposal a large proportion have claimed (perhaps based on the opinions expressed in the prepared objection leaflet) that there are mosques elsewhere in Reading, especially the one on Oxford Road, and therefore there is no need for a new one in Tilehurst. This argument however is similar to expecting members of the Baptist, Methodist, CofE and Roman Catholic congregations to all share one church building.
- 6.19 Section 149, in respect of religion or belief, requires that decisions acknowledge the religious needs and freedoms of users of a facility. In this case the proposed use is to provide a meeting space for the community of Shia Muslims living in the

Reading area. The applicant has made a case for wanting their own facility and why the existing building meets their needs. The applicant has sought to engage with the local community through holding a public meeting and has confirmed that the building will be open for use by all members of the community seeking help or advice or to use the food-bank.

- 6.20 Officers advise that the applicant has submitted a valid planning application and its acceptability in planning terms depends on how the proposed use complies with relevant development plan policies rather than whether there is a need for it or not. The requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 offers support to the case that the proposal will allow the requirements of a religious group to be met.

(vii) Process

- 6.21 The applicant submitted the planning application on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The applicant has been asked to respond to criticism that they started using the building without consideration of the planning process. Their response is:

*We have been using the centre since 14th December. As you may remember we had closed our Bennet Road centre from 15th October as agreed with council. To help with planning going forward we had also hired a planning agent Chris Keen from Keen Partnership as we are not very experienced with this and don't understand that full planning process.*

*Any building we had potential to look at we had run past council planning department and this process has been going for the last 12 months. There were not enough options for us that would meet our requirements and councils requirements.*

*The initial feedback from council planning (via Chris Keen) for School Road building had been positive and hence we made an offer for this.*

*We were among the two potential buyers for the building, the sale completion date was not set at the outset and while we were engaged in fund collection for the purchase of the building we were advised that for our sale to go ahead we had to purchase it within a very short period, which meant that we couldn't plan our whole completion properly and had to rush into it. You may remember that we had sent a few urgent requests for existing use etc to you which you kindly helped with.*

*We had subsequently asked our planning agent to submit planning and he advised that he will do it as soon as possible and he can draw the plan etc. Due to Christmas and new year holidays I understand that full planning was submitted on 17/01.*

*We had kept our planning agent informed at all stages of our progress in all matters including use of centre. From our other meeting and in hindsight I realise that we should have insisted on getting the planning in place before use of centre for which we regret but was more so because of lack of understanding of process.*

*As all our activities had ceased since 15 Oct when we closed the Bennett Road centre, we were really losing out, our significant dates had been missed, Friday prayers were not being held and it was coming to feel like it would have been difficult for us to survive as an organisation. This combined with initial positive appetite from council around change of use and with planning agent not advising*

*otherwise, we had started to use the centre with the request to agent to submit the plan as soon as possible.*

*I hope it briefly explains our situation and as mentioned above we sincerely regret this which was mainly due to our lack of understanding of the full process and any advice received to the contrary. Since our meeting we had cancelled non Thursday programs and at the moment are making less use of the centre.*

*We want to work with council, neighbours and local residents and will take all advice and feedback, wherever and whenever we have been advices of anything incorrect we have resolved it straight away and will continue to do so.*

Officer note: the feedback provided from officers related to confirming the relevant policies and that there was not the same restriction on losing the employment use as in their previous site.

- 6.22 It is unfortunate that the use applied for commenced before the application was submitted and a decision reached. Officers were made aware that the use had commenced late in January. As at that time a planning application was being consulted on and processed it was not considered expedient to take enforcement action to require that the use ceased. The applicant was however advised to reduce how often the building was being used pending the outcome of the application. Officers understand that this advice has generally been followed.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

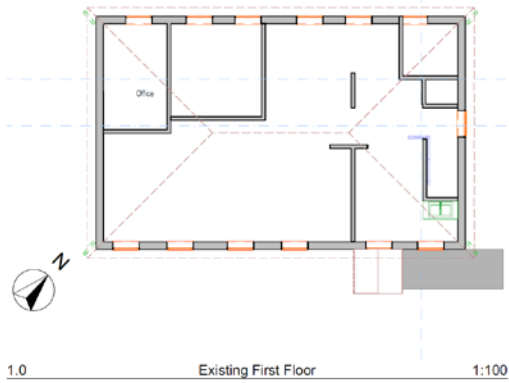
- 7.1 Subject to the imposition of conditions to control how the building is used, the hours of use and how the parking area is managed, the proposed use of the building as a community facility for the applicant is considered acceptable. The location is in a sustainable position in the district centre of Tilehurst close to a frequent bus route and public car parking. There are no significant changes to the building design and appearance so no harm caused to the visual character of the area. The proposal is in accordance with Policy CS11, CS24 and CS31 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM4 and DM12 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document. The proposal does not raise any other policy concerns.

Case Officer: Julie Williams

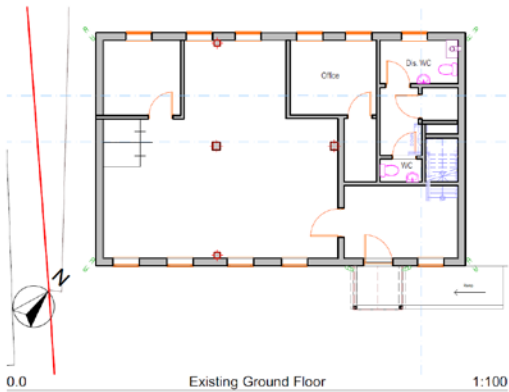
Plans:

Existing block plan PL02  
Proposed site layout PL03 B  
Existing plans PL04  
Existing elevations PL05  
Proposed plans PL06 B  
Proposed elevations PL07 B

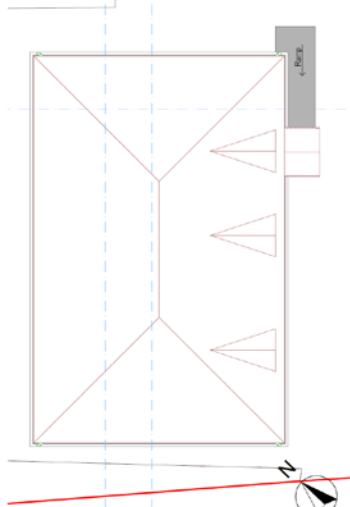




1.0 Existing First Floor 1:100



0.0 Existing Ground Floor 1:100



2.0 Existing Roof 1:100

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 All dimensions to be checked on site and any discrepancies to be reported before work commences.

**Notes:** Site Area: 747.526 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Existing  
 Gross Internal Ground Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Internal First Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>

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**RICS**  
 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

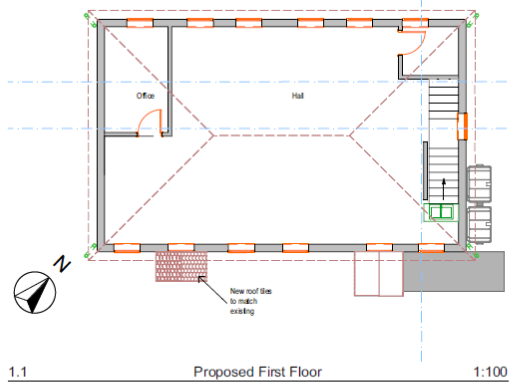
Client:  
**ZAINABIYA READING CENTRE**

Job Title:  
**Change of Use from B1 to D1 place of worship  
 4 - 6 School Road Reading RG31 5AL**

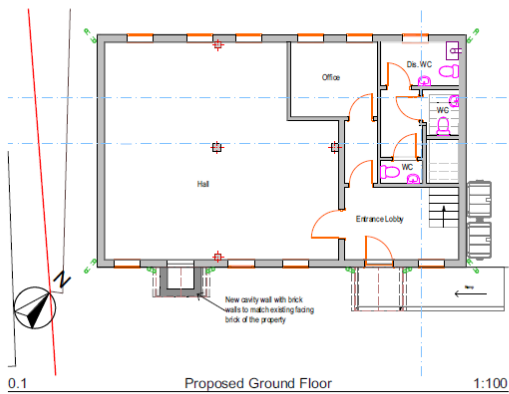
Drawing Title:  
**Existing Floor Plans**

Drawing Date: <b>02-01-2018</b>	Status: <b>Change of Use</b>
Issue Date: <b>02/02/2018</b>	Drawn By: <b>CP</b>
Job No: <b>8762-18</b>	Scale: <b>1:100@A3</b>
Drawing No: <b>PL-04</b>	Rev:

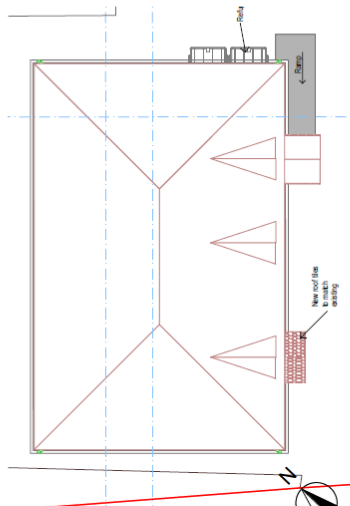
Existing Plans



1.1 Proposed First Floor 1:100



0.1 Proposed Ground Floor 1:100



2.1 Proposed Roof 1:100

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**Notes:** Site Area: 747.526 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Existing  
 Gross Internal Ground Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Internal First Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Proposed  
 Gross Internal Ground Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Additional Ground Floor: 1 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Total Ground Floor: 89.947 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Gross Internal First Floor: 88.947 m<sup>2</sup>

Revision	Description	Issued	Checked	By
A	Education amendments for 4 cycle change	CP		02-02-2018
B	#Entrance, Parking #Entrance	CP		09/04/2018

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**RICS**  
 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

Client:  
**ZAINABIYA READING CENTRE**

Job Title:  
**Change of Use from B1 to D1 place of worship  
 4 - 6 School Road Reading RG31 5AL**

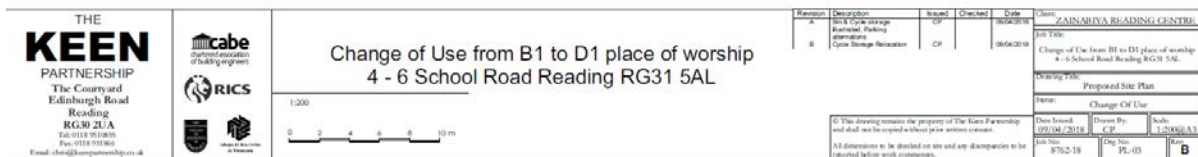
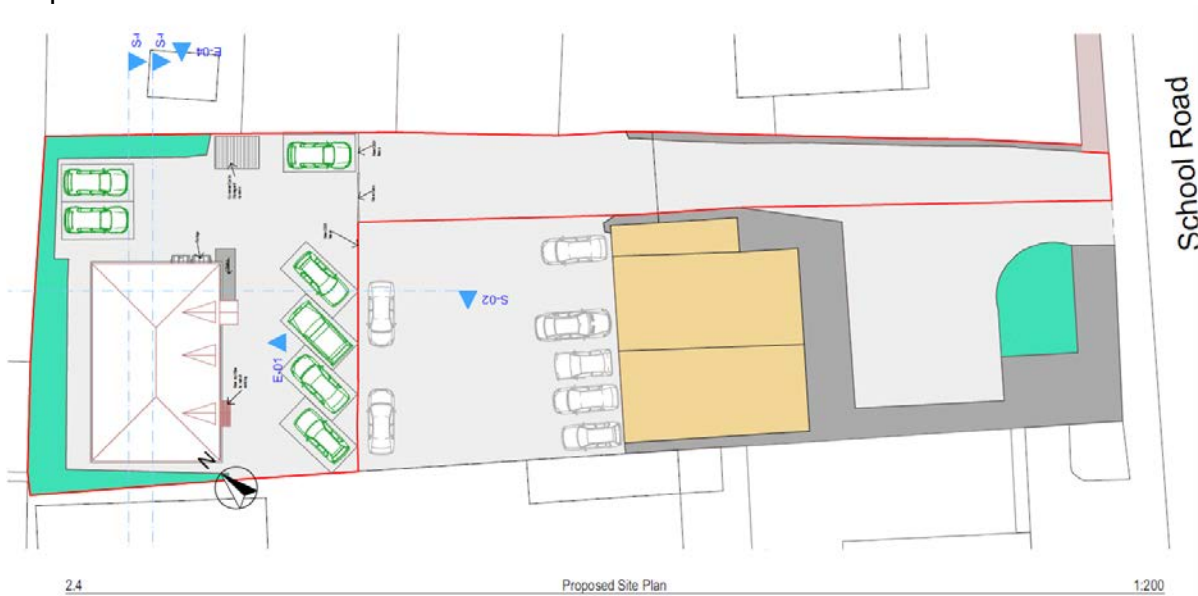
Drawing Title:  
**Proposed Floor Plans**

Drawing Date: <b>02-01-2018</b>	Status: <b>Change of Use</b>
Issue Date: <b>09/04/2018</b>	Drawn By: <b>CP</b>
Job No: <b>8762-18</b>	Scale: <b>1:100@A3</b>
Drawing No: <b>PL-06</b>	Rev: <b>B</b>

Proposed Plans

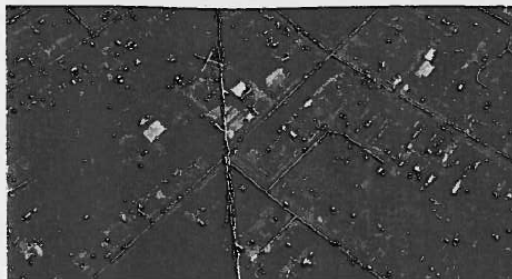


Proposed elevations



Proposed site layout

## Does School Road Need this Mosque?



**Application for a mosque at:**

**Equity House, 4-6 School Road,  
Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5AL**

**Application Ref: 180094**

**Write to Reading Council by post, email or online:**

**Post:** Planning Department, Reading Council, Civic  
Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU

**Email:** [plgadmin@reading.gov.uk](mailto:plgadmin@reading.gov.uk)

An application has been made to create a mosque at 4-6 School Road. This busy and congested road contains shops, schools, a bank, a post office, many businesses, and parking restrictions on both sides. Parking is already a severe problem, particularly at the post office in front of the mosque site. They propose only 10 spaces for a 2,000 square foot mosque! It backs onto back gardens, and is surrounded by densely built residential streets. The application would pave the way for an even bigger mosque later, dominating the area. Their website says they are "Now Fully Open" even before planning permission has been granted! So can they be relied on to keep to planning conditions?

**Please write to the Council to object. You can tear off the postcard below.  
Don't just copy this document – these are points to put in your own words:**

**1. Character of the Area**

The mosque will harm the character of this closely built, busy area. The size at 2,000 sq feet, the numbers, and the level of activity, will dominate the area. Parking, noise, and disruption to local commerce will irreversibly change the character of the area. There are numerous other mosques nearby, including at 330 Oxford Rd, 18a Waylen St, 46 Alexandra Rd, and at London Rd.

**2. Congestion and Parking**

There will be only 10 parking spaces for the many cars that will visit the mosque. Visitors will drive from across Reading, e.g. Earley, where the Applicant lives. Congestion is already very difficult along School Road, an arterial route and a feeder to the A329 Road out of Reading. It would soon become impossible. Congestion is evident around the mosque at Oxford Road, and the effects of such problems will be worse at this vulnerable location on School Road.

**3. Disturbance**

The noise, disruption, and visitors will create unacceptable disturbance for local people. Car doors, traffic jams, and blocked emergency vehicles will create noise and public safety problems, as well as traffic and pedestrian conflicts. The Applicants' website says "New Centre Now Fully Open", even before they have planning permission. So can the Council rely on them to observe planning control, such as opening hours and other conditions, e.g. during the busy and energetic Ramadan activities?

Copy of leaflet distributed and used by some to comment on the application.

