

To: Councillor McKenna (Chair)
Councillors Sokale, Duveen, Ennis,
Lovelock, Page, Robinson, Rowland,
Stanford-Beale and J Williams

Direct ☎ : 0118 937 2112

26 May 2020

Your contact is: **Nicky Simpson - Committee Services (nicky.simpson@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 3 JUNE 2020

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 3 June 2020 at 6.30 pm. This will be an Online meeting via Microsoft Teams, and information on how to observe the meeting will be published on the Council's website. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
1. MINUTES	Decision		9 - 14
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-		
3. QUESTIONS	-		
4. OUTCOME FOR APPLICATIONS THAT PREVIOUSLY MIGHT HAVE COME TO COMMITTEE BUT WERE DETERMINED BY OFFICERS UNDER NEW DELEGATED AUTHORITY	Information		15 - 20
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6. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL	Information		27 - 30
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CIVIC OFFICES EMERGENCY EVACUATION: If an alarm sounds, leave by the nearest fire exit quickly and calmly and assemble on the corner of Bridge Street and Fobney Street. You will be advised when it is safe to re-enter the building.

8.	RELAXATION OF PLANNING REGULATIONS DUE TO CORONAVIRUS: THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) (CORONAVIRUS) (ENGLAND) (AMENDMENT) ORDER 2020	Information		35 - 40
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PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

9.	191749/FUL - 152 CAVERSHAM ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	41 - 60
	Proposal Recommendation	Change of use of a former guest house (C1) to an 8-bedroom, 8 person house in multiple occupation (Sui Generis) (amended). Application Permitted		
10.	192052/HOU - 45 WATLINGTON STREET	Decision	ABBEY	61 - 72
	Proposal Recommendation	Single storey rear extension, alterations to fenestration and provision of roof light to forward roof slope Application Permitted		
11.	191227/REG3 - 11 WAYLEN STREET	Decision	ABBEY	73 - 80
	Proposal Recommendation	Change of use from HMO and supported living accommodation to 2no. 5-bed houses. Application Permitted		
12.	191915/FUL - 39 BRUNSWICK HILL	Decision	BATTLE	81 - 106
	Proposal Recommendation	2-storey side and 3-storey rear extension and conversion of dwelling to contain 8 flats (6 x 1-bed, 2 x 2-bed) parking, demolition of existing garage and associated works. Permitted subject to Legal Agreement		
13.	200408/FUL - BERKSHIRE HOUSE, 252-256 KINGS ROAD	Decision	REDLANDS	107 - 128
	Proposal Recommendation	Removal of 6 No. antennas, 1 No. equipment cabinet and other equipment & installation of 6 No. upgraded antenna apertures onto existing rooftop mast, 2 No. rooftop cabinets, 1 No. ground-based cabinet, plus ancillary development. Application Permitted		
14.	200339/FUL - BURGHELD ROAD, SOUTHCOTE	Decision	SOUTHCOTE	129 - 152

Proposal

Removal of the existing 15m mast and erection of a new 25m lattice tower with a total of 12No. antenna (6No. EE and 6No. Huawei) along with ancillary equipment mounted on a newly formed concrete foundation measuring 5.5m x 5.6m. The existing site compound would be retained and enlarged by a further 6.6m to an overall size of 13.2m x 6.6m all enclosed by a 2.5m high Palisade fence to match that of the existing.

Recommendation

Application Permitted

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GUIDE TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS Agenda Annex

1. There are many different types of applications processed by the Planning Service and the following codes are used to abbreviate the more common types of permission sought:
 - FUL - Full detailed planning permission for development or change of use
 - OUT - Principal of developing a site or changing a use
 - REM - Detailed matters “reserved matters” - for permission following approval of an outline planning application.
 - HOU - Applications for works to domestic houses
 - ADV - Advertisement consent
 - APC - Approval of details required by planning conditions
 - VAR - Significant change to a planning permission previously granted
 - NMA - Insignificant change to a planning permission previously granted
 - ADJ - Consultation from neighbouring authority on application in their area
 - LBC - Works to or around a Listed Building
 - CLE - A certificate to confirm what the existing use of a property is
 - CLP - A certificate to confirm that a proposed use or development does not require planning permission to be applied for.
 - REG3 - Indicates that the application has been submitted by the Local Authority.

2. Officer reports often refer to a matter or situation as being “a material consideration”. The following list tries to explain what these might include:

Material planning considerations can include (but are not limited to):

- Overlooking/loss of privacy
- Loss of daylight/sunlight or overshadowing
- Scale and dominance
- Layout and density of buildings
- Appearance and design of development and materials proposed
- Disabled persons' access
- Highway safety
- Traffic and parking issues
- Drainage and flood risk
- Noise, dust, fumes etc
- Impact on character or appearance of area
- Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas
- Effect on trees and wildlife/nature conservation
- Impact on the community and other services
- Economic impact and sustainability
- Government policy
- Proposals in the Local Plan
- Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
- Archaeology

There are also concerns that regulations or case law has established cannot be taken into account. These include:

- Who the applicant is/the applicant's background
- Loss of views
- Loss of property value
- Loss of trade or increased competition
- Strength or volume of local opposition
- Construction noise/disturbance during development
- Fears of damage to property
- Maintenance of property
- Boundary disputes, covenants or other property rights
- Rights of way and ownerships disputes over rights of way
- Personal circumstances

Glossary of usual terms

Affordable housing - Housing provided below market price to meet identified needs.

Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) - Area where air quality levels need to be managed.

Apartment-hotel - A use providing basic facilities for self-sufficient living with the amenities of a hotel. Generally classed as C1 (hotels) for planning purposes.

Article 4 Direction - A direction which can be made by the Council to remove normal permitted development rights.

BREEAM - A widely used means of reviewing and improving the environmental performance of generally commercial developments (industrial, retail etc).

Brownfield Land - previously developed land.

Brown roof - A roof surfaced with a broken substrate, e.g. broken bricks.

Building line - The general line along a street beyond which no buildings project.

Bulky goods - Large products requiring shopping trips to be made by car: e.g. DIY or furniture.

CIL - Community Infrastructure Levy. Local authorities in England and Wales levy a charge on new development to be spent on infrastructure to support the development of the area.

Classified Highway Network - The network of main roads, consisting of A, B and C roads.

Conservation Area - areas of special architectural or historic interest designated by the local authority. As designated heritage assets the preservation and enhancement of the area carries great weight in planning permission decisions.

Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Competent Authority - The Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999 (COMAH) and their amendments 2005, are the enforcing regulations within the United Kingdom. They are applicable to any establishment storing or otherwise handling large quantities of industrial chemicals of a hazardous nature. Types of establishments include chemical warehousing, chemical production facilities and some distributors.

Dormer Window - Located in the roof of a building, it projects or extends out through the roof, often providing space internally.

Dwelling - A single housing unit - a house, flat, maisonette etc.

Evening Economy A term for the business activities, particularly those used by the public, which take place in the evening such as pubs, clubs, restaurants and arts/cultural uses.

Flood Risk Assessment - A requirement at planning application stage to demonstrate how flood risk will be managed.

Flood Zones - The Environment Agency designates flood zones to reflect the differing risks of flooding. Flood Zone 1 is low probability, Flood Zone 2 is medium probability, Flood Zone 3a is high probability and Flood Zone 3b is functional floodplain.

Granny annexe - A self-contained area within a dwelling house/ the curtilage of a dwelling house but without all the facilities to be self contained and is therefore dependent on the main house for some functions. It will usually be occupied by a relative.

Green roof - A roof with vegetation on top of an impermeable membrane.

Gross floor area - Total floor area of the house, including all floors and garage, measured externally.

Hazardous Substances Consent - Consent required for the presence on, over, or under land of any hazardous substance in excess of controlled quantity.

Historic Parks and Gardens - Parks and gardens of special historic interest, designated by English Heritage.

Housing Association - An independent not-for-profit body that provides low-cost "affordable housing" to meet specific housing needs.

Infrastructure - The basic services and facilities needed for the smooth running of a community.

Lifetime Home - A home which is sufficiently adaptable to allow people to remain in the home despite changing circumstances such as age or disability.

Listed building - Buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Consent is required before works that might affect their character or appearance can be undertaken. They are divided into Grades I, II and II*, with I being of exceptional interest.

Local Plan - The main planning document for a District or Borough.

Luminance - A measure of the luminous intensity of light, usually measured in candelas per square metre.

Major Landscape Feature - these are identified and protected in the Local Plan for being of local significance for their visual and amenity value

Public realm - the space between and within buildings that is publicly accessible, including streets, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces whether publicly or privately owned.

Scheduled Ancient Monument - Specified nationally important archaeological sites.

Section 106 agreement - A legally binding agreement or obligation entered into by the local authority and a land developer over an issue related to a planning application, under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Sequential approach A method of considering and ranking the suitability of sites for development, so that one type of site is considered before another. Different sequential approaches are applied to different uses.

Sui Generis - A use not specifically defined in the use classes order (2004) - planning permission is always needed to change from a sui generis use.

Sustainable development - Development to improve quality of life and protect the environment in balance with the local economy, for now and future generations.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) - This term is taken to cover the whole range of sustainable approaches to surface water drainage management.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO) - An order made by a local planning authority in respect of trees and woodlands. The principal effect of a TPO is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees without the LPA's consent.

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Present: Councillor McKenna (Chair);
Councillors Sokale (Vice-Chair), Duveen, Ennis, Lovelock, Page, Robinson, Rowland, Stanford-Beale and J Williams

RESOLVED ITEMS

139. PROTOCOL FOR ONLINE MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Chair reported that the Coronavirus Act 2020 had paved the way for temporary changes to Regulations governing public meetings held by local authorities, including those held by local planning authorities, to allow the meetings to be conducted using media systems to be attended remotely by officers, members and the public and press during the current Covid-19 pandemic.

At its meeting on 27 April 2020, the Policy Committee had considered a report containing proposed protocols for holding online meetings of the Policy Committee, Planning Applications Committee and Licensing Applications Sub-Committees 1 and 2. The Policy Committee had approved the online meeting protocols (Minute 90 refers) and a copy of the Planning Applications Committee protocol had been included in the papers for the Planning Applications Committee on 29 April 2020.

The Protocol outlined some changes to facilitate successful online meetings of the Planning Applications Committee, by reducing the number of participants and the complexity of the meetings, including amendments to public participation and attendance. The meeting would consist of ten members and would include members from all political groups represented on the Council.

The Policy Committee had also agreed the following amendment to the Protocol:

That current members of the Policy Committee and Planning Applications Committee not included in the reduced memberships be entitled to act as substitutes on the Committee in place of a member of their Group; and where a Group had only one member of the Policy Committee or Planning Application Committee appointed in the current year (2019/20), the Group Leader be entitled to nominate a substitute member, in the event that their Group member was unable to attend the Committee and the Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services be authorised to appoint that Councillor as a substitute member of the relevant Committee (and this substitute provision be included in the meeting protocols for Policy Committee and Planning Applications Committee).

In order to reduce the amount of business required to be decided by the Planning Applications Committee during the pandemic, the Policy Committee had also approved an increase to officer delegations to determine some minor planning applications and Tree Preservation Orders, as set out in Appendix B to the Policy Committee report. It had agreed that a schedule of those applications where delegations had been changed would be presented to each Planning Applications Committee for information.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

140. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

141. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ennis declared an interest in Items 146 (190848/REG3 - 73 Brunswick Street) and 148 (190706/REG3 - 76 Circuit Lane) as Lead Councillor for Housing.

142. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report which explained that, normally, the report would accompany a list of sites where, due to the sensitive or important nature of the proposals, Councillors were 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 would be arranged. It stated that, with the current measures to enforce social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic, it would not be appropriate for officers to recommend that Councillors make any site visits for the time being.

It was explained at the meeting that, where appropriate, officers would circulate a combination of photographs and video footage to Councillors in place of site visits prior to applications being considered at the Committee.

Resolved -

That no site visits take place until the current social distancing measures were lifted and, where appropriate, officers circulate information to Councillors in place of site visits.

143. PLANNING APPEALS

(i) New Appeals

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a schedule giving details of notification received from the Planning Inspectorate regarding one planning appeal, the method of determination for which she had already expressed a preference in accordance with delegated powers, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

(ii) Appeals Recently Determined

The Executive Director for Economic Growth 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

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted reports on the following appeal decisions in Appendix 3:

190544/TPO - 2 FERNDALE CLOSE, TILEHURST

To fell one Lawson Cypress (T10 of TPO) in the rear garden.

Written representations.

Appeal dismissed.

191031/TPO - 7A DELLWOOD PARK, CAVERSHAM

Fell one Oak tree in the rear garden.

Written representations.

Appeal dismissed.

191592/TPO - BLAGRAVE HOUSE, UPPER WARREN AVENUE

Fell one False Acacia in the front garden.

Written representations.

Appeal dismissed.

Resolved -

- (1) That the new appeal, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;
- (2) That the outcome of the recently determined appeals, as set out in Appendix 2, be noted;
- (3) That the reports on the appeal decisions set out in Appendix 3 be noted.

144. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details in Table 1 of 17 pending prior approval applications, and in Table 2 of six applications for prior approval decided between 19 March and 20 April 2020.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

145. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE 2019/20

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report setting out details of performance in development management (applications, appeals, enforcement and associated services) during 2019/20.

It was reported at the meeting that, in paragraph 4.3 of the report, the date of the most recently published performance tables should have read 25 March 2020.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

146. 190848/REG3 - 72 BRUNSWICK STREET

Extension of existing apartment building, conversion of redundant laundry, bin store and cycle storage space to create a one-bedroom apartment and provision of new communal refuse and cycle storage facilities. Resubmission of application 181853.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant full planning permission for application 190848/REG3, subject to completion of a unilateral undertaking by 29 May 2020 (unless a later date be agreed by the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the report.

(Councillor Ennis declared an interest in this item, made a statement as Lead Councillor then abstained in the vote. Nature of interest: Councillor Ennis was the Lead Councillor for Housing and been involved in the development of the scheme).

147. 191757/HOU - 10 PEGS GREEN CLOSE

Two storey side/rear extension and single storey front and rear extensions, loft conversion with new dormer window and two Velux windows.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting that gave details of planning conditions and an amended plan received (appended to the update report). It also addressed five statements of objection received from local residents and one statement received from the applicant, in lieu of public speaking, and copies of the

statements were appended to the update report. The recommendation had been amended to remove condition 4 as a result of receipt of the amended plan.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

That application 191757/FUL be refused for the following reasons:

- (1) By virtue of the prominent position of the application site within the street the combined width of the proposed two-storey side extension and large proportions of the proposed porch would have the cumulative effect of appearing out of scale with and not subservient to the design and proportions of the main house. This would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the street and by reducing the gap at the side would introduce a terracing effect in a street characterised by semi-detached properties. This would be contrary to policies CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and Policy H9 (House Extensions) of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019;
- (2) The size, scale and position of the proposed two-storey rear extension would fail to appear as a suitable subservient addition to the host building by dominating the appearance of the rear of the house and would have an overbearing impact on adjacent neighbours and would harm their outlook contrary to policies CC8 (Safeguarding Amenities) and Policy H9 (House Extensions) of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

148. 190706/REG3 - 76 CIRCUIT LANE

Erection of one two bedroom dwelling.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant full planning permission for application 190706/REG3, subject to completion of a unilateral undertaking by 29 May 2020 (unless a later date be agreed by the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;

- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the report.

(Councillor Ennis declared an interest in this item, made a statement as Lead Councillor then abstained in the vote. Nature of interest: Councillor Ennis was the Lead Councillor for Housing and been involved in the development of the scheme).

149. 200339/FUL - BURGHFIELD ROAD, SOUTHCOTE

Removal of the existing 15m mast and erection of a new 25m lattice tower with a total of 12No. antenna (6No. EE and 6No. Huawei) along with ancillary equipment mounted on a newly formed concrete foundation measuring 5.5m x 5.6m. The existing site compound would be retained and enlarged by a further 6.6m to an overall size of 13.2m x 6.6m all enclosed by a 2.5m high Palisade fence to match that of the existing.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which gave details of outstanding consultation responses received, had appended a copy of the appeal decision which had allowed the existing monopole on the site and corrected an error in the original report regarding the Reading Borough Council application number for that decision.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

The Committee requested that more information on the planning context of 5G masts, including on international guidelines for public exposure to non-ionising radiation and how these were enacted, be provided for a future meeting.

Resolved -

- (1) That consideration of application 200339/FUL be deferred, in order to obtain more information on the visual impact of the new structure on the surrounding area and to allow discussions with the applicant on how this impact might be mitigated and whether they would be agreeable to a pre-commencement condition to achieve this amelioration;
- (2) That an information report be prepared for a future meeting of the Committee on the planning context of 5G masts, including on information on how international guidelines for public exposure to non-ionising radiation were enacted.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.14 pm)

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD
SERVICES**

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3 June 2020		
TITLE:	OUTCOME FOR APPLICATIONS THAT PREVIOUSLY MIGHT HAVE COME TO COMMITTEE BUT WERE DETERMINED BY OFFICERS UNDER NEW DELEGATED AUTHORITY		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams & Richard Eatough		
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING MANAGER (acting) & Team Leader	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk Richard.eatough@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

1.1 To advise Committee of the outcome for those applications that, following the agreement at Policy Committee on 27 April to extend the delegated authority to the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport & Regulatory Services to determine applications and to manage “called in” applications, have now been decided by officers.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION
2.1 That you note the report and the decisions made.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A report was presented at Policy Committee held on 27 April to explain that Section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and ‘The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020’ enables Council meetings to take place online during the current Covid-19 pandemic. The report provided revised protocols for running meetings to help manage online events and included a proposal to extend the delegated authority for making decisions on planning applications to reduce the work handled by Planning Applications Committee.

3.2 Policy Committee agreed that the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services delegated authority to determine planning applications and Tree Preservation Orders should be extended (see Appendix to the report) to help reduce the number of reports coming to the meeting.

3.3 Councillors can ask for an application that is delegated to officers to determine to be considered by Planning Applications Committee instead - known as “calling in” an application. This ability remains but councillors are now requested to seek advice from the Planning Manager and Chair of Planning when considering a “call in” so that a judgement can be made on the merits of bringing the application to Committee. For example; if the application is clearly failing a number of policies and having a debate about it at committee is not going to change that it would be more efficient for the officer to be left to press on and refuse the application within the target timescale than to delay the decision by having to bring a committee report to this meeting.

3.4 It was agreed at Policy Committee that a schedule of those applications affected by the change in delegations be presented to each Planning Applications Committee for

information. Officers have also included in the list those applications that had been called in but then agreed by the relevant councillors could be decided by officers.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 The Planning Service contributes to the Council's strategic aims in terms of:
- Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active."
 - Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing homes for those in most need."
 - Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing infrastructure to support the economy."

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2 The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods. As a team we work hard to reduce the amount of resources (paper and printing) we use to carry out our work so reducing the number of committee reports produced will also help.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 The changes to delegations do not change the need for statutory and non-statutory consultation on all planning applications.

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 There are no financial implications as a result of adopting these arrangements for determining applications.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

27th May 2020 Policy Committee

Table 1 - Applications decided since 29th April 2020

Application type	Application reference number	Called in or extended delegation	Address	Ward	Proposal	Date Received	Decision Date	Decision
Outline Planning Approval	191603	Called in by Cllr R Williams	112 London Street, Reading, RG1 4SJ	Katesgrove	Demolition of existing nightclub building and construction of a 3 storey building containing 6 self-contained C3 residential flats	03/10/2019	07/05/2020	Application Refused

APPENDIX

The table below sets out those applications that the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services is currently not authorised to exercise delegated powers and how officers consider these could be changed to reduce the number of cases coming to Planning Applications Committee. Instead it would be possible to present a schedule of those applications where delegations are changed to each PAC so the decisions can be discussed if needed or simply noted.

	Pre April 2020	Proposed
Applications “called -in” by a member	Determination of applications where a member has requested that an application be referred to Planning Applications Committee for a decision within 3 weeks of the application appearing on the weekly list of planning applications.	Members to use their discretion in call-ins to support the strategic objectives of the Council in the pandemic and recovery. Members are requested to seek advice from the Planning Manager and Chair of Planning before notifying a call in to the Planning Manager instead of the case officer.
Planning Applications Committee re-referral	Where Planning Applications Committee has resolved that a matter be referred to Planning Applications Committee for a decision	No change
Serving or former councillors and employees of the Council and their close friends and relatives	Power to determine an application for planning permission, approval of reserved matters, variations of conditions, variations of legal agreements or planning obligations, advertisement consent, listed building or conservation area consent, works affecting trees covered by tree preservation order and certificates of existing or proposed lawful use or development made by serving councillors and any member of the Corporate Management Team and any person employed or engaged by Planning and Legal Services.	No change but amend the description to: <i>Applications submitted by serving councillors and some employees of the Council (those on Corporate Management Team and any person employed or engaged by Planning and Legal Services).</i>
Council developments	Power to determine an application for planning permission made by the Council alone or jointly with another person under Section 316 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (S.I. 1992/1492) (Para 6) and the determination of applications	No change

	made by the Council for listed building or conservation area consent.	
Applications to develop land without compliance with conditions attached by Committee	Determine applications to develop land without compliance with conditions under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where those conditions were previously attached by Committee, without first agreeing the method of determination with the Chair of Planning Applications Committee and Ward members.	Delegated and no need to agree method with Cllrs.
Departures from the Development Plan.	Any development which is considered by the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to be a departure from the provisions of the adopted development plan and where the application is recommended for approval.	No change - rarely happens
'Major' Applications.	Major development, i.e.: building or engineering work; or Building or engineering work involving change of use comprising: (i)residential development of 10 or more dwellings or residential development on an application site of 0.5 ha or more or (ii)in the case of other uses (not comprising minor or other development as described above), 1,000 sq m or more of gross floorspace, or an application site of 1 ha or more.	No change when the recommendation is to approve. Delegated when the recommendation is to refuse
Conservation area consent / listed building consent	Only where the proposals also require planning permission for development which is classed as "Major"	No change
Tree Preservation Orders / Trees in conservation areas	Where an objection to a Tree Preservation Order has been received or where the proposal has been submitted by or on behalf of the Council	Delegated.

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READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3 June 2020		
TITLE:	PLANNING APPEALS		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams	TEL:	0118 9372461
JOB TITLE:	Acting Planning Manager	E-MAIL:	Julie.Williams@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 2018-21 Corporate Plan objective for “Keeping Reading’s environment clean, green and safe”.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

5.2 The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods. As a team we have also reduced the amount of resources (paper and printing) we use to carry out our work.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 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.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 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.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 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.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 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”.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Planning Appeal Forms and letters from the Planning Inspectorate.

APPENDIX 1

WARD: TILEHURST
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/20/3247779
CASE NO: 191312
ADDRESS: Land Adjacent to 17 Berkshire Drive
PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing garage block and construction of one X
1-bedroom dwelling
CASE OFFICER: Ethne Humphreys
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 28.04.2020

WARD: KATESGROVE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/20/3248604
CASE NO: 190449
ADDRESS: 40 Silver Street
PROPOSAL: Erection of part 1, part 2 and part 4 storey (plus basement
level) buildings to provide 79 student studio rooms (sui
generis use class) with associated ancillary space and
landscaping works.
CASE OFFICER: Alison Amoah
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 14.05.2020

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

WARD: REDLANDS
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/19/3237840
CASE NO: 182214
ADDRESS: 45 Upper Redlands Road
PROPOSAL: Erection of 4 dwellinghouses and accesses with associated
landscaping and parking
CASE OFFICER: Matthew Burns
METHOD: Written Representations
DECISION: DISMISSED
DATE DETERMINED: 07.05.2020

WARD: ABBEY
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/C/32396
CASE NO: E18097
ADDRESS: 30 Addison Road
PROPOSAL: Unauthorised development - outbuilding/extension

CASE OFFICER: Chris Beard
METHOD: Written Representations
DECISION: QUASHED
DATE DETERMINED: 11.05.2020

APPENDIX 3

Address Index of Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

- 45 Upper Redlands Road

Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions attached.

APPEAL OUTCOME REPORT

Ward: Redlands

Appeal No: APP/E0345/W/19/3237840

Planning Ref: 182214

Site: 45 Upper Redlands Road Reading

Proposal: Erection of 4 dwellings with access, landscaping and parking

Decision level: Committee

Method: Written representations

Decision: Appeal dismissed

Date Determined: 7th May 2020

Inspector: S Edwards MA MRTPI

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The site is in the Redlands Conservation Area and comprises undeveloped gardens located to the rear and side of no 45 Upper Redlands Road, a prominent corner plot which is occupied by a large Victorian villa. As well as Upper Redlands Road, the site has frontages on to Redlands Road and New Road and is enclosed by substantial front boundary walls. Part of the site is opposite the Grade II listed Wantage Hall.

1.2 In July 2019 Planning Applications Committee refused an application for planning permission for the erection of 4 dwellings with access, landscaping and parking. The application was refused for the following two reasons:

1. *The proposed development of four detached properties within the gardens to 45 Upper Redlands Road would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area due to the loss of garden space around existing properties, loss of characteristic/historic garden walls in the street-scene and due to over-development within the context of the Conservation Area; all these elements are recorded in the Conservation Area Appraisal as contributing to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Proposed Plots 3 & 4, opposite the Grade II Listed Wantage Hall, would harm the significance of the Listed Building through detriment to its setting and the contribution it makes to the heritage of the area. Therefore the proposed development is not considered to achieve the requirement to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area or preserve the setting of the Listed Building, contrary to the statutory requirements of Sections 66(1) and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the requirements of Reading Local Plan policies and guidance in the NPPF and PPG and contrary to Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy (2008) (altered 2015) and the Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal*
2. *In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure acceptable Affordable Housing provision, the proposal fails to contribute adequately to the housing needs of Reading Borough and the need to provide sustainable and inclusive mixed and balanced communities. As such the proposal is contrary to CS16 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015), Policy H4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan 2018, the Council's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2013 and Section 106 Planning Obligations (2015).*

2 SUMMARY OF DECISION

- 2.1 The appeal was dismissed with the Inspector concluding that the proposed development would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the Redlands Conservation Area and would have a detrimental impact on the setting of Wantage Hall.
- 2.2 On reason for refusal 1 the Inspector felt that the proposed substantial loss of garden space and construction of four large dwellings would erode the contribution made by the appeal site to the spacious character of the Redlands Conservation Area, and to a lesser extent, the setting of Wantage Hall, to the detriment of the significance of these designated heritage assets. The Inspector also concluded that the loss of a number of mature trees which form a substantial part of the green backdrop of the site would dilute the impact this group of trees collectively make to the character of the conservation area.
- 2.3 In addition, the Inspector found that the siting of the proposed dwellings would detract from the established building line to Upper Redlands Road and that the proposed punctuation of several sections of the brick front boundary walls to provide accesses to the dwellings would be detrimental to the significant contribution these walls make to the street-scene and character of this part of the conservation area.
- 2.4 Reason for refusal 2 (Affordable Housing) was overcome during the consideration of the Appeal, following the signing of a legal agreement between the Appellant and the Council for a policy compliant affordable housing contribution.

3 OFFICER COMMENTS:

- 3.1 Officers welcome the appeal decision and particularly the strong regard given by the Inspector to the special contribution the spaciousness of this area makes to the character of the Redlands Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade II listed Wantage Hall, as identified in the Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal Document.
- 3.2 The Inspector's decision notice will be a material consideration for the assessment and negotiations on the current application for this site (191860), which have been on hold pending this decision with agreement from the applicant.

LOCATION PLAN



Case Officer: Matt Burns

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD
SERVICES**

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3 June 2020		
TITLE:	APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams & Richard Eatough		
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING MANAGER (acting) & Team Leader	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk Richard.eatough@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

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

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 GPDO. 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. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

6.2 The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods. As a team we have also reduced the amount of resources (paper and printing) we use to carry out our work.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

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

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 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.

8.2 There are no direct implications arising from the proposals.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None arising from this Report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 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 £1,302,488.

(Office Prior Approvals - £1,181,519: Householder Prior Approvals - £76,052: Retail Prior Approvals - £12,622: Demolition Prior Approval - £2867: Storage Prior Approvals - £5716: Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval - £5038: Shop to Leisure Prior Approval - £305: Light Industrial to Residential - £18,270)

Figures since last report

Office Prior Approvals - £0: Householder Prior Approvals - £110

10.2 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.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2016.

Table 1 - Applications received since 20th April 2020

Type:	How many received since last report:	Loss in possible fee income:
Householder Prior Approvals	1	£110
Office Prior Approvals	0	0
Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval	1	£366
Retail Prior Approvals	0	0
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	0
Light Industrial to Residential Prior Approval	0	0
Prior Notification	0	0
Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	5	N/A
TOTAL	7	£476

Table 2 - Applications decided since 20th April 2020

Type:	Approved	Refused	Not Required	Withdrawn
Householder Prior Approvals	0	0	2	0
Office Prior Approvals	1	0	0	0
Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval	1	0	0	0
Retail Prior Approvals	2	1	0	0
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	0	0	0
Light Industrial to Residential Prior Approval	0	0	0	0
Prior Notification/ Other	0	0	0	0
Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval	0	0	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	4	1	2	0

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3rd June 2020		
TITLE:	INFORMATION ON THE PLANNING REGIME AND THE DEPLOYMENT OF 5G TELECOMMUNICATION APARATUS TO EXTEND MOBILE COVERAGE		
	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
	COUNCILLOR MCKENNA		CHAIR, PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARD:	ALL
LEAD OFFICER:	JULIE WILLIAMS	TEL:	0118 9372461
JOB TITLE:	ACTING PLANNING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 At the Planning Applications Committee on 29 April; 2020 officers were asked to provide a report to explain the role of the planning regime in the roll out of 5G technology and how safety measures are enforced.
- 1.2 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) are jointly pressing for improved national mobile coverage. Last year in August we were consulted on proposals to reform the current permitted development rights to allow the roll out to happen with fewer planning obstacles but the outcome of the consultation has not been published. A report on the reforms being looked at was provided to this committee in October 2019 (see background papers). So the current permitted development rights for Code Operators remains as set out in Part 16 Schedule 2 of the Town & country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015 (as amended in 2016). This report will clarify what these controls are and what this council's planning policies say about 5G.
- 1.3 This report will not attempt to discuss the science but will try to explain, in lay person terms, the public health concerns and what role the planning system plays in addressing these concerns.

2.0 RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the report.

3. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 3.1 The Electronic Communications Code (the Code) was introduced in 2017. This sought to encourage and support network investment by making it cheaper to install and upgrade communications equipment and there is a clear desire for the UK to become a "world leader in 5G" with all 4 main mobile network operators committed to begin deploying 5G.

- 3.2 Investment in better ground and building-based telecommunications equipment and masts has been happening for some time with national planning policy amended in 2018 to support the expansion of electronic communication networks with a commitment to keep the planning regime under review so that it can better support new technologies coming forward.
- 3.3 Over these recent weeks with millions of people attempting to work and provide services from home; emergency services relying on it and the introduction of tracing and identifying applications connected with Covid-19; the call to improve mobile data access and provide effective broadband connectivity has become even more urgent.
- 3.4 To improve coverage and to deploy 5G network operators are primarily seeking to upgrade existing sites by making masts bigger or taller to take more equipment or to increase coverage. Currently mobile network operators either need to apply for full planning permission for the equipment or, on some limited sites, can make use of permitted development rights with prior approval from the LPA needed or sometimes they only need to provide notification to the LPA of their intention to carry out work.
- 3.5 The main issues when dealing with planning applications for new masts are illustrated by the application on the agenda tonight. The application 200339 for a 25 metre high lattice tower to support 5G on the existing Burghfield Road telecommunication mast site was deferred from the previous meeting following concerns about the appearance of the mast and the impact on the character and appearance of the area and reassurance sought on the effect that the 5G technology has on public health.
- 3.6 These issues are no different to the ones faced when considering the original telecommunication masts 20 years ago when the height of masts were similar to taller lampposts at approximately 15m high. We are now considering applications for masts at around 20m to 25m high and with either thicker structures or lattice towers to remain structurally sound and to support the weight of the equipment.

4. PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 Under the current General Permitted Development Order, as amended in 2016, Code Operators, where there is an existing mast, are able to:
 - a. Replace a mast with another mast of the same height; or
 - b. Increase the height of the mast up to 25 metres above ground level on unprotected land, subject to prior approval where it exceeds the height of the original mast and is taller than 20 metres above ground, or
 - c. Increase the height of the mast up to 20 metres above ground level on Article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway, subject to prior approval.
- 4.2 However, if the Code Operator proposes to increase the width of the existing ground-based mast beyond one third, or to increase the height of the existing mast beyond the current height of 25 metres on unprotected land, or 20 metres on Article 2(3) land or land which is on a highway (whichever is greater); an application for full planning permission is required.
- 4.3 The relevant local plan policy is OU3: Telecommunications. It 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 or on the significance of a heritage asset;
 - The apparatus will be sited and designed 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.

- 4.4 This is consistent with Paragraph 112 of the NPPF 2019 which explains that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Paragraph 113 states that the number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged.
- 4.5 The policy does not stipulate that character assessments are required to evaluate the visual qualities of a site to determine if a mast will harm it. If a mast were located close to a conservation area and heritage asset there would be a basis for seeking further analysis but in other areas a subjective assessment can normally be sufficient. The policy does however support site sharing to minimize the number of masts needed and to improve their appearance.

5. PUBLIC HEALTH

- 5.1 The following information is taken from Public Health England's (PHE) pages on Gov.uk. Telecommunication masts have been installed for many years and studies have shown that exposures of the general public to radio waves are well within the international health-related guideline levels that are used in the UK. These guidelines are from the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).
- 5.2 ICNIRP's role over the past 20 years at least has been to provide guidance on non-ionizing radiation protection and this guidance underpins relevant health protection policies at UK and European levels. ICNIRP does not issue certificates to verify the safety of any device or installation or provide a service to evaluate the accuracy of the certificates or declarations provided as part of a planning application by code operators. However, code operators work to ICNIRP guidelines, which remain applicable to the new 5G devices and networks.
- 5.2 Exposure to radio waves is not new and health-related research has been conducted on this topic over several decades. Since 2000 dedicated national and international research programmes have examined concerns arising from the growth in the use of wireless technologies. The main focus of recent research studies has been on exposure to the types of radio signals used by current communications technologies and at the frequencies they use, up to a few GHz. Fewer studies have been carried out at higher frequencies but the biophysical mechanisms that govern the interaction between radio waves and body tissues are well understood at higher frequencies and are the basis of the present ICNIRP restrictions. The main change in using higher frequencies is that there is less penetration of radio waves into body tissues and absorption of the radio energy, and any consequent heating, becomes more confined to the body surface. PHE accepts that there may be a small increase in overall exposure to radio waves when 5G is added to an existing network or in a new area. However, the overall exposure is expected to remain low relative to guidelines and, as such, there should be no consequences for public health. They will continue to monitor evidence and if needed review their advice.
- 5.3 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) public information states "Reflecting public concern, the Government advice is that all operators of mobile phone masts should comply with international guidelines to ensure that public health is not put at risk. These

guidelines are precautionary; this means that they include a very large safety margin for limiting public exposure. Compliance with these guidelines is taken into account by the local planning authority when considering an application for a base station. Ofcom carries out audits of the emissions from mobile phone base stations. The measurements show that the levels of radio waves around base stations are consistently much lower than the safe levels recommended by the guidelines.

- 5.4 The Local Planning Authority will require that the code operator provides a declaration or certificate to confirm compliance with ICNIRP guidance. Clearly, planning officers do not have the scientific expertise to scrutinize the data provided but can check that the applicant has addressed the relevant guidance. Should a health concern arise it will fall to Ofcom and the HSE to monitor and address.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

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

- Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active."
- Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing homes for those in most need."

Facilitating the 5G network on appropriate sites meets the third aim of:

- Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing infrastructure to support the economy."

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 Some members of the public are concerned about the impacts of 5G technology and with this report and earlier responses to questions asked it is considered that there has been an adequate level of community engagement on this matter.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 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.

- 8.2 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none arising from the report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report.

Background

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/5g-technologies-radio-waves-and-health>

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3rd June 2020		
TITLE:	RELAXATION OF PLANNING REGULATIONS DUE TO CORONAVIRUS: THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT) (CORONAVIRUS) (ENGLAND) (AMENDMENT) ORDER 2020.		
	COUNCILLOR MCKENNA	PORTFOLIO:	CHAIR, PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARD:	ALL
LEAD OFFICER:	RICHARD EATOUGH	TEL:	0118 937 3338
JOB TITLE:	ACTING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT TEAM LEADER	E-MAIL:	Richard.Eatough@reading.gov. uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 Members may be aware of various relaxations that the Government has been introducing to existing Permitted Development rights, in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, in order to allow changes of use or developments to take place without having to apply for planning permission first.
- 1.2 This report will explain these changes to the General Permitted Development Order (the GPDO) which have already come into effect and also discuss the recent Ministerial Statement encouraging a flexible approach from Local Authorities to requests to extend working hours on construction sites.

2.0 RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the report.

3. THE CHANGES

Changes to Permitted Development Rights

- 3.1 Permitted Development (PD) rights are basically rights to make certain changes to a building without the need to apply for planning permission. They derive from a general planning permission granted by Parliament, rather than from permission

granted by the local planning authority (LPA). There are many forms of minor development or changes of use where submitting a planning application to the LPA to permit the change would be overly onerous. These rights are set out using criteria to specify in what circumstances a development or use would not benefit from being “permitted development” and sometimes conditions are applied. PD is available to a wide range of development types, including domestic, offices, industrial, retail, agriculture, hospitals, schools and local authority works. These Regulations are set out in the current GPDO and it is this document which has been amended to allow local planning authorities in England to apply a wider discretion for some schemes/works which may become necessary as a result of Coronavirus.

- 3.2 On 17 March 2020, the Government announced that it would relax planning rules to allow pubs and restaurants to operate as hot food takeaways during the coronavirus outbreak. This change to permitted development rights was introduced in *The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2020* (SI 2020/330) and applies between 24 March 2020 and 23 March 2021.
- 3.3 The changes allow the temporary change of use of a pub (A4 - drinking establishment) or a restaurant (A3 - restaurants and cafes) to a hot-food take away for a period of up to 12 months only - to 23 March 2021. While this change did not consider those premises where restrictive conditions might apply prohibiting take-away use to guidance offered has been for LPA.s to exercise restraint in enforcing compliance with the condition. This change was brought in to help these, often, small businesses to carry on working.
- 3.4 The other change came into effect on 9 April 2020 to introduce a new class of Permitted Development: ‘New PART 12A: Development by Local Authorities and Health Service Bodies’.

Class A is defined as:

‘Development by or on behalf of a local authority or health service body on land owned, leased, occupied or maintained by it for the purposes of–

- (a) preventing an emergency;
- (b) reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of an emergency; or
- (c) taking other action in connection with an emergency’.

- 3.5 There are numerous stipulations as provided below:
- (a) the land in question must not be a military explosives area or an SSSI [none in Reading Borough]
 - (b) the land or building must not contain a Scheduled Monument
 - (c) no part of the development must be within 5 metres of any boundary of a (dwelling) house
 - (d) the height of any new building cannot exceed 6 metres (where any part is within 10 metres of the boundary of the land); otherwise the development may be the height of the highest part of the roof of the original building or 18 metres in height (whichever is greater), where any part of the altered building is within 10 metres of the boundary of the original building.
 - (e) if involving any building which is to be altered: the structure must not exceed the highest part of the roof of the original building, or a height of 6 metres (whichever is greater), where any part of the enlarged, improved or altered building is within 10 metres of any boundary of the curtilage of the original building; or the

height of the highest part of the roof of the original building, or a height of 18 metres above the ground (whichever is greater); or

(f) any moveable structure, works, plant or machinery required temporarily and in connection with and for the duration of the development would be located in a position; so long as it is not within 10 metres of any boundary of the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, or within 5 metres of any boundary of the land.

3.6 There are also conditions requiring that development permitted under this new class must cease on or before 31st December 2020 and all parts of the development removed. This date may subsequently need to be extended by further Regulations but if it is not and the structure/building/extension/use is required to be retained, than submission of a full planning application for retrospective planning permission would be required to be submitted.

3.7 Definitions are provided to help LPA deal with enquiries - such as:

- “emergency” means ‘an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the United Kingdom’. This is sufficiently general to allow a wide range of activities to qualify.
- A “health service body” can mean any such function in the broadest sense and 14 are listed, so this is much wider than the Health Trusts which run NHS hospitals.
- an ‘event or situation [which] threatens serious damage to human welfare’ would be if it involves, causes or may cause the loss of human life; human illness or injury; homelessness; damage to property; disruption of a supply of money, food, water, energy, or fuel; disruption of a system of communication; or disruption of facilities for transport; or disruption of services relating to health.

3.8 As can be seen from this list, these are circumstances when this relaxation might apply are wide-ranging and it would be prudent for any body seeking to carry out works under this PD to get in touch with the LPA at the earliest opportunity, for officers to confirm whether or not the proposed emergency undertaking would be likely to be PD under New Class 12A or whether a formal determination would be advisable (see discussion on determinations below).

4. Flexible Construction hours

4.1 On 13 May the Housing secretary Robert Jenrick announced changes to the planning system to allowing developers to agree more flexible construction site working hours. The argument given that by extending the working day to within daylight hours construction workers could follow public health guidance onsite and stagger builders’ arrival times, it would make public transport less busy and so reducing the risk of infection. The statement had the expectation that local planning authorities would grant temporary changes to construction working hours until 9pm or later, six days a week, wherever possible and where construction working hours are controlled by planning condition.

5. OFFICER COMMENTARY ON THE CHANGES

5.1 The temporary relaxation of pd rights as described above for take-away use came in very quickly after the lockdown began and at a time when small businesses like pubs and restaurants were told to close at short notice. Officers were contacted by concerned neighbours at Christchurch Road about such activities in that parade but this was some time ago and no complaints received since then. Clearly a balance has to be struck between livelihoods and residential amenity but it would appear

that if owners are taking advantage of the change it has not led to significant nuisance being caused.

- 5.2 There have been a few enquiries linked to the new Class 12A - mainly from other Council officers seeking guidance on changes at Reading Crematorium, the use of hotels for caring for people being discharged from hospital and accommodating homeless people. Royal Berkshire Hospital Trust also sought advice on the temporary setting up of nurse's quarters. The early change to PD rights was welcomed as it underlined the pragmatic approach that officers were applying to these requests to deal with this very unusual situation.
- 5.3 It may well come to pass that the timeframes will change if the situation continues and applicants can seek a formal determination from the LPA as to whether a development is indeed PD, by submitting an application for a Certificate of Lawful Proposed Use or Development (a 'CLOPUD' application). To date no such applications have been received so it is not possible to confirm how many pubs, restaurants or emergency facilities have made use of these changes.
- 5.3 Any other emergency installations (for instance, emergency provisions on land which is not in the control of the local authority or health service body) would require the submission of a planning application and in such situations, officers would give priority to determining such an application.
- 5.4 A couple of requests to relax construction hours where conditions have specified times had already been sent in to the LPA before the Ministerial Statement. Our standard construction hours condition already includes a provision for some flexibility, for example to deal with an unusual large bit of plant being delivered on a Sunday to avoid traffic congestion. But these are normally for a short timeframe or a specified activity.
- 5.5 In the responses provided so far officers have ensured that Environmental Protection officers are aware and had suggested to developers that we might support a different set of times for internal and external works: Such as allowing outside work up to 7pm and internal works up to 8pm. In these few cases we have also advised the developer to carry out a mail drop to all nearby local residents and to notify local Ward Councillors at least 5 working days in advance of the first works under the changed times taking place.
- 5.6 However, following the Ministerial Statement, officers in Environmental Services and Planning are working on a joint procedure to manage and record these requests to ensure ward councillors are notified and any neighbours as appropriate are informed with a proportionate fee charged for processing the request.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 6.1 The Planning Service contributes to the Council's strategic aims in terms of:
 - Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active."
 - Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing homes for those in most need."
 - Seeking to meet the 2019 Corporate Plan objectives for "Providing infrastructure to support the economy."

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 There is no requirement or facility for community engagement or public consultation for works which are carried out as PD. Requests for later working hours on construction sites however may require public engagement.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 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.

- 8.2 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none arising from the report. In cases of doubt regarding PD determinations, the Council's Planning Solicitor may be involved, but this is part of normal Planning Service functions.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report. It is unlikely that the fees charged for processing requests to extend working hours will amount to a significant fee income.

Back ground

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/412/contents/made>

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 3rd June 2020

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 191479

Address: 152 Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8AZ

Proposal: Change of use of a former guest house (C1) to an 8-bedroom, 8 person house in multiple occupation (Sui Generis). (amended)

Applicant: Mr Mark Bennett

Deadline: 8/1/2020

Extended Deadline: 5/6/2020

Planning Guarantee 26 week target: 13/5/2020

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives.

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

- 1) TL1 - standard time limit 3 yrs.
- 2) AP1 - Approved plans.
- 3) DC1 - Vehicle parking as specified and retained.
- 4) HM3 - HMO refuse & recycling (vermin proof) to be submitted and approved.
- 5) HM4 - HMO cycle storage to be submitted and approved.
- 6) HM5 & HM6 - HMO - No entitlement to parking permits.
- 7) C1 - Hours of construction and demolition.
- 8) C4 - No burning of waste.
- 9) HM1 - In accordance with approved HMO Management Plan.
- 10) HM2 - The communal area - kitchen/living/dining to the ground floor, as on the approved plan, to be retained for communal use at all times.
- 11) The HMO use at ground, first and second floors hereby approved shall be restricted to a maximum of eight persons.
- 12) N9 - Noise assessment and mitigation residential to be submitted and approved.
- 13) To be undertaken in accordance with the measures as set out in the FRA pre-occupation.
- 14) Rear amenity space and front garden space to be implemented pre-occupation and retained as shown on the approved plan.

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

- 1) IF5 - Terms and Conditions
- 2) IF6 - Building Regulations
- 3) I10 - Noise between residential properties
- 4) I26 - Housing Act
- 5) I11 - CIL not chargeable
- 6) I13 - Parking Permits
- 7) IF2 - Pre-commencement Conditions

- 8) IF7 - Complaints about Construction
- 9) IF3 - Highways
- 10) Contact Waste Team to ensure correct number of bins is provided.
- 11) A planning permission does not confer any rights of access over Third Party land
- 12) IF1 - Positive & Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site is located on the eastern side of Caversham Road and is the former Bridge Lodge guest house, next to the Thameside Hotel. The property was purchased in June 2019 and internal works are currently taking place to convert the property to an HMO as applied for through this application.
- 1.2 This part of Caversham Road includes a number of non-residential uses: small retail, guesthouses/hotels, hot food takeaways and larger properties under HMO.
- 1.3 This is a terraced property of three storeys (with the second floor within the roof space). The ground level to the rear of the property is lower than at the front, hence there are a few steps internally as you progress between the front and the rear of the property. To the rear is a concreted yard area, currently used for parking, accessed from Thames Avenue.
- 1.4 The planning history (having undertaken an online search) does not appear to include an approved change of use to a guest house (and microfiche records cannot currently be consulted due to the lockdown of the council offices). However, on the basis that it appears that the property has been used as a guest house for almost 30 years, as an established use it goes well beyond the 10 years for a change of use to be the subject of enforcement action.
- 1.5 The site is within an Air Quality Management Area (Policy EN15). The front part of the property is within Flood Zone 2, and the rear part within Flood Zone 3 (Policy EN18).
- 1.6 This application was called to your meeting by Councillor Page due to concerns for the quality and intensification of use and parking.



Location plan



Front view (as a guest house)

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The original submission was to change the former guest house use to a 9 bed Sui Generis House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) with the inclusion of a rear single storey extension, to accommodate one of the proposed bedrooms. The amended scheme is for the change of use to an 8 bedroom, 8 person HMO, with no extension.

2.2 The layout would be as follows:

Ground Floor - 2 en-suite bedrooms: 11.8sqm and 7.90sqm, communal kitchen, lounge/diner 31.95sqm, access to the rear.

First Floor - 2 en-suite bedrooms: 13.89sqm and 8.37sqm, bathroom and 2 bedrooms 10.57sqm and 7.46sqm

Second Floor - 2 en-suite bedrooms: 12sqm and 7.2sqm
(dimensions exclude en-suites and areas below 1.5m head height)

One car parking space, cycle store, bin store and amenity space.

2.3 **Originally submitted plans** and documentation as received 4th November 2019 are as follows:

- Location Plan
- Existing Floor Plans - Drawing no: CavershamRd - 152- 01
- Existing Elevations - Drawing no: CavershamRd - 152- 03
- Proposed Floor Plans - Drawing no: CavershamRd - 152- 01
- Site Plan [Proposed] - Drawing no: CavershamRd - 152- 05
- Proposed Elevations - Drawing no: CavershamRd - 152- 04
- Planning Statement, dated 30/10/19, prepared by Platinum Property Partners

Amended and additional information:

- Existing and Proposed Elevations - Drawing no: CavershamRd - 152- 03a, received 13th February 2020
- Proposed Floor Plans - Drawing no: CavershamRd - 152- 01a, received 13th February 2020
- Site Plan [Proposed] - Drawing no: CavershamRd - 152- 05a, received 21st May 2020

- Flood Risk Assessment, dated 11/2/20, prepared by Ambiental Environmental Assessment, received 9th March 2020
- HMO Management Plan Covering Internal and External Communal Areas. Dated April 2020, received 17th April 2020

2.4 *Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):*

In relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. Under the Council's Charging Schedule the proposed development has a zero charge.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

88/01246/COU (880325) - Change of use from snack bar with residential accommodation to guest house - Refused 12/1/1989 - *Loss of permanent residential accommodation; the proposed use is over intensive and substandard; and the parking facilities are substandard and poorly arranged.*

91/00075/FUL (910704) - Single storey rear extension to provide a boiler & laundry room - Approved 21/3/1991

91/00708/ADV (910195) - Painted Sign - Approved 15/9/1991

91/00747/FUL (910631) - Awnings on front elevation - Refused 14/10/1991

91/01047/FUL (910998) - Awnings on front elevation - Approved 5/12/1991

190274/PREAPP - Pre-application advice for conversion of existing guest house (C1 use Class) to Large HMO (Sui Generis Use Class) - Observations sent 14/3/2019

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Statutory

Environment Agency

They stated that as this is a minor development in a flood zone and it involves change of use within the same vulnerability type of use (i.e. more vulnerable) that their Flood Risk Standing Advice should be used. They highlighted that while the number of bedrooms has not changed the use has gone from short term stays to full time occupancy. This could increase the number of people at risk of flooding. Safe access and egress must be assessed as part of this application.

4.2 Non-statutory

Environmental Protection & Nuisance (EP&N) -

Environmental Protection concerns:

- Noise impact on development
- Noise transmission between dwellings
- Air Quality impact - increased exposure / new receptors
- Construction and Demolition phase
- Bin storage - rats

Noise impact on development - A noise assessment should be submitted in support of applications for new residential proposed in noisy areas. This location is likely to experience high levels of noise from the busy Caversham Road. Whilst this was a guest house previously, the consequences of being exposed to high noise levels temporarily are much less significant than for a permanent resident.

The noise assessment will be assessed against the recommendations for internal noise levels within dwellings and external noise levels within gardens / balconies in accordance with BS 8233:2014 and WHO guidelines for Community Noise. The report should identify any mitigation measures that are necessary to ensure that the recommended standard is met.

The noise assessment data should also include noise events (L_{Max}) and the design should aim to prevent noise levels from noise events exceeding 45dB within bedrooms at night, as this is linked with sleep disturbance.

Internal noise criteria (taken from BS8233:2014)

Room	Design criteria	Upper limit
Bedrooms (23:00 to 07:00)	<30dB LAeq,8hour	
Living rooms (07:00 - 23:00)	<35dB LAeq,16hour	
Gardens & Balconies	<50dB LAeq,T	<55dB LAeq,T

As a noise assessment has not been submitted and the proposed development is by a very busy road, I recommend a condition is attached to any consent requiring a noise assessment to be submitted prior to commencement of development and any approved mitigation measures implemented prior to occupation to show that recommended noise levels in the table above can be met.

The noise assessment will need to identify the external noise levels impacting on the proposed site.

Noise mitigation is likely to focus on the weak point in the structure; glazing. Given that the acoustic integrity would be compromised

should the windows be opened, ventilation details must also be provided, where mitigation relies on closed windows. Ventilation measures should be selected which do not allow unacceptable noise ingress and should provide sufficient ventilation to avoid the need to open windows in hot weather, however non-openable windows are not considered an acceptable solution due to the impact on living standards.

I recommend the following condition: N9 - Noise Assessment & Mitigation Residential (to be submitted).

Noise between residential properties - sound insulation of any building - include an informative.

Air Quality - Increased exposure - The proposed development is located within an air quality management area that we have identified with monitoring as being a pollution hot-spot (likely to breach the EU limit value for NO₂) and introduces new exposure / receptors. The monitoring results for the nearby Caversham Road air quality monitoring site shows that the limit value for NO₂ was breached/exactly at the limit last year. Therefore mitigation measures should be provided as part of the application.

The mitigation plan must quantify the impact on emissions the proposed mitigation will have, in order to show that future occupants will be protected from the effects of poor air quality.

One method of protecting future occupants is by setting a development back from the source of pollution. Where the development involves converting an existing building and allowing a buffer zone is not an option it may be that other mitigation can be applied. In the first instance this would be to implement measures to reduce the level at the facade of the property by creating a barrier between the property and the carriageway, such as close boarded fencing or planting vegetation.

If this is not possible then locating habitable rooms away from the source of pollution or the use of mechanical ventilation with the inlet on the clean side of the property may be acceptable. This list of potential measures is by no means an exhaustive list.

Mitigation against increased exposure:

- Mechanical ventilation - inlets from the 'clean' side of the development, long term maintenance needs to be addressed
- Buffer zones - consider increasing distance of the building façade from very busy roads
- Habitable rooms - consider placing stairwells, corridors and bathrooms on the façade fronting pollution source
- Non-opening front windows - this should only be considered in certain circumstances, needs to be balanced against loss of freedom for future occupants

- Green Infrastructure - Installation of green walls, rooves, or planters.

Reading Borough Council's Air Quality Policy EN15 requires that developments have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality through design, mitigation and where required planning obligations to be used to help improve local air quality.

I recommend the following condition: N14 - Air Quality Mitigation (to be submitted).

Construction and demolition phases - extensions / renovations - We commonly receive complaints about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and about smoke from bonfires associated with the burning of waste on site of minor developments.

I recommend the informatives regarding construction hours no burning of waste are attached to help prevent complaints.

Transport

The initial comments were as follows: The proposal consists of the change of use of a C1 Guest House in to a 9 bedroom HMO.

Caversham Road is a Classified road and is located just outside Reading town centre and is close to Caversham Centre. It falls within the Zone 2, the primary core; this zone directly surrounds the Central Core and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading, this zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone. The site is within easy walking distance to Reading Station (North Entrance). The completed Christchurch Bridge across the River Thames is appropriate for cyclists and forms part of the North Reading designated cycle route, it links to National Cycle Network Route 5.

In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide parking provision of 0.25 parking spaces per room. The existing use currently benefits from a parking area located at the rear of the site. The submitted Planning Statement states that 4 off road parking spaces would be available which would be in excess of the current Parking Standards, however this has not been illustrated on submitted plans. Revised plans required.

Caversham Road and the surrounding road network all have parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. There are also limited waiting bays along the frontage of the retail units and houses on the opposite side of the carriageway which restricts parking to 30 mins between 9.15am-4.30pm. Outside of these hours, these parking bays

are available without restriction.

The development site is located close to roads that operate a Residents Parking permit Scheme, Parking Permit Area; Zone 03R. Under the Borough's current parking standards, this proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area. Therefore if this application is approved there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed dwellings will not be issued with a resident parking permit which should be covered by condition and an informative applied. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

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 5 cycle parking spaces for this proposed development. Although the planning statement states that cycle storage will be provided at the rear of the site this has not been illustrated on submitted plans. Revised plans are required.

Bin storage has not been illustrated on the submitted plans. Bin storage should comply with Manual for Streets and British Standard 5906: 2005 for Waste Management in Buildings and should be located no further than 15m from the access point of the site to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. Revised plans illustrating storage and collection points are required.

Please ask the applicant's agent to submit revised plans addressing the points above.

Planning Officer note: Following the reduction of the number of bedrooms by one to eight and further discussion with Transport and the agent, a final amended site plan was submitted to show one car parking space, along with an improved rear amenity space, bin store and cycle storage. Transport has confirmed that 1 car parking space would be acceptable. This is based on the location of the site and the parking controls in the area. Further details are required for the proposed Sheffield Stands. Conditions related to parking permits, providing and retaining the parking space, and further details of the bin store are in the recommended conditions and informatives as included above.

4.3 Public

Nos. 144-150, and 154 Caversham Road were consulted and a site notice was displayed.

One observation was received as follows (with regard to the original submission, which included the rear extension):

“We do not wish to object to the proposed plans. However, we would strongly suggest that the following measures to be taken into consideration when reviewing and approving this application. There is a well-known rodent infestation in the area being close to the river. Therefore pest control measures should be put in place As well as commercial waste collection to reduce the attraction of such vermin. Previous owners have not put these measures in place causing severe problems to resident and commercial. Secondly parking is a major issue for this area as well as traffic so please ensure that this is considered.”

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) (2019) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.2 The Development Plan is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) (RBLP). The relevant policies are:

Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change

Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN15: Air Quality

Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

Policy EN18: Flooding and Drainage

Policy H8: Residential Conversions

Policy H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

Policy TR1: Achieving The Transport Strategy

Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

5.3 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are:

- Sustainable Design and Construction (December 2019)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design (October 2011)
- Residential Conversions (2013)

5.4 Other relevant information:

- National Guidance: Review Individual Flood Risk Assessments: Standing Advice for Local Planning Authorities, March 2019

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 Policy H8 states that:

“Proposals to convert buildings into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area, particularly in terms of intensification of activity, loss of privacy, loss of external amenity space, the provision and location of adequate on-site car parking and the treatment of bin storage areas and other related servicing.

Proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will only be acceptable where:

- The proposal respects the physical character of the area in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features;*
- The proposal would not, either individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single family housing;*
- There are no unacceptable adverse impacts to residents of the scheme or surrounding properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties;*
- There is no inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;*
- Bin and cycle storage is of an appropriate size and standard for the units proposed and should be located at ground floor level with easy access; and*
- The resulting property or properties would provide adequate internal floorspace and headroom for residents.....*

Additionally, in the case of sui generis houses in multiple occupation (HMOs):

- The property to be converted measures more than 120 square metres gross;*
- There is sufficient communal space.*

6.2 Along with the relevant adopted local planning policies the appraisal of the application has been based on the Adopted Residential Conversions SPD (2013), which provides further detail for the adopted policies.

6.3 The main matters to be considered are:

- **Principle of development**
- **The impact on amenity of proposed and existing residents of nearby properties**
- **Transport**
- **Sustainability**

- Environmental matters - Flood risk, air quality
- Equalities impact

Principle of Development

- 6.4 In terms of whether a property is suitable to be converted to a large HMO Policy H8 requires a property to measure more than 120 square metres gross. The property meets this requirement and therefore the conversion into a large HMO would be acceptable in principle.
- 6.5 In order to determine whether the conversion would result in unduly diluting or harming an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single family housing, the threshold limit, as set out in the Residential Conversions SPD, is applied (as required under para 4.2).
- 6.6 The SPD identifies that the *“tipping point is when the concentration of HMOs becomes over dominant and the community is no longer considered to be mixed and sustainable.”* The SPD defines that *“planning permission will not normally be granted where the proportion of HMOs will result in HMOs representing 25% or more of the residential properties within a circle of 50m radius measured from the application site”* (para. 5.43).
- 6.7 The concentration of HMOs in the area surrounding the application site has been calculated as a percentage of the total estimated number of existing HMOs (C4 or sui generis) against the total number of residential properties, i.e. those falling with C3, C4 or sui generis HMO use¹. Available data from Environmental Health, Council Tax, extant (unimplemented) permissions for HMOs, data on property websites, and data held by the Planning Enforcement Team, has been used. Where the radius includes entire buildings falling within an A, B, C1 or C2 use class, D or Sui Generis Use Class apart from a Sui Generis HMO, they have been discounted from the total number of buildings in the radius.
- 6.8 The total number of relevant properties (i.e. excluding those wholly in A, B, C1 or C2 uses) within the 50m radius, including the application site, is 24. The total number of properties in HMO use, using the above sources of data, is estimated to be 7 (Including the application site) and therefore the overall percentage is calculated as 29% which is above the threshold of 25%. However, only a few properties within the radius remain as single family houses, and are mainly on Thames Avenue. Given the high proportion of non-residential uses, including hotels, and guest houses, and that the property was previously a guest house, it is considered that the

¹ Any building partly within an A, B, C1 or C2 use class, D or Sui Generis Use Class (apart from a Sui Generis HMO) and partly used as a C3, C4 or sui generis HMO, the C3, C4 or sui generis HMO use still counts towards the threshold calculation.

proposal would not have a significantly detrimental impact on the existing character or composition of the immediate area.

- 6.9 Subject to addressing other policy issues, the principle of the use for a HMO is therefore considered by officers to be acceptable.

The impact on amenity of proposed and existing residents of nearby properties

- 6.10 The Residential Conversions SPD sets out a number of checklist items which provide further detail related to adopted policies H8, CC8 and H10 of the RBLP.

- 6.11 Policy CC8 requires development to not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of: Privacy and overlooking; Access to sunlight and daylight; Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; Harm to outlook; Noise and disturbance; Artificial lighting; Vibration; Dust and fumes; Smell; Crime and safety.

- 6.12 Policy H10 deals specifically with private and communal space and requires such space to allow for sitting out, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, drying space.

Room Sizes

- 6.13 The SPD identifies minimum internal floorspace standards (Appendix 1) as 6.5sqm for a single bedroom and 7sqm for a kitchen. The kitchen/living/dining area is shown as 31.95sqm and the smallest bedroom would be 7.2sqm, with the majority of bedrooms larger than this. All the proposed rooms and kitchen meet these minimum sizes.

Communal Space

- 6.14 The SPD identifies that the amount of communal space that is considered appropriate in a large HMO would be dependent on the number and size of bedrooms. The standard set out is for one communal room for every 4-6 bedrooms (depending on the size of the bedrooms). The amended scheme provides for one large communal area on the ground floor of 31.95sqm comprising an open plan kitchen, living and dining area, which can be independently accessed and has direct access to the rear amenity and parking/cycle and bin storage. A number of the bedrooms are of a good size and the communal space is considered to be of an acceptable size and layout to accommodate residents.

Amenity Space

- 6.15 The application site includes a space at the rear, which totals ca. 117sqm, comprising parking, cycle storage, bin storage and amenity area. An amended site plan was submitted which includes an enhanced garden area, which incorporates hard and soft landscaping.

The rear area is accessible from the communal kitchen/ living/ dining area. This is considered to meet the requirements of Policy H10. In addition, the property is close to public areas of open space adjacent to the River.

External windows

- 6.16 All habitable rooms would benefit from external windows.

Privacy and Overlooking

- 6.17 It is not considered that there would be a loss of privacy to surrounding uses and that any overlooking of private spaces would be the same as currently occurs from the present guest house use.

Noise and Disturbance

- 6.18 Policy H8 requires proposals to not create *“unacceptable adverse impacts to residents of the scheme or surrounding properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties”*.
- 6.19 With regard to stacking and layout the Council’s SPD seeks to avoid layouts which locate living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens, next to, above, or below, proposed or neighbouring bedrooms. The layout largely achieves this with only the communal kitchen/ living/ dining area located next to and below bedrooms. The remainder of the rooms are stacked appropriately.
- 6.20 In terms of existing surrounding residents it would not be expected that the amount of the noise from the property, housing a maximum of eight adults, nor within the garden, would be appreciably different from that generated from the current guest house use when fully occupied. An HMO would be likely to have less comings and goings than a guest house. The property is located on a busy road, so it is unlikely that any external noise generated from an HMO use would be such to that would exceed existing traffic noise.
- 6.21 However, the applicant has confirmed that the following noise mitigation measures have been implemented:
- All front windows replaced with triple glazing. These windows are silenced glass which have 6.4mm laminated on the outside and are toughened on the inside to give minimum vibration. They also have non-metallic spacers offering acoustic comfort.
 - The remainder of the windows have been replaced with ‘A’ rated double glazing;
 - A new trickle vent system has been incorporated into all new windows to reduce the need to open windows to noise exposure.
 - Sound boarding has been undertaken between bathrooms to further mitigate noise levels.

- 6.22 A condition is also included for the submission and approval of a noise assessment to demonstrate acceptable noise levels within the rooms.

Bin storage

- 6.23 Policy H8 requires that bin storage is of an appropriate size and to which there is easy access. Bin storage is proposed within the rear garden and a condition is included to ensure its provision and retention. An informative is included regarding checking requirements with Waste Team. Issues were raised through consultation regarding problems of rats and due to the widespread problem of rats in Reading, especially where there are shared bins, it is important for bin stores to be vermin proof to prevent rats accessing the waste. The condition requires the details of the bin store to be submitted and approved.
- 6.24 An HMO management plan has been submitted and compliance with it is a recommended condition. This includes the management of noise from tenants both within the property and externally within the garden, and dealing with the disposal of waste.
- 6.25 The amended scheme is therefore considered to accord with the relevant policies, which are CC8, H8 and H10.

Transport

- 6.26 The amended proposal includes a rear parking area for 1 no. car parking space. Although this is below standard (of 2 spaces), Transport has confirmed that this would be acceptable due to the specific sustainable location and the presence of existing parking restrictions in the area and subject to no entitlement to parking permits. This is also balanced against the benefits that an enhanced rear amenity space would bring to future occupants. There is proposed cycle storage in the rear garden.
- 6.27 The proposal would therefore accord with policies TR1, TR3, TR4, and TR5 as confirmed by RBC Transport Strategy. Conditions are included for the provision and retention of car parking spaces, the submission of further details of cycle storage to show the layout for the 'Sheffield' type stands, and no entitlement to parking permits.

Sustainability

- 6.28 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, February 2019) states in Paragraph 148: *“The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure”*.

- 6.29 Adopted Local Plan Policy CC2 requires new development to reduce the consumption of resources and materials by using designs and site layouts which use *“energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change”*.
- 6.30 The Policy specifically states that *“Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.”*
- 6.31 Policy CC3 requires that all developments demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. Supporting text in para 4.1.8 states that *“The design of developments therefore needs to more carefully consider matters such as shading, insulation and ventilation, surface water runoff and storage and the use of appropriate tree and other planting.”*
- 6.32 Policy CC5 requires minimisation of waste during construction and the life of the development.
- 6.33 The applicant has confirmed that a range of measures have been implemented as part of the refurbishment and conversion as follows:
- Upgrade of the heating system to include a brand new ‘A’ rated Worcester green star condensing boiler, including thermostatic radiators and two joule unvented high recovery hot water cylinders;
 - All bathrooms have been upgraded to include new shower thermostatically controlled shower vales to reduce water consumption;
 - Thermally efficient triple glazed windows to the front and ‘A’ rated double glazed windows elsewhere;
 - Re-insulation of the loft to current standards;
 - Cyclone 7 ventilation incorporated in all bathrooms;
 - Greening of the front garden, and the introduction of soft landscaping to the rear garden and permeable surfacing.
- 6.34 Such measures are considered to accord with Policies CC2, CC3.

Environmental matters

Flood Risk

- 6.35 NPPF paragraph 155 states that *“Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.”*
- 6.36 Policy EN18 requires that developments are directed to the areas at the lowest risk of flooding, following the Sequential and Exceptions Test set out in the NPPF, and taking account of climate change.

“..... Wherever possible, development should be designed to reduce flood risk, both on- and off-site. ...all new developments in areas of flood risk should give priority to SuDS.”

- 6.37 The front half of the application site is within Flood Zone 2 (pale blue) and the rear part within Flood Zone 3 (darker blue)



- 6.38 NPPF Paragraph 164 does not require this change of use to be subject to a sequential test, but should still meet the requirements for a site-specific flood risk assessment. The previous and proposed use are both classed as more vulnerable uses and the guest house had sleeping accommodation at the ground floor including to the rear of the property. The proposed scheme includes ground floor HMO rooms within the front half of the property only and at first and second floors.
- 6.39 The national ‘Standing advice for vulnerable developments’ requires advice to be followed for surface water management, access and evacuation and floor levels.
- 6.40 The submitted FRA has reviewed all sources of flooding and states that the flood level would be 38.36m AOD in a 1% AEP + 35% for climate change or 1%AEP +70% climate change event. As the existing internal finished floor level is 38.65 AOD to the front and 38.13m AOD to the rear, this would mean that the maximum depth of floodwaters to the rear would be 0.23m in such flood events.
- 6.41 As the flood depth would be less than 0.3m, a mitigation strategy is recommended. The FRA states that raising floor levels to the rear of the building, in accordance with the EA Standing Advice, would not be feasible due to the restricted floor to ceiling height. If raising floor levels above the estimated flood level is not possible then the Standing Advice requires the consideration of ‘extra flood resistance and resilience measures’, which for flood depths of under 300mm relate to the design of the building or development keeping water out as much as possible, i.e. materials should be used with low permeability, so that water cannot pass through.
- 6.42 The FRA includes a water exclusion strategy for the rear of the property and reference is made to the ‘Flood Resilient Construction of New Buildings (MHCLG, 2007) guidance, which suggests various

flood resilient measures that may adopted in residential development. In this instance the following are recommended:

- External render to at least 38.96mAOD (300mm above 1%AEP+35%CC flood level of 38.36mAOD)
- Internal render to at least 38.96mAOD (300mm above 1%AEP+35%CC flood level of 38.36mAOD)
- Air-bricks to be no lower than 38.96mAOD
- No plaster board within 600mm of floor level
- Sealed PVC external framed door recommended to replace existing rear door

6.43 The refurbishment of the property is in progress and the applicant has confirmed that all the measures as set out in the FRA will be implemented.

6.44 Additionally safe refuge would be possible at first floor level in a flood event and the FRA identifies a safe access and egress route through the front of the property and away from flood risk areas.

6.45 It is also required that the residents, site management and site owner should subscribe to the EA Flood Alert and Warning Service.

6.46 In terms of surface water management the FRA recommends that betterment would be achieved over the existing situation with the implementation of a rain water harvesting system (water butts) and permeable paving on hardstanding areas.

6.47 The proposed development is considered to be suitable and accords with Policy EN18, as long as the mitigation measures, including warning procedures can be maintained for the lifetime of the development. A condition is included requiring the measures as set out in the FRA to be implemented and maintained and an amended site plan, as already discussed and agreed with the agent, will be submitted prior to committee and reported in an update, will include for permeable paving, grassed/ landscaped areas.

Air Quality

6.48 The proposed scheme includes for three of the eight bedrooms to be at the front of the property, which has some set back from Caversham Road. There are limited means to reconfigure the internal space and make efficient and viable use of the property. To ensure all bedrooms have an external window it means that some of the bedrooms need to be to the front. The applicant has confirmed that the following mitigation measures have been installed which contribute towards reducing the impacts of air quality within the scheme and are considered to accord with Policy EN15:

- A new trickle vent system has been incorporated into all new windows to reduce the need to open windows.
- Cyclone 7 ventilation is incorporated in all bathrooms; and
- Planting will be installed to the front.

Equalities Impact

- 6.49 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, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, 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.

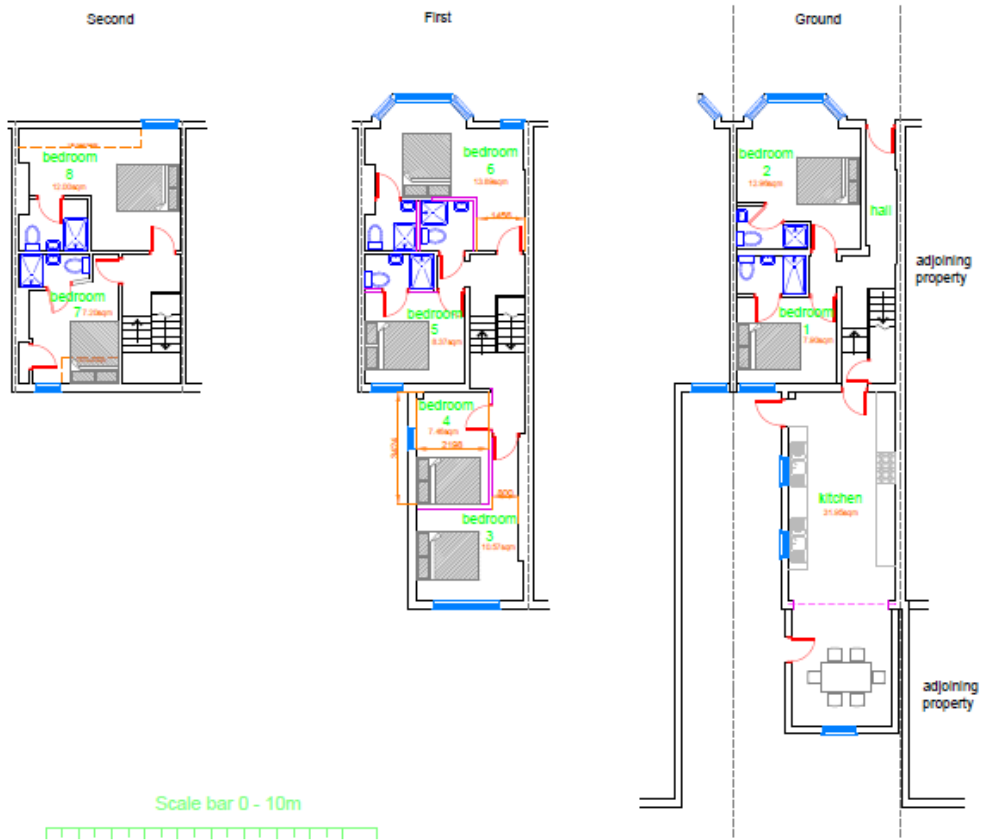
7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This proposal has been considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. Although the percentage of HMOs already exceeds the threshold guidance, the addition of another HMO is considered acceptable in this instance, because the existing character of the location is already dominated by a mix of other uses, with very few single family dwellings, and the application site is already an alternative use to a single family dwelling.
- 7.2 This is considered to be mitigated by the provision of residential accommodation, which contributes to overall housing needs, in a sustainable location. The proposal would also reduce risk to occupants through removing a sleeping area within the rear part of the site, which is within flood zone 3, and measures to improve the flood resilience of the property are conditioned. Additionally, there would be improvements to the rear space with respect to secure bin and bicycle storage and an enhanced amenity space, and conditions are included in this regard.
- 7.3 Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant on this scheme, and amendments have been secured, which are considered to satisfactorily address policy issues, and overall, officers consider this to be a supportable scheme. It is therefore, recommended for approval subject to conditions and informative.

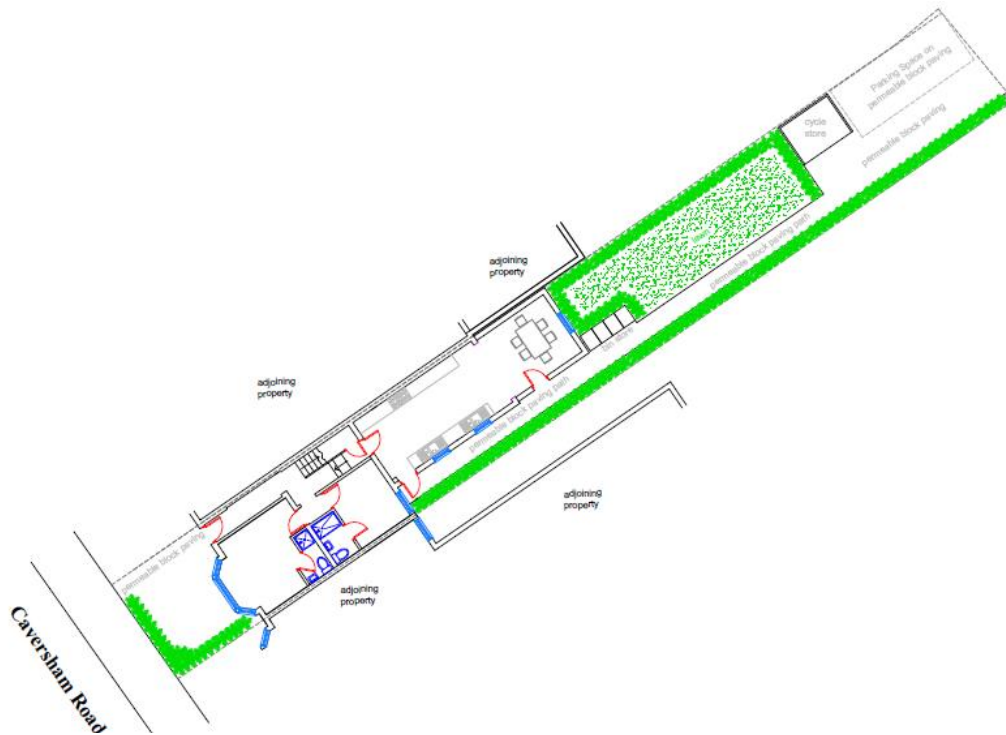
Case Officer: Alison Amoah

APPENDIX 1: PLANS

Floor Plans



Site Plan



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 3 June 2020

ITEM NO.

Ward: Abbey

App No: 192052/HOU

Address: 45 Watlington Street

Proposal: Single storey rear extension, alterations to fenestration and provision of roof light to forward roof slope

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Murphy

Date validated: 27/12/19

Target Date: 21/02/20 Extension: 06/03/20

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

Conditions to include:

1. Time limit for implementation
2. In accordance with approved plans
3. Materials to match
4. Window and roof light details to be submitted
5. No use of roof as terrace/balcony
6. Obscure-glazing
7. Hours of work

Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Need for building regulations
3. Encroachment
4. Construction and Demolition subject to Environmental Health
5. Positive and proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

This application was deferred at the 4 March 2020 Planning Applications Committee meeting to allow Members to carry out an accompanied site visit. However, social distancing measures in response to Covid19 came in before the site visit could take place - scheduled for 26 March.

2. By then the Agenda papers for PAC on 1 April had been published but that meeting was cancelled so this application has been hanging in limbo. Helpfully at your last meeting (29 April 2020) it was agreed that officers could provide additional photographs to help Members understand sites better while site visits are suspended.

3. Therefore, this application is being presented to you with additional photographs to be provided in time for your meeting.. The recommendation and officer advice remains as set out in the previous reports to Planning Applications Committee, which are appended to this report below.

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES	
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL	ITEM NO.
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 01/04/20	

Ward: Abbey

App No: 192052/HOU

Address: 45 Watlington Street

Proposal: Single storey rear extension, alterations to fenestration and provision of roof light to forward roof slope

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Murphy

Date validated: 27/12/19

Target Date: 21/02/20

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RECOMMENDATION

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Informatives to include:

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5. Positive and proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 45 Watlington Street is a modest three storey, with basement, mid-terraced property located within Eldon Square Conservation Area. The property benefits from a loft conversion, with front and rear dormers. The dormers combine to exceed the original ridge height. The dormers are unauthorised but have been in situ for in excess of ten years, so are immune from enforcement action due to the passing of time. Beyond the rear garden is located a parking court for Barkham Mews.

1.2 The Eldon Square Conservation Area appraisal notes that the character of the area is predominantly residential, with Watlington Street being the primary street within the area.

APPENDIX to 192052/HOU - Reports to 4 March and 1 April PAC

- 1.3 *“Its street frontage of short rows of two and three storey houses is punctuated by two significant places of worship and Watlington House, a 17th Century clothier’s mansion, now offices”.*
- 1.4 45 Watlington Street is identified as a Building of Townscape Merit, as are all the unlisted buildings along Watlington Street. The adjoining properties at 47 and 49 Watlington Street are a storey taller, and benefit from rearward gables and further extensions. The adjoining property at 43 Watlington Street is of the same original form and has not been extended to the rear.
- 1.5 The application was called in to be determined at Planning Applications Committee by Councillor Page, following neighbour objections.
- 1.6 Members decided to defer further consideration of this application pending an accompanied site visit. This was scheduled to take place on 26 March but following government advice on social distancing to combat Covid-19 officers instead attended and carried out a video recording to provide Councillors with additional information.
- 1.7 Appended is the report as presented at the 4th March committee.

Appendix - Original Committee Report from 4 March 2020

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 04/03/20

ITEM NO.

Ward: Abbey

App No: 192052/HOU

Address: 45 Watlington Street

Proposal: Single storey rear extension, alterations to fenestration and provision of roof light to forward roof slope

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Murphy

Date validated: 27/12/19

Target Date: 21/02/20

Extension: 06/03/20

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT

Conditions to include:

1. Time limit for implementation
2. In accordance with approved plans
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4. Window and roof light details to be submitted
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Informatives to include:

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1. INTRODUCTION

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1.2 The Eldon Square Conservation Area appraisal notes that the character of the area is predominantly residential, with Watlington Street being the primary street within the area.

APPENDIX to 192052/HOU - Reports to 4 March and 1 April PAC

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- 1.5 The application was called in to be determined at Planning Applications Committee by Councillor Page, following neighbour objections.



Site Location Plan

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey rear extension, alterations to fenestration and the provision of roof lights. The rear extension would project to a depth of 2.1m, extending at a width of 4.6m. A distance of 0.2m would be maintained to the sideward boundaries with 43 and 47 Watlington Street. The extension would have a flat roof at a

APPENDIX to 192052/HOU - Reports to 4 March and 1 April PAC

height of 2.9m. A roof light would be located within the flat roof, with bi-fold doors located to the rear elevation. The extension would be of brick construction, to match the existing property.

- 2.2 To the rear elevation, the existing first floor windows would be replaced. The new windows would be in broadly the same location as the existing, but with the provision of a smaller, obscure-glazed, window to serve a proposed bathroom. The proposed windows would be white uPVC, to match those of rest of the property.
- 2.3 To the forward roof slope of the original property, and the northward roof slope of the front dormer would be located roof lights. The roof lights would be in a 'Conservation Area style'. The agent has confirmed the specification of the roof lights to be Keylight-Conservation Centre Pivot-01-550x780mm.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 171787/HOU - Single storey rear extension and replacement of existing front and rear dormers - Withdrawn 18/12/17
- 3.2 191353/PRE - Various external works including single storey rear extension, elevational alterations and reconstruction of dormers - Observations sent 08/10/19 *Officer note: the pre-app response gave no support for any dormer to the forward roof slope. The provision of a rearward dormer was deemed to be more acceptable but would require substantial reduction from that which was proposed, in order to mitigate against harm to the character and appearance of the property and wider Conservation Area and to neighbouring residential amenity. No objection was raised to the proposed single storey rear extension, or the proposed elevational alterations, subject to details being agreed at application stage.*

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Conservation Area Advisory Committee
No response received to consultation.
- 4.2 Reading Civic Society
No response received to consultation.
- 4.3 Neighbouring owners and occupiers at 43 and 47 Watlington Street, Wesley Methodist Church, Queens Road and 1-18 Barkham Mews were consulted by letter. Four letters of representation were received, with regard to the following:
 - The rear extension would cause an unreasonable degree of overshadowing and light loss to the kitchen of 43 Watlington Street
 - There are no rear extensions in the terraced row from The Lyndhurst, as they would impact negatively on neighbours in terms of light falling on the back of houses and gardens

APPENDIX to 192052/HOU - Reports to 4 March and 1 April PAC

- Loss of light and overshadowing does not apply to 45 Watlington Street as it is already overshadowed by 47 Watlington Street, a building constructed decades ago
- In a Conservation Area any development should take account of the effect on the architectural and historic character of the area
- There is little difference to the plans submitted under 171787/HOU, to which Reading Civic Society and the Historic Buildings Consultant objected to
- The building line of 47 Watlington Street should not be used as an excuse to overshadow other properties
- The extension will not provide a greater degree of privacy to adjacent properties
- The rear extension will cause a loss of light to the kitchen and dining room of 47 Watlington Street
- A restriction on hours of work condition should be applied to any permission

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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

5.2 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

5.3 National Planning Policy Framework

5.4 Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC7 - Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8 - Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Policy EN3 - Enhancement of Conservation Areas

Policy EN4 - Locally Important Heritage Assets

Policy H9 - House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

5.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance - A Design Guide to House Extensions (2003)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 Design and impact on the character of the surrounding area

6.2 Policy CC7 requires that all development be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading

in which it is located. Policy EN1 requires all proposals to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Policy EN3 notes that positive consideration will be given to proposals which take the opportunity to enhance the character of Conservation Areas. This might include restoring original building features and removing inappropriate additions or alterations.

- 6.3 In assessing the proposals, officers are mindful of the 171787/HOU submission, as well as the relevant refused application at 51 Watlington Street for a front dormer (170611/HOU) and its subsequent dismissal at appeal. Indeed, in his appeal decision the Planning Inspector noted the existing front dormer at 45 Watlington Street to be a significantly jarring element, harmful to the street scene and Conservation Area.
- 6.4 Upon receipt of the application, officers were concerned that the proposed plans included the unauthorised dormers, and that any resultant planning permission could be construed as granted permission for them. An amended plan was requested, with the annotation ‘no alteration to current form’ applied to the dormers. This has been received and is satisfactory. Were it to be applied for, neither dormer would receive planning permission. They are considered to cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the original property and the Conservation Area setting. Unfortunately, due to the passing of time no action can be taken against the unauthorised dormers.
- 6.5 Section 171B of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) sets time limits for enforcement action to be taken: “*Where there has been a breach of planning control consisting of the carrying out without planning permission of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, no enforcement action may be taken after the end of the period of four years beginning with the date on which the operations were substantially completed*”. Google Maps images show the dormers in situ and substantially completed in May 2012, comfortably in excess of four years prior to the date of this application. There is no mechanism by which the Local Planning Authority can reasonably expect the dormers to be removed, despite this being preferable. The application will instead be assessed on its own individual merit.
- 6.6 The Council’s Design Guide to House Extensions states that planning permission will not usually be granted for rear extensions that are longer than 4m when measured from the back of the original house. Rear extensions should be located as far away from side boundaries as possible to protect light main rooms, and to safeguard outlook from, adjacent properties. For terraced housing, rear extensions (including single storey ones) can have a significant and detrimental impact on neighbouring properties and the general appearance of the terrace.

- 6.7 45 Watlington Street is a relatively modest property but benefits from a rear garden of approximately 7m depth. 47 Watlington Street, to the south of the site, benefits from a longer plot, but also a rearward gable and extensions. 43 Watlington Street is not extended to the rear and has the same plot depth as the application site. Policy CC1 reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF, whereby a positive approach is taken to considering development proposals.
- 6.8 With a depth of 2.1m, the proposed rear extension would reflect the scale and proportion of the original property. Flat roof extensions with a height of 2.9m are common across the Borough, including on mid-terraced properties. The bulk and mass of the extension is not therefore considered to be excessive, nor would it detract from the appearance of the original property. Constructed of brick to match the existing property, its original character would not be significantly harmed.
- 6.9 The replacement of fenestration to the rear, and the provision of roof lights, is not considered to cause harm to the character and appearance of the original property, or the Conservation Area setting. Detail has been provided with regard to the specification of the roof lights, which would be in a 'conservation style'. This is deemed acceptable and would be secured by condition. The windows to be replaced are non-original white uPVC. It is considered appropriate to require the replacement windows to be in a style in keeping with the Conservation Area setting. An appropriate condition requiring details of the windows to be submitted for approval prior to installation will therefore be applied. Subject to this, the proposal is in accordance with Policies CC1, CC7, EN1, EN3, EN4 and H9 of the Local Plan and the Council's Design Guide SPG.
- 6.10 Impact on neighbouring residential amenity
- 6.11 Policy CC8 states that development will not cause a detrimental impact to the living environment of existing residential properties, in terms of privacy and overlooking, access to sunlight and daylight, visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development and harm to outlook. It is accepted that residents of neighbouring properties will notice the implementation of the proposed development, particularly the proposed 2.1m deep rear extension. To a degree, harm would be caused to the occupants of 43 and 47 Watlington Street in terms of access to sunlight and daylight, and visual dominance and overbearing effects. However, it is not considered that this degree of harm would be significant, given the modest depth of the extension.
- 6.12 Each application is assessed on its own individual merit. However, there are often similarities between schemes and replications of scenarios, particularly with regard to householder development. Reading benefits from a number of terraced properties, many of which have been extended. Considering this, and by applying Policy CC1, a positive approach is taken towards development. The application site benefits from a rear garden of

approximately 7m depth. As a result of the proposal, approximately 5m of rear garden would be retained. As stated above, the proposed rear extension is therefore considered proportionate to the original property and its plot. It should also be noted that under Permitted Development, the applicant could erect a single storey rear extension of slightly greater height, and approximately 1m greater depth, without requiring planning permission. In this context, the harm that a 2.1m deep rear extension will cause to neighbouring residential amenity must be balanced.

6.13 Officers acknowledge the concerns raised by occupants of the neighbouring properties in terms of light loss, overshadowing and visual dominance. However, it is not considered that any significantly harmful impacts on neighbouring residential amenity will arise as a result of the proposed development. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policies CC1 and CC8 of the Local Plan and the Council's Design Guide SPG.

6.14 Other matters

6.15 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics including age and disability. 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.

7. CONCLUSION

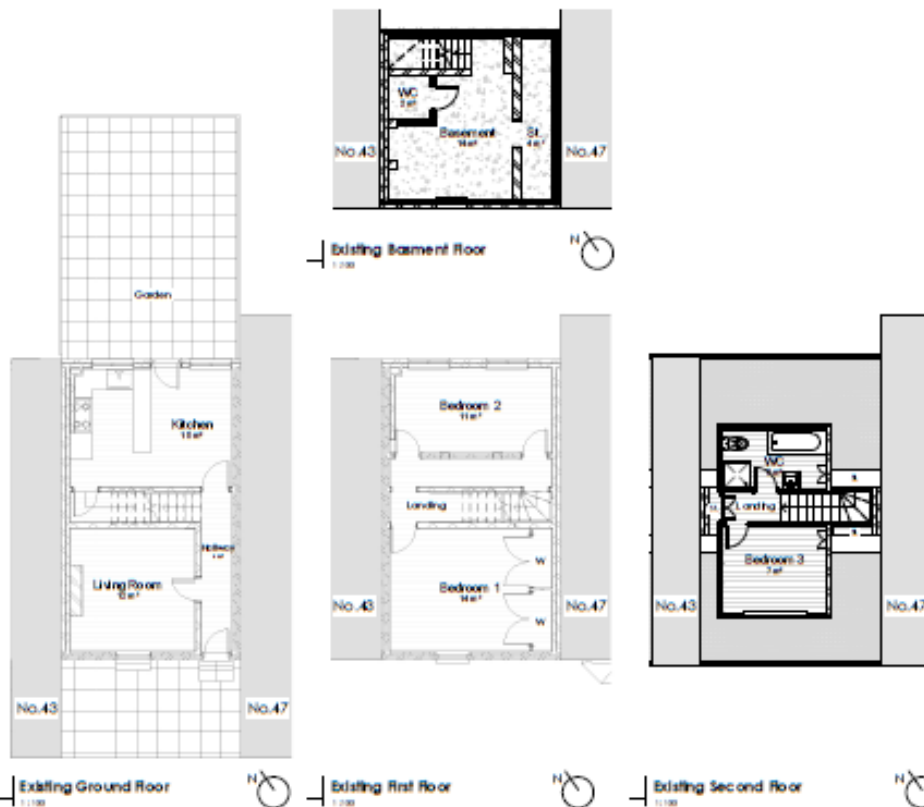
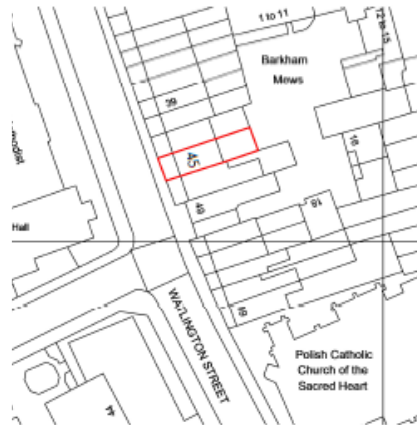
7.1 The proposal is considered to be acceptable in the context of national and local planning policy, as set out in this report. The application is recommended for approval on this basis.

8. PLANS

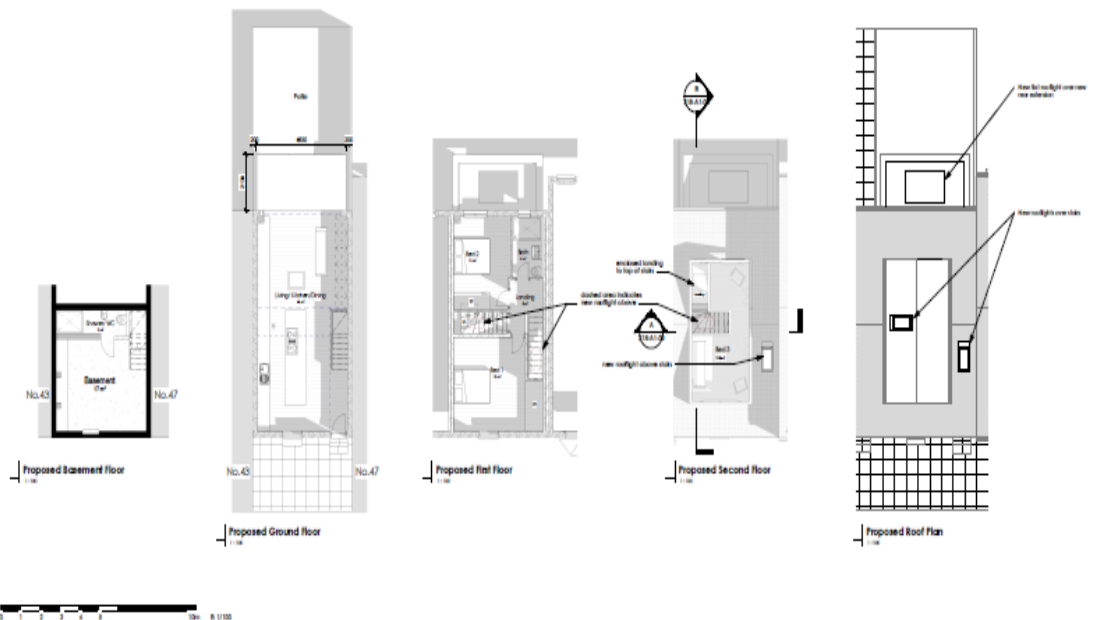
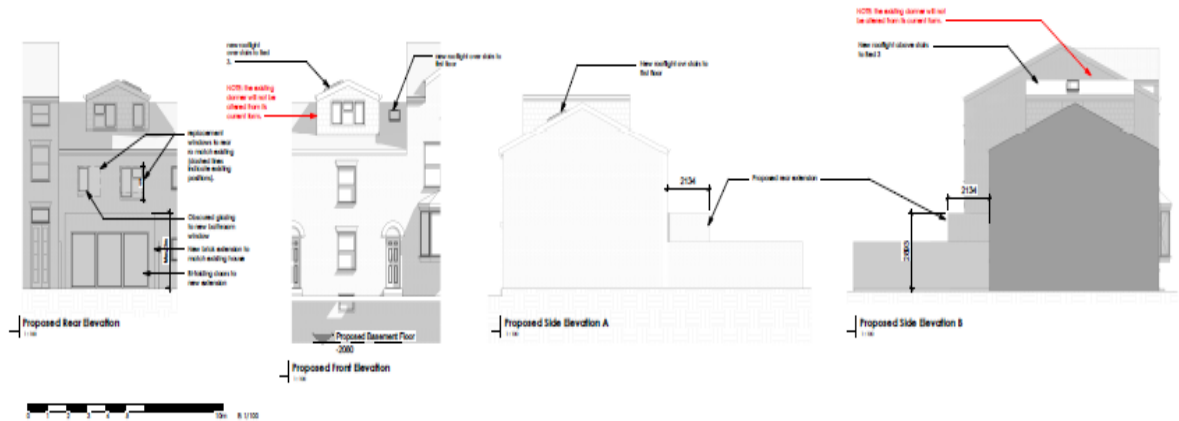
Drawing No: 218-A1-08-B - Site Location, Proposed Site Plan, Proposed Floor and Roof Plans and Elevations (received 22/01/20)

Case Officer: Tom Hughes

APPENDIX to 192052/HOU - Reports to 4 March and 1 April PAC



Existing Plans



Proposed Plans

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 3 June 2020

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 191227

Address: 11-13 Waylen Street, Reading

Proposal: Change of use from HMO and supported living accommodation to 2no. 5-bed houses.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

8-week target expiry: 13/04/2020 extension of time agreed to 6/05/2020

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT

Subject to the following conditions and informatives to include:

1. Approved plans;
2. Time limit
3. BREEAM - Pre-commencement 'Very Good'
4. BREEAM - Post-construction
5. Removal of PD rights C3 - C4 (Small HMO)
6. Pre-occupation landscaping
7. Obscure Glazing for bathroom windows (to rear)
8. Construction Method Statement
9. Pre-occupation provision of bicycle store
10. Pre-occupation provision of bin storage area

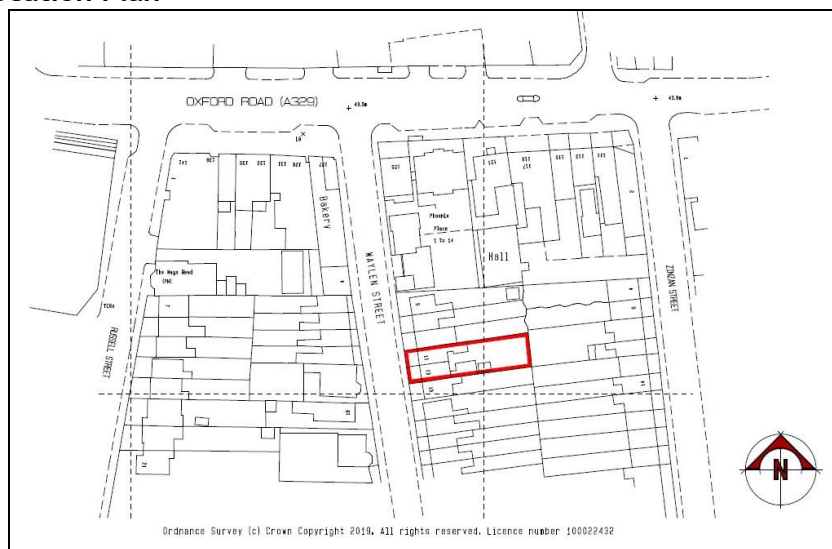
Informatives:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Terms and conditions
3. Building Control
4. Noise Transmission between residential properties (Building Regulations part E)
5. No burning of waste on site

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site contains two three storey (excluding basement) mid-terraced dwellings (no's 11 and 13 Waylen Street). Each dwelling contains a single storey rear extension, a first floor outrigger style extension. No.13 also includes an existing outbuilding. The buildings were last in use as a large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) for supported living.
- 1.2 The application site is located within the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area. Specifically, the site lies within Area 3 and is noted as a building of townscape merit.

Site Location Plan



2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal includes the change of use of the building from a large HMO (for supported living) to 2 x 5-bedroom dwellings (C3 use class). No alterations to the front façade are proposed, the outbuilding at no.13 is proposed to be removed, and a boundary fence between the properties is proposed to return the gardens to separate use.

2.2 Submitted Plans and Documentation:
Drawing No: 19/002/02A - Proposed reinstatement to 2 no separate dwellings
Drawing No: 19/002/01 - Existing plans

2.3 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):
In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. The application site was last in use within 4 years, as such would not be liable for CIL.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 12-00144-VARIAT (120800) - Continual use as a professionally staffed supported living unit without complying with condition 4 (professionally staffed 24-hours), condition 5 (number of permitted residents) and condition 9 (provision of off site parking spaces) of planning permission 06/00636/REG3

3.2 06-00636-REG3 (061052) - Change of use from separate household to a professionally staffed supported living unit

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal

4.1 Transport - No objections subject to conditions and informatives.

4.2 Environmental protection officers - No objections subject to conditions and informatives.

Public

- 4.3 A site notice was placed at the site, and letters sent to adjoining properties. No comments have been received at time of writing.

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) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

- 5.2 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is now in one document - the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019), which fully replaces the Core Strategy, the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Reading Central Area Action Plan. The relevant policies are:

CC1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
CC2	Sustainable design and construction
CC3	Adaptation to climate change
CC5	Waste minimisation and storage
CC6	Accessibility and the intensity of development
CC7	Design and the public realm
CC8	Safeguarding amenity
H1	Provision of housing
H2	Density and mix
H3	Affordable housing
H5	Standards for new housing
H8	Residential conversions
H10	Private and communal outdoor space
TR1	Achieving the transport strategy
TR3	Access, traffic and highway related matters
TR5	Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging
CR2	Design in central Reading
CR3	Public realm in central Reading
CR6	Living in Central Reading

- 5.3 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Affordable Housing (2013)
Design Guide to House Extensions (2003)
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Planning Obligations Under Section 106 (2015)
Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

6. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Principle of development
- Design considerations and effect on character
- Impact on residential amenity
- Standard of Residential Accommodation

- Transport
- Affordable Housing
- Other Matters
- Equalities impact

Principle of development

6.1 Policy OU1 (New and existing community facilities) states that:

“Proposals for new, extended or improved community facilities will be acceptable, particularly where this will involve co-location of facilities on a single site. Proposals for on-site intensification of important facilities, such as schools and healthcare uses, will be supported, subject to other policies in the plan. Proposals for additional development for further and higher education will only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that it would not lead to a material increase in the need for student accommodation, or that it will be supported by an appropriate increase in existing or planned student accommodation.”

6.2 The principle of the loss of the existing use, has been carefully considered. The building is presently un-occupied and was last in use as a Sui Generis HMO for supported living. The supporting text within Policy OU1 (Paragraph 4.7.2) states that community facilities encompass “youth and community centres” such as this. Accordingly, as the site is considered a community use under Policy OU1, its loss is resisted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a need to retain the facility. In addition, Policy CC9 seeks mitigation where development would have an adverse impact in terms of increasing the need for additional community facilities. Furthermore, Paragraph 70 of the NPPF states that decisions should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.

6.3 The applicant (The Council) has provided a statement to explain that the property is surplus to The Council’s requirements for this style of accommodation, including the re-modelling of supported accommodation services taking into account the following considerations:

- A review of services in accordance with national best practice resulting in the decision to re-focus on emergency and higher level provision within (what we now refer to as) Homelessness Support Services including introducing a hub, emergency bed spaces and assessment bed spaces at Willow House since 1st September 2018
- Services that provide 9 - 5 on-site support are an older model of housing-related support delivery that is not necessarily cost effective or in line with best practice
- A review of locational suitability and continual incidents of anti-social behaviours on Waylen Street where there was another supported accommodation property on this road and the borough’s drug and alcohol service on the corner of Oxford Road/Waylen Street
- The property being included as an accommodation option within the tender for new Homelessness Support Services; however, the successful tenderer chose not to use it in the delivery of recommissioned services deciding to utilise their own or other properties to meet their service needs

6.4 In addition, the following supported accommodation bed spaces/support services have been commissioned in Reading to meet this particular group's needs:

- Launchpad Reading - 100 bed spaces for people transitioning from the need for a 24/7 environment into independent accommodation (same level/amount of support provided at 11 - 13 Waylen Street, but remotely rather than on site)
- Floating support - cross-tenure for between 100 - 130 individuals each quarter to support people with sustaining accommodation in the community

6.5 In light of this additional information secured and the absence of any public representations against the loss of the existing use, there is no evidence to demonstrate that the facility is needed and would conflict with Policy OU1. This weighs in favour of the proposed change of use and the principle of development is thereby accepted.

Design Considerations and effect on character

6.6 The proposed development is located within the Russell Street/Castle Hill conservation area. The proposed development does not include any external changes to the front of the buildings, other than removal of the temporary security measures installed over the front doors and basement doors. Also, the boundary treatments are proposed to be retained as is, which is considered acceptable.

Mix of uses

6.7 Waylen Street has been subject to substantial change over time, where a number of large properties along the street have been changed to flats or houses in multiple occupation. An assessment has been carried out based on the Council's address data, and HMO register, and has found that within 50m of the property, are 31 buildings which would have originally been single dwelling houses. Of the 31, 16 have been converted to flats (51%), and 6 are registered as HMO's (19.4%). As such, the concentration of flats and HMO's within the immediate vicinity has resulted in the significant loss of family housing. Policy H8 (Residential conversions) and the supporting text (para. 4.4.60) "*Conversions, either individually or cumulatively, can also have a harmful impact on the character of the area through unduly diluting mixed and sustainable communities.*" As such, in this instance, it is considered appropriate, to secure by condition, that permitted development rights for change of use to a small HMO (class C4) be removed from the two properties.

Impact on residential amenity

6.8 Policy CC8 seeks to protect the amenity of surrounding occupiers whilst Policy EN16 seeks to ensure development is not harmful in terms of pollution.

6.9 The number of occupiers of the two flats would be unlikely to be any greater than that of the proposed dwellings. It is therefore considered that there would be no negative impact as a result of the proposed development.

Standard of Residential Accommodation

6.10 The proposed 2 x 5-bed, 3-storey dwelling would each exceed the internal space requirements as outlined within policy H5. As such would be

acceptable in this regard.

- 6.11 The proposal would return the dwellings to their original state in terms of sub-division of the rear garden and remove the structure to the rear of no.13. The resulting outdoor space would be appropriate and commensurate with other gardens in the area.
- 6.12 Appropriate sound insulation between dwellings is required through building regulations, as such no planning conditions are required to secure this.

Transport matters

- 6.13 The development, as proposed, is for a car-free development. The area is predominantly terraced properties, with limited off-street parking. The site is located within close proximity to the town centre, high frequency bus routes, and the Reading Central Station. The provision of a car-free development in this location is considered wholly appropriate and is in-line with the aspirations of the Council's climate emergency declaration.

Affordable Housing

- 6.14 In accordance with Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) a contribution towards affordable housing is not required as the conversion of these properties to single dwellings does not require additional floor space to be built.

Other Matters

CIL

- 6.15 The property has been in use within 4-years, as such would not trigger a CIL liability.

Sustainability

- 6.16 The proposed development would require measures to address Policy CC1, and the Council's climate emergency declaration. The conversion would be required to meet the BREEAM standards as they relate to conversions, and conditions as outlined above are recommended in this regard.

Equalities Impact

- 6.17 When determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. 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. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This proposal has been carefully considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and supplementary planning documents. The recommendation is shown above.

Case Officer: Mr Anthony Scholes

8. PLANS

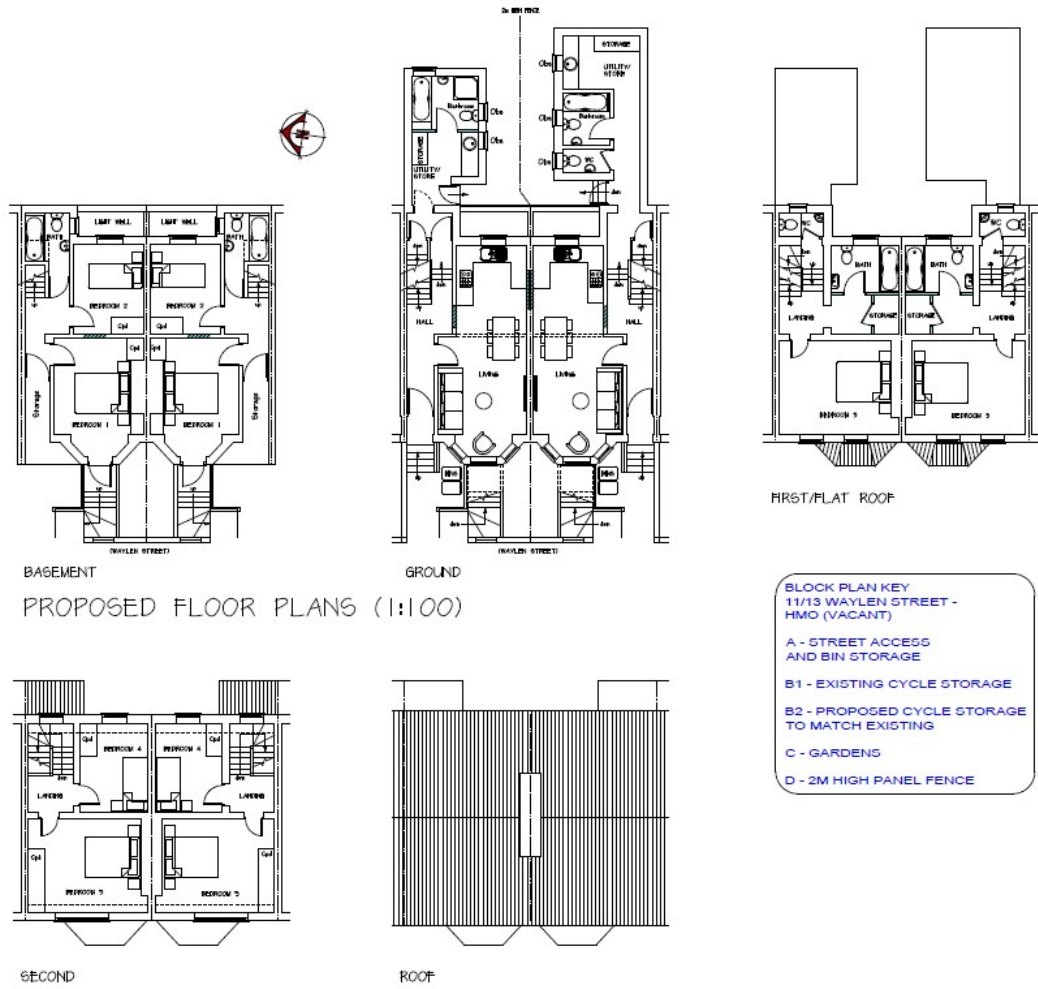


Figure 1 - Proposed floor plans

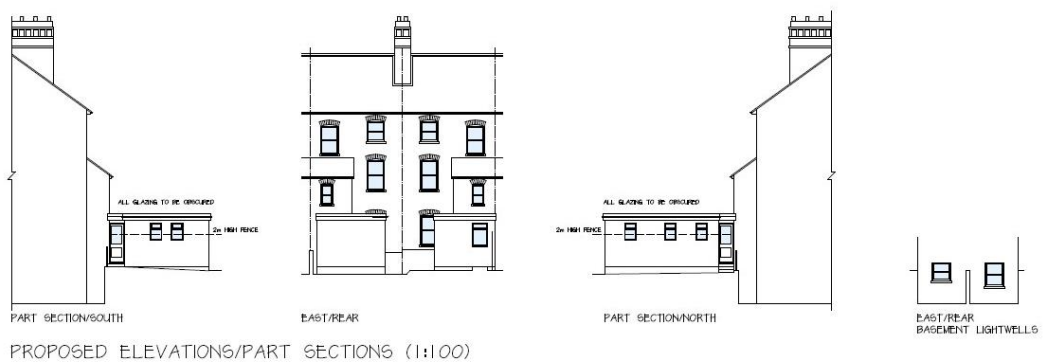


Figure 2 - Proposed rear elevations

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND REGULATORY SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 3 June 2020

Ward: Battle

App No.: 191915

Address: 39 Brunswick Hill

Proposal: 2-storey side and 3-storey rear extension and conversion of dwelling to contain 8 flats (6 x 1-bed, 2 x 2-bed) parking, demolition of existing garage and associated works (amended description).

Applicant: Mr Eric Benjamin

Date received: 2 December 2019 (valid 10 December 2019)

8 week target decision date: 4 Feb 2020 (Agreed extension of time to 30/7/20)

RECOMMENDATION:

Delegate to Deputy Director of Planning, Transport & Regulatory Services to:

GRANT Full Planning Permission with appropriate conditions and informatives, subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 legal agreement by 30th July 2020 to secure the following

- Provision of appropriate affordable housing contribution mechanism (subject to viability appraisal, full details to be provided in update report);
- Should the building subsequently be extended / altered (to create further units) or units subdivided then contributions to affordable housing would apply on a cumulative basis;
- a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) amount £5,000

OR

REFUSE permission should the S106 agreement not be completed by 30th July 2020, unless Officers, on behalf of the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport & Regulatory Services, agree to a later date for completion of the agreement.

Conditions to include:

1. Time limit for implementation (3 years)
2. Approved plans
3. Sample of materials to be provided prior to construction
4. Hard/soft landscaping scheme including boundary treatment
5. Landscaping implementation
6. Landscaping maintenance/replacement of dead trees
7. Biodiversity enhancements
8. Access control strategy in accordance with Secured by Design
9. Parking permits 1
10. Parking permits 2
11. Bicycle parking space provided in accordance with approved plans
12. Vehicle access provided in accordance with approved plans
13. Vehicle parking space provided in accordance with approved plans
14. EV Charging points (details to be provided)

15. Construction Method Statement (including noise and dust control)
16. Hours of Working - Construction and demolition phase
17. Noise assessment
18. Refuse Storage
19. No Bonfires
20. No change in unit mix
21. Sustainable drainage (to be approved)
22. Pre-commencement BREEAM 'Very Good'
23. Post-construction BREEAM 'Very Good'

Informatives to include:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Pre-commencement conditions
3. Terms and conditions
4. Need for Building Regulations approval
5. Construction nuisance informative
6. No Parking Permits
7. Highways
8. Building Regulations Approved Document E
9. Bats and work to roof
10. Community infrastructure levy (CIL)- Liable

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application relates to the conversion of a substantial Edwardian detached house on the west side of Brunswick Hill, a residential road running north from Tilehurst Road. The site is 0.14 hectares, with a 25 metre frontage and 56 metre depth, equating to 1400 square metres in area).
- 1.2 Brunswick Hill slopes downhill from south to north and contains a variety of types and sizes of dwellings, though they are predominantly two storey. Opposite the application site is a gap in the street scene where the houses are set down at a lower level from the road. There has been some more modern infill in the road, including at number 35 adjacent to the application site.
- 1.3 Number 39 has a three storey gable on the front elevation and a two and a half storey element on its southern side. It is a grand property in a 'Queen Anne Revival' style and dates from the early Twentieth Century. Internally, the property is largely unaltered, although a previous application site visit in 2017 found evidence of informal subdivision to create separate accommodation over the basement and part of the ground floor.
- 1.4 There is a single storey detached garage on the northern side of the dwelling (probably original or of similar age to the property itself) and this is also in partially separate residential use as a dwelling/artist's studio, although there is no kitchen or bathroom, these facilities being shared with the tenanted unit in the basement/ground floor of the main house.
- 1.5 The property has a large rear garden that backs on to vegetated railway land, and beyond, the railway, which is sunk into a cutting at this point beyond the pedestrian access slope down to Reading West station. The subject property is the largest plot

within the immediate area, being nearly twice the width of the prevailing plots. The garden has a brick wall running down the North, East (front) and South sides and a wooden fence on its Western frontage towards the railway. The garden is a mature mix of lawn, vegetable garden and shrubs and some fruit trees.



Figure 1 - Location plan



Figure 2 - Site photo

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 This planning application follows a number of planning applications over the same site. The previous applications were for the full demolition of the existing building and replacement with a number of flats. The most recent planning application (190522/FUL) proposed the erection of a new building containing 9no apartments with parking at rear following demolition of existing buildings. This application was refused at Planning Applications Committee (PAC) for the following reasons:

1. The proposal would result in the loss of a Non-designated Heritage Asset that makes a valuable contribution to the street scene of Brunswick Hill. The development would result in the loss of original historical architectural features and introduce a new development which is out of keeping with the historic character of the street. The proposal does not therefore respond positively to the local context or sufficiently justify the loss of a non-designated Heritage Asset contrary to policies CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) and CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) of the Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008, as altered 2015).
2. The proposal would result in the introduction of 9 flats in a purpose built single building into an area predominantly characterised by individual family houses set in spacious plots. The scale and type of development is considered to respond insensitively to the immediate street scene and pattern of development by introducing flats into what is an area predominantly characterised by individual houses. This is contrary to policies CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) of the Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008, as altered 2015).
3. In the absence of a completed Section 106 legal agreement/unilateral undertaking, to provide a deferred affordable housing contribution mechanism and to provide for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to amend parking restrictions in the Controlled Parking Zone on Brunswick Hill to allow the creation of a vehicular access, the proposal is contrary to policies CS9 (Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities) of the Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008, as altered 2015) and policies DM3 (Infrastructure Planning), DM6 (Affordable Housing) and DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters) of the Reading Borough LDF Site and Detailed Policies Document (2012, as altered 2015).

2.2 This proposal was refused at Planning Applications Committee in December of 2019 and the subsequent appeal against this decision was dismissed (appeal decision and previous plans appended to this report) with the principal reason being:

- Due to the scale of the replacement building and the complete loss of a heritage asset, that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area

2.3 Although not directly comparable, due to the proposal being amended, a number of design points noted in this appeal are considered relevant to the current proposal. Specifically:

- The building is still considered a non-designate heritage asset despite not being of significant heritage value to warrant local listing status (and its loss is not supported);
- The significant width of the proposal as viewed from the street;
- Bland appearance of the side elevations;
- Lack of interest in roof form;

2.3 This application has been called-in for Committee determination by the request of Ward Members.

3. PROPOSAL

3.1 This proposal seeks permission for the conversion of the existing dwelling to contain 8 no. apartments (6 x 1-bed, 2 x 2-bed) facilitated by a two-storey side extension, and 3-storey rear extension, with parking at rear, following demolition of existing garage.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

190522	Erection of new building containing 9 no. apartments with parking at rear following demolition of existing buildings	Refused at committee 4/9/2019 (Appeal APP/E0345/W/19/3237799 dismissed 23 January 2020)
171719	Erection of part two/part three storey building containing 10 no. apartments with parking at rear following demolition of existing buildings.	Refused 07/03/2018 (Appeal APP/E0345/W/18/3200081 dismissed 14 November 2018)
05/00886/OUT	demolition of nos 35-39 and erection of 4no townhouses	Refused 1/11/2005.
891317/891318	demolition of existing house and garage, construction of 10 flats with associated car parking	Refused 18/5/1989.

5. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Transport:

This application is for the conversion and extension of the existing property to form 9 no. flats. A previous application (ref: 190522) was refused by the LPA and dismissed at appeal on the 23rd January 2020. This proposal retains the existing and historically important parts of the building; with extensions proposed to the rear.

The site is located on the western side of Brunswick Hill which is in close proximity to frequent bus services travelling along Tilehurst Road. The proposals include 4 x 1-bed and 5 x 2-bed and 12 parking spaces.

The proposed flats will be accessed from Brunswick Hill via the existing access which will be widened to 4.8m to facilitate two-way vehicular traffic for a distance of 10m into the site. It should be noted that an access width of 4.1m would be acceptable (to facilitate two-way traffic).

A driveway is proposed on the northern side of the building, leading to a parking courtyard, comprising of 12no. parking spaces. The site is situated within a designated Resident Permit Holders zone and a permit holders only bay currently runs across the site frontage terminating just before the existing access. A shared use bay commences from this point across the vehicular access.

The proposed widening of the access would require changes to the residents parking and shared use parking bays. This process involves changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which will require approval by the Traffic Management Sub Committee (TSUB) and will be subject to statutory consultation. Given TRO's are under separate legislation to the Planning Act there is a possibility they may not be approved. However, any costs associated with the changes to the TRO and on-street signage and markings would have to be paid upfront by the applicant before commencement on site. The costs associated with this process are in the region of £5,000 which should be secured with the S106 agreement.

Further, as illustrated on the site plan, the lamp column adjacent to the existing access would need to be relocated. The applicant should be aware that they would be liable for any costs associated with relocating the lamp column (separate to the costs associated with the changes to the parking regulations) and that these works should be undertaken with the Council's approved contractor SSE before the any works associated access is implemented.

The applicant should be advised that the future residents of the properties would not be entitled to apply for a residents parking permit for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

In respect of parking provision, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 space per 1-2 bedroom flat plus 1 space for visitor parking. The development provides a total of 12 parking spaces which complies with Council's adopted parking standards. The proposed parking layout is acceptable.

Reading Borough Council adopted the new Reading Borough Local Plan and its policies on 4th November 2019. The newly adopted policy TR5 relates to car parking, cycle parking and electric charging points and states;

TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.

Development should make the following provision for electric vehicle charging points:

- All new houses with dedicated off-street parking should provide charging points;

- Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point.

Therefore, the development must provision for a minimum of 2no. electric charging point at the time of build. This should be covered by condition.

Disabled spaces must be provided based on the level of units proposed for disabled persons. Can the applicant confirm whether any disability compliant units are provided as no disabled parking spaces have been designed into the scheme.

In accordance with the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD, a minimum provision of 6 cycle parking spaces should be provided. The site layout provides for secure cycle storage to the rear of the building adjacent to the access road which provides convenient access.

The bin store is conveniently located at the front of the site which will provide easy access for refuse collection. However, the Council's Waste Management Guidelines for Property Developers states that the amount of bins needed for 9 flats would be a minimum of 2 x 1100 litre refuse bins and 2 x 1100 litre recycling bins for a fortnightly collection. Therefore, the bin store is not big enough to accommodate a total of 4 bins 1100 litre. The Council's Waste department should be consulted on the application for comment.

A Construction Method Statement will be required given the significant remodelling of the site proposed within this application. The proposed work should be in accordance with the Borough's Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway. Before construction starts on site, the applicant must commence the TRO process which will aid the construction process.

In principle, there are no transport objections subject to the conditions below and S106 requirements.

RBC Planning Natural Environment Team

There are no objections to the tree removals as the trees are not significant specimens and the proposed landscaping includes replacements which mitigate their loss.

One of the trees to be planted will need to fulfil the requirements to replant a previously removed beech tree protected by TPO 105/05 removed in 2014. This will need to be another beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) planted as close to the position of the original tree as practicable to provide it with sufficient future space to reach maturity without interfering with access or light.

RBC Ecologist

The site backs on to a railway corridor, with connected gardens with trees to the north and south and a line of trees 40m southeast. Since the site is connected to habitat of good ecological value, in accordance with paragraph 175 of the NPPF,

opportunities for wildlife - including bird and bat boxes and wildlife-friendly planting should be incorporated into the development.

Overall, subject to a condition, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

RBC Environmental Protection

Environmental Protection concerns

- Noise impact on development
- Noise transmission between dwellings
- Construction and demolition phase
- Bin storage - rats

Noise impact on development

As a noise assessment has not been submitted and the proposed development is by a railway line, I recommend a condition is attached to any consent requiring a noise assessment to be submitted prior to commencement of development and any approved mitigation measures implemented prior to occupation to show that recommended noise levels in the table above can be met.

The noise assessment will need to identify the external noise levels impacting on the proposed site.

Noise mitigation is likely to focus on the weak point in the structure; glazing. Given that the acoustic integrity would be compromised should the windows be opened, ventilation details must also be provided, where mitigation relies on closed windows. Ventilation measures should be selected which do not allow unacceptable noise ingress and should provide sufficient ventilation to avoid the need to open windows in hot weather, however non-openable windows are not considered an acceptable solution due to the impact on living standards.

Noise between residential properties

To minimise the disturbance by noise of future residential occupiers of the flats and its effect on neighbouring residents, residential accommodation must be designed and constructed or converted so as to achieve the insulation requirements set out in Building Regulations Approved Document E.

Construction and demolition phase

The following informative should be attached to help prevent complaints.

Recommended Informative

Noisy construction, demolition and associated activities should be restricted to between the hours of 08:00hrs to 18:00hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 09:00hrs to 13:00hrs on Saturdays, with no noisy works taking place at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays.

Bin storage - rats

There is a widespread problem in Reading with rats as the rats are being encouraged by poor waste storage which provides them with a food source. Where developments involve shared bin storage areas e.g. flats and hotels there is a greater risk of rats being able to access the waste due to holes being chewed in the base of the large wheelie bins or due to occupants or passers not putting waste inside bins, or bins being overfilled. It is therefore important for the bin store to be vermin proof to prevent rats accessing the waste. A condition is recommended to ensure appropriate measures are implemented.

Reading Civic Society (RCS)

No comments received.

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

No comments received.

Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor

No objections subject to following observations relating to:

- Rear court parking areas;
- Boundary Treatments;
- Apartment Mail delivery/residential security;
- Physical Security;
- Creation of secure communal lobbies;
- Bin and cycle store doors;
- Residential door Sets;

And condition relating to:

- Access control strategy

RBC Valuers

To be provided in any update report.

Public consultation

Letters were sent to neighbouring properties on Brunswick Hill and a site notice was displayed at the front of the property. Objectors have also been notified by post of amendments to this application. In total, 10 letters of objection have been received (including a group objection letter), these can be summarised as:

- Impact on parking/traffic impacts;
- Extension is too large and harms character of original building;
- Too many flats;
- Impact on utilities (sewer/water);
- Amenity impacts of proposal
- Drainage impacts of hardstanding;
- Loss of outbuilding;
- Overbearing nature of development;
- Lack of natural light/windows to some rooms;

6. RELEVANT POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 6.1 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) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

The following policies and documents are relevant:

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
CC2	Sustainable design and construction
CC3	Adaption to climate change
CC5	Waste minimisation and storage
CC6	Accessibility and the intensity of development
CC7	Design and the public realm
CC8	Safeguarding amenity
CC9	Securing infrastructure
EN1	Protection and enhancement of the historic environment
EN6	New development in a historic context
EN10	Access to open space
EN12	Biodiversity and the green network
EN14	Trees, hedges and woodland
EN15	Air quality
EN16	Pollution and water resources
EN17	Noise generating equipment
H1	Provision of housing
H2	Density and mix
H3	Affordable housing
H5	Standards for new housing
H8	Residential conversions
H9	House extension and ancillary accommodation
H10	Private and communal outdoor space
TR1	Achieving the transport strategy
TR3	Access, traffic, and highway-related matters
TR5	Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging

Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Revised Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
Revised S106 Planning Obligations (2013)
Affordable Housing (2013)

Other material guidance and legislation

National Planning Practice Guidance (2019)
Section 72 of the Town and Country (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (Amended 2015)
Department for Transport Manual for Streets

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues raised by this planning application are:

- (i) Principle of development
- (ii) Design and impact on the character of the area
- (iii) Mix of units
- (iv) Amenity of future occupiers
- (v) Impact on neighbouring properties
- (vi) Transport and parking
- (vii) Affordable Housing
- (viii) Other matters

(i) Principle of development

7.2 The application site currently contains a large detached Edwardian property within residential use. The extent of the current accommodation is such that it would only be suitable for a very large family or subdivided to smaller units as appears to be the case currently, albeit this is somewhat informal. The site is within close proximity to high frequency bus routes along Oxford Road and Tilehurst Road and adjacent to Reading West Station. The proposed development would extend the current building to provide 8 dwellings with a mix of unit sizes (1 and 2 bedroom flats) in a sustainable location. In making best use of the land available and meeting an established need for housing, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy H1 (Provision of Housing). As such, the principle of development is considered acceptable, including the fact that the retention of the main building would overcome one aspect of the previous refusal, and appeal decisions.

(ii) Design and the impact on the character of the area

7.3 The development site is located within an established residential area, characterised by detached or semi-detached single residential dwellings, with a number of flatted developments (closer to Tilehurst Road), and other uses (including a public house and church). The proposal seeks to convert the existing single dwelling into 8 flats. A survey of the area, specifically measured 50m from the subject property, has found that there are 16 properties within 50m of the subject dwelling. Of the 16 dwellings only no's 26 and 32 Brunswick Hill (12.5% of properties) have been converted to flats. Of that, it appears both flats at no.32 Brunswick Hill are within C4 (HMO use). With the remaining 14 properties (87.5% of properties) still single dwellinghouses (C3 use class). As such, the proposed conversion of the subject dwelling would result in 18.75% of properties within 50m of the subject site being flats. This approach to assessing the mix of uses in the area is based on that used in the Article 4 Area where changes of use to small HOM use C4. The relative percentages demonstrate that converting the property to flats in this instance would not, individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm the existing mixed and sustainable community, as required by Policy H8. As such, the proposal would be acceptable in this regard, and reason from refusal 1 from the previous committee decision is considered to be overcome. It is also noted, that in dismissing the appeal, the Inspector did not consider this to be a key matter and did not appear to object on this ground.

- 7.4 In design terms, the proposal includes two main elements: the two-storey side extension, and the 3-storey rear extension (with excavation to supply third storey) each aspect will be assessed in turn.
- 7.5 Policy H9 seeks to ensure all extensions to a house would: respect the character and appearance of the host dwelling; respect the pattern of neighbouring properties, location and arrangement of windows, and avoid overbearing, or large blank facades to public areas.
- 7.6 The proposed two-storey side extension would be 3.2m wide and have a gable end wall similar to the main roof form. The extension would be set-down from the ridge height of the main dwelling and set-back from the main façade. The proposal includes architectural detailing to match the front facing windows of the main dwelling. The side extension portion complies with the Council's adopted SPD and would be considered acceptable subject to conditions to ensure suitable materials. This is also a new element as compared to previously refused schemes, and would increase the width of the dwelling as viewed from the street. However, the side extension, as noted would remain subservient to the main dwelling, and be of an acceptable design that would compliment the main dwelling. In addition, the more interesting and subservient roof form is considered to overcome the concerns of the Inspector in dismissing the previous appeal.
- 10.7 The proposed rear extensions would include a predominantly three-storey rear extension to the main dwelling, with a ridge line lower than that of the main dwelling and set in from the side by approximately 700mm (the right as viewed from the street) and extended from the original dwelling on the left hand side. The rear extension would include a gable end wall on the right hand side (as viewed from the street) and a hipped roof form for the remainder of the roof. It would include Juliet balconies at first and second floor, and an oriel window on the right hand side. There would be a shared access to the lower ground floor flats (within the rear extension) to the side, with the main entrance to the rest of the dwellings being provided from the front. In this regard, the width of the previously refused schemes as viewed from the street is considered to be overcome by this design approach.
- 10.8 As noted above, the property in question is the largest property within the immediate vicinity, being 26m wide and 58m in depth. The rear extension, would measure 10.5m in total depth, with the total resulting dwelling being approximately 20.4m. The Council's adopted house extensions SPD sets out that rear extensions on semi-detached or detached houses would not normally be granted where they are longer than 4m. It also states that exceptions to this may be accepted if the house and garden are capable of taking an extension of a longer depth, and should leave sufficient garden space for general use and penetration of light and sunlight.
- 10.9 Due to the significant width of the plot, the proposed development would be located 4m from the boundary of no.41, and 9.3m from the boundary of no.35. The rear extension would also be located 30m from the rear property boundary.
- 10.10 In addition, the design approach incorporates a gable end rear facing wall, a two-storey oriel window, fenestration to match the existing detailing, and add visual interest to the long flank wall. With the bland appearance of the long flanking elevation another key matter of the original appeal. As such, the design options are considered to provide sufficient visual interest and fenestration to break up the long flank wall.

- 10.11 In this particular instance, the design has considered the form and detailing of the original dwelling and presents a subservient roof form which incorporates a gable end wall to reflect the features of the original dwelling. The design, in overall depth would be set-off all adjoining boundaries by a substantial distance and allow for a substantial amount of rear garden space to be retained as garden space for future residents. As such, the extensions to the dwelling are considered to respect the character and appearance of the house as outlined in policy H9.
- 10.12 The application site is considered a non-designated heritage asset. As such, in addition to the proposal being considered acceptable in design terms, the proposed detailing and materials are required to be of a high quality which respects the host property. In this regard, the proposal includes materials to match, which includes matching brickwork, timber windows, and doors, and matching lintels. The proposed detailing is recommended to be secured by condition, and material samples to be provided prior to commencement to ensure acceptable materials are used.
- 10.13 The application is acceptable in this regard, subject to amenity considerations which are outlined below.
- (iii) Mix of units**
- 10.14 Policy H2 of the Local Plan indicates that the appropriate density and mix will be informed by assessing the characteristics including land uses in the area; the level of accessibility; the requirements for good design; and the need to minimise environmental impacts, including impacts on adjoining occupiers. The policy also states that developments of 10 or more dwellings outside the central area and defined district and local centres, over 50% of dwellings shall be of 3 bedrooms or more and the majority of dwellings will be in the form of houses rather than flats.
- 10.15 As this revised proposal is now for 8 dwellings (and therefore below the threshold of 10), the dwelling mix requirement of Policy H2 is no longer applicable and the mix of 1 and 2 bedroom units is considered acceptable in policy terms.
- (iv) Amenity of future occupiers**
- 10.16 When considering the previous appeals the Inspectors found in both cases, where the buildings were of a larger footprint and scale than currently proposed, that there would be no conflict with the need to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers. The revised internal layout of all proposed flats would continue to be satisfactory, with all flats containing a primary outlook over the front or rear garden. In addition, a number of kitchens and bathrooms are not provided with windows for direct access to natural light. It is not considered to be uncommon within flats that bathrooms or kitchens are provided without windows, as such this is considered acceptable.
- 10.17 The site plan is not clear on exactly whether the rear garden is to be communal or private. However, the lower ground floor flats appear to have a defensible space outside the rear facing windows, and there is an opportunity for the rear garden to be used as communal space without undue impact on these flats. The amount of amenity space available is sufficient and can be controlled by condition. Sound control measures along with stacking of some rooms is required by current Building Regulations to prevent any harm in this regard. Outlook from each flat and

attainable light levels are acceptable too. Therefore, the revised scheme is considered to comply with Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).

(v) Impact on neighbouring properties

10.18 This development has the potential to impact on neighbouring properties through the increase in scale of the extended building and additional disturbance caused by the increased intensity of residential use. However, it is relevant that harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties was not raised as a material concern by the previous appeal Inspector.

10.19 No. 41 to the south has a rear extension and the submitted plans indicate that no habitable room windows would be adversely affected by the new building works, with a 45 degree angle maintained. On the northern side, it is recognised that No. 35 would experience a degree of overbearing from the development, especially as the new building would be to the south of this property. However, similar to the 2 refused schemes, there would be a significant distance (some 9m) intervening gap to allow the rear access drive providing a sufficient setback to prevent any significant harm in terms of loss of daylight and sunlight to habitable rooms. This is further mitigated by the reduced ridge and eaves height.

10.20 The development will result in additional residential activity when compared to the present situation, with additional comings and goings and access to and use of the parking area. This may be noticeable from surrounding properties and will be most acutely felt by the occupants of No. 35, where long lengths of the common boundary will change from garden to hard-surfacing. But No. 35 has a long garden itself, and there remains sufficient space within the plot to accommodate the access road and it is not considered that eight dwellings would result in a substantial number of sustained vehicle movements or uncharacteristic uses at unsocial hours. Officers consider that the residential amenity to No. 35 would not be significantly harmed in any way which would justify refusal in terms of Policy CC8.

(vi) Transport and parking

7.21 There are no objections to this planning application from the Highway Authority. The development would necessitate a widening of the access, moving a lamp-post, adjusting the parking zone, and removal of rights to parking permits, all of which could be controlled by conditions or obligations. The parking level shown is suitable for the intended development and location. However, the Highway Authority's approval is dependent on the development securing a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which would be needed to remove part of the residents parking area in order to provide the access into the site. There is generous space available on site for required cycle/bin stores and the application includes potentially suitable arrangements for such.

(vii) Affordable Housing

7.22 The applicant has provided an affordable housing viability statement which is being assessed by the Council's valuations team, and an update report will clarify the affordable housing conclusion.

(viii) Other matters

Sustainability

- 7.23 Such residential development could reasonably be expected to demonstrate compliance with a BREEAM 'Very Good' standard and this will be secured by condition. There is no requirement for on-site energy generation for this scale of development. Officers are content that the Council's sustainability policies can be achieved via condition.

Bats

- 7.24 The Council's ecologist is content with the conclusions of the bat survey and does not raise issue with the development, providing that ecological enhancements are provided, which would be secured via condition to comply with Policy EN12.

SuDS

- 7.25 Given the size of the site, adequate sustainable drainage is able to be secured by condition in order to ensure implementation.

CIL

- 7.26 The proposed development would be CIL liable.

Equality Act

- 7.27 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, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, 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 In responding directly to the previous appeal dismissal, this revised scheme has been reduced to 8 dwellings and has included the retention of the original building.
- 8.2 In light of the above and with due regard to all matters raised, the extensions and conversion and overall planning merits of this development are now considered acceptable. Accordingly, Officers are of the view that the proposal complies with relevant policies, has addressed earlier Inspector's concerns and can be recommended for approval subject to conditions and necessary planning obligations.

Case Officer: Anthony Scholes

9. Plans and Documents

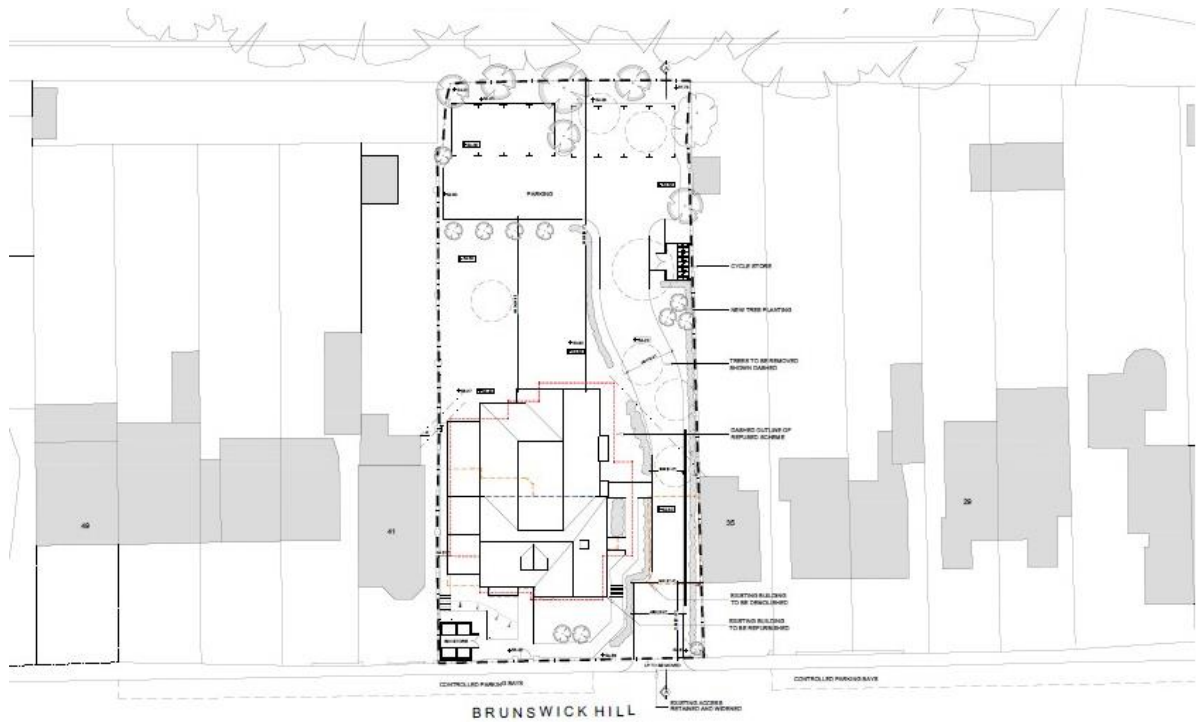


Figure 3 - Site layout plan



Figure 4 - Proposed elevations

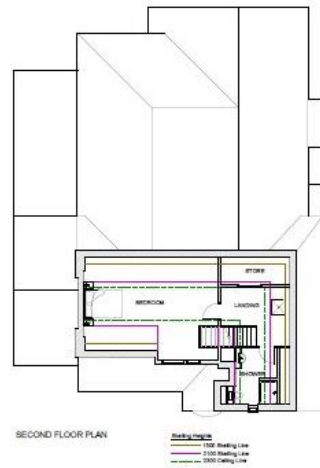


Figure 5 - Proposed floor plans

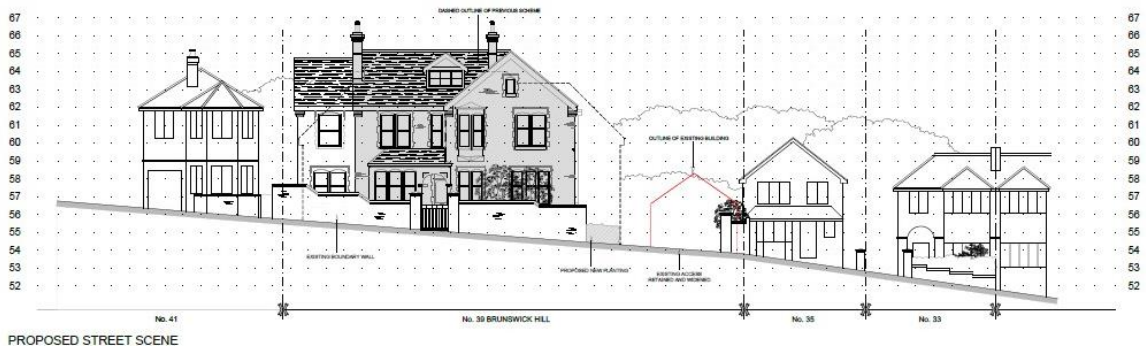
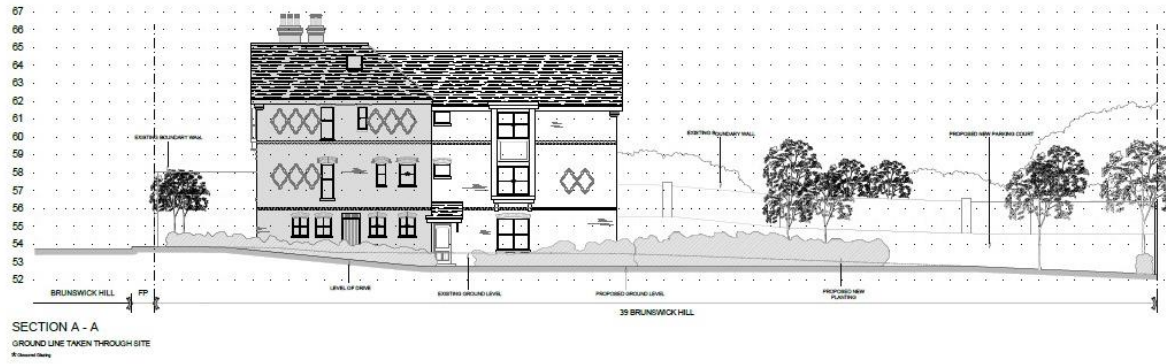


Figure 6 - Proposed street scene and site section



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 January 2020

by James Taylor BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/19/3237799

39 Brunswick Hill, Reading RG1 7YU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Eric Benjamin of W2 (Shepperton) Ltd against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 190522, dated 27 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of new building containing 9no apartments with parking at rear following demolition of existing buildings.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. Since the determination of the planning application the Council have adopted the Reading Borough Local Plan – November 2019 (LP) whose policies supersede those referenced within the Decision Notice. The parties have had opportunity to comment on the revised development plan policies and I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area including the loss of a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

4. There is relevant planning history at the appeal site, including a similar proposal for ten apartments that was dismissed at appeal in 2018¹. An important conclusion of this was that the existing building is a heritage asset. Whilst I note that the development plan policy context has altered, I am not aware of any other material changes in circumstances to lead me to a different conclusion. The building remains as described by the Inspector and the national policy position in this regard is unchanged by the February 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
5. Paragraph 197 of the Framework requires a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. The proposal would result in the total loss of the dwelling. However, I acknowledge that this large Edwardian villa has previously been assessed as not suitable for

¹ APP/E0345/W/18/3200081

inclusion on a local list. Whilst a second application has been made to include the building on the local list, that remains the current position. Based on this evidence I find the significance of the heritage asset to be modest.

Nonetheless, in these circumstances, the total loss of the heritage asset, despite it not being included on the local list weighs against the proposal and would conflict with policies EN1 and CC7 of the LP. These policies seek the protection and enhancement of the historic environment and to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

6. No 39 Brunswick Hill is a large and notable building within the street scene, which is characterised by a variety of residential properties. The proposal seeks to significantly increase the scale of the built form at the site. Whilst I note the proposed reduction in height over the existing dwelling and the 2018 dismissed appeal scheme, the width and depth of the development remains considerable. This appears as a consequence of the design facilitating nine flats within a purpose-built single building.
7. I note that the design has been amended in a number of ways compared to the 2018 appeal scheme, including greater architectural detail to the front elevation to reflect, for example, the existing oriel window detail and provide a legible communal access. Furthermore, I note that the proposed elevations have greater variation in depth which adds some interest. However, the flanking elevations continue to appear bland, for example with few openings, those few openings being restricted to a high level and little brickwork detail. Furthermore, the depth of the development within the plot would be significantly greater than the existing building and, overall, deeper than the 2018 appeal scheme. This would not be adequately mitigated by the changes including the flanking elements on the north elevation being set-down.
8. Whilst I acknowledge that the eaves have been reduced compared to the last proposal, the roof form appears awkward in order to keep the overall height of the building down and accommodate the significant spans of the building. Furthermore, the largely mono-pitched enclosure around the high-level flat roof would be conspicuous in views down the hill. Additionally, the roof form lacks the interest and variety that the existing building provides in the street scene, including the prominent chimneys.
9. Whilst I acknowledge that the revised proposal has sought to address some of the Inspector's findings from the 2018 dismissed appeal, I find that the scale of the building would remain incongruous within the street scene. I note that there are other examples of purpose-built flats at the end of Brunswick Hill. However, the context of these developments is not the same as at the appeal site which is flanked by far more modestly scaled dwellings. The appeal site appears as part of this built-up frontage. Nor is the proposal the same as any schemes that have subdivided housing on Brunswick Hill. Therefore, I find that the proposed development would not be a suitable high-quality design so as to respond positively to the local context or reinforce local character and distinctiveness.
10. Therefore, in conclusion on the main issue I find, due to the scale of the replacement building and the complete loss of a heritage asset, that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the area. As such, it would be contrary to policies CC7 and EN1 of the LP and Sections 12 and 16 of the Framework. The aims of these policies include securing high-quality design

that responds positively to local distinctiveness and scale. Furthermore, the policies take a balanced approach to the protection of heritage assets.

Other matters

11. The Council has sought a deferred contribution towards the provision of affordable housing and a contribution towards amending a Traffic Regulation Order regarding parking restrictions outside the appeal site. Whilst the appellant has indicated in proceedings that they intend to submit a Unilateral Undertaking under section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, this was not submitted within the permitted timeframe. The need for it is not disputed by the parties. As I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, and the provision of a unilateral undertaking would not be likely to result in any public benefit, the lack of an obligation cannot lead me to a different conclusion.
12. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that the proposal would make a more efficient use of land and provide additional housing. The Council accept that there is an identified need for this mix of housing, but I have no evidence to indicate that there is an inadequate supply. As such I afford this moderate weight. Additionally, I note that the proposed development would provide some benefit through the construction of these homes in what would be an accessible location and that would support local services. However, the weight I afford these considerations is limited as I have no evidence that similar benefits could not be achieved through a more acceptable scheme. Even taken cumulatively I do not find that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the identified harm and consequent conflict with the development plan.
13. Finally, I am mindful that this application was recommended for planning permission by the Council's professional planning officers and subsequently refused by members of the Council's planning committee. However, I have found that the Council's evidence adequately substantiates the main issue and that the Council has reasonably exercised a planning judgement. The appellant asserts that the Council's evidence has been produced by its officers. However, even if it has, I do not find that this is a reason to afford it any less weight.

Conclusion

14. In conclusion, the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and result in the loss of a non-designated heritage asset. Whilst I acknowledge some benefits from the proposal these do not outweigh the identified harm and conflict that I have found with local and national policies. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

James Taylor

INSPECTOR

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Figure 1 - Refused elevations (190522)



Figure 2 - Current Proposal (191915)

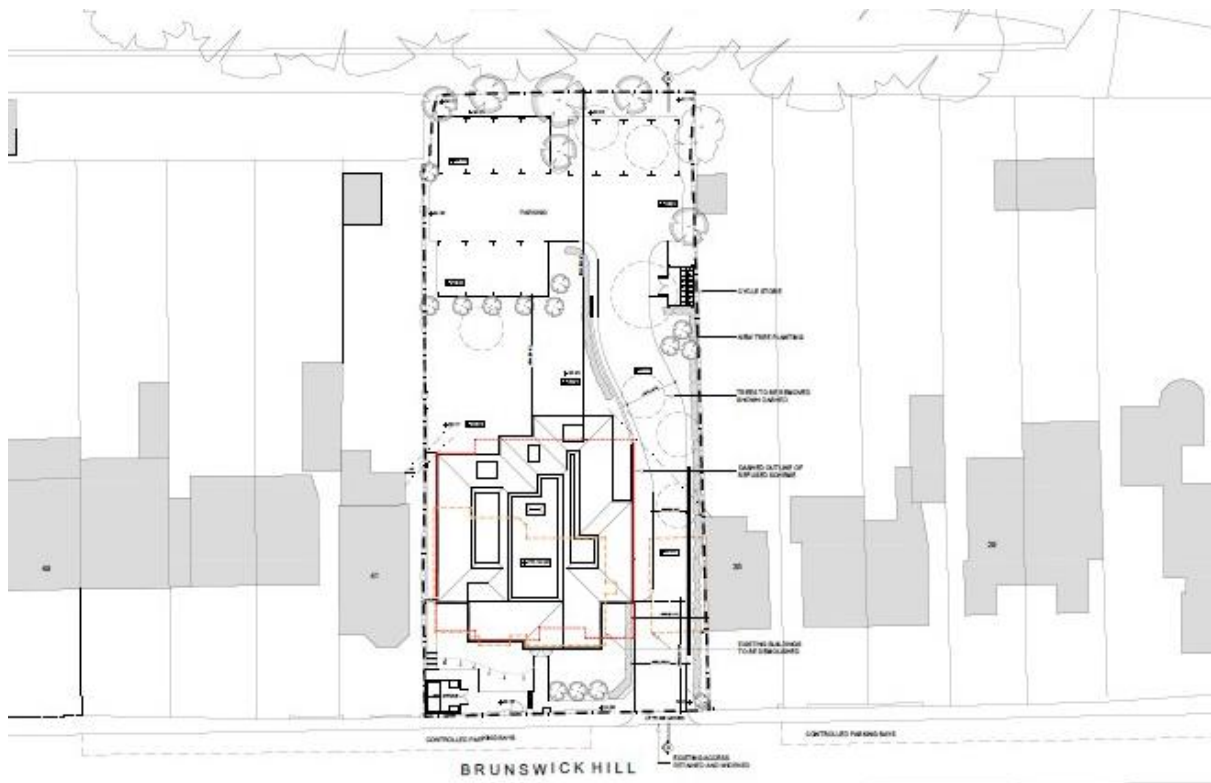


Figure 3 - Refused Site Plan (191915)

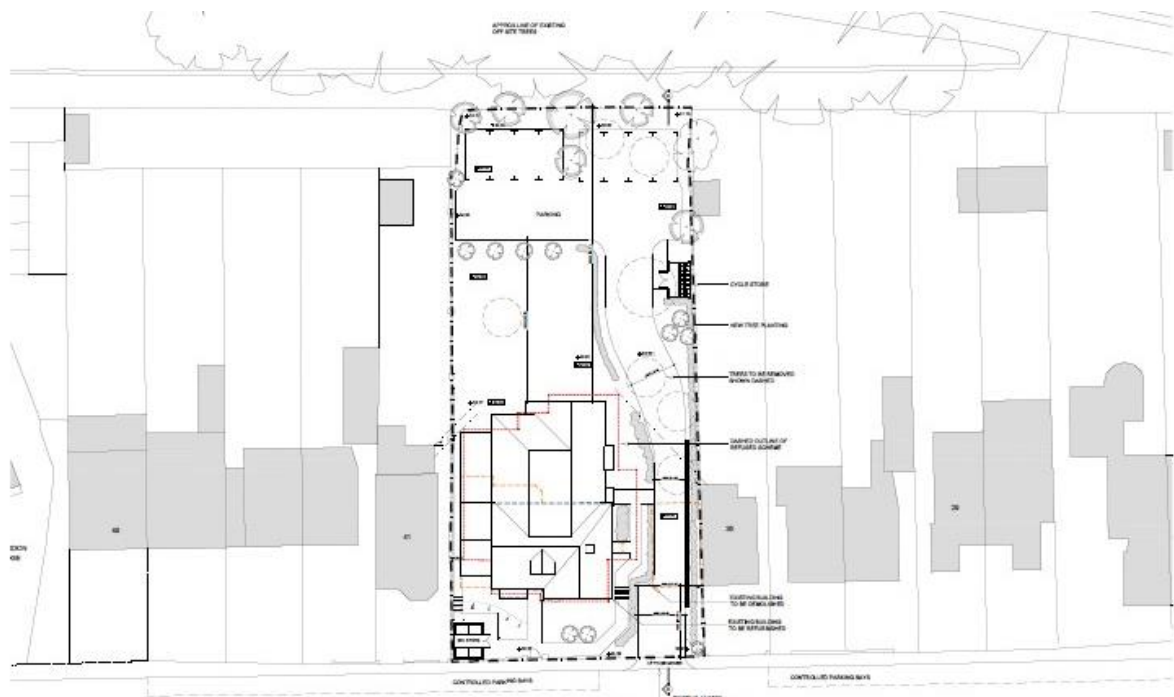


Figure 4 - Proposed Site Plan (191915)



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Figure 5 - Refused Floor Plans (190522)



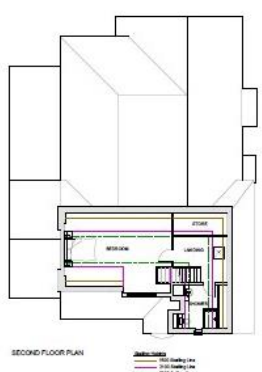
LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN



UPPER GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Figure 6 - Proposed Floor Plans (191915)

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 3 June 2020

Ward: Redlands

App No.: 200408/FUL

Address: Berkshire House 252-256 Kings Road

Proposal: Removal of 6 No. antennas, 1 No. equipment cabinet and other equipment & installation of 6 No. upgraded antenna apertures onto existing rooftop mast, 2 No. rooftop cabinets, 1 No. ground-based cabinet, plus ancillary development

Applicant: MBNL Ltd

Date validated: 13 March 2020

8-week target decision date: 8 May 2020

RECOMMENDATION

Grant Full Planning Permission

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE

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

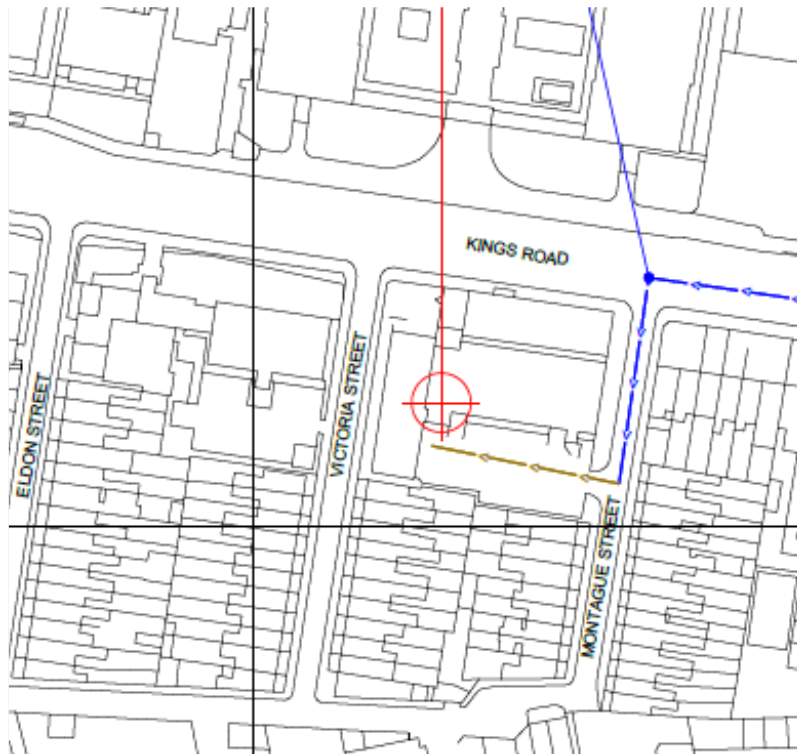
INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE

1. Standard positive and proactive informative.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site comprises a five-storey student accommodation building fronting onto the southern side of Kings Road and spanning the block between Montague Street and Victoria Street. An existing retail unit is located at the ground floor of the building on the corner to Victoria Street.
- 1.2 The building already has an existing 3m high roof top lattice mast and antennas together with ancillary rooftop equipment cabinets and other associated equipment.

- 1.3 The site is located within the Eldon Square Conservation Area. The main Reading College campus is sited on the opposite site of Kings Road to the north. A row of two and three-storey terraced houses exists to the east with a late twentieth century four-storey block of flats to the west. The area to the south of the site is residential and characterised by two storey Victorian terraced housing.



Site Location Plan



Existing rooftop mast, antennas and cabinets



View east along Kings Road towards Berkshire House showing the existing rooftop telecommunicaitons mast

2. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the replacement of 6 antennas, 1 equipment cabinet and other equipment with 6 upgraded antenna apertures onto the existing 3m high rooftop lattice mast, 2 rooftop cabinets and 1 ground-based cabinet.
- 3.2 The proposed upgrades are designed to accommodate 5G technology and improved 2G, 3G and 4G services. The upgraded infrastructure would provide high mobile download speeds and more reliable, quicker phone connections as well as increase capacity to provide services to a higher number of people at the same time and improved service for the emergency services network. The telecommunications base station is shared by the mobile operators EE and Three.
- 3.3 The proposed replacement antennas would be attached to the existing 3m high rooftop lattice mast. The antennas are required to be positioned at the top of the existing mast to enable the signal to clear surrounding structures without interference. To accommodate the upgraded technology the replacement antennas are slightly larger than existing. The larger size of the replacement antennas would result in a 0.3m increase in the overall height, width and depth of the apparatus. The proposed mast, cabinet and apparatus would be coloured grey as is the existing.

- 2.4 An existing 0.9m high galvanised steel grey rail safety fence surrounds the existing rooftop telecommunications base station. As part of the site upgrade it is proposed to replace the fence with a slightly larger 1.2m high grey rail fence. The proposed single ground based equipment cabinet would be 1.2m wide, 0.6m deep and 1.5m high positioned on the east elevation of the building.
- 2.5 A declaration has been submitted by the applicant confirming compliance with the International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) guidelines.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 02-00435 - Erection of a roof-top mounted telecommunications base station, including 6 cross polar antennae, 4 x 600 mm dish antennae and equipment cabinet - Granted
- 3.2 141986 - Change of use and extension of the existing office building Berkshire House (252 - 256 Kings Road, Reading) to create a six-storey student residential building - Granted
- 3.3 182198 - Replacement of existing telecommunications equipment to the roof. To include replacement of existing 3m high roof tower, 6 x antennas, 1 x 300mm dish and 5 x equipment cabinets with a new 10m high roof tower supporting 12 x antenna apertures, 3 x 600mm dishes. 8 x equipment cabinets to be installed on the rooftop and 1 x meter cabinet to be installed at ground level - Withdrawn.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Conservation Area Advisory Committee - The replacement equipment would be slightly more intrusive but accepts the need for the upgrade to provide 5G technology.
- 4.2 RBC Conservation Consultant - A proposed addition of telecommunication antenna within a Conservation Area, would generally be considered to harm its character and appearance. However, there are existing telecommunications antennas on the roof of Berkshire House and the proposed development intends to replace these with new antennas in the same location. Berkshire House is not of any architectural interest and, whilst the proposal would increase the prominence of the telecommunication equipment slightly, the antenna is not currently prominent within views from the Conservation

Area and so any additional harm would be considered less than substantial.

4.3 Public consultation:

No. 252-256 Kings Road, Davina's Kings Road, Flats 1 and 2 258 Kings Road, no.s 3 and 8 Montague Street, no. 3 Victoria Street and Thames Valley University Kings Road were notified of the application by letter.

4.4 No letters of representation have been received.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Full Planning Permission has been applied for as the site is located within a conservation area and therefore permitted development rights under Class A, Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) do not apply.

5.2 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'.

5.3 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.

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

5.5 National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Part 10 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure

Part 12 - Achieving well designed places

Part 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Part 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

5.6 Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Policy CC7 Design and the public realm

Policy CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Policy EN3 Enhancement of Conservation Areas

Policy EN6 New Development in a Historic Context
Policy EN16 Pollution and water resources
Policy OU3 Telecommunications development

6. APPRAISAL

- 6.1 Paragraph 112 of the NPPF 2019 notes that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Paragraph 113 states that the number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged.
- 6.2 Policy OU3 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 or on the significance of a heritage asset;
 - The apparatus will be sited and designed 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

- 6.3 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF sets out that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value. Paragraph 193 states that 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. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 6.4 In addition to Policy OU3, Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires that all development is of high design quality which maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the surrounding area

with respect to issues such as scale, height, massing and landscape impact. Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) states that proposals should protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting, Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) requires that the special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas is conserved and enhanced and Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) seeks that in areas characterised by heritage assets that the historic environment informs and shapes new development.

- 6.5 Berkshire House is a modern building that is not considered to be of any architectural merit that is located on the north east edge of the Eldon Square Conservation Area. The appearance of the building is not considered to contribute positively to the character of the conservation area. The existing 3m high rooftop lattice mast and equipment are modern utilitarian additions to the building which are also not considered to contribute positively to the character of the conservation. However, whilst the existing rooftop equipment forms part of views from the West and South along Kings Road, Eldon Road and Eldon Terrace, the narrow nature of the surrounding streets is such the equipment is not seen within views from the majority of the Conservation Area.
- 6.6 Given that the proposals relate to the upgrade of an existing rooftop telecommunications base station and mast the key assessment is the additional visual impact of the proposed replacement equipment.
- 6.7 The proposals would retain and reuse the existing 3m high rooftop lattice mast structure and whilst the proposed replacement antennas are bulkier than those existing this would only result in a modest 0.3m increase in the overall height, width and depth of the structure. The additional visual impact of this increase is considered to be minor and the impact when viewed from ground level is considered to be marginal. The mast would be retained in its current grey galvanised steel form whilst the antennas would also be grey and white in appearance as existing.
- 6.8 It should also be noted that an earlier application (ref. 182198) to replace the existing 3m high mast with a 10m high rooftop mast was withdrawn by the applicant in in 2019 due to officer concerns with the proposed significant increase in height of the mast. The current proposal which re-uses the existing mast is considered to be much more preferable in visual impact terms.

- 6.9 The additional equipment cabinets and modest 0.3m increase in height of the rail safety fence surrounding the rooftop base station are also not considered to result in any significant additional visual impact when compared to the existing base station. The single proposed grey steel ground-based equipment cabinet to the east elevation of the building would also have marginal visual impact due to its small size.
- 6.10 The overall visual impact of the proposed upgrade works to the existing base station upgrade works is considered to be minor and would maintain the character and appearance of the surrounding area in accordance with Policy CC7.
- 6.11 In terms of heritage impact; the proposed upgrade works would result in very minor increase in size and prominence of an existing structure. However, in the context of Paragraph 193 of the NPPF the level of harm to the setting of the Conservation Area is considered to be less than substantial and therefore this must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development as discussed in the following sections of this report.

Alternative Sites

- 6.4 The proposal would accord with the requirements of the Paragraph 115 of the NPPF and Policy OU3 in that the works propose an upgrade to an existing telecommunications base station as opposed to creating a new base station in an alternative and non-established location. The proposal would also demonstrate further adherence to the NPPF and Policy OU3 in that it would continue to operate as a site share between the operators EE and Three further reducing the need for multiple masts located elsewhere in the close locality.
- 6.5 The supporting information submitted with the application does not explore alternative locations for the equipment on the basis that the proposed works relate to an upgrade of an existing base station and therefore the principle of telecommunications apparatus on the site is already established. Whilst the proposals do relate to upgrade of an existing site this does not mean that alternative locations should not be considered, particularly if these could potentially have a lesser visual impact. However, in this instance given the built-up nature of the surrounding area any alternative location is likely to be very similar in context and located in a prominent roof top location in order to provide the necessary level of network coverage for residents and the emergency services network. The Applicant has also confirmed that an alternative site would need to be located within very close proximity

to the existing site in order to replicate its radio coverage pattern and provide an effective service for all users and therefore any alternative site would very likely also be within or impact upon views from the Eldon Square Conservation Area.

- 6.6 Given the above and the very minor increase in size of the apparatus as a result of the upgrade and the minimal additional visual impact Officers are of the opinion that the re-use and upgrade of this existing site is the preferred approach.

Other

- 6.16 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that “*Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the telecommunications system, or determine health safeguards if the proposal meets International Commission guidelines for public exposure*”. The requirement is also outlined in the supporting text to Policy OU3.
- 6.17 The applicant has provided an International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) declaration to support this planning application. This certifies that the proposed development would be in full compliance with the ICNIRP guidelines. The ICNIRP guidelines are the most up-to-date and relevant tool to ascertain the acceptability of telecommunications development within the planning process. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF goes on to state that Local Planning Authorities should not substitute their own “opinion” on health issues for that expressed by ICNIRP.
- 6.18 As such, the proposal is deemed acceptable in terms of health-related issues.

Equalities impact assessment

- 6.19 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/sex, or 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.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in the context of national and local planning policy and other material considerations as set out in this report.

7.2 With regard to heritage impact, as set out in paragraph 6.11 of this report officers consider the proposal to result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the Eldon Square Conservation Area. As per paragraph 193 of the NPPF this must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal development.

7.3 As discussed in the main body of the report the notable public benefits of the proposals include providing improved network coverage for nearby residents and the emergency services network, together with the fact that the proposals are for an upgrade of an existing telecommunications base stations that is shared between operators therefore, reducing the potential for new telecommunication base stations and masts to be established elsewhere in this locality and within the Conservation Area. It is considered that these benefits would outweigh the minor additional visual impact of the proposed base station upgrade works upon the setting of the Eldon Square Conservation Area.

7.2 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC7, EN1, EN3, EN6, OU3, CC8 and EN16 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 as assessed above. It is therefore recommended that approval be granted, subject to the recommended conditions.

Drawings Considered:

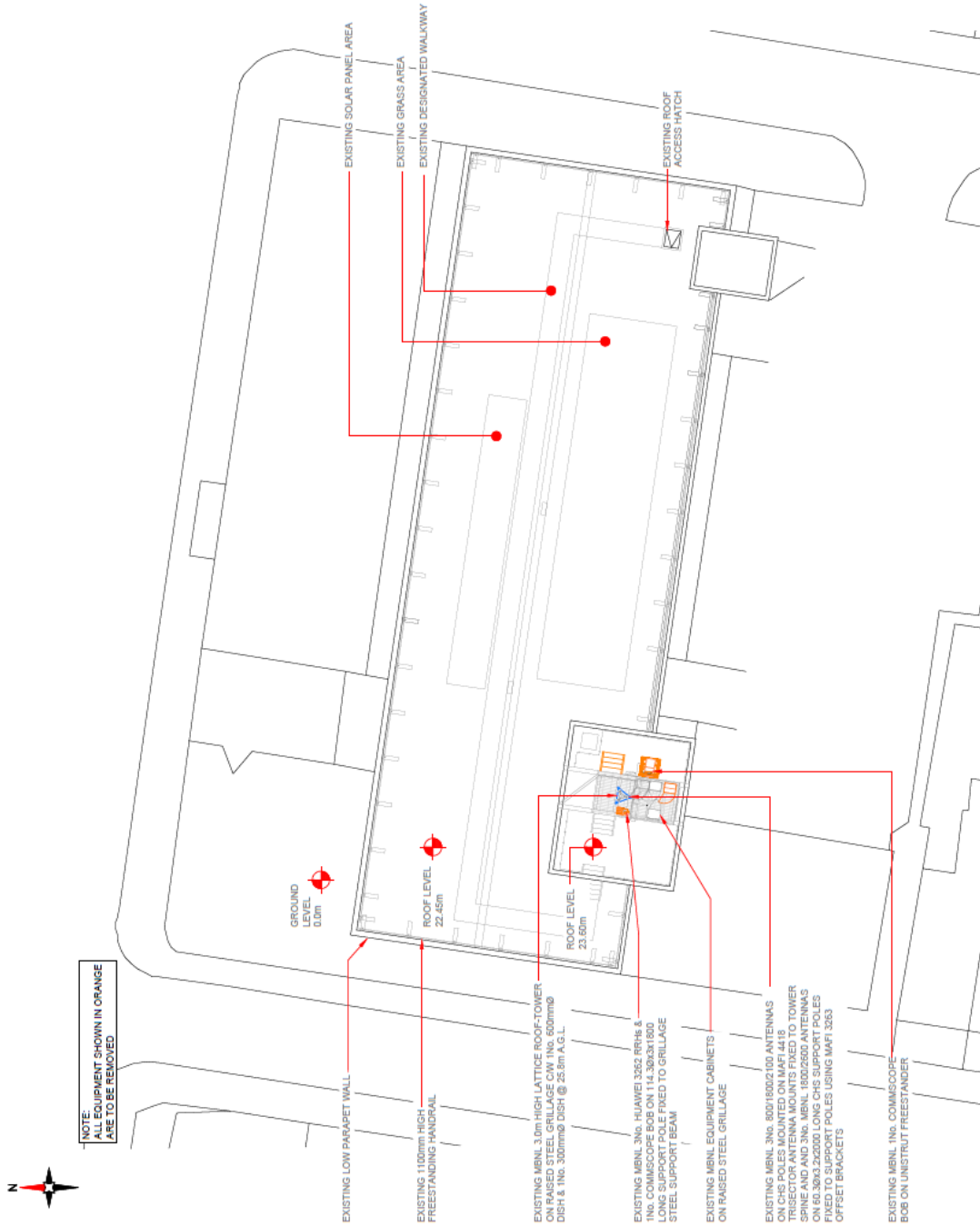
Drawing no.s:

- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 002 Site Location Plan
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 100 Existing Site Plan
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 150 Existing Site Elevation
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 151 Existing South Elevation
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 152 Existing Site Elevation

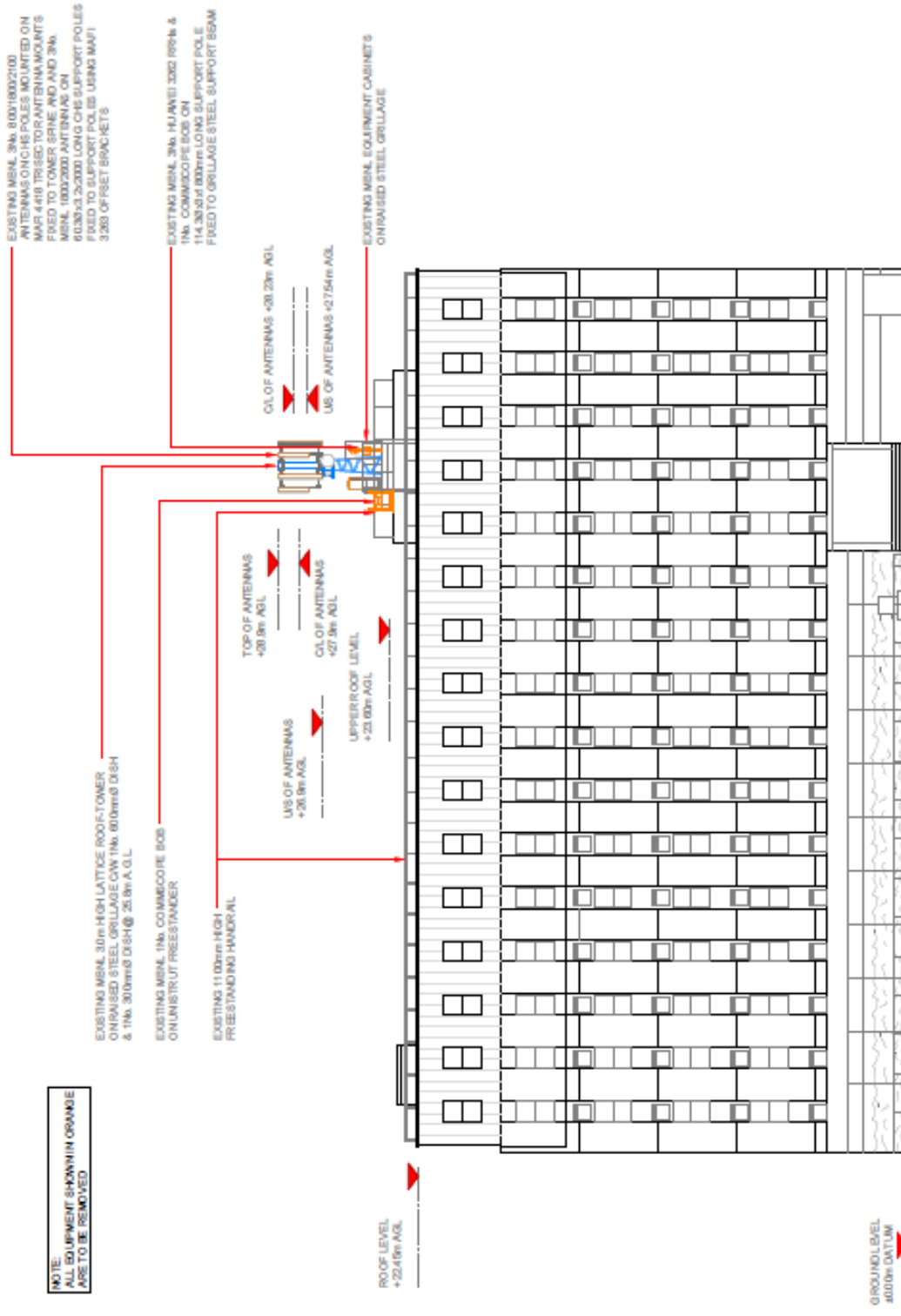
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 153 Existing Site Elevation
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 215 Proposed Max Config Site Plan
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 265 Proposed Max Config Elevation
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 266 Proposed Max Config Elevation
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 267 Proposed Max Config Elevation
- 795494_RDG024_61354_RG4406_M004 rev D - 268 Proposed Max Config Elevation
- Supplementary Information Document ref. 61354
- Declaration of Conformity with ICNIRP Public Exposure Guidelines signed and dated 26/02/2020.

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 19th March 2020

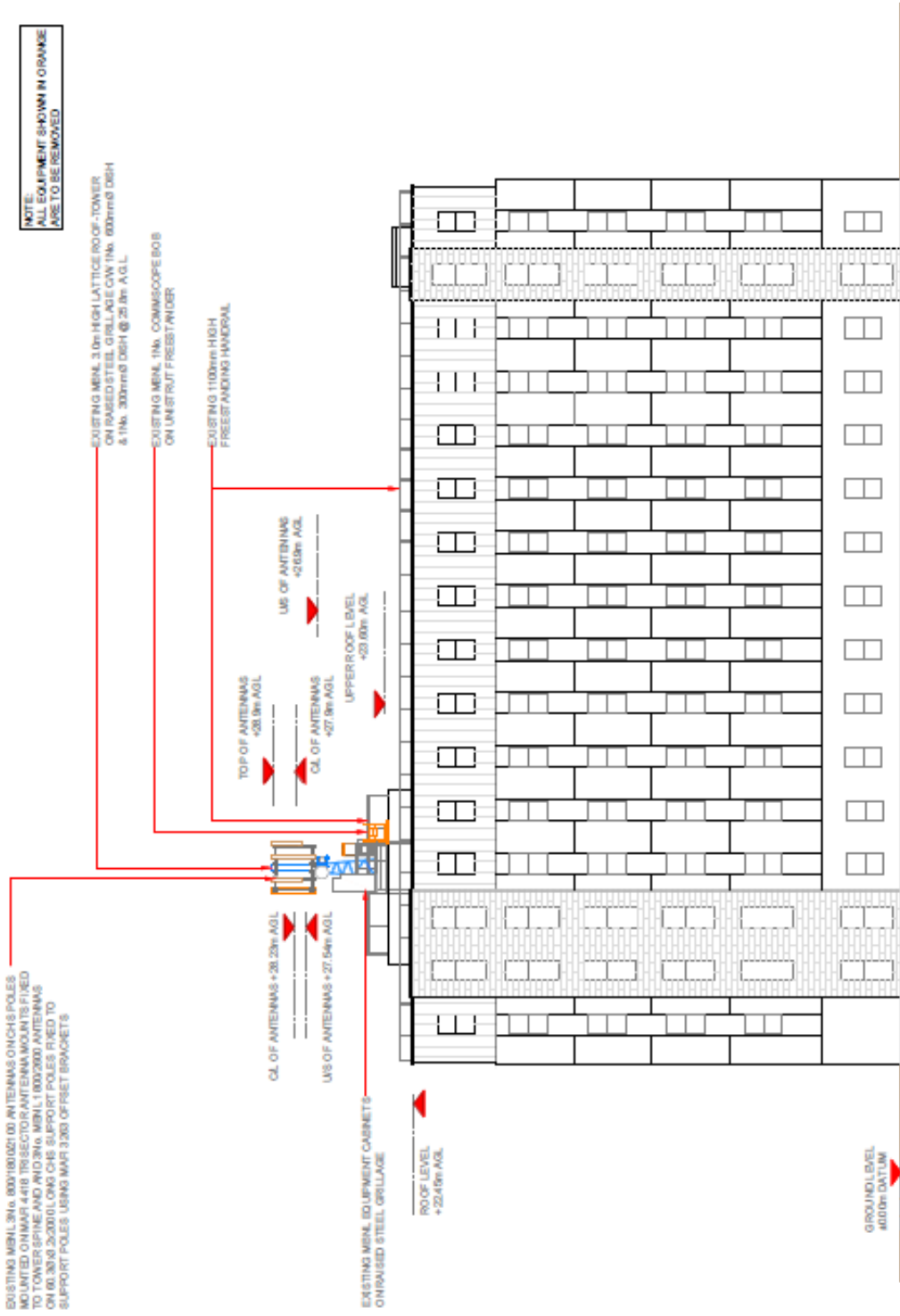
Case Officer: Matt Burns



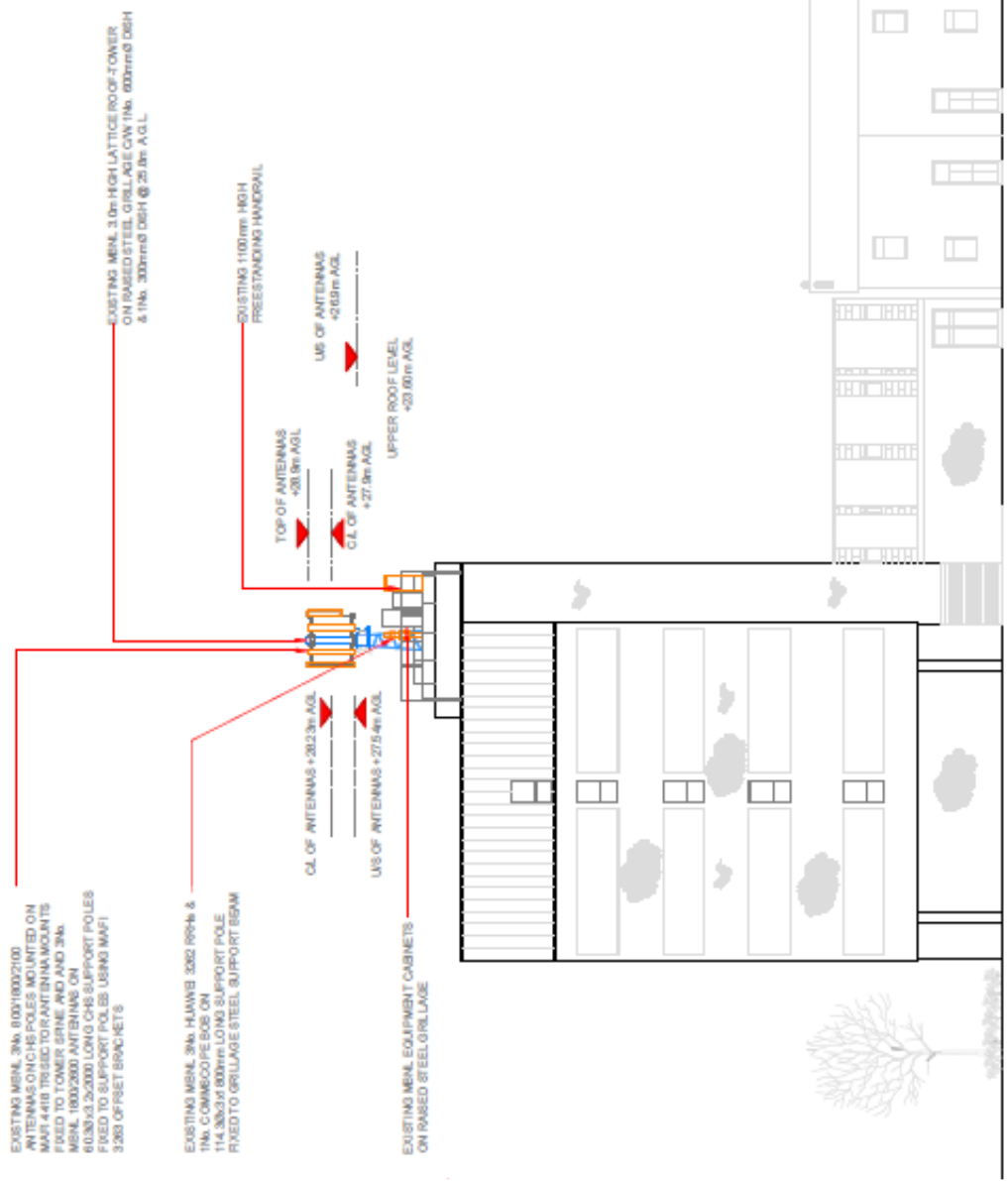
Existing Site Plan



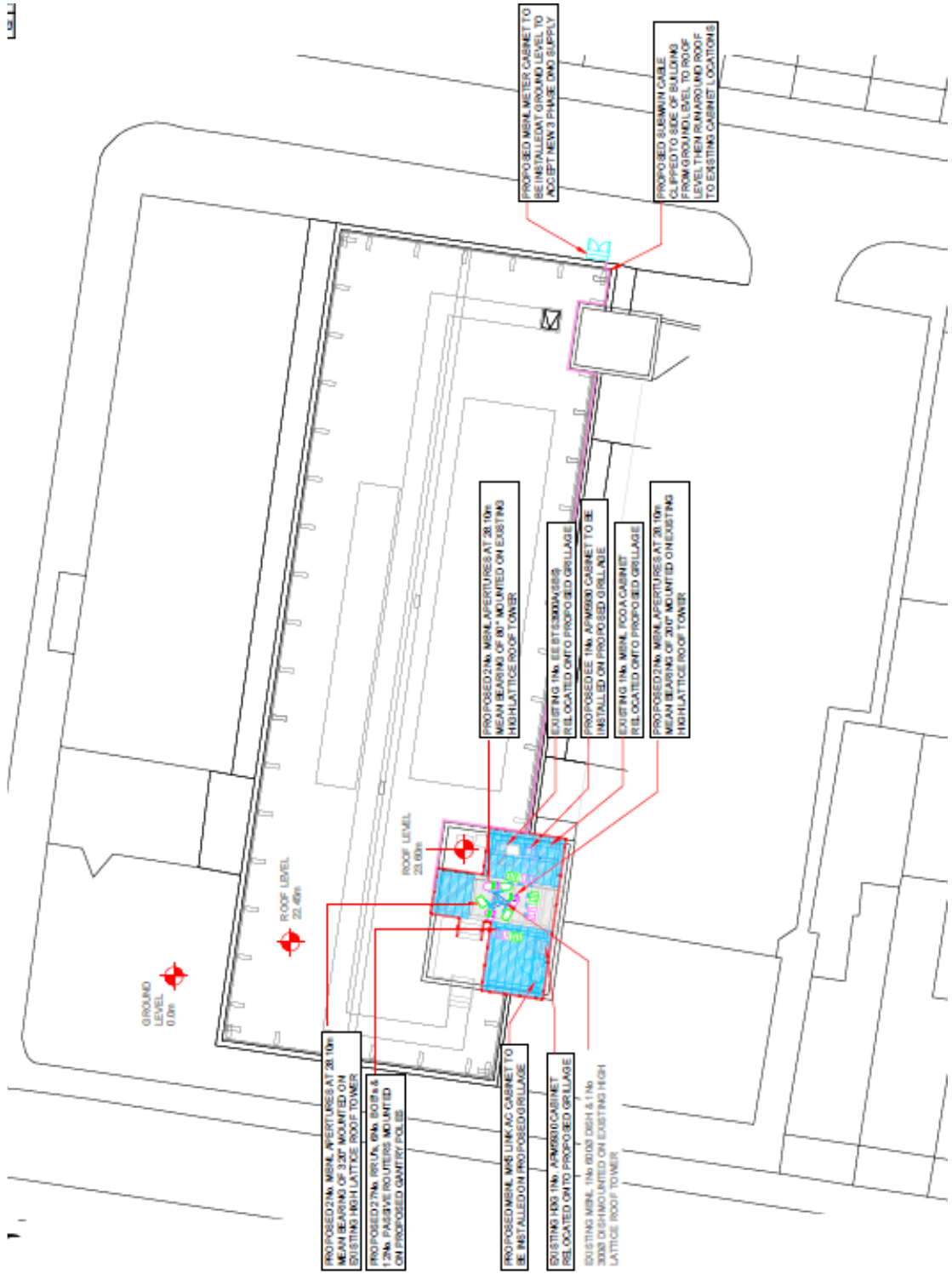
Existing North Elevation



Existing South Elevation



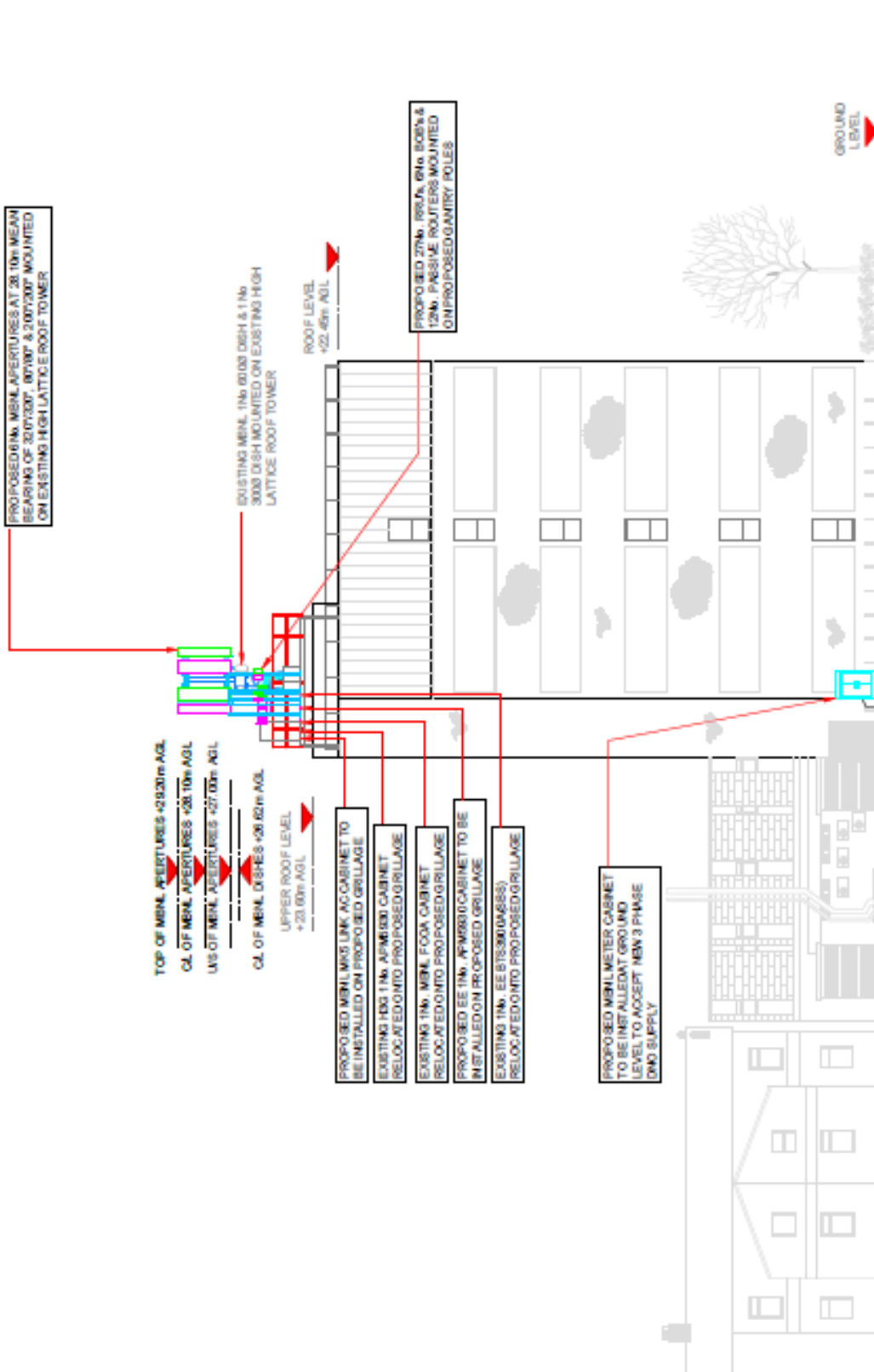
Existing West Elevation



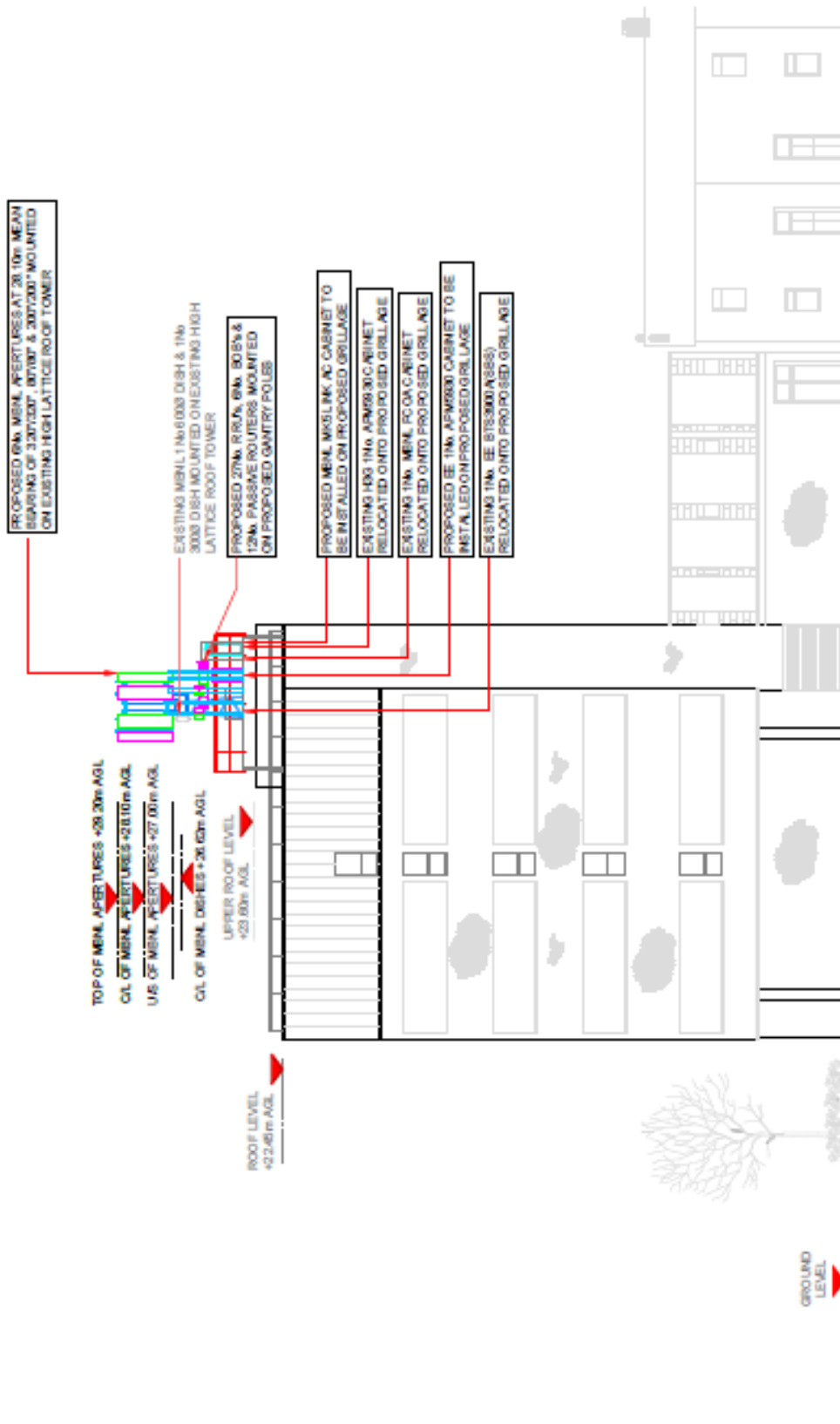
Proposed Site Plan



Proposed South Elevation



Proposed East Elevation



Proposed West Elevation

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 3 June 2020

Ward: Southcote

App No.: 200339/FUL

Address: Burghfield Road Southcote

Proposal: Removal of the existing 15m mast and erection of a new 25m lattice tower with a total of 12No. antenna (6No. EE and 6No. Huawei) along with ancillary equipment mounted on a newly formed concrete foundation measuring 5.5m x 5.6m. The existing site compound would be retained and enlarged by a further 6.6m to an overall size of 13.2m x 6.6m all enclosed by a 2.5m high Palisade fence to match that of the existing

Applicant: Wireless Infrastructure Group

Date validated: 2 March 2020

8-week target decision date: 27 April 2020

RECOMMENDATION

As per 29th April 2020 committee report (attached to this report as Appendix A) but with the following additional condition:

4. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of this development shall be painted or coated with a fir green (RAL 6009) colour finish before the development hereby permitted becomes operational.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application was deferred at the 29th April 2020 Planning Applications Committee in order to seek clarification from the Applicant on some matters relating to the proposed development.
- 1.2 One point of clarification was regarding the colour of the proposed mast. The Applicant has confirmed that the mast could be constructed in a 'Fir Green' (RAL colour ref. 6009) colour finish:

RAL 6009 Fir Green



and that the proposed antennas and dishes to the top of the mast could also be provided in this colour finish. Officer consider that Fir Green is an appropriate colour in the context of the surrounding countryside and trees.

- 1.3 Clarification has also been provided with regard to the height of the mast. Paragraph 2.2 of the 29th April 2020 committee report set out that a 25m high mast was required due to the height of the surrounding clutter between the site location and the cell coverage area in order to provide improved coverage to customers. The Applicant has now advised that the topography of the surrounding land which rises from the application site towards the north, where the target residential coverage area lies, also necessitates a mast of the height proposed, in order to provide the necessary network coverage improvements. The Applicant has advised that a reduction in height of the mast would result in the need for an additional site in the locality to meet the necessary coverage requirements which would be contrary to the aims of paragraph 113 of the NPPF which seeks to keep the number of masts to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion.
- 1.4 There was also discussion at the 29th April 2020 committee meeting with regard to the value of a character assessment of the proposed enlarged mast to assist with consideration of the visual impact. The Applicant has considered this request and does not dispute the fact that introduction of a taller vertical structure will have a degree of visual impact but is of the strong opinion that provision of a such a views study would not be proportionate to the impact of the development.
- 1.5 The Applicant notes that the site and surrounding land is not under any statutory designation and that whilst within the Kennet and Holy Brook Meadows Major Landscape Feature as defined by Policy EN13 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 it is located on the western edge of this local landscape feature. The Applicant considers that the immediate surrounding of the site must also be considered. The site is located within an existing large electricity sub-station site with telecommunications base station equipment and mast which have been in situ for some time. Additionally, the railway line and associated infrastructure to the north of site also mean that the localised setting of the landscape feature has already been compromised by the existing and historic land use and infrastructure.
- 1.6 The Applicant considers that the main consideration is whether the degree of visual impact would outweigh that of the public benefits of the proposal

(as summarised in the 29th April 2020 Committee Report) and considers that this would not be the case and therefore it is not proportionate in this instance to provide a views assessment or visualisations of the site.

- 1.7 Officers consider that a views assessment would be of some benefit in the assessment of the application, but that ultimately it is already clear that, as with any large vertical structure, there will be some visual impact arising from the new tower from most surrounding viewpoints. The question is whether this impact amounts to a degree of harm that outweighs the public benefits of the proposals.
- 1.8 As set out in paragraph 7.1 of the 29th April 2020 committee report it is considered that the benefits of the proposed development in providing improved network coverage for nearby residents and the emergency services network, together with the fact that the proposals are for an upgrade of an existing telecommunications base stations and are designed to be shared with other operators therefore reducing the potential for new telecommunication base stations and masts to be established elsewhere in this locality, are considered to outweigh the extent to which the increased height of the mast would detract from the visual amenity of the surrounding area and the character of the Kennet and Holy Brook Meadows Major Landscape Feature.
- 1.9 One additional letter of objection to the application has also been received. A summary of what this objection states is set out below:
 - Not all scientists agree with ICNIRP that 5G has no harmful effects
 - A number of countries have place moratoriums on 5G networks
 - Public Health England and Ofcom who regulate communications services are linked to Government Departments and is concerned that there are vested interests in their involvement in this matter.
- 1.10 Officer comments in respect of the role of planning in considering the health impacts of telecommunications development is set out in paragraphs 6.16 to 6.18 of the 29th April Planning Applications Committee report.
- 1.11 The Officer recommendation remains as per the 29th April 2020 committee report and is to grant full planning permission subject to the conditions and the additional condition set out in the recommendation box of this report.

Case Officer: Matt Burns

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COMMITTEE REPORT

**BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29 April 2020**

Ward: Southcote

App No.: 200339/FUL

Address: Burghfield Road Southcote

Proposal: Removal of the existing 15m mast and erection of a new 25m lattice tower with a total of 12No. antenna (6No. EE and 6No. Huawei) along with ancillary equipment mounted on a newly formed concrete foundation measuring 5.5m x 5.6m. The existing site compound would be retained and enlarged by a further 6.6m to an overall size of 13.2m x 6.6m all enclosed by a 2.5m high Palisade fence to match that of the existing

Applicant: Wireless Infrastructure Group

Date validated: 2 March 2020

8-week target decision date: 27 April 2020

RECOMMENDATION

Grant Full Planning Permission

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE

1. Full - time limit - three years
2. Standard approved plans condition
3. Removal of existing monopole

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE

1. Standard positive and proactive informative.
2. Terms & conditions
3. Highways works

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is located to the south of the existing SSE electricity sub-station, adjacent to the main access for the site on the west side of Burghfield Road and contains an existing 15m high telecommunications monopole with antennas and ground based ancillary equipment cabinets surrounded by a metal palisade fence. The site is located approximately 800m south of the A4 Bath Road and about 150m north of the boundary with West Berkshire District. The substation site is in an open agricultural area 200m north-east of Holybrook Farm. The River Kennet is located around 300m to south of the site with an industrial estate located directly to the south of the river channel. The nearest residential dwellings are in Lea Close some 140 metres north of the site with a brook, railway tracks and Southcote Linear Park in between.

- 1.2 The site is set below the ground level of Burghfield Road, behind an embankment to the east as Burghfield Road rises up to the north to the bridge over the railway line. That embankment is vegetated by a hedgerow of up to 10 metres in height. Taller trees of around 12-18 metres in height are located further to the north east and west.
- 1.3 There is an existing 16m high lattice telecoms tower located some 175m to the south west of the site just north of Holy Brook Farm.
- 1.4 Immediately to the north within the sub-station site are transformers and a single storey control building, this is bordered to the north by a raised (3 metres high) railway track. Further north is Holy Brook itself, then extensive mature planting and an open field. The substation site is located within and on the western edge of the Kennet and Holy Brook Meadows Major Landscape Feature Area which extends to the east and north of the site. Southcote Linear Park area of Local Green Space is also located around 100m to the north of the site on the north side of the railway line.



Site Location Plan



Existing monopole

- 1.5 The existing 15m high telecommunications monopole was originally refused by Planning Applications Committee in 2005 under telecommunications prior approval application ref. 050068. The application was refused on the grounds of siting and appearance with the monopole considered to be a harmful and dominant structure in the local area, particularly when viewed from Southcote Linear Park and Lea Close to the north. A second reason for refusal regarding failure to demonstrate that there was not an alternative more suitable site for the monopole that in the local area that would have a lesser visual impact was also applied.
- 1.6 However, this proposal was allowed by the Planning Inspectorate on appeal (ref. APP/E0345/A/05/1183889). In allowing the appeal, the Inspector acknowledged the site's sensitive location but only identified limited harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and concluded that the benefits of the monopole in providing improvements to network coverage for nearby residential areas would outweigh this harm. The Inspector was also satisfied that alternative sites had been satisfactorily investigated.
- 1.7 The current application is on the committee agenda because the Council's scheme of delegation requires all applications for new/replacement telecommunications masts to be determined by Planning Applications Committee.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission to replace the existing 15m high and 0.5m wide telecommunications monopole with a new 25m high 'lattice' tower of between 1.2m and 1.8m in width, with a total of 12No. antennas (6No. EE and 6No. Huawei) and 4No. EE 600mm diameter dishes. The antennas would be located at the top of the mast and would have a

maximum width of 4.4m. The proposed lattice tower would be mounted on a newly formed concrete foundation measuring 5.5m x 5.6m located to the north and directly adjacent to the existing concrete base and monopole. As a replacement scheme, the existing monopole is to be removed as part of the proposals. The existing site compound would be retained and enlarged by a further 6.6m to an overall size of 13.2m x 6.6m all enclosed by a 2.5m high Palisade fence to match that of the existing. The existing concrete base would be retained to house the 6No. new ground-based equipment cabinets (for EE/H3G).

- 2.2 The proposed upgrade of the existing established telecommunications base station and the proposed lattice tower would host EE Ltd, who require this larger tower due to the height of the surrounding clutter between the site location and the cell coverage area, in order to provide improved coverage to existing customers. The tower would continue to provide 2G, 3G and 4G coverage for EE's customers within this area providing them with mobile, voice, text and data services, as well as being optimised to include the upgrade of 5G equipment. The tower would also provide opportunity for additional operators to site share in the future, reducing the number of masts within the locality as well as providing improved coverage for the emergency services network(s).
- 2.3 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 Electricity substation permitted in 1960 and an extension to the control building was also permitted in 1998.
- 3.2 04/00113/TELE - 15 metre pole with 4 x antennas, 2 x 600 mm dishes radio equipment housing and ancillary development - Refused.
- 3.3 04/00755/TELE - Installation of a telecommunications pole with antennas, radio equipment housing and ancillary development - Withdrawn.
- 3.4 050608/TELE - Provision of a 15m monopole and a ground based equipment cabinet - Refused. Allowed on appeal (ref. APP/E0345/A/05/1183889).

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 RBC Natural Environment - Notes that that the existing trees along the Burghfield Road boundary are fairly small and doesn't envisage that the extension of the concrete base will be harmful in this respect.

The key point is the extension of height from a 15m mast to a 25m tower, which is significant. This will take the tower above the height of adjacent trees and increase its visibility from the surrounding area, including the road and adjacent Local Wildlife sites. Notes that only an elevation has

been submitted just to show what the tower will look like whereas it would seem appropriate that visuals from further afield should be provided in respect of the requirements of Policy OU3 and the impact of telecommunications development on the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

Objects to the application on the basis that it fails to demonstrate that the replacement tower would not have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding landscape and Major Landscape Area.

4.2 RBC Transport - No comments received at time of writing this report.

4.3 RBC Ecology - No comments received at time of writing this report.

4.4 Berkshire Archaeology - The proposed new telecommunications tower lies immediately adjacent to an existing facility that was subject to an archaeological watching brief in 2004 (Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 2006). The watching brief did not identify any remains of archaeological significance.

On the basis of the results of the earlier watching brief and in view of the small area of below ground impact for the current proposal, an archaeological response would not be proportionate and therefore no further action is required in relation to the buried archaeological heritage. No objection.

4.5 West Berkshire Council - No comments received at the time of writing this report.

Public Consultation

4.6 No. s 71-109 Brunel Road and no.s 14-35 Lea Close were notified of the application by letter. A site notice was not displayed.

4.7 One letter of objection has been received raising the following comments:

- *There have been numerous reports regarding the introduction of 5g rollout some in favour but the majority against. Until a comprehensive review is carried out regarding this rollout of the 5g network it should not be installed. The installation of this 5g network without the proper safety reviews being carried out would be a flagrant abuse of our basic human rights and an abuse of the duty of care towards the population in the close proximity to this mast.*

4.8 If any further representations received these will be detailed in an update report or reported verbally at the committee meeting.

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 Full Planning Permission has been applied for as the development exceeds permitted development rights under Class A, Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Full Planning Permission has been applied for as the development exceeds permitted development rights under Class A, Part 16 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). This is because the width of the proposed tower exceeds that of the existing monopole by more than a third. It should be noted that a replacement mast of 25m in height could be erected under permitted development rights as long the width of the mast did not exceed this requirement; albeit any such proposal would still be required to go through the prior approval process where the LPA would be required to assess the visual impact of the mast on the surrounding area and either give or refuse prior approval.

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

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Part 10 - Supporting high quality communications infrastructure

Part 12 - Achieving well designed places

Part 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

5.5 Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Policy CC7 Design and the public realm

Policy EN7Wr Southcote Linear Park Local Green Space (LGS)

Policy EN8 Undesignated Open Space

Policy EN12 Biodiversity and the green network

Policy EN13 Major landscape features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy EN14 Trees hedges and woodlands

Policy EN16 Pollution and water resources

Policy TR3 Access, traffic and highway related matters

Policy OU3 Telecommunications development

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 Paragraph 112 of the NPPF 2019 sets out that advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Paragraph 113 states that the number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged.

- 6.2 Policy OU3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 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 or on the significance of a heritage asset;
 - The apparatus will be sited and designed 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

- 6.3 Paragraph 170 of the NPPF sets out that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan) as well as recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services - including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.
- 6.4 In addition to Policy OU3 as set out above Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks that all development is of high design quality which maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the surrounding area with respect to issues such as scale, height, massing and landscape impact. Policy EN13 (Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Beauty) also sets out that planning permission will not be granted for development which would detract from the character or appearance of a Major Landscape Feature. Policy EN8 (Undesignated Open Space) requires that there is a presumption in favour of retention of undesignated open space. Policy EN7 (Local Green Space and Public Open Space) requires that development does not result in loss of or jeopardise public enjoyment of designated Local Green Spaces (LGSs).
- 6.5 The proposed replacement lattice tower and associated equipment would be located within the confines of the existing substation site; therefore, no loss of undesignated open space will occur. The substation site is located over 100m south of Southcote Linear Park such that there would be no loss of this designated LGS. Furthermore, this separation is such that the proposed development is not considered to jeopardise the use or enjoyment of this LGS.
- 6.6 The lattice tower structure (including antennas and dishes at the top of the tower) is the only element of the proposal that is considered to be visible to a level that could be considered discernible from public vantage points, with the proposed extended concrete base and 6 ground level equipment cabinets and palisade fencing being screened to longer range

views by existing vegetation and the change in levels between the substation site Burghfield Road to the east.

- 6.7 The key assessment is the impact of the increase in height, width and change in form of the replacement lattice tower upon the character and views within the surrounding area and Kennet and Holy Brook Major Landscape Feature compared to the existing 15m high monopole.
- 6.8 The existing monopole, whilst partially screened by the existing hedgerow and trees surrounding the substation site, is visible to immediate views from Burghfield Road and the surrounding countryside particularly views north towards Southcote and west and east across the site. The existing vegetation screening is most effective in screening views south from Southcote towards the countryside where the existing tree lines largely obscure the monopole, albeit the antenna to the top of the monopole is still visible. The existing monopole is also evident in longer range views from the wider countryside and from within the Major Landscape Feature Area to the east and north of the site.
- 6.9 Officers requested a views assessment of the impact of the increased height of the structure upon the surrounding area from the Applicant given the site's sensitive location, however this has not been provided. The Council's Natural Environment Officer also considers that such an assessment is necessary to properly assess the impact of the development of the surrounding area and Major Landscape Feature. Given the absence of this assessment from the application documentation, the Natural Environment Officer has raised objection to the proposed development on the basis that the application fails to demonstrate that the increased height and width of the telecommunications tower would not detract from the visual amenity of the surrounding area and the character and appearance of the Major Landscape Feature.
- 6.10 However, notwithstanding the above officers must assess the application and proposed development based on the plans and documentation that have been submitted.
- 6.11 At 10m taller than the existing monopole, the proposed replacement 25m high lattice tower would clearly be more a more visible and prominent structure. In terms of appropriate design, the lattice style structure, whilst wider, would present a more lightweight appearance than a solid monopole. The existing vegetation and trees, none of which are to be removed as part of the proposals, would screen the lower parts of the tower to some immediate and long-range views as with the existing monopole. However, the increased height would project up above the surrounding tree line making it visible to wider range of views whilst the bulky antennas and dishes to the top of the mast would increase its visual prominence, negatively affecting views from the Kennet and Holy Brook Meadows Major Landscape Feature and Southcote Linear Park Local Green Space. This would be particularly evident looking south across the site from Southcote towards the open countryside, where the existing monopole is most effectively screened by trees and vegetation.

- 6.12 There is an existing telecommunications lattice tower located around 100m to the south in open countryside just north of Holy Brook Farm. This structure is 16m in height and therefore would not provide the necessary height to provide the network coverage sought by the lattice tower proposed as part of this application. In considering the visual impact on the wider area officers accept that it is preferable for a taller lattice tower, such as that proposed, to be located within an existing large substation site which is already established within the countryside, rather than an isolated site such as that near Holy Brook Farm in the middle of green fields. Albeit it is acknowledged that the re-use of an existing site does not diminish the impact of the increased height.
- 6.13 Based on the information provided, Officers conclude that the proposed larger replacement telecommunications lattice tower, antennas and dishes would result in a development which detracts from the amenity and character of the surrounding area both in terms of immediate and long-range views from within the surrounding countryside and Major Landscape Feature. However, taking into account that the application relates to an existing telecommunications base station site within an established electricity substation which is encouraged by the NPPF and Policy OU3, as well as the existing presence of the monopole to be removed, the degree to which the development detracts from surrounding character must be considered against the positive benefits of the telecommunications development.

Alternative Sites

- 6.14 The proposal would accord with the requirements of the Paragraph 1115 of the NPPF and Policy OU3 in that the works propose an upgrade to an existing telecommunications base station as opposed to creating a new base station in an alternative and non-established location. Whilst not currently proposed as a site share between different telecommunications operators, the application makes clear that the size and location of the mast mean that it is suitable and would be available for share with other operators which could avoid the need for the installation of another mast elsewhere within the Borough or creation of a new base station site that is not in an established location.
- 6.15 The supporting information submitted with the application does not explore alternative locations for the tower on the basis that the proposed works relate to an upgrade of an existing base station and therefore the principle of telecommunications apparatus on the site is already established. Whilst the proposals do relate to upgrade of an existing site this does not mean that alternative locations should not be considered, particularly those which could potentially have a lesser visual impact. However, in this instance given the open character of this part of the borough and the scale of the mast required to provide the necessary level of network coverage for residents and the emergency services network, Officers are of the opinion that less exposed sites locations are likely to be difficult to identify and therefore re-use and upgrade of an existing

established site is the preferred approach. Furthermore, the character of the built-up areas of this part of the Borough do not include particularly tall buildings where there could be potential for provision of alternative roof-based equipment as opposed to ground-based monopoles/towers.

Other

- 6.16 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that “*Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for the telecommunications system, or determine health safeguards if the proposal meets International Commission guidelines for public exposure*”. The requirement is also outlined in the supporting text to Policy OU3.
- 6.17 The applicant has provided an International Commission on Non-ionizing Radiation (ICNIRP) certificate to support this planning application. This certifies that the proposed development would be in full compliance with the ICNIRP guidelines. The ICNIRP guidelines are the most up-to-date and relevant tool to ascertain the acceptability of telecommunications development within the planning process. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF goes on to state that Local Planning Authorities should not substitute their own “opinion” on health issues for that expressed by ICNIRP.
- 6.18 On balance, the suggested health risks associated with this development (as raised by the objector) and the fear and/or stress associated with these perceived risks are outweighed by the reassurances provided by the technical information submitted by the applicant. As such, the proposal is deemed acceptable in terms of health-related issues.
- 6.19 No audible noise is anticipated from the structure. The surrounding area receives audible noise from vehicles, trains and a constant low hum from the substation. Consequently, there will be no adverse effects.
- 6.20 The tree officer is satisfied that the proposed position of the extended concrete base and its location within an established substation is such that the proposals would not result in any detrimental impact to existing trees and vegetation. Comments from the Council’s Ecologist will follow in an update report or be reported verbally at the committee meeting.
- 6.21 Berkshire Archaeology raises no objection to the proposals on the basis that the site is located within an established base station site such that archaeological implications would be limited.
- 6.22 In terms of transport impacts the substation site has its own existing access such that construction works will be able to take place away from the highway. However, any more detailed transport comments will be provided in an update report or reported verbally at the committee meeting.

Matters raised in representations

- 6.23 The issues relating to the health impact of the proposals have already been addressed in paragraphs 6.16 to 6.18 of this report.
- 6.24 However, the objector also raises the matter the impact of the perceived health effects of the development upon their Human Rights. Article 8 of the Human Rights Act (HRA) relates to enjoyment by residents of their home life. The grant of planning permission for development which may have sufficiently serious effects on the enjoyment by local residents of their home life may in principle affect Article 8, although such cases are likely to involve extreme facts. In addition, Article 8(2) allows public authorities to interfere with the right to respect the home if it is “in accordance with the law” and “to the extent necessary in a democratic society” in the interest of “the well-being” of the area.
- 6.25 Under S.70 of the 1990 Planning Act, Parliament has entrusted planning authorities with the statutory duty to determine planning applications, and has said (S.70(2)) that in dealing with such an application the authority “shall have regard” to the development plan and to “any other material considerations” which will include HRA issues.
- 6.26 The courts have held that a “balance” has to be struck in planning decisions between the rights of the developer and the rights of those affected by the proposed development. This involves the balance between:
- on the one hand the specific interests of the individual objector as documented (see above), and
 - on the other hand, the interests of the applicant to obtain the planning permission he has applied for, and lastly
 - the interests of the wider community, as expressed in Lough (2004) in the following terms “in an urban setting it must be anticipated that development may take place” and that it “is in the public interest that residential developments take place in urban areas if possible”.
- 6.27 In this respect the applicant has applied for planning permission for the development as required by planning legislation. As referred to in paragraphs 6.16 to 6.18 of this report above, the NPPF is clear that for telecommunications development LPAs should not substitute their own opinion on health matters where a development demonstrates that it is meeting ICNIRP guidelines which are the internationally set guiding principles for such matters. An ICNIRP certificate demonstrating adherence to these guidelines has been submitted by the Applicant as part of the application as required. Officers therefore consider that the development would not conflict with the HRA.

Equalities impact assessment

- 6.28 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/sex, or 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.

7. CONCLUSION

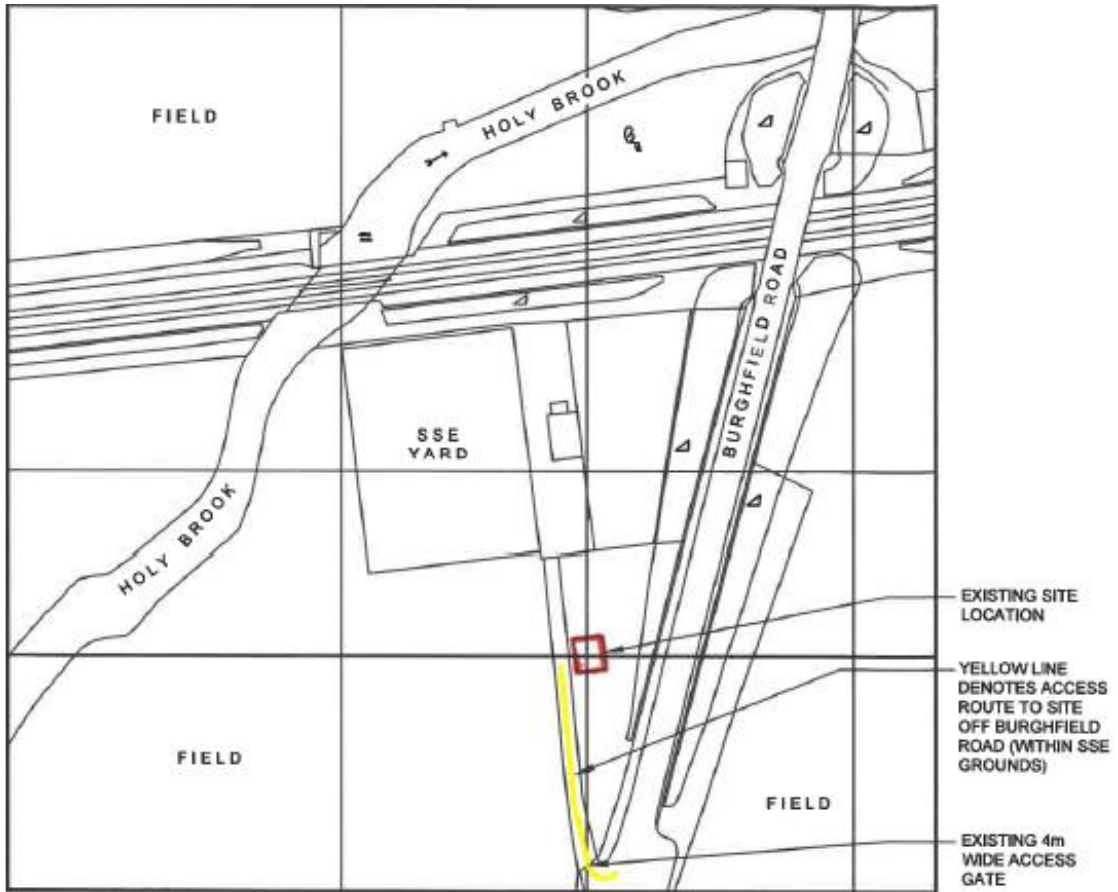
- 7.1 It is considered that the benefits of the proposed development in providing improved network coverage for nearby residents and the emergency services network, together with the fact that the proposals are for an upgrade of an existing telecommunications base stations and are designed to be shared with other operators therefore reducing the potential for new telecommunication base stations and masts to be established elsewhere in this locality, are considered to outweigh the extent to which the increased height of the mast would detract from the visual amenity of the surrounding area and the character of the Kennet and Holy Brook Meadows Major Landscape Feature.
- 7.2 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC7, EN7Wr, EN8, EN12, EN13, EN14, EN16, TR3 and OU3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 as assessed above. It is therefore recommended that approval be granted, subject to suitable conditions.

Drawings and Documents Considered:

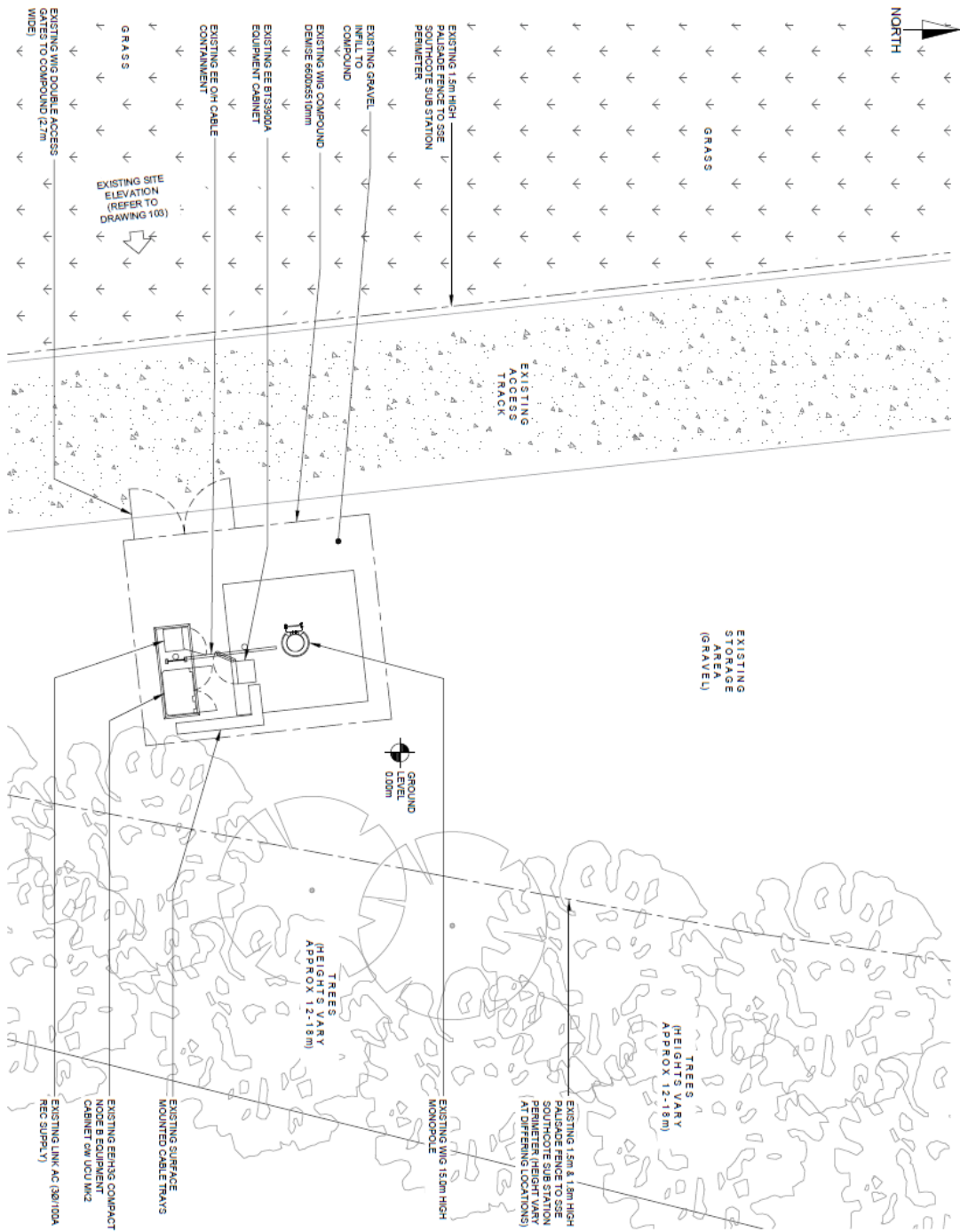
Drawing no 100 rev E - Location and block plans
Drawing no 101 rev E - Crane/cherry picker location plan
Drawing no 102 rev E - Existing site plan - ground level
Drawing no 103 rev E - Existing site elevation
Drawing no 104 rev E - Proposed site plan - ground level
Drawing no 105 rev E - Proposed site elevation
Drawing no 107 rev E - MBNL headframe plans

ICNIRP declaration certificate
Harlequin group supporting statement rev 1

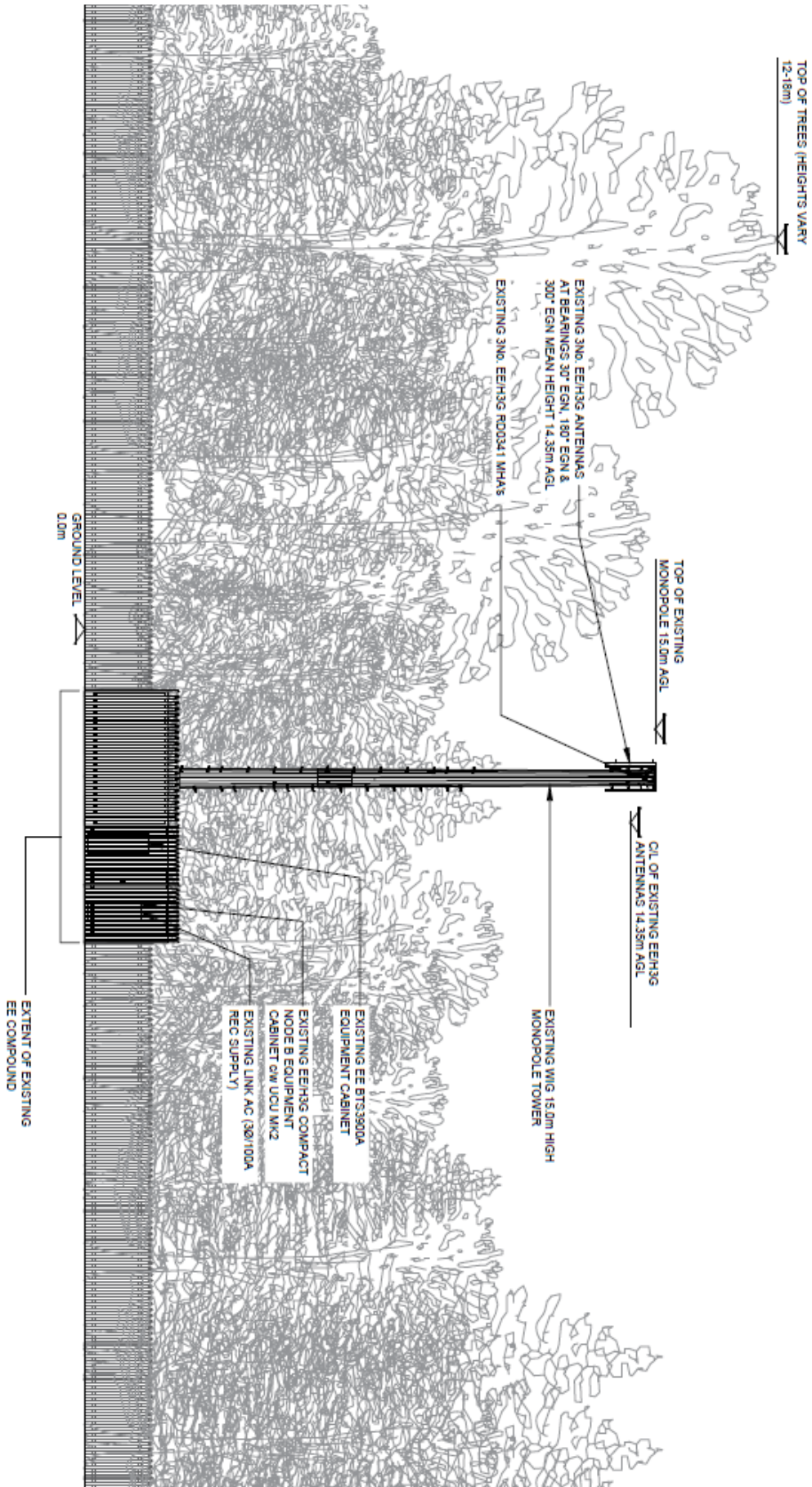
Case Officer: Matt Burns



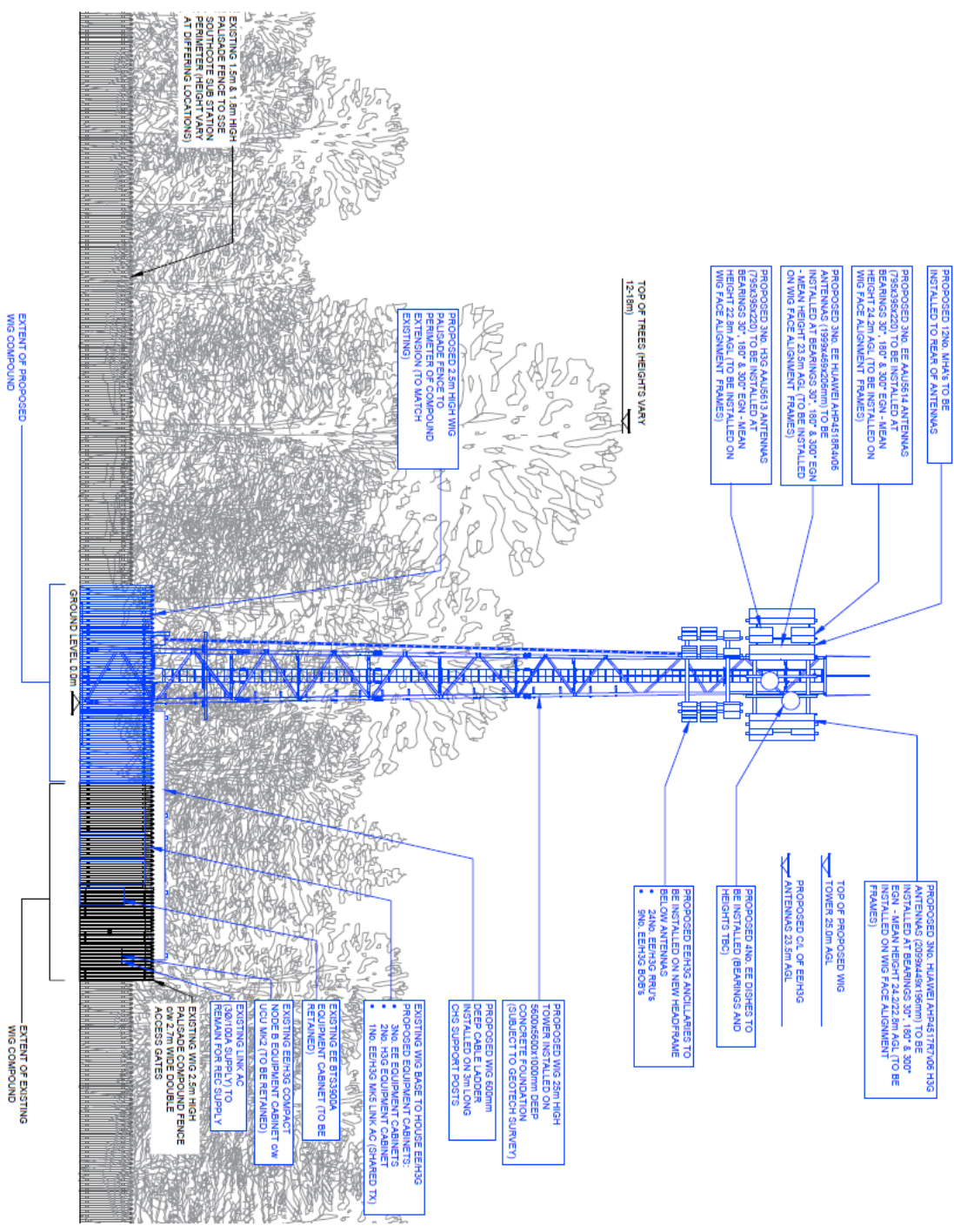
Site Plan



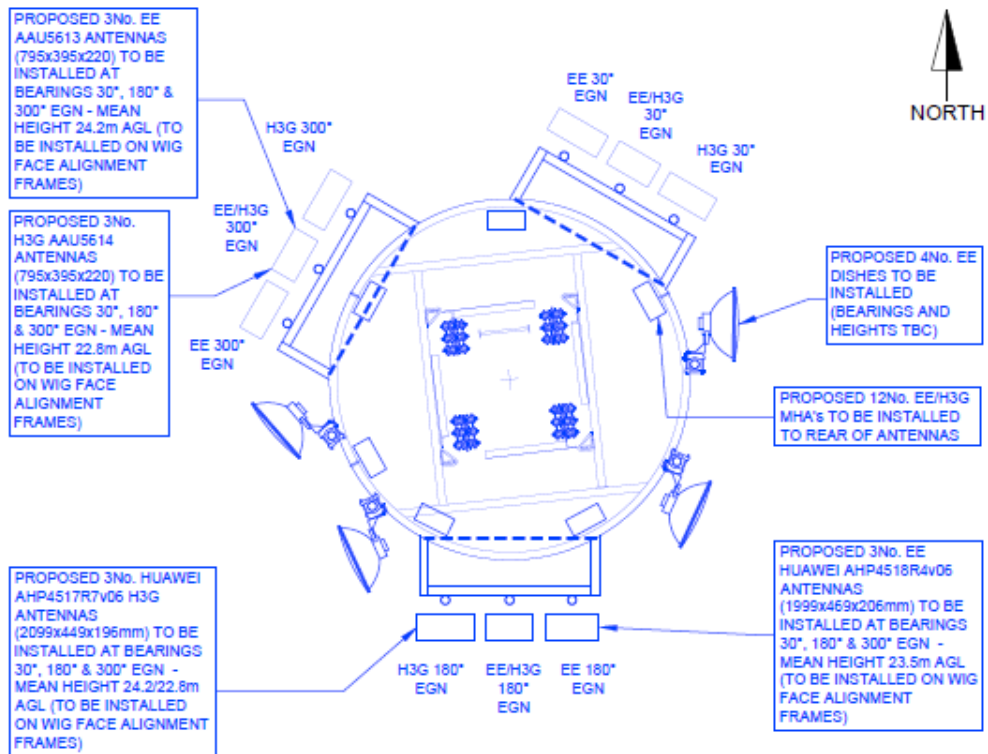
Existing Site Plan



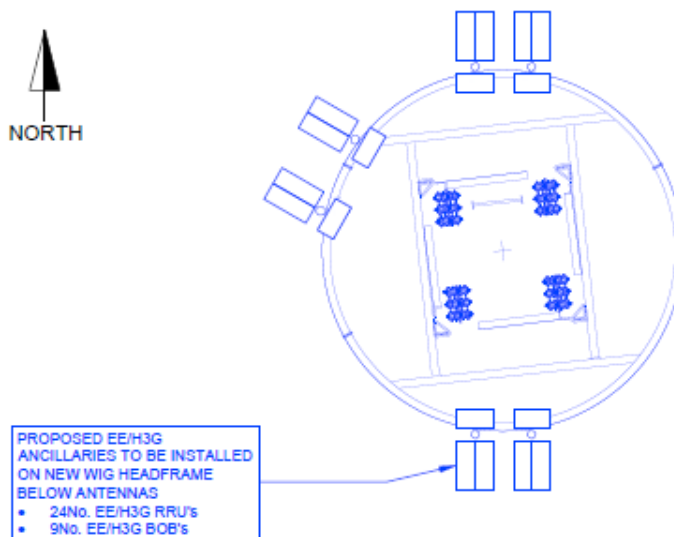
Existing Elevation



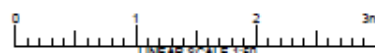
Proposed Elevation



PROPOSED EE/H3G ANTENNA PLAN AT 23.5m AGL



PROPOSED EE/H3G ANCILLARY PLAN



Proposed Headframe Section

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