

To: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)
Councillors Challenger, Carnell, Duveen,
Emberson, Ennis, Leng, McEwan, Page,
Robinson, Rowland, Stanford-Beale,
J Williams and R Williams

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13 July 2021

Your contact is: **Simon Hill - Committee Services (simon.hill@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 21 JULY 2021

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 21 July 2021 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
1. MINUTES	-		9 - 14
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-		
3. QUESTIONS	-		
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	Decision		To Be Tabled
5. PLANNING APPEALS	Information		15 - 18
6. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL	Information		19 - 24
7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE - QUARTER 1 (APRIL - JUNE) 2021/2022	Information	BOROUGHWIDE	25 - 28
8. STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT OFF HENLEY ROAD, CAVERSHAM	Decision	PEPPARD	29 - 34
9. STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT REAR OF HIGHGROVE STREET	Decision	KATESGROVE	35 - 38

PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

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10.	210007/FUL - 124-128 CARDIFF ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	39 - 54
	Proposal	Demolition of No.124 and construction of a building for use as an extension to the existing waste recycling centre building at No. 128 with associated parking and landscaping.		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
11.	210163/FUL & 210164LBC - BRISTOL & WEST ARCADE, MARKET PLACE	Decision	ABBEY	55 - 124
	Proposal (210163)	Demolition of vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (173-175 Friar Street) and redevelopment of site including minor excavations at basement level to provide an 8-storey building to provide a hotel (C1 use) of up to 182 beds, creation of a bar/restaurant/gym at ground floor associated with the hotel and the provision of ancillary facilities including outdoor terrace, demolition of rear parts of 29-31 and 32 Market Place, the change of use of the retained units at 27-28, 29-31 and 32 Market Place at first, second and third floors to provide 8 residential units, retention of flexible Class E uses at ground and basement floors.		
	Recommendation	Permitted subject to Legal Agreement		
	Proposal (210164)	Demolition of Market Place v		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
12.	210349/FUL - 115 CHATHAM STREET	Decision	ABBEY	125 - 176
	Proposal	Demolition of the existing buildings on site and erection of a 3 - 5 storey building to provide 54 residential units (Class C3). Provision of private and communal external amenity areas, car and cycle parking and refuse storage.		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
13.	210879/REG3 - 134 OXFORD ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	177 - 182
	Proposal	Install Artwork on existing metal railings on a vacant site to the West of 134 Oxford Road		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
14.	210583/FUL - 75 LOVEROCK ROAD	Decision	BATTLE	183 - 192
	Proposal	Change of use of 75 Loverock Road from B8 to B2 requiring minor alterations and erection of substation and external plant area.		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
15.	210471/LBC - CAVERSHAM COURT ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE, CHURCH ROAD	Decision	CAVERSHAM	193 - 200
	Proposal	Listed Building Consent for the installation of a toilet facility in a store room in single storey outbuilding of the main Stable Block.		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		

16.	201141/FUL - 65 NORTHCOURT AVENUE	Decision	CHURCH	201 - 230
	Proposal	Construction of a 15 bedroom building (C2 use) with ancillary accommodation and associated works.		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
17.	201070/ADV - LAND AT ROSE KILN LANE	Decision	MINSTER	231 - 244
	Proposal	LED Screen hoardings, supported by hollow steel posts		
	Recommendation	Application Refused		
18.	210549/FUL & 210550/ADV - WENSLEY COURT (NO. 193), IRVING COURT (NO.203) AND RIVERSLEY COURT (NO. 205), WENSLEY ROAD	Decision	MINSTER	245 - 292
	Proposal (210549)	Various renovation works to the three tower blocks (Wensley Court, Irving Court and Riversley Court), including replacement of the external envelope and windows, extended and reconfigured entrance areas incorporating altered refuse and recycling facilities, replacement ground floor escape doors, external stairs and windows, roof level works, various landscaping works including planting and surface treatments, and external cycle parking stores.		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
	Proposal (210550)	Non-illuminate 205 Riversley Court level; Non-illuminate Court, No. 205 level.		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
19.	201197/LBC - 5 THE BROOKMILL	Decision	MINSTER	293 - 296
	Proposal	Replacement of windows		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
20.	210018/OUT - READING GOLF CLUB, KIDMORE END ROAD, EMMER GREEN	Decision	PEPPARD	297 - 400
	Proposal	Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential-led scheme (c3 use to include affordable housing) and the provision of community infrastructure at reading golf club		
	Recommendation	Application Refused		
21.	210644/REG3 & 210745/LBC - PROSPECT PARK, LIEBENROOD ROAD	Decision	SOUTHCOTE	401 - 418

Proposal (210644)	New playground with reinstatement of existing playground back to informal parkland
Recommendation	Application Permitted
Proposal (210745)	Listed Building playground bar and Garden
Recommendation	Application Permitted

22. 210806/HOU - 47 BEVERLEY ROAD, Decision TILEHURST 419 - 424
TILEHURST

Proposal	Single storey rear extension with internal alterations to add WC
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.

Guide to changes to the Use Classes Order in England.

Changes of use within the same class are not development.

Use	Use Class up to 31 August 2020	Use Class from 1 September 2020
Shop - not more than 280sqm mostly selling essential goods, including food and at least 1km from another similar shop	A1	F.2
Shop	A1	E
Financial & professional services (not medical)	A2	E
Café or restaurant	A3	E
Pub, wine bar or drinking establishment	A4	Sui generis
Takeaway	A5	Sui generis
Office other than a use within Class A2	B1a	E
Research & development of products or processes	B1b	E
For any industrial process (which can be carried out in any residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area)	B1c	E
Industrial	B2	B2
Storage or distribution	B8	B8
Hotels, boarding & guest houses	C1	C1
Residential institutions	C2	C2
Secure residential institutions	C2a	C2a
Dwelling houses	C3	C3
Small house in multiple occupation 3-6 residents	C4	C4
Clinics, health centres, creches, day nurseries, day centre	D1	E
Schools, non-residential education & training centres, museums, public libraries, public halls, exhibition halls, places of worship, law courts	D1	F.1
Cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bingo halls and dance halls	D2	Sui generis
Gymnasiums, indoor recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	D2	E
Hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community	D2	F.2
Indoor or outdoor swimming baths, skating rinks, and outdoor sports or recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	D2	F.2

Present: Councillor Lovelock (Chair);
Councillors Challenger (Vice-Chair), Carnell, Emberson, Ennis, Leng, McEwan, Page, Robinson, Rowland, Stanford-Beale, J Williams and R Williams

In remote attendance (non-voting): Councillor Duveen

RESOLVED ITEMS

8. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Further to Minute 5 of the previous meeting it was agreed to circulate the Council's final response to the consultation on changes to permitted development rights for electronic communications infrastructure to all members of the Committee.

9. QUESTIONS

Councillor Josh Williams asked the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee:

Heritage Assets

Reading's Local Plan says, 'The Council will monitor buildings and other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, proactively seeking solutions for assets at risk ... and, as a last resort, using its statutory powers.' Can the Chair please tell us which at risk buildings the Council is currently monitoring, and what proactive solutions it is seeking for those buildings? Can the Chair also tell us what are, in the last resort, the Council's statutory powers?

REPLY by the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee (Councillor Lovelock):

I thank Cllr Williams for his question.

Reading Borough Council currently has two buildings on Historic England's 'heritage at risk register', and one Conservation Area.

The buildings are: (1) a small part of the Abbey Ruins (arch) and (2) Chazey Farm Tithe Barn.

We are expecting that the Abbey Ruins should be able to come off the list with all elements having been restored.

Monitoring of Chazey Farm Barn has taken place since the work to protect the structure was carried out last year after a warning notice was served on the relevant parties.

The Conservation Area at risk is the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road area. We have recently adopted a reappraisal and enlargement of this area and initiatives are currently being looked at through the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme with support from Historic England to remove the area from being at risk.

In terms of other privately-owned buildings at risk, using the resources that we have, discussions between Council Officers and the agents for the owners and internal inspection by officers would be carried out. If urgent works are needed to weatherproof and protect the building, using powers provided by section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, a schedule of works required for the urgent preservation of the building is drawn up and sent to all parties with an interest in the building putting them on notice to carry out these works. This is an Urgent Works Notice. If no action is taken, section 55 of the same Act allows the Council to undertake the works and to then recover the costs from the interested parties.

Other options include:

1. listed building enforcement notices under s38 and prosecution for any failure to comply under s43; and
2. s215 (untidy site) notices;
3. Compulsory Purchase Order for a listed building in need of urgent works.

10. PLANNING APPEALS

(i) New Appeals

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a schedule giving details of a notification received from the Planning Inspectorate regarding a planning appeal. It was reported at the meeting that this was not a new appeal and had been listed in error.

(ii) Appeals Recently Determined

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted details of a decision that had been made by the Secretary of State, or by an Inspector appointed for the purpose, which was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

(iii) Reports on Appeal Decisions

There were no appeal decision reports submitted.

Resolved -

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

11. SITE VISITS

At the meeting it was proposed and agreed that site visits be arranged for the applications relating to Bristol & West Arcade and Reading Golf Club. For future meetings of the Committee officers would submit a list of applications for potential site visits in line with previous practice prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Resolved

- (1) That the under-mentioned application, together with any additional applications which the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services might consider appropriate, be the subject of an accompanied site visit:

210163 - Bristol & West Arcade, Market Place

Demolition of vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (173-175 Friar Street) and redevelopment of site including minor excavations at basement level to provide an 8-storey building to provide a hotel (C1 use) of up to 182 beds, creation of a bar/restaurant/gym at ground floor associated with the hotel and the provision of ancillary facilities including outdoor terrace, demolition of rear parts of 29-31 and 32 Market Place, the change of use of the retained units at 27-28, 29-31 and 32 Market Place at first, second and third floors to provide 8 residential units, retention of flexible Class E uses at ground and basement floors.

- (2) That the under-mentioned application, together with any additional applications which the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services might consider appropriate, be the subject of an unaccompanied site visit:

210018 - Reading Golf Club, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green

Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential-led scheme (c3 use to include affordable housing) and the provision of community infrastructure at Reading Golf Club

12. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details in Table 1 of 14 prior approval applications received, and in Table 2 of six applications for prior approval decided, between 19 May and 10 June 2021.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

13. 200142/FUL - 109B OXFORD ROAD

Change of use from Sui Generis (betting shop) to Class E restaurant with ancillary Sui Generis takeaway and replacement shopfront (Part retrospective)

Further to Minute 91 of the meeting held on 31 March 2021, the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out additional information on design/materials and kitchen extraction.

It was reported at the meeting that information had been received on the day of the meeting which indicated that the specification of the odour control equipment at the premises was not as stated in the application. In consultation with officers in Environmental Protection it had been agreed that it was not safe to proceed with consideration of the application and that it should therefore be deferred to allow further investigation.

Resolved -

That consideration of application 200142/FUL be deferred to allow further investigation of the odour control equipment.

14. 210223/FUL AND 210224/LBC - 1-15 QUEEN VICTORIA STREET AND 147-148 FRIAR STREET

Part demolition of rear of site. Repair and refurbishment of listed building. Change of use of upper floors from office (Use Class E(g)) to apart hotel (Use Class C1). Erection of a three - storey rear extension with mansard. Erection of a part-single, part-two storey rear addition (Use Class E(a) or (b)). Alterations to ground floor principle façade. Creation of public square, and associated works.

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant full planning permission for application 210223/FUL subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement by 30 July 2021 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant 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 Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the report;

- (4) That listed building consent for application 210224/LBC be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the report.

15. 210584/LBC - 61 BAKER STREET

Listed Building Consent for proposed repairs to windows

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

That listed building consent for application 210584/LBC be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the report.

16. 201842/FUL & 201853/FUL - BRUNEL RETAIL PARK, ROSE KILN LANE

201853/FUL - Demolition of existing buildings. erection of 2no. buildings for use within Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and B8, along with access and servicing arrangements, car parking, landscaping and associated works.

201842/FUL - Continued use of Units 1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4, 5 and 6a within Class E following consolidation of the Retail Park (amended description)

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above applications. An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out amended and additional information on transport, noise, sustainability, SuDS and amended plans submitted. The report also set out a late neighbour consultation response and explained that it had been agreed with the applicant that the description for application 201842 be amended, to remove reference to the overall floorspace for the retained retail units. An amended condition on visibility spays and an additional condition on tree replacement were recommended.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Objector Adam Boulding, from Kennet Island Reading Residents Management Company, submitted a written statement, in lieu of speaking to the Committee, which had been circulated with the update report. Tim Rainbird, the applicant's agent, addressed the Committee.

At the meeting the following were proposed and agreed:

- An additional condition to require a net gain in biodiversity were only Phase 1 of application 201853/FUL to be implemented;

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- An additional condition to control the hours of use for testing of alarms and maximum noise from alarms;
- Amendment of the proposed construction method statement condition to include any measures required to prevent the use of Kennet Island as a route to and from the site;
- An additional condition for a delivery management plan to include measures to prevent the use of Kennet Island as a route to and from the site.

The additional conditions to be agreed in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee and Ward Councillors.

Resolved -

- (1) That planning permission for application 201853/FUL be granted subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report, with the amended and additional conditions as recommended in the update report and the additional and amended conditions agreed at the meeting;
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee and Ward Councillors, to finalise the proposed additional and amended conditions agreed at the meeting;
- (3) That planning permission for application 201842/FUL be granted subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.36 pm)

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

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	21 st July 2021		
TITLE:	PLANNING APPEALS		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams	TEL:	0118 9372461
JOB TITLE:	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: ABBEY
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3276463
CASE NO: 200188
ADDRESS: 55 Vastern Road
PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road
CASE OFFICER: Jonathan Markwell
METHOD: INQUIRY
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 25.06.2021

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

None

APPENDIX 3

Address Index of Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

No reports available this time.

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REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	21 July 2021		
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 the types of development that can now be submitted for Prior Approval and to provide a summary of the applications received and decisions taken in accordance with the prior-approval process as set out in 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.
- 3.2 Since May 2015 more and more changes of use or development have been brought under the prior approval approach in an attempt to give developers more certainty on their proposals by avoiding the typical planning application consultation and assessment process. Section 4 below lists the current types of prior approval applications.
- 3.3 Members have been advised in previous reports of changes to the Use Classes Order and a comparison list of old and new use classes has been added at the beginning of your agenda papers. These changes will have implications for change of use prior approvals going forward. The extract below from the Planning Portal website (the platform for submitting planning applications) tries to explain:

Changes to Use Classes

Wholesale legislative changes determining how uses of buildings and land in England are classified will take effect (with certain transitional procedures and periods) from 1 September 2020.

In making these changes, Government has also introduced a 'material period' that runs from 1 September 2020 until 31 July 2021 meaning that, for all the current Permitted Development rights, the Use Classes in place up to the end of August 2020 will remain in effect until the end of this period. This also

applies to any existing direction that restricts these rights.

So, what does this mean for content on the Planning Portal and our application service?

Applications submitted before 1 September 2020 will be determined based on the Use Classes in place up to the end of August 2020.

Based on the ‘material period’ detailed above, our permitted development content and Prior Approval application types will also continue to reference the ‘old’ Classes for the time being, though we will be updating relevant areas to acknowledge this.

For other applications, any reference that needs to be made to the new E & F Use Classes will need to be added as ‘Other’ and have detailed provided. This is an interim measure while we work to update the relevant question sets and our data standard to account for the new classes.

- 3.4 Officers are still unclear how this will all pan out as we start to receive applications for prior approval and I suspect that applicants and their agents will have similar questions to ours. For example, for Class J below some changes from retail to leisure will mean that the use remains in Class E but not all types of leisure uses.
- 3.5 The preparation of the application forms might help as the one published for Part 20 Class A has a checklist of 12 questions to establish if a site is eligible to use this process.

4 TYPES OF PRIOR APPROVAL APPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The categories of development requiring prior approval appear in different parts of Schedule 2 of 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. Those that are of most relevance to Reading Borough are summarised as follows:

SCHEDULE 2 - Permitted development rights

PART 1 - Development within the curtilage of a dwelling house

- **Householder development - larger home extensions. Part 2 Class A1.**
- **Householder development - upwards extensions. Part 2 Class AA.**

PART 3 – Changes of use

- **Change of use from A1 shops or A2 financial & professional, betting office, pay day loan shop or casino to A3 restaurants and cafes. Class C.**
- **Change of use from A1 shops or A2 financial & professional, betting office or pay day loan shop to Class D2 assembly & leisure. 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. Class M**
- **Change of use from an amusement arcade or a casino to C3 dwellinghouse & necessary works. Class N**
- **Change of use from B1 office to C3 dwellinghouse Class O*.**
- **Change of use from B8 storage or distribution to C3 dwellinghouse Class P**
- **Change of use from B1(c) light industrial use to C3 dwellinghouse 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. 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. Class R.
- Change of use from Agricultural buildings and land to state funded school or registered nursery D1. 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. Class T.

PART 4 - Temporary buildings and uses

- Temporary use of buildings for film making for up to 9 months in any 27 month period. Class E

PART 11 - Heritage & Demolition

- Demolition of buildings. Class B.

PART 16 - Communications

- Development by telecommunications code system operators. Class A
- GPDO Part 11.

Part 20 - Construction of New Dwellinghouses

- **New dwellinghouses on detached blocks of flats** Class A
- **Demolition of buildings and construction of new dwellinghouses in their place.** Class ZA

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

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

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

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

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

6. 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 £1,639,242.

(Office Prior Approvals - £1,502,057: Householder Prior Approvals - £82,872: Retail Prior Approvals - £16,840: Demolition Prior Approval - £4,331: Storage Prior Approvals - £5716: Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval - £6026: Shop to Leisure Prior Approval - £305: Light Industrial to Residential - £20,022: Dwellings on detached block of flats - £768: Additional storey on dwellings - £206).

Figures since last report

Office Prior Approvals - £50994: Householder Prior Approvals - £660

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 10th June 2021 to 8th July 2021

Type:	How many received since last report:	Loss in possible fee income:
Householder Prior Approvals	6	£660
Office Prior Approvals	3	£50994
Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval	0	0
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	0
Light Industrial to Residential Prior Approval	0	0
Prior Notification	0	n/a
Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	1	n/a
Dwellings on detached block of flats	0	0
Householder Additional Storey	0	0
TOTAL	10	£51654

Table 2 - Applications decided since 10th June 2021 to 8th July 2021

Type:	Approved	Refused	Not Required	Withdrawn	Non Determination
Householder Prior Approvals	1	0	7	1	0
Office Prior Approvals	1	0	0	1	0
Shop to Restaurant Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Light Industrial to Residential Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Prior Notification/ Other	0	0	0	0	0
Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	1	2	0	1	0
TOTAL	3	2	7	3	0

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Agenda Item 7

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	21st July 2021		
TITLE:	PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE - Quarter 1 (April - June) 2021/2022		
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	JULIE WILLIAMS	TEL:	0118 937 2461 (72461)
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING MANAGER (acting)	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on how the Planning Service has performed over the first quarter of 2021/2022 in terms of meeting government set targets for dealing with planning applications and success at planning appeals.
- 1.2 For context, details on the types of applications handled and appeal decisions provided are given for this same quarter last year.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The MHCLG published criteria (2018) judges a Local Planning Authority to not be performing well if:
 - a. For applications for major development: less than **60 per cent** of an authority's decisions are made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant;
 - b. For applications for non-major development: less than **70 per cent** of an authority's decisions are made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant.
 - c. For applications for both major and non-major development over **10 per cent** of an authority's total number of decisions on applications have been overturned at appeal.

4. PERFORMANCE AGAINST MHCLG TARGETS

Speed

- 4.1 The Council’s performance over the past 3 months in terms of speed of determination of planning applications (see Table 1 below) is:
 88% of major development applications within the statutory determination period or an agreed extended period.
 88.5% of all non-major development applications within the statutory determination period or an agreed extended period.

- 4.2 Table 1 provides a breakdown on the types of planning applications handled with a comparison with the same quarter last year. As can be seen, the number of applications received and decided so far in 2021/22 has risen slightly on all types of applications and this pattern is consistent with the experience of planning authorities across the country. Performance on issuing decisions remains good and above the MHCLG’s targets.

Quality

- 4.3 The quality performance requirement is based on the percentage of appeal decisions allowed, thus overturning the local planning authority’s decision, when compared to the total number of decisions made. The current percentage threshold is 10 per cent of an authority’s total number of decisions.
- 4.4 Table 2 provides the results on appeals decided so far this year in comparison with the same quarter last year. It shows that over the past three months no appeals have been allowed so we are well within the target set.
- 4.5 Table 3 shows the fee income so far compared to the previous year.

Table 1: Application Performance for Q1 21/22 (1st April 21 to 30th June 2021) for the Planning Service compared with the same quarter of the previous year.

Description	MCHLG Target	Q1 20/21	Q1 21/22
Number & Percentage of major applications issued in time	60%	3/3 100%	7/8 88%
Number and Percentage of all other minor applications issued in time	70%	36/50 78%	46/52 88%
*Number and Percentage of other applications issued in time	70%	106/121 88%	131/147 89%
*Of which were householder applications (not prior approval)	70%	82/93 88%	104/117 89%
TOTAL DECISIONS		145/174 83%	184/207 88%

Table 2: Section 78 Appeals against the refusal of planning permission

	Q1 20/21	Q1 21/22
APPEALS LODGED	6	2
NUMBER OF APPEAL DECISIONS	7	9
APPEALS ALLOWED	0	0
APPEALS DISMISSED	7	9
SPLIT DECISIONS	0	0
APPEALS WITHDRAWN	0	0

Table 3: Planning Fee Income

	£
Q1 20/21	£160,444
Q1 21/22	£158,447

4.6 It may be noticed that while the number of applications being dealt with increased by 33 in quarter 1 this year compared to the same quarter last year the fee income has dropped by c£2,000. This seems to be due to the increase in householder and small Other commercial applications being submitted which come in with much lower fees than the Minor and Major categories.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The processing of planning applications contributes to creating a sustainable environment with active communities and helping the economy within the Borough as identified as the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan:

1. Healthy Environments
2. Thriving Communities
3. Inclusive Economy

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

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

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

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

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

8. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

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

8.2 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.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The collection and monitoring of performance indicators is a statutory requirement and a requirement of MHCLG.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	21ST JULY 2021		
TITLE:	STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT OFF HENLEY ROAD, CAVERSHAM		
SERVICE:	GI & BUSINESS SYSTEMS	WARDS:	PEPPARD
LEAD OFFICER:	ANDY FISHER	TEL:	Ext 72606 (0118 937 2606)
JOB TITLE:	GI & BUSINESS SYSTEMS TEAM LEADER	E-MAIL:	andy.fisher@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To identify proposed names for the development site detailed below and for Committee to select the name to be assigned.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 The Committee approve the street names from the table set out at 4.2 of this report.
- 2.2 If none of the proposed names are considered suitable Committee to select names from the Street Names Proposals list at Appendix 2, as previously approved by Committee.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The development is located in Caversham, off Henley Road. We received the plans from the developers, based on these plans we would like committee to approve one name to be reserved for the development.
- 3.2 A plan of the site detailing the street layout is attached at Appendix 1.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 That Committee approve one name for the development.
- 4.2 In the event that Committee consider none of the names offered to be acceptable, alternative names will need to be selected from the Approved Street Names list in Appendix 2.

<i>Name</i>	Reason for action	Ward	Site	Source
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Willow View	Existing Willow trees are adjacent to the site.	Peppard	Rear of 199-203, Henley Road, Caversham	Developer
Monarch Close	With regard to Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.	Peppard	Rear of 199-203, Henley Road, Caversham	Approved Street List
Brook View	The Berry Brook is at the southern boundary of the site.	Peppard	Rear of 199-203, Henley Road, Caversham	GIS

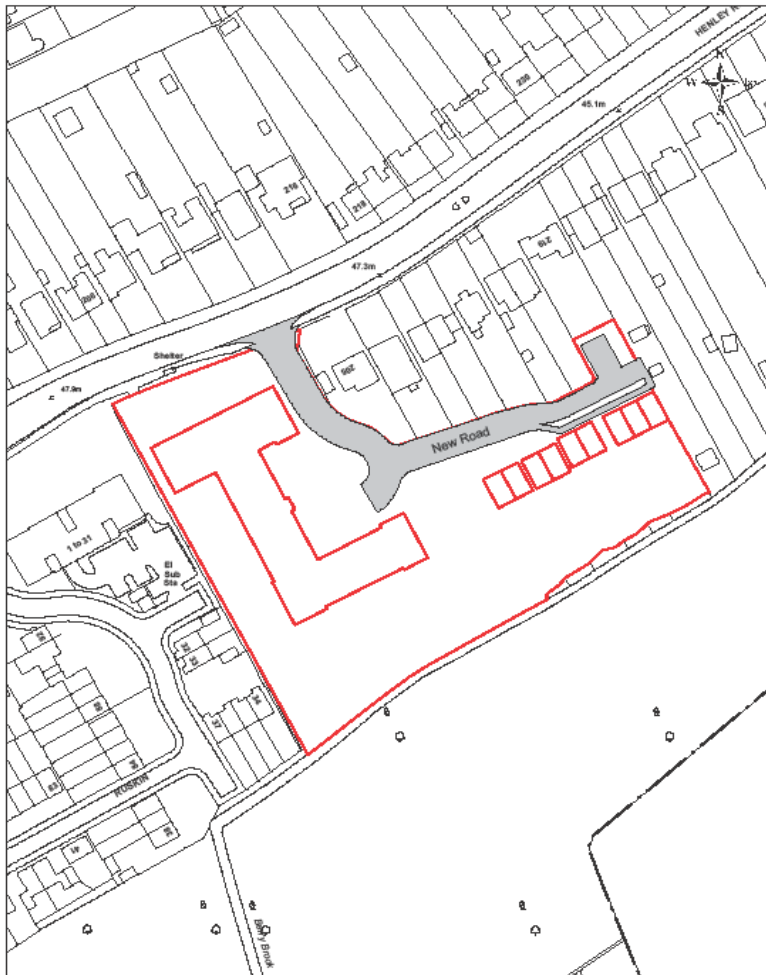
5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None directly from this report.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The creation of street names should follow the guidelines detailed in the "Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the National Land and Property Gazetteer", a reference manual based on Property Addressing Standard BS7666:2006 Parts 1 & 2.

Appendix 1 - Off Henley Road, Caversham. (Street Plan)



Title: STREET NAMING & NUMBERING PLAN.
 New road name required for development off Henley Road, Caversham.
 SN&N Xref.No.: 34520210402 Date: 19/05/2021 Scale at A4: 1:1250
 Produced by GIS & Mapping Services Ref: G:SN&Numbering/RBC process\2021\0421 Applications April 2021\34520210402
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Reading
 Borough Council
 Working better with you.

Appendix 2 - Approved Street List

Street Name	Reason for suggestion	Preferred area / site
Alderney	Channel Island	None specified
Ambleside	A place in the lake district	Kentwood
Arlington	Random selection	West Reading
Belvedere	Victorian name for a viewing point on a tall building	None specified
Braunston	UK place name and canal junction	None specified
Brecon	A Welsh town	Bugs Bottom / Caversham
Buckler	Derek Buckler, and Bucklers Of Reading Car company. 1947 - 1964 at 67 Caversham Road	Caversham Road / Caversham Heights
Burns	2001 World Rally Champion who died in 2005, aged 34.	None specified
Byron	Poet	None specified
Coppell	Former Reading Football Manager	None specified
Curtis	Geoff Curtis, Reading Racers Speedway in 1973, part of the British League Division One Championship team. Killed in Sydney on 5th Dec 1973, 40 years anniversary in 2013.	None specified
Depass	Harvey DePass, Reading's first Community Relations Officer	Caversham
Dundas	Canadian town name	None specified
Dunelm	Abbreviation of a latin word	None specified
Eastwood	Random selection	None specified
Elgin	Scottish town name	None specified
Erith	Riverside town name in Bexley Borough London	None specified
Falcon	Name of a bird	None specified
Festival	40+ years of Reading Festival	None specified
Flint	Old Reading street name - lost during building of civic centre & IDR	Katesgrove
Flower	Random selection	None specified
Gardener	Random selection	None specified
Garland	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Gold	Mineral theme	None specified
Guernsey	Channel Island	None specified

Street Name	Reason for suggestion	Preferred area / site
Hampton	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Hampshire	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Harwich	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Hope	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Humber	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Iron	Mineral theme	Katesgrove
Ivory	Random selection	None specified
Jersey	Channel Island	None specified
Jonsson	Per Jonsson. Reading speedway team and World Champion.	Whitley
Kennedy	Phil Kennedy, BBC Radio Berkshire presenter	None specified
Knox	Random selection	None specified
Larose	Random selection	None specified
Ledger	Random selection	None specified
Leicester	Random selection	None specified
Limerick	Celebrating Reading's Irish community.	None specified
Madejski	John Madejski - Reading Football Club owner	None specified
Margate	Random selection	None specified
Matrix	Former Reading nightclub	None specified
Michanek	Anders Michanek. Reading speedway team and World Champion.	Whitley
Monarch	Random selection	None specified
Norwich	Random selection	None specified
Nottingham	Random selection	None specified
Nuneaton	Random selection	None specified
Oban	Random selection	None specified
Pantry	Peoples Pantry restaurant, badly damaged by a bomber on 10th February 1943. 41 people killed and 49 injured.	None specified
Peach	Andrew Peach, BBC Radio Berkshire presenter	None specified

Street Name	Reason for suggestion	Preferred area / site
Perkins	Make of engine used locally	Worton Grange
Presentation	Former school, Presentation College	Southcote
Price	Candle-maker	None specified
Proctor	Make of steam engine used locally	Worton Grange
Pyeatt	Reading Speedway rider from 1981/82 who was killed in July 1982.	None specified
Ransome	Make of steam engine used locally	None specified
Redway	Bernard Redway, Poet, Athlete, expeditioner and mountaineer.	None specified
Rowland	Unknown reason	None specified
Ruston	Make of steam engine used locally	Worton Grange
Sangar	Sangar is a type of look out tower.	Brock Barracks
Sark	Channel Island	None specified
Saunderson	Make of tractor once used locally	None specified
Saxon	Anglo-Saxon tribe, Readingas, who settled the area.	None specified
Sentinel	Make of steam engine used locally	Worton Grange
Signal	Former GWR signal works was located in Reading	None specified
Sprott	Michael Sprott is the former British and Commonwealth Heavyweight champion from Reading.	None specified
Stephenson	Steam engine designer	None specified
Steve Death	Steven Victor Death, former Reading Football Goalkeeper	None specified
Tallow	A form of lubricant once made locally	None specified
Thompson	Make of steam engine used locally	Worton Grange
Thornycroft	Historic firm formerly based on the bank of the Thames	None specified
Tidman	Make of steam engine used locally	Worton Grange
Tilley	Historic type of oil lamp	None specified
Ufton	Local village	None specified
Ullapool	Scottish town	None specified
Vickers	Aircraft manufacturer	None specified

Street Name	Reason for suggestion	Preferred area / site
Vickers	Aircraft manufacturer	None specified
Viking	Norse warriors	None specified
Vulcan	Royal Airforce Bomber	None specified
Watkins	Professor Derek Watkins, Reading pupil, cancer survivor, trumpet player and trumpet designer. Went to school in Whitley.	Whitley
Westray	Scottish island	None specified
Whitchuch	Local village	None specified
Yateley	Local village	None specified
Yattendon	Local village	None specified
Zenith	Random selection	None specified

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	21 ST JULY 2021		
TITLE:	STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT REAR OF HIGHGROVE STREET		
SERVICE:	GI & BUSINESS SYSTEMS	WARDS:	KATESGROVE
LEAD OFFICER:	ANDY FISHER	TEL:	Ext 72606 (0118 937 2606)
JOB TITLE:	GI & BUSINESS SYSTEMS TEAM LEADER	E-MAIL:	andy.fisher@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To identify proposed names for the development site detailed below and for Committee to select the name to be assigned.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 The Committee approve the street names from the table set out at 4.2 of this report.
- 2.2 In the event that none of the proposed names are considered suitable Committee to select names from the Street Names Proposals list at Appendix 2 of the previous report, as previously approved by Committee.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The development is located to the rear of addresses at 107 - 125 Highgrove Street. We received the plans from the developers and based on these plans we would like committee to approve one name to be assigned for the development.
- 3.2 During the consultation with Councillors two responses were received and these have been included in section 4.2 of this report.
- 3.3 A plan of the site detailing the street layout is attached at Appendix 1.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 That Committee approve one name for the development.

4.2 In the event that Committee consider none of the names offered to be acceptable, an alternative name will need to be selected from the Approved Street Names list (See Appendix 2 on the previous report).

Name	Reason for action	Ward	Site	Source
Flint Place	The Street list suggestion is for this name to be assigned within the Katesgrove area.	Katesgrove	Rear of 107 - 125 Highgrove Street	Approved street list
Highgrove Mews	Small development is accessed from Highgrove Street.	Katesgrove	Rear of 107 - 125 Highgrove Street	Developer

Councillor responses:

Councillor Liam Challenger prefers Highgrove Mews.

Councillor Rose Williams prefers Highgrove Mews.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- None directly from this report.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- The creation of street names should follow the guidelines detailed in the “Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the National Land and Property Gazetteer”, a reference manual based on Property Addressing Standard BS7666:2006 Parts 1 & 2.

Appendix 1 - Development rear of 107-125 Highgrove Street



Title: New Street Name		
Rear of 107-125 Highgrove Street		
SN&N Xref.No.: 34520200809	Date: 22/06/2021	Scale at A4: 1:1250
Produced by GI & Business Systems	Ref: GISNN\Highgrove Street	



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21st July 2021

Ward: Abbey

Application No.: 210007/FUL

Address: 124-128 Cardiff Road, Reading,

Proposal: Demolition of No.124 and construction of a building for use as an extension to the existing waste recycling centre building at No. 128 with associated parking and landscaping.

Applicant: R Collard Ltd

Application target decision date: Originally 01/03/2021, with an extension of time subsequently agreed until 23/07/2021

RECOMMENDATION

SUBJECT TO no substantive objection from the Environment Agency being received by 20 July 2021:

GRANT Full planning permission subject to conditions, to include:

1. Time Limit - 3 years
2. Approved plans
3. Materials as specified (compliance condition)
4. Pre-commencement contaminated land - site characterisation
5. Pre-commencement contaminated land - submission of remediation scheme
6. Pre-construction contaminated land - implementation of approved remediation
7. Contaminated land - reporting of unexpected contamination
8. Pre-commencement full details of vehicular access and egress arrangements to include amendments to barriers and kerb lines to the satisfaction of the LPA. And full details of circulation arrangements within no.124 site and between no.124 and no.128 sites. No physical separation between sites to allow vehicles to pass between at all times.
9. Pre-commencement full details of cycle parking (6 secure covered spaces)
10. Prior to first occupation full details of delivery and servicing plan
11. Vehicle parking as specified (compliance condition)
12. Prior to first occupation EV charging points
13. Access closure with reinstatement
14. Pre-commencement sustainable drainage
15. Prior to first occupation sustainable drainage
16. Pre-commencement hard and soft landscaping
17. Pre-commencement Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan
18. Prior to first occupation lighting scheme
19. No mechanical plant (noise assessment required)
20. Pre-commencement Employment Skills and Training Plans for construction and End Users
21. Constructed in accordance with flood risk assessment recommendations
22. Constructed in accordance with sustainability report
23. No subdivision of building or site without further grant of planning permission. Use to be carried out in conjunction with use of No.128 Cardiff Road only - no separate/standalone waste recycling use of site.

24. Hours of construction
25. No burning of waste on site
26. Hours of operation: 0700-1900 Monday-Saturday; 0900-1800 Sundays and Bank Holidays
27. Use of 'white noise' reversing alarms only
28. No outside storage/works
29. Removal of PD rights for extensions.

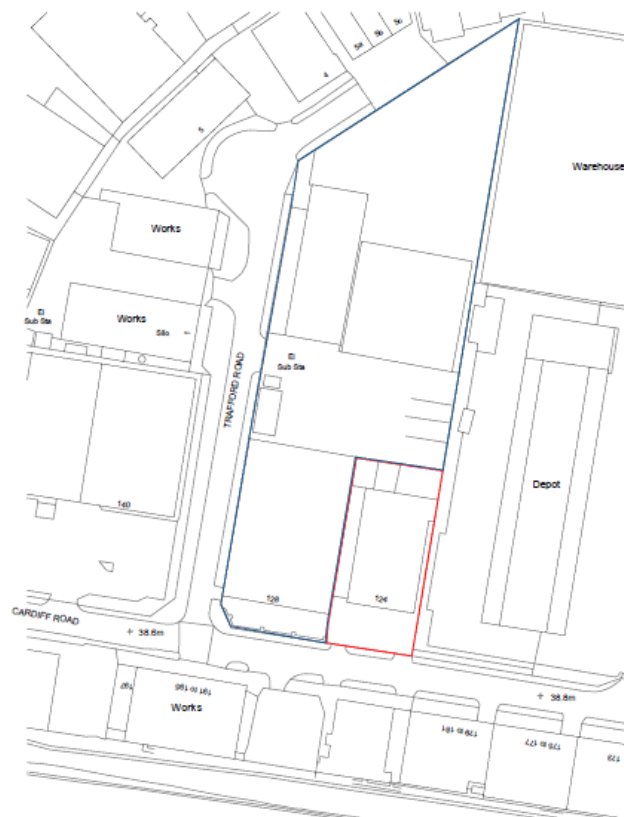
Informatives:

1. Terms and Conditions
2. Building Regulations
3. S59 Highways Act (damage to the Highway)
4. Licence required for removal of drop-kerb
5. Pre-Commencement Conditions
6. Complaints about Construction
7. Positive & Proactive
8. CIL liability calculation

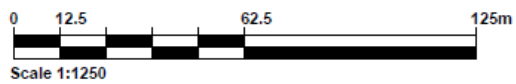
1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application relates to Nos. 124 and 128 Cardiff Road, located on the north side of Cardiff Road, close to the junction with Trafford Road. No 124 is a vacant UPS parcel depot building and No.128 serves as the Collard Recycling Centre. The surrounding area is predominantly industrial with commercial and warehouse buildings, with ancillary offices to these functions. The closest residential properties are approximately 300m to the east on Cardiff Road. The railway line is to the south of the site.
- 1.2 The site is located within the Richfield Avenue 'Core Employment Area'. The site is also within Flood Zone 2 as designated by the Environment Agency, an Air Quality Management Area and an area of potentially Contaminated Land.
- 1.3 The site falls within an area of less than 10% tree canopy cover, and in a Ward with a low canopy cover, making it a priority area for new tree planting in the Tree Strategy. In these areas, there is a commitment to protect and enhance tree cover.
- 1.4 The site in relation to the wider industrial/commercial area is shown below, together with an aerial view.

Site Location Plan (not to scale)



Location Plan 1:1250



Aerial view



1.5 The application is being considered at Planning Applications Committee by virtue of it falling within the 'Major' applications category.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the demolition of 124 Cardiff Road and replacement with an extension to 128 Cardiff Road. The extension would serve as additional space for the sorting of recycling materials.
- 2.2 Following demolition of No.124 Cardiff Road, the extension would be located to the eastern side of 128 Cardiff Road. It would have a depth of 43.44m, would be 23.5m wide and would measure 10m in height to the eaves with an overall height of 12.4m.
- 2.3 A roller shutter and entrance door is proposed on the front elevation and the proposed exterior would be finished in Kingspan composite cladding to match the existing building at 124. The extension would have a floor space of approximately 1019m².
- 2.4 Eight parking spaces are proposed, two parking spaces with electric vehicle charging points are proposed in the front forecourt and a soft landscaping strip is also proposed at the front of the site, to match the existing landscaping strip in front of 128 Cardiff Road. The proposals also include the provision of two Rowan trees located at the front of the site.
- 2.5 During the course of the application the applicant has submitted revised plans to address and clarify some initial Transport concerns and further information in respect of landscaping matters.
- 2.6 Plans and documents considered:

Drawing No: Location and Block Plan and Parking Plan 20.128CR.SITE
Drawing No: Existing Floor Plans 20.128CR.PO1
Drawing No: Existing Elevations Unit 128 20.128CR.PO2
Drawing No: Existing Elevations Unit 124 and Street View 20.128CR.PO3
Drawing No: Proposed Floor Plan and Roof Plan 20.128CR.PO4
Drawing No: Proposed South and North Elevations 20.128CR.PO5
Drawing No: Proposed East and West Elevations 20.128CR.PO6
Drawing No: Proposed Site Plan 20.128CR.PO7

Drawing No: Proposed Soft Landscaping and Planting Plan PO14
Drawing No: Proposed Soft Landscaping and Planting Plan PO13

Drawing No: Swept Path Analysis PO2
Drawing No: Proposed Parking Bays PO2

Other information:

Roof Cladding Materials x 2
Planning Statement December 2020
Flood Risk Assessment 70063683 dated December 2020
Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report 70063683 PBRA
Sustainability Statement 70063683-PL8 dated December 2020
Preliminary Risk Assessment 70063683-PL6 dated December 2020
Appendix A - Figures and Drawings
Appendix E- Groundsure Report
Appendix F - BGS Borehole Logs

Groundsure Geology Report
Groundsure Mapping

Arboricultural Method Statement
Bat Survey Report 001 dated November 2021
Volvo Turning Circle Calculation x 2
Volvo Technical Specification
Noise Assessment Report 70063683 - REP- 01 dated May 2021

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 124 Cardiff Road:

88-01396-FUL - Single storey extension to rear of existing industrial unit. Granted

3.2 128 Cardiff Road:

13-00304-FUL - Erection of a new loading bay and 2 storey office building. Granted

12-01759-APPCON - Discharge of conditions 6, 8 10, 11 and 16 on planning permission 11/01745/FUL. Conditions Discharged

12-00911-APPCON - Change of use of existing premises to a use for recycling of construction and commercial waste (class b2) (retrospective); and the erection of new industrial building, offices and landscaping (amended description). Conditions Discharged

12-00460-APPCON - Discharge of condition 9 of planning permission 11/01745/FUL. Condition Discharged

11-01872-FUL - Prior notification of proposed demolition of property. Prior Approval Notification - Approval

11-01745-FUL - Change of use of existing premises to a use for recycling of construction and commercial waste (Class B2) (retrospective); and the erection of new industrial building, offices and landscaping (amended description). Granted

09-01380-CLE - Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use for Class B2 use. Refused

09-01818-FUL - Change of use of existing premises to a recycling of construction and commercial waste operation. (Class B2) (amended description). Granted

01-00316-FUL - New steel framed prefabricated building for the sorting, recycling and transfer of waste. Granted

3.3 Pre-application advice was sought and provided prior to be submission of this application (Reference 200323/PREAPP).

4. CONSULTATIONS

i) Environment Agency (Statutory Consultee)

4.1 No comments received.

ii) Highway Authority

4.2 Further to revised plans and additional information, no objection subject to conditions. Discussed further below.

iii) **RBC Environmental Health - Environmental Protection Officer**

4.3 In terms of noise, and further to clarification of no additional plant being provided, no objection subject to condition in respect of future plant.

4.4 In terms of contaminated land, no objection subject to conditions. Discussed further below.

ix) **RBC Planning Natural Environment Officer**

4.5 Further to the submission of revised plans and additional information, no objection subject to conditions. Discussed further below.

v) **RBC Ecology Consultant**

4.6 Further to submission of the bat survey report, there are no objections to this application on ecology grounds. Discussed further below.

vi) **Lead Flood Authority**

The proposal seeks to utilise the existing on site drainage to therefore not worsen the discharge rate from the site and the principle of this is accepted. However, this will be subject to the following conditions to provide a detailed drainage layout and confirmation through full drainage calculations that the discharge rate will not be worsened by the development.

SU7 SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE (TO BE APPROVED)

SU8 SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE (AS SPECIFIED)

vi) **Public consultation**

4.7 Notification letters were sent to adjacent occupiers on 20/01/2021, with the statutory 21-day consultation period expiring on 10/02/2021. A site notice was erected on 25/01/2021.

4.8 No neighbour letters of representation received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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 National

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.3 Local

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change

CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

- EM1: Provision of Employment Development
- EM2: Location of New Employment Development
- EM3: Loss of Employment Land
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN18: Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

5.4 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
- Employment, Skills and Training (April 2013)

5.5 Other relevant documentation

- Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (2021)
- Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (2021)
- Manual for Streets 2007 (Department for Transport)
- Reading Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 (2011)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- Principle of development and land use considerations
- Design considerations and impact on street scene
- Amenity
- Transport
- Natural Environment - trees and landscaping
- Ecology
- Sustainability
- Flood risks and SuDS
- Environmental health issues
- Other Matters - Employment Skills and Training Plan; Pre-commencement conditions; CIL; Equalities Act

Principle of development and land use considerations

- 6.2 Policy EM1 (Provision of Employment Development) seeks to support a net increase in warehousing spaces within the Borough. Policy EM2 (Location of New Employment Development) seeks that employment uses such as industrial and storage and distribution uses are located within the designated core employment areas and Policy EM3 (Loss of Employment Land) seeks to maintain the overall level of employment land.
- 6.3 The application site is located within an existing industrial estate, within the designed 'Core Employment Area EM2g: Richfield Avenue' as per Policy EM2 and as identified on the Local Plan proposals map.
- 6.4 No.128 Cardiff Road is in an existing employment use as a recycling depot (receiving and sorting materials from building sites) and whilst No.124 Cardiff Road has historically been in employment use as a parcel delivery depot, it is currently vacant. It is proposed to demolish No.124 Cardiff Road to facilitate the proposals and the proposed development will continue to provide additional employment

floorspace (greater than that to be demolished) and the site will remain as employment land and in employment use. The proposals would not introduce a non-employment use within this core employment area. It is proposed to extend the existing waste transfer site and would continue this use within the enlarged premises. It is recommended that a condition requiring the use to only be carried out in conjunction with the use of No.128 Cardiff Road as a waste transfer station and not to be used separately for that purpose as this is the basis on which the transport and environmental impacts of the extended use have been assessed. In overall terms, it is considered that the proposal is compatible with the functions of the industrial/commercial area and it is considered that the proposals would maintain the overall level of employment land provision in accordance with Policies EM1, EM2 and EM3.

Design considerations and impact on street scene

- 6.5 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires that all development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is situated. This stretch of Cardiff Road is industrial in nature, whereas further east, the street scene is more mixed, featuring small-scale industrial buildings and mostly terraced housing.
- 6.6 Whilst No.124 Cardiff Road has some architectural merit there are no strong policy basis to resist its demolition and it is considered that the rationale for an extension to the existing waste unit, suitable for modern occupation, is acceptable.
- 6.7 The proposed development, designed as an extension to the existing waste transfer building, would be large, resulting in the overall built form infilling near on the entire width of the site. However, the surrounding area is an established area of commercial and industrial activity which features other large (in width and depth) buildings and as such this is not considered unacceptable. The proposed development would be no higher than the existing building - indeed would be set slightly lower - which would allow a level of subservience to be maintained. It would match the existing waste transfer building in terms of appearance and with materials to match to aid its integration.
- 6.8 There is no definitive building line along this part of Cardiff Road and whilst the proposed development would be closer to the road than the existing building to be demolished, it would not project forward of the main waste transfer building and this arrangement is considered to be acceptable visually.
- 6.9 The proposed roller shutter on the front elevation is not unacceptable given the industrial/commercial use of the area, with other shutters in a common existence in the nearby vicinity.
- 6.10 The applicant was advised as part of the pre-application advice given that it would be important to provide soft landscaping to the site frontage to soften the appearance of the proposal and improve the visual amenity of the area within which it is located. It is also noted that the site is located within an area of the Borough identified in the Council's adopted tree strategy as having a tree canopy cover of 10% or less (discussed further below). It is therefore appropriate that landscaping should include suitably-sized trees and the two trees proposed on the site frontage are therefore an important addition, to be secured by condition. Detailed landscaping details/planting can be secured by way of condition prior to commencement of development.

6.11 In overall terms the proposed development is considered to be in keeping with the character of the area industrial/commercial street scene. Sufficient information in respect of external materials and finishes has been provided at application stage and these are proposed to be secured by condition. The proposed development is considered to accord with Policy CC7 and Policy EN14 on this basis.

Amenity

6.12 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to ensure development protects the amenity of existing and future surrounding occupiers. Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to mitigate impacts of pollution associated with development.

6.13 The site is within an established area of industrial and commercial activity. The closest residential dwellings are located a significant distance away from the site, to the east and west. The proposed use would be a comparatively modest expansion of the existing use at 128 Cardiff Road (the use in conjunction with no.128 to be secured by condition). The proposed development is not considered to result in any material harm to the adjacent industrial/commercial units in terms of the amenity of occupiers.

6.14 The applicant has advised that no mechanical plant is proposed to be installed as part of the development. However, it is conceivable that such plant could be installed in the future, given the nature of the use and, a condition is recommended to secure submission and approval of a noise assessment prior to the installation of any noise generating plant in the future.

6.15 With the above in mind, subject to the condition noted, the proposals are considered to comply with Policy CC8 and EN16.

Transport

6.16 Policies TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway related matters), TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking-related matters relating to development.

6.17 The Parking Standards and Design SPD identifies the site as being located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, which directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distance of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. In accordance with the SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 space per 125m² based on B2 - B7 General and Specific Industrial Use (uses based on the previous Use Classes Order). Based on the proposed floor area, the proposed development (extension) would require a total of 8 parking spaces. Whilst only 2 parking spaces were originally proposed, revised plans were received showing an additional 6 parking spaces to meet the standards. The additional 6 spaces would be located on land within the ownership of the applicant to the northern edge of the wider site and the use of these spaces would be secured by way of condition which is considered acceptable both procedurally and in terms of parking provision.

6.18 The proposals would utilise the existing access point off Cardiff Road with the existing second access point being closed off with the new landscaping extending across, a condition would be required to close off the access and reinstate the walkway and kerb in place of the existing dropped kerb.

6.19 The current operations at the waste transfer site include 17 active HGV vehicles leaving and arriving at the facility per working day. No increase in the amount of

HGV vehicles is predicted as a result of the proposed development and the Highway Authority considers that as such there will be no unacceptable impact on the existing highway network.

- 6.20 Concerns were originally raised as to whether there would be sufficient space for operational, servicing and delivery vehicles, including HGVs, to manoeuvre into and out of the site in forward gear. During the course of the application, further details of the delivery and servicing of the building were provided and tracking diagrams were provided to demonstrate that HGV vehicles could adequately service the building. The Highway Authority is satisfied that the tracking diagrams identify that a vehicle can turn on site while both entering and exiting the building via the front shutters from Cardiff Road. It is noted, however, that a vehicle exiting the site could potentially conflict with an existing barrier and raised kerb on the radii on the junction. A revised drawing is therefore required that widens and relocates/replaces the barrier etc as required. The Highway Authority and officers are satisfied that this can be dealt with by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 6.21 During the course of the application the applicant has confirmed that all HGVs will continue to access the site from the main entrance on Trafford Road and that existing Health and Safety practices would prevent on-site HGVs from using the entrance off Cardiff Road, which the Highway Authority considers is acceptable. This is subject to a condition requiring a service and delivery management plan to detail which vehicles would use which entrance.
- 6.22 Further to the above, a condition is proposed to be attached stipulating that planning permission would be required for any subdivision of the units in the future. This is because were any subdivision to be proposed, the car parking and servicing access would need to be re-considered given that they are currently accessed from the adjacent site and therefore would not be available in future leading to potential Highway safety concerns.
- 6.23 Cycle parking is already present on site: 6 spaces within the wider 128 Cardiff Road site which falls within the applicant's ownership. This is considered acceptable; however, currently these spaces are not covered. The Transport Officer has confirmed that details of this can be dealt with by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 6.24 Subject to the recommended conditions it is considered that the proposals are acceptable in transport terms and would accord with Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5.

Natural Environment - trees and landscaping

- 6.25 Policy CC7 seeks that development shall be of high design quality which maintains and enhances the character of the area in which it is located including landscaping. The site is located within an area of the Borough identified in the Council's adopted Tree Strategy as having a tree canopy cover of 10% or less. Policy EN14 requires new development to make provision for tree retention and planting to assist in extending the Borough's vegetation cover.
- 6.26 Concern was originally raised that the two proposed Cherry Trees - acknowledging that the provision of additional tree planting itself is welcomed - would result in a species that is over-represented within the Borough. During the course of the application, a revised Tree Planting Plan was received, replacing the Cherry trees with two Rowan trees. The Council's Tree Officer has confirmed that this is acceptable and would provide a positive addition to the site which helps with the

aims of the Tree Strategy, supports biodiversity and helps maintain the share of native trees in the Borough.

- 6.27 Further to the above, the Tree Officer is satisfied with the soft landscaping principles proposed, which are considered to enhance the appearance of the site, along with other new trees as part of the proposed landscaping to provide a net gain. Further information is required in respect of watering and maintenance details and for securing a site specific Arboricultural Method Statement. The Tree Officer has confirmed that this can be dealt with by way of suitably worded conditions.
- 6.28 With the above in mind, and subject to the conditions noted, the proposals are considered to comply with Policies CC7 and EN14.

Ecology

- 6.29 Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) states that development proposals should retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity. Given the age of the building and proximity to a green link, a bat survey was considered to be necessary.
- 6.30 The applicant submitted a preliminary bat roost assessment report as part of the submission and, further to discussions with the Council's Ecologist, also submitted a full bat survey report during the course of the application.
- 6.31 The Council's Ecologist considers that whilst the report was taken just outside of the optimal period for bat surveys, nevertheless, the conclusion reached - that the building does not host a bat roost - is likely to be accurate and there are no concerns in this respect.
- 6.32 The proposal may require external lighting around the premises. As the site is close by to a green link and the railway, which is also an important wildlife corridor, any new external lighting should require approval. A condition is recommended to secure full details of any external lighting to be approved prior to occupation of the proposed development to ensure the scheme is acceptable in terms of Policy EN12.

Sustainability

- 6.33 Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) states that: *"All major non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible"*. The supporting text of the policy (4.1.4) states: *"some types of development, such as industrial uses, warehouses and schools might find it more difficult to meet these standards. In these cases, developments must demonstrate that the standard to be achieved is the highest possible for the development, and at a minimum meets the BREEAM 'Very Good' standard."* Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change,) requires that *"all developments demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change."*
- 6.34 The applicant has explained that, given the nature of the proposed extension (an industrial 'shell' with large openings), it is not possible to achieve a BREEAM 'Excellent' or 'Very Good' rating. Instead the applicant has submitted a BREEAM Pre-Assessment and Feasibility Review which demonstrates that it will not achieve these BREEAM levels but that environmental improvements will be designed in where possible, reflecting the specific nature of the proposed industrial unit. This includes specific measures for reducing the energy usage of the building including the specification of the building fabric, energy efficient lighting etc. This alternative approach, unique to this proposal, is considered to respond to and provide a suitable alternative to a full BREEAM assessment in this specific instance relative to the scale

and nature of the extension itself and the specific constraints. A condition is recommended to ensure that the sustainable construction measures that can be achieved are delivered. With this condition secured, and given the specific circumstances of this proposal, officers are content that the proposals are policy compliant in this regard.

- 6.35 The proposed development also includes features to demonstrate other sustainability measures have been incorporated, showing adaptation to climate change as per Policy CC3. These include the proposed soft-landscaping, the planting of new trees and the provision of EV charging points. These measures are sufficient to demonstrate compliance with Policy CC3 and TR5.

Flood risk and SUDS

- 6.36 Policy EN18 requires that development is directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding in the first instance, to reduce the overall and local risk of flooding in the Borough, and requires that all major developments should incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) with runoff rates aiming to reflect greenfield conditions or be no worse than existing.

- 6.37 As above, the site is within Flood Zone 2 as designated by the Environment Agency. The proposed use falls is considered a 'less vulnerable' use which, in accordance with EA advice, is an acceptable development within the Flood Zone. The applicant has submitted a detailed Flood Risk Assessment that concludes that includes measures to address the vulnerability of the location. A condition is recommended to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the recommendations of the Flood Risk Assessment. In addition, the proposed access and exit points are also considered to be appropriate in terms of flood resilience and flood resistance.

- 6.38 In terms of surface water drainage (and related surface water flood risk) the proposals would utilise the existing on-site drainage and the Lead Flood Authority has confirmed that, subject to conditions to provide a detailed drainage layout and associated drainage calculations, the rainwater discharge rate from the site into the sewers would not be worsened by the development.

Environmental Health Issues

- 6.39 The site is within an area of potential contaminated land. Environmental Protection Officers have recommended the standard four-stage conditions to ensure that the possible presence of contamination is thoroughly investigated and removed/mitigated if necessary (3 of the conditions are pre-commencement). In accordance with Policy EN16.

- 6.41 It is noted that whilst a new Environmental Permit may be required (which governs the environmental impact of the waste being treated), this would be separate to any planning permission granted and issued by the Environment Agency, in line with the EA's procedures. The Environment Agency has been consulted on this application and any response, if received, will be reported in an Update Report.

Other matters

Employment, Skills and Training Plan

- 6.42 As the scheme falls within the Major category it would be required to provide an Employment Skills and Training Plan for both the 'Construction' Phase and 'End User' Phase, or equivalent financial contribution. In this instance the applicant has specified their intention to provide a site specific ESP. The exact form is, at the time of writing, under discussion with Reading UK CIC (who delivers ESPs on the behalf of the Borough Council). It is proposed in this instance for this to be secured by a

suitably worded condition (as opposed to S106 agreement), as the ESP will not require a financial contribution to be secured.

Pre-commencement conditions

- 6.43 Pre-commencement conditions - In line with section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) discussions are being undertaken with the applicant regarding pre-commencement conditions. At the time of writing a response is awaited from the applicant in terms of agreement to pre-commencement conditions. If appropriate, a response will be reported in an Update Report.

CIL

- 6.44 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would apply to the proposals, subject to the usual reliefs or exemptions set out in the CIL Regulations. In this respect, although the proposed scheme would be CIL liable development, because industrial premises attract a zero CIL charge under the Council's adopted CIL charging scheme, there would be no CIL payable.

Equalities Impact

- 6.45 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 this 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 previous planning history.

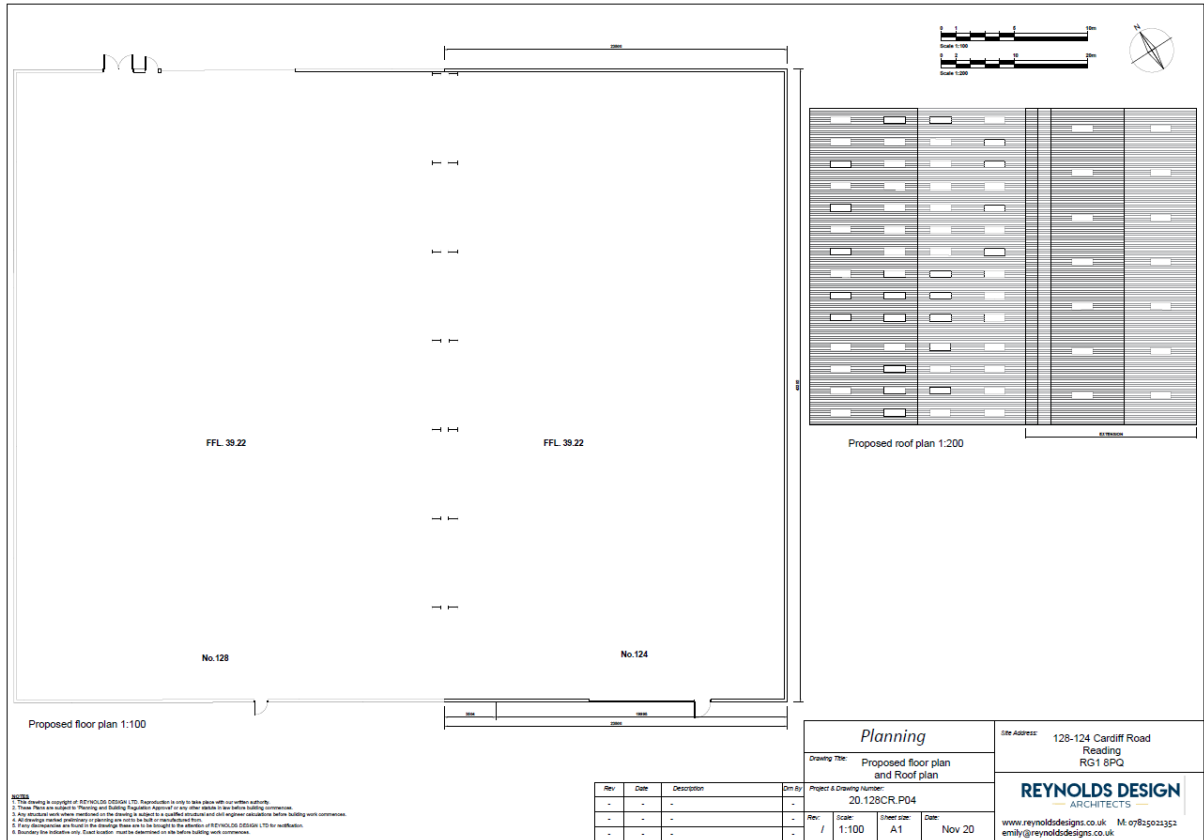
The benefits of the scheme include providing additional employment floorspace within the existing established and identified core employment area which would accord with national and local policy. This would be in terms of contributing to delivering the required industrial and/or warehouse floorspace of 148,000m² by 2036 as set out in Policy EN1, the delivery of economic development support by the NPPF. Other benefits include providing additional greening of the site with a net gain in tree planting and landscaping which will also provide an ecological benefit.

Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant on this scheme and overall officers consider this to be a supportable scheme. It is, therefore, recommended for approval subject to conditions summarised at the outset of this report.

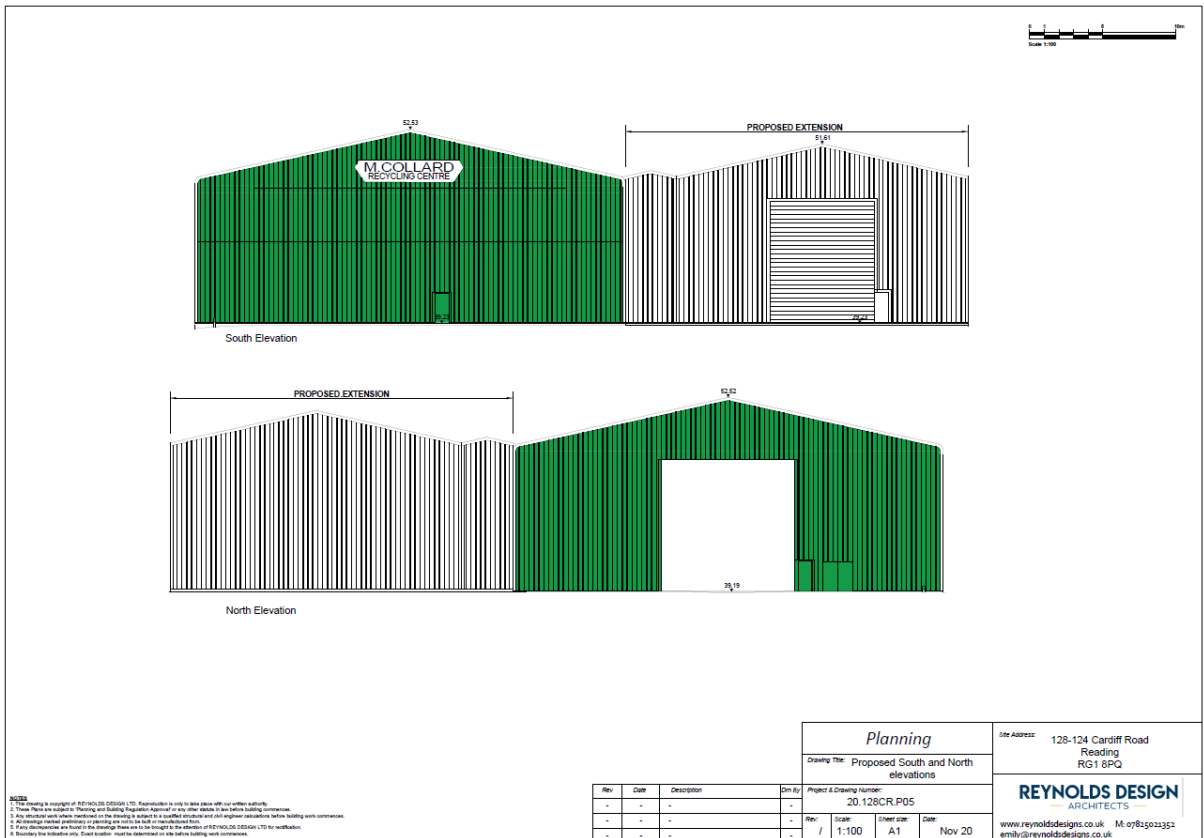
Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

Plans:

Proposed Floor Plan and Roof Plan



Proposed Elevations



COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21 July 2021

Ward: Abbey

Application No: 210163FUL and 210164LBC

Address: Bristol & West Arcade 173-175 Friar Street and no.s 27-32 Market Place, Reading.

Proposal: Full and Listed Building Consent for:

210163FUL - Demolition of vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (173-175 Friar Street) and redevelopment of site including minor excavations at basement level to provide an 8-storey building to provide a hotel (C1 use) of up to 182 beds, creation of a bar/restaurant/gym at ground floor associated with the hotel and the provision of ancillary facilities including outdoor terrace, demolition of rear parts of 29-31 and 32 Market Place, the change of use of the retained units at 27-28, 29-31 and 32 Market Place at first, second and third floors to provide 8 residential units, retention of flexible Class E uses at ground and basement floors

210164LBC - Demolition of 20th Century additions to the rear of 29-31 Market Place and 32 Market Place with associated internal and external alterations to listed buildings

Applicant: Sonic Star Properties Ltd

13 Week Decision Target Date: 30/06/2012

RECOMMENDATION

210163FUL

Delegate to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services (HPDRS) to i) **GRANT** full planning permission, subject to conditions and satisfactory completion of a section 106 legal agreement or ii) Refuse full planning permission if the legal agreement is not completed by 31st August 2021 (unless officers on behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement)

The legal agreement to secure the following:

1. Affordable housing Contribution of £213,000 towards provision of off-site affordable housing within the Borough (index-linked from the date of permission)
2. An obligation to update the existing 1893 covenant by entering into a permissive path agreement with the Council as Local Planning authority within 6 calendar months following completion of construction
3. Provision and implementation of both a construction and end user phase

Employment Skills and Training Plan or equivalent financial contributions, as calculated by the levels as set out in the adopted Employment and Skills SPD (all financial contributions index-linked from the date of permission)

4. C1 Hotel use only:

- no hotel room shall be used for any use other than as a C1 Use
- no hotel room shall be used or occupied as a residential dwelling or dwelling-house (C3 Use)
- not to let or licence for occupation or permit or suffer occupation of any of the hotel rooms for a continuous period of more than 3 months to the same occupier or occupiers
- other than those Customers staying in accordance with the above, not to let or licence for occupation or permit or suffer occupation of any hotel room for a continuous period for more than 3 months to the same Customer or Customers
- not to require Customers of any hotel room to agree to any minimum period of occupation (of whatever duration)
- to provide to the Council within 14 days of written request evidence regarding the use or occupation of the hotel rooms

5. Works to listed buildings at 27-32 Market Place and provision of public realm/landscaping prior to first occupation of the hotel. Works to include:

- Clearing of all rainwater good and necessary leads repairs
- Overhaul of roof slopes replacing damaged and missing tiles
- Re-pair to leadwork to flat roof areas
- Removal of air conditioning units
- Repairs to glazing and timber windows
- Securing all windows to intruders and water ingress
- Re-painting of external elevations

- Soft strip of all damp affected plaster including laths to allow underlying brick and timber to breath and dry out
- Inspection of all timbers together with studs to internal walls and application to all timbers suitable for retention of anti-fungicidal timber preservation treatment.
- Where required new timbers to be spliced using matching hardwood or softwood and installed adjacent to existing leaving the original timbers in situ (also treated with anti-fungal treatment to prevent further decay).
- Replacement of timber windows that are beyond repair with new windows to match existing

- Demolition of the rear of the Market Place buildings, re building of the rear elevations and provision of rear area of public realm

and landscaping

6. High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) contribution towards public realm improvements equivalent to 2% of construction costs

Conditions:

1. Time Limit - standard 3 years
2. Approved Plans
3. Prior to commencement of development (hotel) submission and approval of material samples
4. Prior to commencement of development (hotel) submission and approval of details of additional entrance column to the Friar Street frontage
5. Prior to commencement of development submission and approval of a construction method statement (hotel)
6. Prior to commencement of development submission and approval of a construction method statement (Market Place)
7. Standard hours of construction: 0800 to 1800hrs Monday to Friday, 0800 to 1300hrs Saturdays and no working on Sundays and Bank Holidays
8. No burning of waste on site
9. Provision of approved cycle parking prior to occupation of relevant part of the hotel development
10. Provision of approved cycle parking prior to occupation of relevant part of the market place development
11. Prior to occupation of hotel, submission and approval of servicing and refuse management plan
12. Prior to occupation of Market place retail units/pub, submission and approval of a servicing and refuse management plan
13. Prior to occupation of hotel submission and approval of bin store details (vermin control). Provision of approved bin stores also prior to occupation.
14. Prior to occupation of Market Place retail units/pub submission and approval of bin store details (vermin control). Provision of approved bin stores also prior to occupation.
15. Prior to occupation of Market Place residential units' submission and approval of bin store details (vermin control). Provision of approved bin stores also prior to occupation.
16. Prior to occupation of hotel implementation of approved of approved glazing and ventilation, insulation details
17. Prior to occupation of Market Place residential units' implementation of approved glazing and ventilation details
18. No installation of mechanical plant until submission and approval of a noise assessment
19. Prior to occupation of hotel submission and approval of access control strategy
20. Prior to occupation of hotel submission and approval of a CCTV strategy
21. Prior to occupation of hotel submission and approval of operational

- management plan
22. Prior to commencement of development (hotel) submission and approval of hard and soft landscaping scheme (to include details of green roof). Implementation prior to first occupation
 23. Prior to commencement of development (Market Place) submission and approval of a hard and soft landscaping scheme. Implementation prior to first occupation.
 24. Prior to commencement of development (hotel) submission and approval of a scheme of biodiversity enhancements (to include bat boxes)
 25. Pre-commencement submission and approval of Natural England license for works affect bats (Market Place buildings)
 26. Pre-occupation of hotel use, submission and approval of a landscaping management plan
 27. Pre-occupation of market place uses, submission and approval of a landscaping management plan
 28. Prior to commencement of development submission and approval of a scheme of archaeological investigation
 29. Programme of post-excavation archaeological assessment in accordance with approved scheme of archaeological investigation
 30. Prior to occupation of hotel submission and approval of details of air source heat pump
 31. Pre-occupation submission and approval of BREEAM as built certification for hotel - Very Good standard
 32. Pre-occupation submission and approval of BREEAM as built certification for Market Place retail units/pub - Very Good standard
 33. Pre-occupation submission and approval of BREEAM as built certification for Market Place residential flats - Very Good standard
 34. Adherence to approved hours of use (hotel and ancillary uses)
 35. Adherence to approved hours of use (Market Place pub)
 36. Prior to commencement of development (hotel) submission and approval of an external lighting scheme
 37. Prior to occupation of hotel provision/retention of lift(s) to hotel
 38. Prior to occupation of hotel submission and approval of full details of gates
 39. Gates to open inwards only
 40. Gates to be locked and passageway closed to public access outside of the permitted hours of use of the hotel restaurant/bar
 41. Retail units to Market Place to be under Use Class E only
 42. Prior to commencement of development (hotel) submission and approval of SuDS Strategy
 43. Adherence to approved SuDs Strategy
 44. Prior to occupation of hotel submission and approval of a litter management strategy
 45. Parking permits - pre-occupation notification of postal addresses of all residential units
 46. Parking permits - prohibition on entitlement to parking permits for occupiers of all residential units

47. Prior to occupation of hotel, submission and approval of details of information boards relating to the former retail arcade use of the site
48. Prior to commencement of development submission and approval of contaminated land assessment
49. Prior to commencement of development submission and approval of a contaminated land remediation scheme
50. Implementation of contaminated land remediation scheme as approved
51. Reporting of unidentified contamination
52. Pre-occupation of the hotel restaurant installation of approved odour control and kitchen extraction equipment
53. Pre-occupation submission and approval of an odour assessment and mitigation scheme for any of the Market Place units to be occupied for a use involving food preparation/cooking
54. No fixing or installing of miscellaneous items to the external faces or roof of any building without the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority
55. Flat roof/green roof areas not to be used as roof terraces
56. Implementation in accordance with approved Fire Strategy

Informatives:

1. Building Control
2. Terms and conditions
3. Positive and Proactive Statement
4. Complaints about construction
5. Damage to the highway
6. Highways
7. Noise between residential properties - sound insulation of any building
8. Related section 106 Legal Agreement
9. Related listed building consent
10. Possible need for future separate advertisement consent
11. Pre-commencement conditions
12. CIL
13. Parking permits

210164LBC

Delegate to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services (HPDRS) to **GRANT** listed building consent, subject to conditions

Conditions:

1. Time limit Listed Building Consent - standard 3 years
2. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a window repair/replacement scheme
3. Pre-commencement submission and approval of schedule and materials for works all works to rear elevation of no.s 27-32

4. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a detailed scheme of internal works and finishes (to include partition walls, cornices and skirting boards, etc.)
5. Pre-commencement submission and approval of detailed plans/sections of windows and doors
6. Pre-commencement submission and approval of detailed plans/sections of secondary glazing
7. Pre-commencement submission and approval of methodology for installation of insulation between ground and first floor level of the building
8. Pre-commencement submission and approval of external plant and services
9. Pre-commencement submission and approval of materials
10. Retention of all other features of historic and architectural interest unless referred to on approved plans

Informatives:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and Proactive Statement
3. Clarification over pre-commencement conditions

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site is formed of two adjoining plots with separate frontages, one plot fronting Town Hall Square, consisting of 173-175 Friar Street (the former Bristol and West Arcade / Brook Henderson House); and the other comprising of three buildings on the western side of Market Place, Nos 27-32, fronting onto the wide footway and the Market Place itself. Part of the application site (the properties fronting Market Place and Number 175 Friar Street) sit within the London Street/Market Place Conservation Area (See map below).



Location Plan (Listed Buildings highlighted red)

- 1.2 The former Bristol and West Arcade/ Brook Henderson House building is located at the eastern end of Friar Street, opposite the Town Hall and St Laurence's Church. The site is presently occupied by two buildings constructed in the mid-20th Century in a neo-Georgian style. No 173-174 and No 175 Friar Street are both four-storey in height constructed of red brick with pale stone elements set above the ground floor. This building is not Listed but is considered to be of Townscape Merit, as set out within the Council's Townscape Appraisal Map.
- 1.3 The upper floors of both buildings were formally in office use. The ground floors, consisting of the former arcade of retail shops and a link through to Market Way, are constructed in pale stone with full height glazing. The ground floor frontage therefore contains contemporary shop windows and an open passageway through the site to Market Way and the existing Sainsbury's store.
- 1.4 Within the buildings the existing retail units and office space are now entirely vacant with ground floor openings enclosed by hoardings to the front and rear. This site has not been fully in use for a period of 10 years, although building work was commenced to the rear (by virtue of permission 06-01560-FUL) but then ceased prior to completion due to market forces.

Existing Market Place Units

- 1.5 No.27-28 Market Place is a Grade II listed, three storey (plus attic accommodation and basement) building and is a fine example of an original merchant's house. The building is timber framed and dates from the seventeenth century. Internally, the building is currently just one room deep; it is apparent that sometime in the past, access to the rear rooms has been blocked and the floor areas incorporated into the No.29-31 (Coopers Arms). The building is vacant but was formally an A1 shop on the ground floor with ancillary storage at the upper floors.
- 1.6 No.29-31 Market Place (Coopers Arms) is Grade II listed and has three storeys (plus accommodation in the roof space and an extensive basement). The existing structure of the building dates largely from the seventeenth century, however the building has been extended to the rear (three storeys plus basement) in the 1950s/60s and an internal open courtyard roofed over. The existing half-timbered Market Place façade was added in the early twentieth century (1930s), and the ground floor shop front is a more modern, mid-twentieth century addition. The building is vacant but was formally a public house, incorporating basement storage and ancillary use of the upper floors as accommodation by staff.
- 1.7 No.32 Market Place is a four-storey building, Grade II listed, constructed in the mid-nineteenth century (1840-1853). The front façade survives largely intact with traditionally proportioned sash windows. The ground floor had been completely stripped out and a modern shop front is now in situ. On the rear elevation, the original sash windows have been replaced with modern UPVC double glazed units and, also on the rear, there is a large flat roof, single storey extension. These units make a significant contribution to the character of the surrounding Market

Place/London Street Conservation Area but are currently all vacant with all ground floor windows boarded up.

- 1.8 As shown on the site plan above the sites are effectively 'land locked' to their rear by existing town centre development. The former arcade is bounded to the west by the rear entrance of Marks and Spencer's and to the east by No 23-26 Market Place. To the north the former Arcade fronts Town Hall Square containing the Listed Town Hall and Listed St Laurence's Church. To the south the Arcade adjoins Market Way, and via Sainsbury's link to Broad Street.
- 1.9 The existing properties on Market Place directly adjoin the Friar Street property at their rear and have been built up to the boundary so there is no separation between them. The Market Place buildings front eastwards onto Market Place Square and are bounded by 23-26 Market Place (as above) and 33-34 Market Place containing Romans estates agents. These adjoining buildings are also Listed.
- 1.10 The site is set within the historic town centre in close proximity to a number of listed buildings, including the Grade I St Laurence's Church, the Grade II* Town Hall, the Grade II statue of Queen Victoria and the Grade II buildings at 23 through to 34 Market Place. A large number of unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area are noted on the Townscape Appraisal map as being 'Buildings of Townscape Merit'. These include:
 - No. 175 Friar Street; and
 - No. 172 Friar Street.
- 1.11 The Forbury Gardens, which are located to the east of St Laurence's Church, is an area of high-quality townscape, with the gardens also containing a number of Listed Buildings. The gardens are significant as the largest area of open space in central Reading and have a high degree of permeability for pedestrians moving through the area. Town Hall square which provides an open space enjoyed by the the public is set to front of the site on Friar Street. There are also a several public houses and night clubs (a number with late licenses) located around the junction of Friar Street and Blagrove Street.
- 1.12 The application site is:
 - Within the boundary of the defined Reading Central Area: Policies CR1 to CR10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019
 - Within a designated primary frontage within the defined Central Area: Policy CR7
 - Within the central core, primary shopping area and office core of the defined central area: Policy: CR1
 - Within an area of archaeological potential: Policy EN2
 - Within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA): Policy EN15
 - Partially within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area (Policy EN3)
 - No.s 27-32 Market Place Grade II Listed Buildings (Policy EN1)
 - The Market Place frontage is also within the High Street Heritage Action Zone for Reading.

1.13 It should also be noted that an existing covenant (dated 1893) grants public access through the former Bristol and West Arcade whilst the Corn Exchange and General Market are open. Within the S106 Legal Agreement for the 2007 permission to develop the Bristol and West Arcade, and 2003 permission for the current Sainsbury's site (directly south of the application site) this route was retained via a section 106 Legal agreement.

1.14 The application is referred to committee as it is classified as a 'major' category development.

2. PROPOSALS

2.1 Full planning permission is sought for demolition of vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (173-175 Friar Street) and redevelopment of the site including minor excavations at basement level to provide an 8-storey hotel (C1 use) of up to 182 beds with ancillary bar/restaurant/gym at ground floor associated with the hotel and the provision of ancillary facilities including outdoor terrace. It is also proposed to demolish the rear parts of 29-31 and 32 Market Place and the change of use of the retained units at 27-28, 29-31 and 32 Market Place at first, second and third floors to provide 8 residential units, retention of flexible Class E uses at ground and basement floors. The proposed demolition and internal alteration work to the Market Place buildings are also subject to a related application for listed building consent.

2.2 It is proposed to retain the former arcade route through the site which connects the Friar Street frontage with Market Way where the rear entrance to Sainsburys is located which then links through to the Market Place frontage. The main entrance to the proposed hotel would be located centrally off the route through the site with the demolition of the rear elements of the Market Place buildings enlarging this area creating a small public courtyard. The bar and restaurant would be accessed via the Friar Street frontage and would be open to hotel guests and the public.

2.3 The eight residential units (C3 use) to the upper floors of no.s 27-32 Market Place are proposed as a mix of 4 x 1-bedroom units, 3 x 2-bedroom units and 1 x 3-bedroom unit. At ground and basement floor level the Market Place building would be retained in their existing commercial use. Including reinstatement of the former public house (sui generis use) at 29-31 Market Place. The proposals to the Market Place buildings are the same as that under existing planning permission ref. 180358FUL (& listed building consent ref. 180359LBC).

2.4 The Applicant sought detailed pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) prior to submitting the applications which have been subject to detailed discussions and series of meetings and written advice letters.

2.5 Plans and Documents Considered:

- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Norr Consultants;
- Draft Operational Management Plan, prepared by the applicant;
- Economic Impact Statement, prepared by Savills;
- Retail Market Assessment, prepared Hicks Baker;
- Office Market Assessment, prepared by LSH;
- Heritage Statement, prepared by Turleys;
- Condition Report for Market Place Properties, prepared by Roc Associates;
- Archaeology Statement, prepared by RPS;
- Transport Statement, prepared by iTransport Planning;
- Hotel and market Place Framework Travel Plan, prepared by iTransport Planning;
- Delivery and Servicing Statement (included in Transport Statement), prepared by iTransport Planning;
- Air Quality Assessment, prepared by South Downs Environmental Consultants;
- Bat Survey Report, CSA Environmental;
- Sustainability Statement, prepared by JH Partners;
- BREEAM Pre-Assessments prepared by Summers Inman;
- Surface Water Drainage & SuDS Assessment, prepared by Clancy Consulting;
- Fire Engineering Review, prepared by JGA;
- Odour Assessment, prepared by South Downs Environmental Consulting;
- Indicative external lighting scheme, prepared by JH Partners;
- Outline Utilities Statement, prepared by JH Partners;
- Provisional roof level MEP requirements, prepared by JH Partners;
- Wind & Microclimate Assessment, prepared by RWDI.

Drawings no.s

- REBW-NOR-01-ZZ-DR-A-90010 Rev 1- Site Location Plan
- REBW-NOR-01-ZZ-DR-A-00102 Rev 8 - GA Elevations South & West
- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-0000B Rev 7 - GA Plan Level -01
- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-00001 Rev 12 - GA Plan Level 01
- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-00002 Rev 9 - GA Plan Level 02
- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-00003 Rev 9 - GA Plan Level 03
- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-00004 Rev 8 - GA Plan Level 04
- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-00005 - Rev 8 - GA Plan Level 05
- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-00006 - Rev 8 - GA Plan Level 06
- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-00007 - Rev 8 - GA Plan Level 07
- REBW-NOR-01-RF-DR-A-27001 Rev 7 - GA Plan - Roof
- REBW-NOR-01-ZZ-SH-A-00402 Rev 7 - GIFA Schedule

- DE.101 - Demolition Basement Floor Plan
- DE.102 - Demolition Ground Floor Plan
- DE.103 - Demolition First Floor Plan

- DE.104 - Demolition Second Floor Plan
- DE.105 - Demolition Third Floor Plan
- DE.106 - Demolition Roof Plan

- DE.201 - 27-32 Market Place Basement Floor Plan
- DE.202 - 27-32 Market Place Ground Floor Plan
- DE.203 - 27-32 Market Place First Floor Plan
- DE.204 - 27-32 Market Place Second Floor Plan
- P.305 Rev B - Section EE (Cross Section Facing St. Laurence)
- P.306 - Section FF (Cross Section Facing South)
- P.307 - Section GG (Rear Elevation of Market Place)
- P.318 - Signage Position - Section HH (Market Place Elevation)

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 2nd February 2021

- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-00000 Rev 13 - GA Plan Level 00
- REBW-NOR-01-ZZ-DR-A-00101 Rev 11 - GA Elevations North & East
- REBW-NOR-01-ZZ-DR-A-00201 Rev 8 - GA Sections

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 6th July 2021

- REBW-NOR-01-00-DR-A-00020 Rev 1 - GA Plan Landscape Areas

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 9th July 2021

3. PLANNING HISTORY

Application site

- 3.1 There are numerous applications relating to both plots forming the site. Those applications considered to be of relevance in the determination of this application are specified below:
- 3.2 *173- 175 Friar Street*
- 06-01560-FUL - Refurbishment of shopping arcade and offices. Partial demolition and addition of health club and 14 dwellings - **Granted.**
 - 06-00825-FUL - Refurbishment of shopping arcade and offices (including partial demolition), construction of new gym and 14 apartments (12 x 2 bed and 2 x 3 bed) - **Refused.**
 - 06-00663-FUL - Demolition to rear of part first floor 4 shop units and roof light reconstruction of retail units with a new glazed wall and new roof - **Granted.**
- 3.3 *173-175 Friar Street and 27-32 Market Place*

- 180358FUL & 180359LBC - Demolition of vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (173 - 175 Friar Street) and erection of an eight storey mixed -use building (plus basement) to provide 35 residential units, 4,208 sqm of B1 office floorspace, and 5 retail units (A1/A2/A3); demolition of rear parts of 29 - 31 and 32 Market Place, the change of use of the retained units at 27 - 28, 29 - 31 Market Place at first, second and third floors to provide 8 residential units, change of use at ground and basement level of 32 Market Place from A2 to flexible retail use (A1/A2/A3), retention of 260.4 sqm of A4 use at ground and basement at 29-31 Market Place, change of use at ground and basement of 27 - 28 Market Place to flexible retail use (A1/A2/A3), and associated internal and external works to the Listed Buildings, landscaping, refuse, plant, cycle stores and substation at basement level - **Granted** (associated S106 legal agreement).

3.4 Planning permission ref. 06-01560-FUL referred to above for the *“Refurbishment of shopping arcade and offices. Partial demolition and addition of health club and 14 dwellings”* was granted in 2007. This permitted the erection of 3 tower elements above the existing building at 175 Friar Street (to be retained) allowing 8 storey development on the site. Construction works were commenced on site, but subsequently left unfinished with elements clearly visible from the rear of the Sainsbury’s Store. Although the legal status of this 2007 permission cannot be determined under this application, it was accepted under planning permission 180358FUL that this 2007 permission set the parameters for the height and bulk of development within this site and this is again considered the position in respect of the current planning application.

3.5 29-32 Market Place

- 08/00969/FUL & 08/00970/LBC - Change of use of building to a basement bar (class A4 use), ground floor retail units, and a mixed-use hotel/restaurant/bar (class C1/A3/A4) on the first, second and third floors, partial demolition of rear of building, three storey extension to the rear, refurbishment of building, and new Market Place façade - **Granted**.
- 11/01719/EXT & 11/01720/LBC- Application for an extension of the time limit for implementation of permission 08/00969/FUL for a change of use of building to a basement bar (Class A4 use), ground floor retail units, and a mixed-use hotel/restaurant/bar (class C1/A3/A4 use) on the first, second and third floors. Partial demolition of rear of building, three storey extension to the rear, refurbishment of building, and new Market Place façade - **Granted**.
- 12/01257/FUL - Change of use of the first, second and third floors from office use to residential accommodation - **Granted**

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Historic England - No formal comments received. However, advice received that a condition that the Market place buildings are brought into good repair before work

on the arcade commences given the now serious state of disrepair of the buildings and the failure of the owners to fulfil their obligation to keep them in good repair.

- 4.2 RBC Conservation and Urban Design Consultant - No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of materials samples for all external works, scheme of window repair/replacement, details of additional column to Friar Street entrance, scheme of internal works (partition walls, cornices, fireplaces etc), plans/sections of all windows and doors, details of secondary glazing, installation methodology for insulation between ground and first floors, details of internal and external plant and services and retention of all other historic features unless referred to within the approved plans and documents. As detailed within the appraisal section of this report.
- 4.3 RBC Transport - No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement, refuse and servicing strategy and cycle parking plans as detailed with the appraisal section of this report.
- 4.4 RBC Environmental Protection - No objection, subject to conditions to secure implementation of glazing, ventilation, extraction and insulation specifications, submission and approval of details of any additional plant equipment to be installed, an operational management plan, details of bin stores, contaminated land assessment (and remediation scheme if required) and a construction method statement together with compliance to Councils standard construction working hours and limiting of delivery times to daytime hours. As detailed within the appraisal section of this report.
- 4.5 RBC Natural Environment - No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a hard and soft landscaping scheme (including details of green roof) and a landscaping management plan. As detailed within the appraisal section of this report.
- 4.6 Ecology Consultant - No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a scheme of biodiversity enhancements (including bat boxes) and evidence of a Natural England License for works impacting bat roosts. As detailed within the appraisal section of this report.
- 4.7 Berkshire Archaeology - No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a scheme of archaeological investigation and post excavation assessment. As detailed within the appraisal section of this report.
- 4.8 Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Adviser - No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of security, CCTV Strategies and an external lighting scheme. As detailed within the appraisal section of this report.
- 4.9 Berkshire Fire and Rescue - No comments received.

Public consultation

- 4.10 No.s 172, 173, 176 Friar Street, 7-8 Broad Street, 19, 20, 21-22, 23-24, 25-26, 27-28, 32, 33-34, 36, 37-42 Market Place, Flats 1 & 2 30 Market Place and Sussex House 6 The Forbury were notified of the applications by letter. Two site notices were also displayed at the application site on the 24th February 2021.
- 4.11 One letter of objection has been received which objects to the loss of the existing building of townscape merit at 173 Friar Street.
- 4.12 One letter of observation has been received raising the following issues:
- Welcome the redevelopment of the site
 - Concern about the modern frontage to the building and consider this should be a red brick design
 - Concern about rough sleeping with the large entranceway to the hotel
- 4.13 The Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) have also commented on the applications and raise the following in summary:
- Welcome retention of the set back of the Friar Street frontage of the hotel building but consider the frontage to be monolithic in appearance and have concern about dominance of the white stone section of the façade
 - Concerned about removal of the single doorway entrance into no. 29-31 Market Place (former Coppers Pub) and replacement with two doors.
 - The application should be used as an opportunity to replace the existing modern shop front to no. 32 Market Place
 - The large entrance to the site from Town Hall Square is visually unattractive and uninviting
 - Concerned about 24 hours access to the hotel and security of this.
- 4.14 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) has been submitted with the applications. This sets out that the Applicant also undertook their own public consultation about the development proposals which included a web-based survey, leaflet drop to 911 commercial and residential addresses surrounding the site, and two virtual online engagement events (face to face public engagement event no possible due to Covid19 social distancing restrictions at the time).

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special

attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

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

National planning policy framework (NPPF) 2019

CHAPTER 1 - ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
CHAPTER 6 - BUILDING A STRONG AND COMPETITIVE ECONOMY
CHAPTER 7 - ENSURING THE VITALITY OF TOWN CENTRES
CHAPTER 8 - PROMOTING HEALTHY AND SAFE COMMUNITIES
CHAPTER 9 - PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT
CHAPTER 10 - MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF LAND
CHAPTER 12 - WELL DESIGN PLACES
CHAPTER 15 - CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
CHAPTER 16 - CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

READING BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2019

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
CC9: SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
EN2: AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE
EN6: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT
EN9: PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE
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
EN18: FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

EM3: LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND

H1: PROVISION OF HOUSING

H2: DENSITY AND MIX

TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

TR4: CYCLE ROUTES AND FACILITIES

TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

RL1: NETWORK AND HIERARCHY OF CENTRES

RL2: SCALE AND LOCATION OF RETAIL, LEISURE AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT

RL5: IMPACT OF MAIN TOWN CENTRE USES

OU5: SHOPFRONTS AND CASH MACHINES

CR1: DEFINITION OF CENTRAL READING

CR2: DESIGN IN CENTRAL READING

CR3: PUBLIC REALM IN CENTRAL READING

CR4: LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM IN CENTRAL READING

CR5: DRINKING ESTABLISHMENTS IN CENTRAL READING

CR6: LIVING IN CENTRAL READING

CR7: PRIMARY FRONTAGES IN CENTRAL READING

CR8: SMALL SHOP UNITS IN CENTRAL READING

CR14d: 173-175 FRIAR STREET AND 27-32 MARKET PLACE

Supplementary Planning Documents

Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

Planning Obligations under Section 106 SPD (2015)

Employment, Skills and Training SPD (2013)

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- Principle of development and land use considerations
- Demolition, layout, height & massing, appearance, design and effect on Heritage Assets
- Archaeology
- Natural Environment
- Amenity
- Transport Matters
- Sustainability
- Other matters

Principle of development and land use considerations

- 6.2 The application site is located within the central core and primary shopping area of the town centre, on a prominent corner plot and a location that is highly accessible. In general terms the proposals are considered to accord with the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 in terms of development within the town centre which it seeks should facilitate the growth and diversification of the town centre and enhance its role as a regional centre. Specifically, the nature of uses proposed are considered to align with Policy RL1 (Network and Hierarchy of Centres) which seeks the vitality and viability of Reading as a Regional Centre should be maintained and enhanced and Policy RL2 (Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development) which states that the town centre shall be the focus for new investment.
- 6.3 Furthermore, the proposals are considered to reflect the requirements of Policy CR1 (Definition of Central Reading) which sets out that main town centre uses should be located within the Central Core area. Policy CR4 (Leisure, Culture and Tourism in Central Reading) requires that the Central Core of the town centre will be the prime focus for major leisure, cultural and tourism development. The policy goes on to state that uses that would attract a wide range of people into the centre will be encouraged together with innovative solutions for leisure provision which make best use of available (often limited) site area. The proposed eight flats to the upper floors of the Market Place buildings would also align with Policy H4.
- 6.4 Notwithstanding the above, the Local Plan contains a number of more detailed policies in terms of the appropriate locations and function of particular land uses within the town centre which must also be considered.

Site Allocation Policy CR14d and Extant Planning Permission

- 6.5 The site, including both the former Bristol and West Arcade at no.s 173-175 Friar Street and the listed buildings at no.s 27 to 32 Market Place is allocated for development within the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 under Policy CR14d. This policy states that the development principles for the site are:

Change of use of listed buildings and development of remainder for residential and/or offices with retail and related uses on the ground floor, retaining the arcade form and that development should:

- *Avoid detrimental effects on the significance of the listed building and the Conservation Area and their settings;*
- *Take account of potential archaeological significance;*
- *Address noise impacts on residential use; and*
- *Address air quality impacts on residential use.*

- 6.6 Therefore whilst the proposed hotel and ancillary bar, restaurant and gym would be acceptable uses in general terms within the Town Centre as per Policies CR1

(Definition of Central Reading) and CR4 (Leisure Culture and Tourism) as referred to above, this use would not align with all stipulations of the site allocation Policy CR14d which seeks to retain the arcade form of site and for provision of residential and/or office uses to the upper floors. In terms of the ground floor uses officers are satisfied that the ancillary bar, restaurant and gyms uses to the hotel, which would be open to the public and hotel guests, are appropriate 'retail and related uses' in the context of Policy CR14d.

- 6.7 In terms of the no.s 27-32 Market Place the proposals seek to retain the existing two retail units and pub and convert the upper floors to eight residential flats which would align with the requirements of Policy CR14d.
- 6.8 It is also relevant to note that there is an extant planning permission on the site ref. 180358FUL (& listed building consent ref. 180359LBC) (permission expires on 9th January 2022), for a development of very similar layout, scale and massing. The extant consent is the same as the current application proposals in terms of the uses and works proposed to no.s 27-32 Market Place but proposed a mix of office and residential accommodation (35 flats) to upper floors of a new building on the Friar Street and former arcade part of the site, incorporating four ground floor retail units. The extant planning permission was granted in January 2019 under the now superseded, Reading Core Strategy Policies when the site was not allocated for development. The new Reading Local Plan having been adopted after this decision in November 2019.
- 6.9 The Applicant has provided a number of documents in support of the planning application which evidence the steps taken to market the development as proposed by the 2018 extant permission. However, a significant commitment from a developer to bring the site forward or interest from potential tenants for the non-residential elements of the permission (seven retail units at ground floor) has not been forthcoming.
- 6.10 In respect of the above, the evidence submitted sets out that a number of agents were appointed to advertise the consented development off-market over a 9-month period. The off-market exercise reached 37 parties but resulted in no significant interest or commitment to bring forward the residential or retail elements. Following this a more formal open market approach to advertising the site was undertaken. Details were sent to over 2,400 property developers and investors, in response to which 35 enquiries were received with only 7 considered to be 'firm interest' with 4 of the 7 parties interests relating to the potential use of the site as hotel and not the consented development itself. The remaining 3 parties interest related to the conversion of the Market Place properties only and the development on the former arcade part of the site. Only one offer for the site was received in January 2020 which related to bringing it forward in a hotel use. This offer was not accepted with the Applicant instead switching focus in an attempt to bring the site forward as a hotel themselves.

- 6.11 Of the interested parties who made enquiries about the site the general reasons for not pursuing their interest was that much of the site was not market facing and that the layout of some of the retail units was not desirable with them not directly visible to the main thoroughfares of Friar Street and Market Place due to efforts to retain some of the arcade layout of the site. This meant that there were significant concerns about securing future occupiers for the units and viability of the scheme given the challenging nature of the retail market with increasing number of vacant units across the country, a situation which has worsened as a result of the Covid19 pandemic.
- 6.12 Officers acknowledge the detailed evidence put forward by the Applicant in terms of the difficulties encountered in marketing of the consented scheme. This evidence is considered relevant to consideration of the current proposals in ensuring that a development on the site is capable of contributing to the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Proposed Uses

- 6.13 Given some aspects of the current proposals deviate from that set out within the site allocation policy it is important to assess the individual elements and development as a whole against the other detailed Local Plan Policies and relevant material planning considerations.

Ground Floor Uses

- 6.14 Within the arcade part of the site it is proposed to replace the former shopping arcade use with ancillary restaurant, bar and gym associated with the hotel use, together with the hotel reception/lobby area. This is different to the 2018 permission at the site which sought to provide four retail units at ground floor level. As discussed above, the site allocation Policy CR14d seeks that ground floor uses to the site are 'retail or related uses' and in this respect, officers are satisfied that the proposed bar, restaurant and gym uses are appropriate related uses.
- 6.15 Policy CR8 (Small Shop Units in Central Reading) is relevant and states that small shop units (less than 75 sqm), such as those formerly occupied within the arcade, make an important contribution to the diversity of the town centre. In addition, the site allocation Policy CR14d as set out above, states that development on site should 'retain the arcade form' which consists of small shop units. However, it should be noted that significant loss of the arcade form on the site is permitted under the extant 2018 planning permission which whilst providing ground floor retail units to this part of the site, none are less than 75m² in size and therefore not considered 'small shop units' in the context of Policy CR8. The officer report at the time when assessing the loss of the shop units and arcade form explained that detailed retail market reports were submitted with the application which demonstrated the lack of demand within the market for small retail units set in an arcade style layout.

- 6.16 As set out above the current proposals seek to provide the hotel reception/lobby, restaurant and bar to the ground floor - no small shop units are proposed. The Applicant has provided an updated retail market assessment report as part of the supporting documentation to the application as justification for why retention of small shop units in an arcade layout is not viable. The evidence within this report states that there is already an oversupply of small retail units in the town centre, demonstrated by high vacancy rates (above UK average) and lack of occupancy or demand for existing arcade style pitches. The report references the Kings Walk shopping Centre which has not been in 100% occupation since it was built in 1992 and also the Harris Arcade which has only had 100% occupancy for a period of three days within the last four years. The market report also sets out that outside of The Oracle and Broad Street Mall there are 403 retail units in the town centre of which 62 are vacant with 30 of those units with a floorspace of less than 100m² (as of January 2020).
- 6.17 The significant adverse impact of the Covid19 pandemic on the retail market is also referenced noting a sharp drop off in new lease agreements and closure of many national operators such as Debenhams and Arcadia who have gone into administration. The report concludes that in the current market with the growth of online shopping, shopping centres require an anchor store to attract other retailers and footfall to a pitch and that a national anchor retailer would not be interested in the arcade location. This is largely due to lack of a destination point to attract the required footfall with smaller retailers mostly interested in sites close to existing larger anchor stores which generate footfall and a higher chance of long-term sustainability.
- 6.18 Officers acknowledge the evidence put forward by the applicant in terms of the current and longer-term challenges of the retail market and the issues associated with an arcade style layout. These are issues that were raised in consideration of the 2018 permission on the site, which permitted removal of the small shop units and significant loss of the arcade form, issues which have, in part due to the pandemic, worsened over time as also indicated by the evidenced lack of interest in bringing forward the existing permission on the site.
- 6.19 The Applicant acknowledges that the arcade layout is not just a land use matter but also one of character with these layouts characteristic of certain parts of the town centre as per Policy CR8. To retain some of the character of the arcade, the central route through the arcade that leads from Friar Street through to Market Way to the rear is to be re-provided and a small public courtyard area is also proposed around the hotel and gym entrances which are located off this public route through the site. The route through the site has also been designed so that it is split at ground floor level to appear as individual frontages that would have been characteristic of a shopping arcade. This has been done by splitting the façade of the ground floor into separate blocks with glazing representing active frontage as well as the hotel reception. The Applicant has also indicated that

information boards would be included along the passageway referring to the sites retail history as an arcade details of which can be secured by way of condition.



Proposed Ground Floor Layout Plan

- 6.20 The principle of the creation of the public courtyard area and new area of public realm in a currently inaccessible and underutilised part of the town centre is considered to align with the intentions of Policy CR2 (Design in Central Reading) and Policy CR3 (Public Realm in Central Reading) which states that new development should make a positive contribution towards the quality of the public realm of the central area. In particular, the policy seeks to encourage ‘imaginative uses of open space and the public realm which contributes to the offer of the centre’ and that ‘new open spaces should be of a size and shape to be flexible enough to accommodate such uses with the provision of planting and landscaping expected to create high quality spaces’. The policy also goes on to state that public realm areas should ‘conserve and enhance the historic environment and the significance of heritage assets and their setting and that opportunities for areas of public realm to provided improved access to a visibility for heritage assets’. The proposals would also comply with Policy EN9 (Provision of Open Space) which seeks that all new development should make provision for appropriate open space based upon the needs of the development. The Market Place part of the application site is also located within a designated High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) and it is

proposed to secure a financial contribution (2% of construction costs), as part of a section 106 legal agreement, towards public realm improvements within Market Place.

- 6.21 The Friar Street frontage of the site is located within a designated Primary Frontage under Policy CR7 (Primary Frontages in Central Reading) and therefore the impact of the hotel use of the primary frontage must be considered. The Policy requires that uses at ground floor level within the frontages are within 'town centre uses' which include hotels, restaurants and bars and as such these uses, which would form the Friar Street frontage of the site, are considered to be appropriate in this location. The restaurant and bar would be open to the public as well as hotel guests and would provide a glazed active frontage to Friar Street.
- 6.22 Policy CR7 goes on to set out that proposals that would result in loss of shop units (or units in financial and professional services use) within the frontage where the proportion of shop units within the frontage would fall below 50% would not be permitted, unless the proposals introduce a use that makes a positive contribution to the overall diversity of the centre. The purpose of the Policy is to help retain the retail character of the town centre. The designated Friar Street active frontage is extensive and includes both sides of the street with the proportion of shop units (or units in financial and professional services use) at 34% and already below the policy threshold. However, the arcade has been vacant and boarded up for over 10 years and as such, in this time, has made no contribution to the active frontage or vitality the town centre in recent years. Officers consider that the uses proposed as part of the wider hotel function of the site would contribute positively to the active frontage as well as the overall diversity and vitality of the town centre and are considered to be appropriate uses in this context.
- 6.23 In terms of no.s 27-32 Market Place the retention of the two commercial units, public house and associated frontages comply with the site allocation Policy CR14d and are considered appropriate and in accordance with Policy CR7.
- 6.24 In overall terms Officers consider the proposed ground floor uses to be acceptable in this location and that they would contribute positively to the vitality and interest the active frontage and town centre, both as individual elements but also as part of the wider hotel use. Loss of the arcade layout and small shop units is a shortfall of the proposals. However, based on the detailed supporting documents submitted by the Applicant evidencing the current challenging nature of the retail market, difficulties in attracting tenants to an arcade style layout, fact that the arcade has been vacant for over 10 years and given that the loss of the small shop units and the majority of the arcade form is already permitted under the extant planning permission on the site, Officers accept that there is strong justification for loss for these elements. Nonetheless, this shortfall will be considered in the overall planning balance judgement of the application.

Uses to Upper Floors

- 6.25 The existing upper floors to both the arcade part of the site and no.s 27-32 Market Place consist of vacant former office space. Loss of office accommodation must be considered against Policy EM3 (Loss of Employment Land) which states that in locations such as the application site which are outside of the Core Employment Areas, loss of employment land will be assessed against a range of criteria including accessibility (including access to the strategic road network), viability of continued use as employment and impact on character and amenity of the area, surplus of similar accommodation elsewhere, need for other uses and whether or not the proposals would result in a piecemeal loss of employment land where there is scope for a more comprehensive approach.
- 6.26 Also relevant to the assessment is that use of the upper floors of the buildings as offices is included under the site allocation policy CR14d and that the extant planning permission on the site includes provision of 4000 sqm of office floor space.
- 6.27 Whilst the site is located conveniently for access to public transport, it is clear that other purpose-built office sites outside of the town centre benefit from more convenient access to the strategic road network. The supporting information submitted with the application referred to above in this report details the applicant's efforts to market the site and lack of interest in the current proposed uses, including the office accommodation. The proposed hotel use is also considered to represent potential for a more comprehensive development of the site as opposed to a mix of uses.
- 6.28 The Applicant has also provided an Office accommodation market assessment report which details the significant impact of the Covid19 pandemic and reduced demand and use of office space and likelihood of continued working from home practices moving forward beyond the pandemic. The report also details difficulties in terms of the quality and layout of the existing office space which is not considered readily compatible with a modern open plan office environment. Whilst challenges are also identified in terms of the attractiveness of the office space permitted under the extant permission due to its lack of street-level presence and expectation that a large modern office has reception lobby area to welcome guests and visitors.
- 6.29 Given the prevalence of office accommodation elsewhere within the Borough Officers do not object to the loss of office employment accommodation nor that this proposal no longer brings forward the office accommodation secured under the extant permission. It is also pertinent to note that the proposed hotel accommodation would also officer significant employment opportunities with around 100 jobs likely to be created.
- 6.30 Loss of potential residential accommodation is also a relevant consideration. Whilst there is no existing residential accommodation on the site, the site allocation Policy CR14d stipulates a potential residential use of the upper floors (indicative capacity of 36-54 dwellings) of any new development on the site. The extant 2018 planning permission also includes provision of thirty-five dwellings to the arcade

part of the site and eight dwellings to the upper floors of the Market Place buildings, including thirteen affordable housing units

- 6.31 Whilst the current proposals seek to retain the eight residential units to the upper floors of the Market Place buildings the thirty-five dwellings to the upper floors of the arcade part of the site are no longer proposed. This loss of potential residential accommodation is disappointing and in particular the loss of 13 affordable homes. However, it should be noted that the eight units still proposed to the upper floors of the Market Place buildings would be subject to an affordable housing contribution in accordance with Policy H3 (Affordable Housing). The Applicant has agreed to a policy compliant level of contribution to be secured by way of a section 106 legal agreement which equates to £213k. The mix of units proposed is four x 1-bedroom units, three x 2-bedroom units and one x 3-bedroom unit. This mix is considered appropriate for the town centre location in accordance with Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) which seeks that developments provide a range of housing opportunities.
- 6.32 Provision of new Housing within the Borough is supported by Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) which sets the housing provision target over the plan period. The Council's Annual Monitoring Report sets out that the Borough can demonstrate a strong five-year housing supply in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF. Therefore, there is no current overriding need to provide residential dwellings where other policy considerations allow other development types. It should also be noted that the site allocation policy CR14d sets out that use of the upper floors of development on the site should be in residential and/or office use and therefore there is clear potential for the site to come forward without providing residential accommodation that would in principle accord with this policy. Nonetheless, whilst there is some justification for not bringing forward all the residential units proposed under the extant planning permission this is still considered a shortfall compared to the consented development and one which would also fall to be assessed in the overall planning balance judgement of the application.
- 6.33 In terms of the proposed use, the upper floors of the arcade part of the site would consist of 182 hotel bedrooms under the C1 hotel use class. As with similar proposals, occupation of the hotel units on a short stay basis only in accordance with Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) would be secured by way of a section 106 legal agreement to secure the following terms:
- no hotel room shall be used for any use other than as a C1 Use
 - no hotel room shall be used or occupied as a residential dwelling or dwelling-house (C3 Use)
 - not to let or licence for occupation or permit or suffer occupation of any of the hotel rooms for a continuous period of more than 3 months to the same occupier or occupiers
 - other than those Customers staying in accordance with the above, not to let or licence for occupation or permit or suffer occupation of any hotel room for a continuous period for more than 3 months to the same Customer or Customers

- not to require Customers of any hotel room to agree to any minimum period of occupation (of whatever duration)
- to provide to the Council within 14 days of written request evidence regarding the use or occupation of the hotel rooms

Demolition, height & massing, appearance and effect on Heritage Assets

- 6.34 Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) states that heritage assets, including their settings will be protected and where possible enhanced. The policy goes on to state that proposals should seek to avoid harm to heritage assets in the first instance but that any harm identified would require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits. The policy also states that in respect of listed buildings development proposals should not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special character or historical interest. Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) seeks that the special interest and character of such areas is conserved and enhanced
- 6.35 In terms of general design approach, Policies CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and CR2 (Design in Central Reading) seek that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area within which it is located. Both Policies CR2 and CR3 (Public Realm in Central Reading) encourage provision of public spaces, use of high-quality materials, provision of soft landscaping and green roofs and that development should also conserve and enhance the historic environment.
- 6.36 The proposal has been carefully assessed by officers in relation to the Heritage Assets within and surrounding the site. As set out in the introduction section of this report the application site falls partly within the London Street/ Market Place Conservation Area, the site contains listed buildings and a building of Townscape merit; and the immediately surrounding area contains important Listed Buildings including the Grade II* Town Hall and Grade I Listed St Laurence's Church.
- 6.37 The London Street / Market Place Conservation Area Appraisal defines the features of the conservation area that contribute to its special interest. Those features relevant to the part of the conservation where the application site is located include>
- Presence of one of Reading's three Medieval Churches (St Laurence's)
 - 16th and 17th Century timber framed buildings found to Market Place
 - 19th Century Municipal buildings to Blagrove Street including the Town Hall building and Museum
 - Examples of red, blue and buff brick buildings reflecting Readings extensive local brickworks
 - Public open space and trees to Town Hall Square and Market Place

- 6.38 These designations have also been noted by the applicant and the application submission is accompanied by a detailed Heritage Statement.

No.s 27-32 Market Place

- 6.39 The Market Place listed building buildings at no.s 27-32 are grade II listed and are in poor condition both internally and externally and Officers have raised concerns with the Owner over the last few years, including issuing of warning letters, with regard to the upkeep, condition and security of the buildings following a series of break ins. Owners of listed buildings have a duty of care to maintain the buildings and their heritage significance under the Listed Buildings Act. At the end of May 2021, the Applicant began a series of essential works and repairs to the listed buildings following discussions with Officers and Conservation and Urban Design Officer. These works are being carried out separately to the current listed building consent application as essential works under their duty of care. The works include:

- Clearing of all rainwater good and necessary leads repairs
- Overhaul of roof slopes replacing damaged and missing tiles
- Re-pair to leadwork to flat roof areas
- Removal of air conditioning units
- Repairs to glazing and timber windows
- Securing all windows to intruders and water ingress
- Re-painting of external elevations

- 6.40 The Applicant has advised that a report evidencing the works that have been carried out will be provided to Officers and Members of the Planning Applications Committee prior to the Committee meeting. This will be included as update report to the Committee for this item.

- 6.41 The current listed building consent application is also accompanied by a more detailed condition report of the listed buildings and schedule of repairs. This includes the works already untaken by the application but also other works, largely internal that, that would go beyond the scope of the essential works being undertaken by the owner separately to these applications. The additional works proposed this more detailed schedule include:

- Soft strip of all damp affected plaster including laths to allow underlying brick and timber to breath and dry out
- Inspection of all timbers together with studs to internal walls and application to all timbers suitable for retention of anti-fungicidal timber preservation treatment.
- Where required new timbers to be spliced using matching hardwood or softwood and installed adjacent to existing leaving the original timbers in situ (also treated with anti-fungal treatment to prevent further decay).
- Replacement of timber windows that are beyond repair with new windows to match existing

- 6.42 The repair works already undertaken and the more detailed works outlined above have been reviewed by the Conservation and Urban Design Officer who considers these appropriate to ensure the preservation of the significance of the listed buildings. Implementation of the more detailed schedule of works is to be secured as part of the section 106 legal agreement to require this work to be completed prior to first occupation of the permitted hotel. Therefore, if the event that the development is implemented in a phased manner with the hotel element being built out first this works to the listed buildings as a minimum would still be secured. It should be noted that under the extant planning permission on the site there is no requirement of that permission or associated listed building consent and legal agreement to require the works to the Market Place listed buildings to be carried out.
- 6.43 In relation to the works to the listed buildings proposed under the current applications the proposals are the same as that approved under the extant planning permission and listed building consent. This comprises internal works to re-provide retail units and a public house at ground floor and the new residential units above. The major alterations proposed relate to a demolition of a series of modern extensions to the rear of the listed buildings and reinstatement of the original rear elevations of the listed buildings using sympathetic materials and detailing. The rear elevations of the listed building would be visible from the passageway and courtyard area through the site that is to be re-provided as part of the development. The proposals also include repair of the existing shop fronts and removal of modern shop front additions.
- 6.44 The submitted heritage statement sets out a detailed assessment of all the external and internal changes proposed and the Officer assessment of these works remains the same as under consideration of the previous application. Officers are satisfied that that internal works to the core areas of the listed buildings would involve minimal loss of original fabric and notably the plan form of the buildings would be retained and, in some places, enhanced via reinstatement of internal walls. The demolition of the poor-quality modern additions to the rear of the listed buildings and reinstatement of original rear elevations is considered to be a significant benefit as is the removal of modern additions to the existing shopfronts. Existing doors to the shopfronts that formerly provided access to the office accommodation to the upper floors would be retained and adapted to provide access to the new residential units. Officers consider that the proposed works to the listed buildings include a number of benefits which in overall terms would both preserve and enhance their historic significance, including:
- Securing the viable reuse of the listed buildings on Site (which are currently vacant and their conditions deteriorating) in the interests of their future conservation;
 - Works of required repair, refurbishment and ongoing maintenance of the historic buildings, funded by their conversion and reuse;
 - Reinstatement of a private residential entrance to the front elevation of Nos.27-28 Market Place;

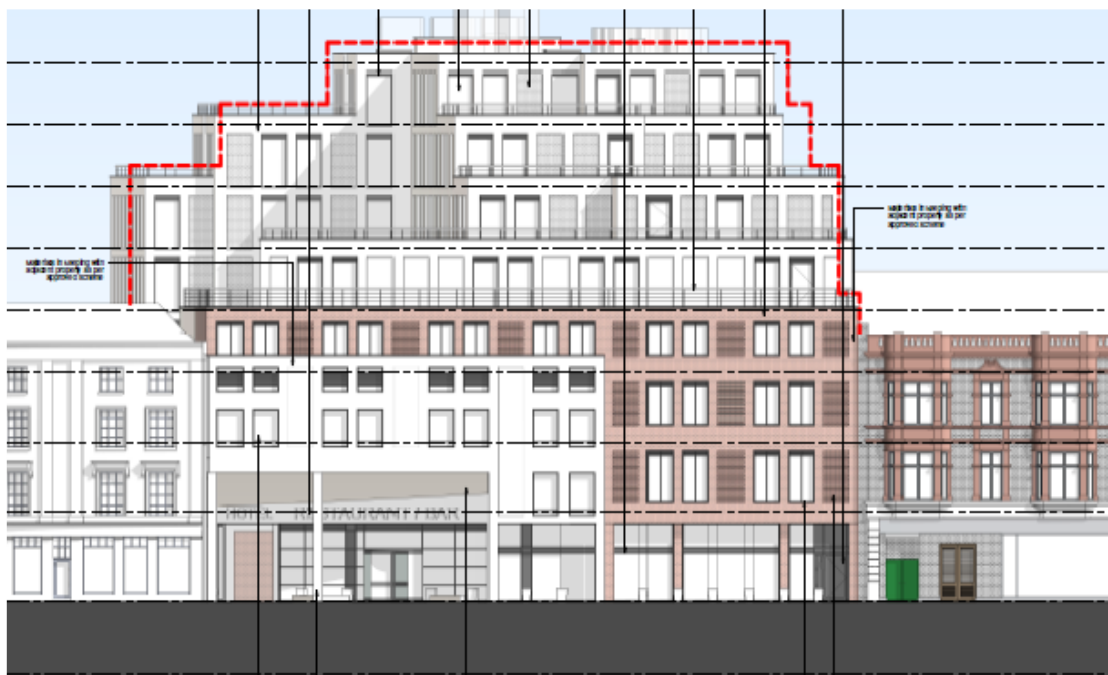
- Reinstatement of the front elevation of the former Coopers Arms pub including removal of modern fanlight above entrance.
 - Removal of unsympathetic modern extensions to better reveal the historic form and appearance of the listed buildings;
 - Reinstatement of traditional timber sash window frames to No.32 Market Place;
 - Reinstatement of the rear room of Nos.27-28 Market Place (which had become incorporated within Coopers Arm pub footprint)
 - Reinstatement of the original proportions of the street vault at basement level to Nos.27-28 Market Place;
 - Reinstatement of a staircase between the ground and upper floors of No.32 Market Place, as there would have been historically;
- 6.45 It should be noted that the works proposed to the Market Place listed buildings are identical to that which is subject to the existing planning permission and listed building consent.
- 6.46 Implementation of the works to demolish the modern additions to the rear of no.s 27-32 Market Place, rebuilding of these rear elevations and provision of the enlarged passage way and courtyard along the public right of way through the site is also to be secured prior to first occupation of the hotel as part of a s106 agreement.
- 6.47 The proposed listed building works are considered to preserve the buildings themselves and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area in which they are located. Details of materials, internal finishes and bespoke methods of construction can be satisfactorily secured by conditions.

No. 173-175 Friar Street

- 6.48 In relation to the demolition of the existing building at 173-175 Friar Street this building is of Townscape Merit but is not itself Listed (non-designated heritage asset). The removal of this building will alter the appearance of the conservation area but is not considered to result in significant harm to the conservation area (or setting of nearby listed buildings) subject to its replacement being of high architectural quality which is discussed below. It is noted that substantial construction works have been carried out to the rear of the building by virtue of previous permissions at the site, so the building is not wholly intact at present. Additionally, it is considered by officers that the current scheme for the restoration of existing Listed Buildings and regeneration of vacant buildings is a welcome opportunity to improve this important area to make a positive contribution to the townscape and significance of the heritage assets. The removal of the existing building is therefore justified on this basis.
- 6.49 The proposed new built form to the arcade part of the site has, following pre-application discussions with Officers, been kept largely within the envelope of the building permitted under the extant planning permission and follows a similar

approach in terms of design and use of materials. The image below shows the proposed Friar Street elevation of the building with a red line outline indicating the massing envelope of the building permitted under the extant consent.

- 6.50 In terms of the height, massing and design it is noted that the prevailing heights of the adjacent buildings within the Conservation Area are 4 storey with the existing buildings exceeding this height being the Town Hall, St Laurence’s Church and the Clock Tower that forms the Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance on Market Place. At 8 storeys in height the building is not a ‘tall building’ in the context of Policy CR10 (Tall Buildings) which relates only to commercial buildings of 10 storeys or more and residential buildings of 12 storeys or more.



Comparative Friar Street Elevation (red line shows envelope of extant permission)

- 6.51 The proposals consist of an 8 storey building with the top four floors of the building gradually recessed from the Friar Street frontage. This was the same approach that was adopted under the existing permission in order to set back the tallest parts of the massing away from Friar Street frontage and soften the massing of the upper floors to longer range views given the buildings greater height when compared to those in its immediate surroundings. It should be noted that that the previous scheme did also incorporate angled and off-set position of the recessed upper floors but this is no longer proposed under the current applications as a result of construction difficulties with this approach identified by the Applicant. Notwithstanding this Officers consider that the recessed nature of the upper floors still acts as a suitable design approach to soften the massing of the upper floors.
- 6.52 In terms of the detailed design of the building this again reflects the principle of the extant permission with the Friar Street frontage of the building having the

appearance of two individual buildings. The western part of the building is proposed in light ashlar sandstone to reflect the light stone appearance of nos 23-26 Market Place, a grade II listed building, which adjoins the site to the west. The height of this part of the building has also been designed to reflect the parapet height of the adjoining listed building to providing continuity and sympathetic transition within the street-scene. The eastern portion of the building frontage is proposed in red brick to reflect the materiality of the existing building and those found elsewhere on Friar Street. Panels of brick detailing are also included to the red brick part of the building to add visual interest. The fourth floor of the building is proposed in red brick and spans the full width of the building, running across the top of the stone part of the building to tie the two distinct parts of the building frontage together. The predominant use of red brick reflects that on surrounding buildings and part of the special interest of the surrounding conservation area.



Proposed visual Friar Street (Town Hall Square Entrance) (not showing additional column to frontage)

- 6.53 The proposed window proportions and alignment to the upper floors of the Friar Street frontage have also been designed to reflect window hierarchy of the adjoining buildings either side of the site to further aid the integration of the building within the street and town hall square. Whilst the window hierarchy differs between the two different elements of the building it is considered that this is important to soften the transition between the existing and proposed buildings and that the distinct differences in design and materiality to the two elements facilitate this in a sympathetic manner.
- 6.54 The applicant has provided a views study from surrounding streets to assist in understanding the wider visual impact of the proposals upon the surrounding area. A series of visuals showing this are set out below and include comparisons with the already consented development.

View across Town Hall Square form corner of Friar Street and Blagrave Street



As consented



As proposed

View from The Forbury

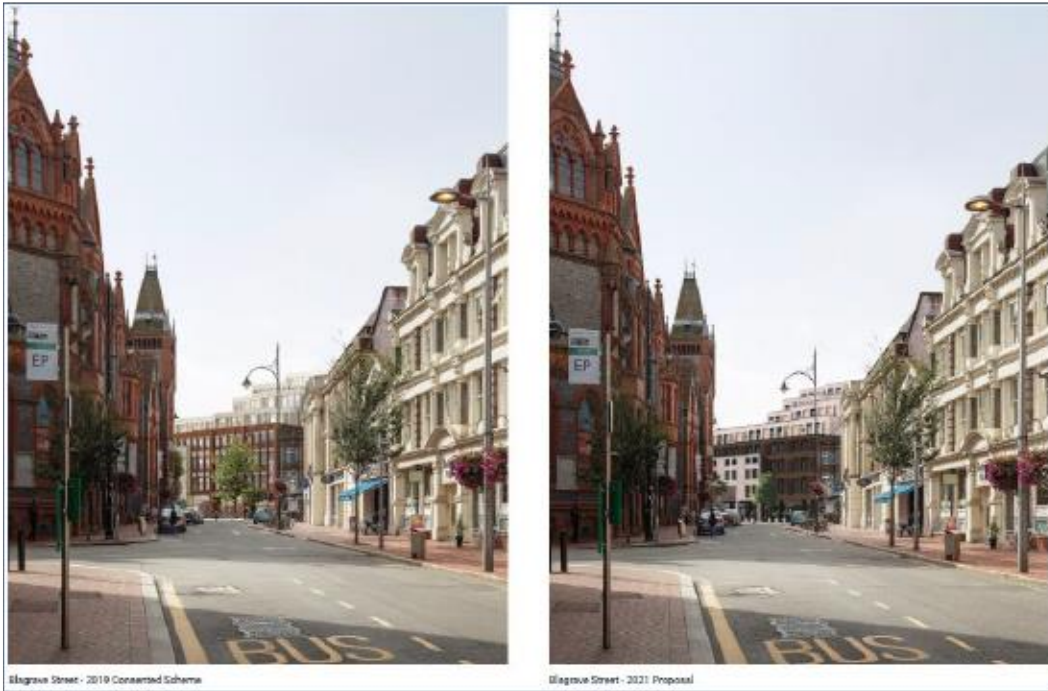


As consented



As proposed

View from Blagrave Street



As consented

As proposed

View from Market Place



As consented

As proposed

- 6.55 As per the extant planning permission the overall height of the proposed building has been set lower than the tower of St Laurence Church to maintain the latter's visual prominence. The stepped and recessed form of the upper floors also ensures that the tallest elements of the proposal are set furthest from the external

boundary of the site on Market Place/Friar Street; and therefore, also furthest from the Listed Buildings located outside of the site and the adjacent Conservation Area. The use of light-colored brick/stone to the upper floors also assists in softening the visual impact of the massing from longer range views.

- 6.56 In terms of more detailed design matters the main difference between the consented scheme and that proposed relates to the position of the Friar Street frontage. As existing, the frontage of no.173-175 Friar Street displays a significant set-back from the frontage of the adjoined building to the east (no. 23-26 Market Place) but sits flush with the front elevation of the Marks and Spencer building which adjoins the frontage to the west. Under the extant permission the frontage of the proposed building was to be brought forward to reinstate the previously curved historic building line adjoining no.s 23-26 Market Place. The current proposals still seek to reinstate this building line but incorporate a much larger double height entrance to the western stone element of the building frontage which would provide access to the public right of way through the site and entrance to the hotel restaurant and bar.
- 6.57 This change is proposed following further investigation into the area to the front of the site which has revealed a major meeting point of a significant number of underground utilities and services. These services and utilities require horizontal and vertical clearance zones around them to allow operators to maintain and access the infrastructure at all times. The proposed larger and double height entrance would allow this access to be maintained. The entrance would be double height at the point of the frontage but has been designed to be angled such that it slopes down to single storey height to the rear at the point of the existing building frontage and proposed entrances to the restaurant, bar and passageway.
- 6.58 Officers consider the larger entrance has been designed sympathetically and provides a landmark entrance to the hotel when viewed from the town hall square. The large entrance is also likely to draw people to the site and encourage footfall via the passageway and small public courtyard area through the site to Market Way that is to be opened up as part of the development. A series of planters would be provided within the entrance areas as soft landscaping features together with external lighting and stone paving to reflect that found with the wider square.
- 6.59 Amended plans have also been submitted during the course of the application to provide a vertical column to the entrance to provide some additional grounding and reduce the possible poor perception of the overall width of the entrance when viewed from the square. Due to the underground services this column would not be structural but would be a removable aesthetic feature. Materials used for the column would be different to the stone façade due to the need for the structure to be lightweight. Full details of this column would be secured by way of pre-commencement condition. The entrance to the bar and restaurant as well as entrance to the passageway through the site are considered to provide appropriate active frontages to Friar Street and within Town Hall square.

- 6.60 The proposed larger entrance also has the benefit of enabling an existing side door to the adjoining listed building at no. 23-26 Market Place to be retained with access to this door provided under the covered entrance area.
- 6.61 The side and rear elevation of the building would be visible within the site and to the rear from Market Way which would also provide access to the proposed passageway through the site and small courtyard area. The rear elevations of the building would be constructed of light brickwork, pale reconstructed stone and glazing. All facing materials will be secured via condition, including on-site samples, to ensure the design quality envisaged at application stage is achieved in practice.
- 6.62 As per the previously consented scheme, it is proposed to reinstate the historic 1893 right of way through the site which links Friar Street and Market Way to the rear, which connects to Market Place and currently provides pedestrian access to the rear of Sainsburys. Continuation of this route was previously secured by way of a permissive path agreement which the former arcade operator of the site which allowed public access through the central avenue of the arcade to Market Way before it became vacant and the route was boarded up and shut off to the public.
- 6.63 Reinstatement of this route and addition of small courtyard area as an extended area of public realm within the site is considered a significant benefit of the scheme which would reactivate this area of the town centre and provide enhanced connectivity to Market Way. As part of the section 106 agreement it is proposed to secure an amendment to the permissive path agreement to reflect the slightly amended orientation of the new route through the site now proposed and use of this by the public during the daytime operational hours of the hotel. No change to the position of Market Way is proposed.
- 6.64 The public right of way route through the site would also be laid in stone paving and incorporate soft landscaping planters along its route. The main entrance to the hotel would be located centrally off the route where it widens by virtue of the proposed demolition of the modern additions to the rear of the Market Place listed buildings to provide a small courtyard area. The siting of the hotel entrance in this location is considered to be positive as it would encourage footfall and activation of this part of the site. A spill out ground floor dining terrace area is also proposed within the central courtyard area next to the hotel entrance serving the hotel restaurant and bar, further activating this space. As discussed in the land use principles section of this report the ground floor elevation of the hotel along the passageway through the site has been designed in a sectional manner as a nod to the retail arcade history of the shown in the visuals below.
- 6.65 Securing implementation of the works to demolish the modern additions to the rear of no.s 27-32 Market Place, rebuilding of these rear elevations and provision of the enlarged passage way and courtyard along the public right of way through the site prior to first occupation of the hotel as part of the s106 works will also ensure that the appropriate setting and finish is provided to the public realm area

and main entrance to the hotel. Conditions are recommended to secure details of the external materials and finishes of the rear of the Market Place listed buildings and details of the design and appearance of the proposed gates at either end of the proposed reinstated passageway.



Proposed Visuals from Passageway and Courtyard

- 6.66 In overall terms Officers consider that the proposals have been well considered in terms of scale, massing and articulation and display a high design quality which builds on many of the positive elements of the scheme subject of the extant planning permission. The proposals are considered to integrate satisfactorily with the character of the surrounding area and together with the reinstatement of the public route through the site connecting to Market Way and creation of a small public courtyard area, are considered to create new visual interest in the street-scene within Town Hall Square. In this respect it is considered that the proposed replacement building would be of suitable quality such that no objection to the demolition of the building of townscape merit at no.175 Friar Street is warranted. The proposed internal alterations to no.s 27-32 Market Place are considered to preserve and enhance their historic character.
- 6.67 Notwithstanding the high quality design and well thought out nature of the proposals Officers do, as per the development subject of the extant planning permission, identify some minor harm to the setting of surrounding listed buildings

(Grade II listed no.s 23-34 Market Place and Grade I listed St Laurence's Church) as a result of the height and massing of the proposed hotel building and its proximity to these listed buildings. It is acknowledged that the building design incorporates a number of features intended to mitigate its impact and Officers consider that the harm identified would be 'less than substantial harm' which as per paragraph 196 of the NPPF (2019) requires to be weighed against the public benefits of the development.

- 6.68 Officers also identify 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area on the basis of the impact on St Laurence's Church identified above given the church is identified as a feature of special interest within the conservation area. Views of the upper floors of the building behind the elevations of no.s 23-24 Market Place from within the Market Place public square, an area identified as being of special interest within the Conservation Area, is also considered to contribute to the 'less than substantial harm' identified.
- 6.69 As assessment of this harm weighed against the public benefits of the proposals will form part of the conclusion of this report.

Archaeology

- 6.70 Policy EN2 (Areas of Archaeological Significance) seeks that developments proposals should identify and evaluate sites of archaeological significance and remains should be either preserved in situ or if not possible, excavated, investigated and recorded.
- 6.71 An archaeological assessment has been submitted with the application which has been reviewed by Berkshire Archaeology who are satisfied that this has been carried out to an appropriate standard. The assessment identifies that the site has potential to contain notable archaeological activity, dating as far back as the 11th century and including the burial of human remains. Berkshire Archaeology advise that a detailed multi-phase archaeological investigation will be required, and two conditions are recommended to secure submission and approval of a detailed scheme of investigation and post-excavation programme of works.

Natural Environment

- 6.72 Policies CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and CR2 (Design in Central Reading) seeks to ensure that development is of high design quality and includes landscaping, whilst Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) seeks that all development should provide a net gain for biodiversity.

Biodiversity

- 6.73 The application site is currently entirely covered in built form and does not contain any vegetation or landscaping, but a bat survey submitted with the application indicates that works proposed to the roofs of no.s 27-32 Market Place would result in disturbance to a number of Pipistrelle bat roosts. This report has been reviewed by the Council's Ecological Consultant who is satisfied that the survey and report have been carried out to an appropriate standard. Given the works would disturb the roosts of a protected species the Applicant will be required to obtain a licence to carry out the works from Natural England and a condition is recommended to require evidence of this licence being secured to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.74 The application proposes to provide new bat habitats within the development in the form of bat boxes (and bird boxes) and subject to a condition to secure submission and approval of the detailed location and specifications of the bat (and bird) boxes the Ecological Consultant is satisfied that the proposals would enhance conditions for bats (and birds) on the site. This together with the proposed extensive areas of green roof proposed to the flat roof of the upper floors of the building are considered to result in a net gain in biodiversity across the site as a result of the proposed development.

Landscaping

- 6.75 The Council's adopted Tree Strategy (2020) identifies that the site sits within a low canopy cover ward and as such, there is a need to incorporate and maximise greening to improve green features within the ward, improve air quality and soften the appearance from within the conservation area.
- 6.76 The Natural Environment Officer has reviewed the proposals and notes the addition of the enhanced public route through the site and open space courtyard area when compared to the development subject of the extant planning permission. This addition is considered to be a significant benefit of the development in terms of potential for landscaping and greening of the site. Planters are also indicated within the large entrance area from Town Hall Square. Detailed landscaping specifications and management details are to be secured by conditions.
- 6.77 The proposed extensive areas of green roof to the flat roof areas of floors (4th floor and up) are a positive although will not be visible from street level but do provide further biodiversity enhancements. However, the green roof to fourth floor level includes a number raised planters to the Friar Street frontage which would be visible from Town Hall Square and are a benefit in terms of increasing greening over the site.



Proposed visual showing green roof areas to hotel

- 6.78 The proposed green roof areas would not be publicly accessible areas from within the hotel with access only for servicing and maintenance. Full details of the proposed green roof specification and its management/maintenance will also be secured by way of condition.
- 6.79 Subject to the recommended conditions the proposals are considered acceptable in terms of biodiversity and landscaping matters and are considered to an enhancement above the previously consented development on the site.

Amenity

- 6.80 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) states that development should not adversely harm the living environments of existing or new residential properties, including privacy, outlook and daylighting. Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks to create safe and accessible environments. Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to ensure development is not damaging to the environment and sensitive receptors by way of pollution. Policy EN15 (Air Quality) specifically seeks to protect existing occupiers from poor quality and EN17 (Noise Generating Equipment) from noise associated with plant equipment. Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) requires new residential type development within the defined

Reading Central Area to demonstrate how issue of noise and other disturbance from town centre uses have been considered and where necessary mitigated.

Standard of Accommodation and Daylight /Sunlight

- 6.81 The main consideration in terms of future occupiers is the standard of accommodation to be provided for within the eight residential flats proposed by way of conversion works to the upper floors of no.s 27-32 Market Place.
- 6.82 Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) seeks that new housing outside of the town centre is designed to adhere to the nationally prescribed spaces standards. Whilst the site is location with the town centre, it is welcomed that the application proposes that all of the residential units would meet or exceed the national standards. The flats would have outlook to both the Market Place and the rear of the buildings with many of the units being triple aspect. All habitable rooms have at least one external window and are considered to be well served in terms of outlook and daylighting.
- 6.83 The rear of the flats would face the eastern elevation of the hotel across the rear courtyard area. This elevation of the hotel is proposed to be mainly brick but punctuated with some windows to serve bedrooms, however these are sited over 20.3m from the nearest window of the Market Place properties and between 26.7m and 29.2m at the furthest point such that it is not considered there would be any adverse overlooking from the hotel to the flats or vice versa. This would accord with Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) which seeks a minimum back to back separation of 20m between windows to protect privacy. This is an enhancement on the situation provided under the extant permission whereby the rear of the flats to the Market Place buildings faced the formerly proposed new office/residential block at much closer distances of between 8m and 17m. Therefore, outlook and daylighting to the flats is considered to be much enhanced under the current proposals. A condition is recommended to ensure the green roof areas to the upper floors are not used as terrace or balcony areas to prevent more direct overlooking from these areas.
- 6.84 There are no adopted standards for hotel rooms within adopted planning policies. However, the hotel rooms proposed range from 19 sqm to 32 sqm and are all provided with en-suite accommodation to suit the requirements of a four-star standard operator. The majority of rooms will be double although 21 of the total rooms will be suitable for larger occupations (family) and 10 rooms will also be designed to be universally accessible. Each room will be served by windows and are considered to be served by adequate levels of natural daylight and sunlight.
- 6.85 The closest existing occupiers near to the application site are the residential flats on the upper floors of no.s 36-42 Market Place to the south of the site which have rear windows which would face towards the proposed hotel building, albeit at an oblique angle. An assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon access to daylight and sunlight to existing surrounding occupiers has been

submitted with the application. This concludes that loss of daylight to all but one of the neighboring windows would be well within the Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidelines and that the loss of light to the single impacted window would be a minor adverse effect in the overall context. This is the same conclusion as the daylight assessment relating to the development subject of the extant planning permission which was reviewed on behalf of the LPA by the BRE and who agreed with the report's findings. Given the current proposal relates to a building of reduced overall height (albeit a minor reduction) and that parts of the currently proposed building are set further from the rear of the Market Place properties Officers are satisfied that the impact of the current proposed building on daylight to existing surrounding residential occupiers would be acceptable and in overall terms there would be a lesser impact given the small reduction in height of the building. Loss of sunlight to the neighboring building is not an issue as the relevant windows face within 90 degrees of due north.

- 6.86 In respect of overlooking, visual dominance and overbearing matters, it is acknowledged that for occupiers of the existing flats to the upper floors of no.s 36-42 Market Place the view from rear facing units will change as a result of the proposed development. These units are set in a tight knit urban context at present with the Sainsbury's building to the rear. However, given the oblique angle of the relationship between the two sites and separation distance (15m to 20m) it is not considered that the proposals would result in any significant detrimental impacts in terms of overbearing or visual dominance.
- 6.87 Impact of the proposed built form on the other units adjoining the site is not considered to be significantly adverse due to the commercial nature of these units.

Amenity Space

- 6.88 Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) sets standards for access to suitable private or communal outdoor space for new residential dwellings. The policy acknowledges that flats within central Reading are unlikely to be able to meet these standards in full. Due to the location of the eight proposed flats, to the upper floors of no.s 27-32 Market Place, these dwellings would not be served directly by private or communal amenity space. This situation is not uncommon for town centre developments with the flats being well served by leisure and recreation facilities within the town centre with Forbury Gardens close by. Future occupiers of the flats would also have convenient access to the public courtyard area proposed to rear. Given the central location of the site Officers are satisfied that future occupiers would be served by suitable access to outdoor space.

Noise and Disturbance

- 6.89 The application is accompanied by a detailed noise assessment and mitigation scheme considering both the existing uses surrounding the site and the new uses proposed. This assessment and mitigation scheme has been reviewed by

Environmental Protection Officers who are satisfied that the glazing, ventilation (mechanical ventilation heat recovery system for hotel) and insulation proposed for both future occupiers of the residential flats and hotel bedrooms would ensure acceptable internal noise levels are achieved. Implementation of these measures prior to occupation of the relevant parts of the development are to be secured by condition. Secondary glazing is proposed the front windows of the upper floor flats to the listed buildings and details and specifications of this can also be secured by way of appropriate condition.

- 6.90 The Environmental Protection Officer has noted that the noise assessment and mitigation scheme does not specifically assess noise from the proposed gym which can be high risk in terms of structure borne noise and therefore a separate condition is recommended to secure a supplementary noise assessment and mitigation scheme in respect of the gym.
- 6.91 Details of mechanical plant to be installed, such as that proposed in connection with the ground floor restaurant, are also to be secured by condition, to ensure this is of suitable specification to prevent undue noise impacts.
- 6.92 A condition is also recommended secure submission and approval of a servicing and refuse management plan to ensure of deliveries and waste collection associated with the site, are carried out in manner which can protect both future and existing occupiers from unreasonable noise disturbance.
- 6.93 A draft operational management plan for the hotel, bar and restaurant uses together with use of the passageway way through the site and courtyard area has been submitted with the application. A final operational management plan will be secured by condition prior to first occupation of the hotel
- 6.94 The draft operation management plan sets out that the hotel would operate 24 hours a day and the following opening hours in the table below are proposed for the restaurant and bar uses. The Environmental Protection Officer considers the proposed hours of use to be appropriate for this town centre location to avoid unreasonable noise disturbance to both existing and proposed surrounding occupiers. The public house to Market Place is proposed to operate 0700-2400 hours Monday to Saturday and 0700-2300 Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Day / Area	Restaurant	Bar
Monday - Friday	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 23:00
Saturday	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 23:00
Sunday	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 22:00
Bank Holidays	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 23:00
Terrace area / outdoor eating and drinking	07:00 - 23:00	10:00 - 23:00

- 6.95 The hotel reception and front desk will be staffed throughout the night to facilitate guest and visitor arrivals and departures through the courtyard entrance accessed from Friar Street. This will be supplemented by a comprehensive CCTV monitoring

system and access control system to prevent unwanted access and anti-social behaviour. The passageway through the site connecting Friar Street to Market Way would be secured by gates both from the Friar Street and Market Way entrances which would be closed and locked overnight (in line with the hours of use of the proposed restaurant and bar areas) to ensure there are no incidents of noise or anti-social behaviour (rough sleeping too) within these areas during night time hours.

- 6.96 The draft operational management plan also sets out that any music played within the bars will be subject to automatic sound level limiters with the levels to be agreed with the LPA when the final operational management plan is submitted for approval by way of condition.
- 6.97 Conditions are also recommended to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement to ensure surrounding occupiers are not unduly impacted by noise (and dust) associated with construction works associated with the proposed development and compliance with the Council's standards hours for construction work (0800hrs to 1800hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 0800hrs to 1300hrs on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays).

Odour

- 6.98 The application is accompanied by a detailed odour assessment and mitigation scheme in relation to the proposed restaurant. The Environmental Protection Officer is satisfied that the specification of the proposed kitchen extraction system is acceptable to ensure that both existing and future occupiers within and surrounding the site would not be subject to adverse odours. A condition is recommended to secure implementation of the extraction system prior to first occupation of the hotel. A further condition is recommended to require submission and approval of an odour risk assessment and mitigations schemes in the event that any of future occupiers of the three Market Place units involve food preparation and cooking.
- 6.90 Details of the all proposed bin stores are also to be secured by condition including pest and vermin control measures.

Air Quality

- 6.91 The site is located within a busy town centre location and designated air quality management area (AQMA). An air quality assessment has been submitted with the application and has been reviewed by Environmental Protection Officers who are satisfied that new residential dwellings within the development would not be subject to unacceptable air quality levels.
- 6.92 The submitted air quality assessment also considered potential increased emission and harm to air quality as a result of the proposed development. In this respect the site is located in a highly accessible location with excellent public transport links

including close proximity to Reading Train Station and the development is proposed to be car free with no on-site vehicle parking. As such it is not considered that the development would result in a significant increase in emissions nor any significant adverse impact upon air quality.

Contaminated Land

- 6.93 The proposals are for a major category development within the town centre and the Environmental Protection Officer recommends conditions are attached to secure submission and approval of a contaminated land assessment (and remediation scheme and its implementation, if required) prior to commencement of any development to ensure that future occupiers are not subject to contamination risks.

Wind and Microclimate

- 6.94 A wind assessment has been submitted with the application which looks at the microclimate conditions that would be create around the open-air passageway through the site and small central courtyard area. This concludes that the increase width of the passageway and creation of courtyard area would result in an enhancement in the microclimate conditions in this part of the site and acceptable conditions for pedestrians and outdoor seating. The increased width of these areas and separation between the rear of the proposed hotel and rear of the Market Place buildings reduces the potential for generation of strong winds. Officers are satisfied that microclimate conditions at the site would be acceptable for the proposed use and would result in an enhanced situation when compared to the development subject of the extant planning permission.

Access and Security

- 6.95 The proposed hotel building will be fully accessible for all user with lift access to all floors and entrances to the building providing level access. Ten universally accessible hotel rooms are also proposed providing generally rooms, accessible bathrooms and wider doorways for wheelchair access. Level access is also provided across the right of way through the site that is proposed to be reinstated.
- 6.96 It is not proposed to provide lift access to the residential and retail units to the Market Place properties given that this would necessitate significant intrusions in the building's historic fabric. As with the extant planning permission, given the relatively small number of dwellings proposed and duty to preserve and enhance the historic significance of the listed buildings officers accept that fully accessible units can not be provided to this part of the site.
- 6.97 With regard to security measures the draft operational management plan submitted includes a scheme of security measures for the site. This includes gated access to the passageway through the site with the gates to be closed by the hotel management during night time hours to prevent unauthorised access. The hotel

would be manned 24 hours a day and staff would be able to access the passageway during night time hours using key fob access and similar could facilitate emergency access. Guests would be able enter the hotel and access the reception area during night time hours via the Friar Street entrance to the restaurant/bar areas.

- 6.98 Other security measure proposed for the development include CCTV surveillance across the site, glazed frontages to the ground floor of the hotel, restaurant, bar and gym facing into the passageway and courtyard area to also provide natural surveillance of these areas. External lighting, tactile paving to prevent rough sleeping and strategically located planters are also proposed within the large hotel entrance from Town Hall Square to prevent opportunities for hiding and anti-social behaviour.
- 6.99 The proposals have been reviewed by Thames Valley Police's Crime Prevention Design Adviser who is satisfied that the site security measure proposed are appropriate and raise no objection to the proposed development. Conditions are recommended to secure full details of the proposed CCTV scheme, an external lighting scheme and, as set out earlier in the report, a final operational management plan (including security strategy).
- 6.100 In overall terms, subject to the recommended conditions it is considered that the proposals ensure suitable standards of amenity and the development could operate without adversely impacting upon the amenity of both proposed occupiers and existing occupiers surrounding the site.

Transport Matters

- 6.101 Policies TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway related matters), TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking relates matters relating to development.
- 6.102 The site is in a central location in close proximity to Reading rail station and is well served by bus links and public car parks. Access restrictions are in operation in Market Place whereby access is restricted to buses, taxis and permit holders between 07:00-11:00 and 16:00-19:00. There are a number of bus stops in Market Place as well as being a well-used bus route. A new section of a 'no stopping' red route has recently been introduced east along Friar Street. The new restriction mean vehicles will not be allowed to stop unless they are within a dedicated loading bay.
- 6.103 No on-site parking is to be provided for the development. Given the town centre location, existing extensive parking restrictions nearby and close proximity to public transport routes this is considered to be acceptable. An informative is to be attached to any planning permission to advise that future occupiers of the residential units would not eligible to apply for parking permits to use nearby roads given existing high pressure to on-street parking.

- 6.104 Service access to the hotel and Market Place units is proposed via Market Way providing access to a dedicated servicing entrance to the hotel and rear servicing areas of no.s 27-32 Market Place. Servicing vehicles are proposed to use existing on street loading bays on Market Place and Friar Street. This arrangement is consistent to previous uses and other businesses in the area and Transport Officers are satisfied that this is acceptable. Refuse will be stored within ground floor bin storage areas which is an internal store for the hotel accessed via the dedicated servicing entrance and secure external bin stores store within the courtyard area for the Market Place units (both retail units/pub and flats). Refuse collection is also proposed from Market Place via Market Way. Transport Officers consider this arrangement to be acceptable in principle and a servicing and refuse management plan is proposed to be secured by condition to detail how waste and deliveries would be transferred to and from the collection points on Market Place for all uses on the site.
- 6.105 Cycle storage for the hotel use is located internally at ground floor level, whilst the retail units and pub on Market Place would incorporate mix of internal and external cycle stores with the external one located in the rear courtyard area. Transport Officers are satisfied with the level and accessibility of the cycle storage proposed.
- 6.106 Subject to the recommended conditions Officers are satisfied that the proposals are acceptable in terms of transport related matters.

Sustainability

- 6.107 In accordance with Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) the proposed hotel would be required to meet a BREEAM Excellent standard whilst the proposed retail units, pub and flats to the Market Place buildings would be expected to meet a Very Good standard. Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) requires that all development incorporates measures to adapt to climate change and commentary on this should also be provided. Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) seeks that all major developments consider the inclusion of decentralised energy provision unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is not suitable, feasible or viable for this form of energy provision. Policy EN18 (Flood and Sustainable Drainage Systems) requires that all major category developments incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and that surface run off should be no greater than the existing conditions on site.
- 6.108 The application is accompanied by a detailed sustainability assessment. In terms of BREEAM this sets out that given the application consists of a mixture of conversion and new build works as well as mix of use types it makes application of a BREEAM standard across the development has a whole impractical. Furthermore, the fact that some of the application buildings are Grade II listed further complicates matters given it is essential that works and intrusions to original fabric are kept to a minimum. The Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019) reflects these findings noting that for mixed use developments a mix of standards may be

appropriate and that applications affecting heritage assets may struggle to meet the policy standards.

- 6.109 In this respect the application proposes that the new build hotel element of the would achieve a BREEAM standard of Very Good (with a BREEAM score of 61.86). In terms of BREEAM scoring a Very Good rating is 55 points and above whilst an Excellent score is 70 points and above. The submitted sustainability assessment sets out that an Excellent score has not been achieved given the additional service and infrastructure requirements this would place on the building which would result in additional height and massing and potential harm to the setting of surrounding heritage assets. The assessment also sets out that certain credits do not apply to hotel uses and therefore cannot be achieved and that given the town centre location of the site there is a reliance upon mechanical ventilation to ensure suitable noise environments within the development which further reduce availability of credits.
- 6.110 Separate BREEAM assessments have also been submitted in respect of the Market Place buildings which confirm that the ground floor retail and pub units would achieve a policy compliant BREEAM rating of Very Good (score of 58.81) and that the residential element and conversion of the upper floors of the buildings to eight flats would also achieve a policy compliant rating of Very Good (score of 62.36).
- 6.111 Whilst the proposed BREEAM score for the hotel is a shortfall from the Policy/SPD target level Officers consider that when considered overall the proposed development strikes an appropriate balance between preserving and enhancing the significance of surrounding heritage assets and provision of sustainability measures. In this respect, the proposed hotel building also incorporates provision of an on-site source of decentralised energy provision in the form of an air source heat pump (ASHP). Further details of the ASHP and its provision are to be secured by way of condition which would comply with the requirements of Policy CC4.
- 6.112 The application also incorporates a range of other sustainability measures to help the development adapt to climate change which are considered to align with the intentions of Policy CC3. This includes a 'fabric first' approach to the design and construction to reduce energy demand and carbon emissions. This will include the use of sustainable construction techniques, prioritising sustainable materials, minimising waste generation and maximising recycling. The thermal properties of the building fabric will also exceed the minimum standards within the Building Regulations, energy efficient lighting will also be provided throughout to minimise electricity consumption. As set out in the Natural Environment section of this report the proposals also include provision of extensive areas of green roof (736m² which is 36% coverage of the site) which together with the proposed landscaping would significantly enhance the greening of the site.
- 6.113 In terms of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), the application site is currently 100% impermeable but through the proposed provision of the extensive green roofs together with an underground attenuation tank to be located under the courtyard

area the proposals would result in a significant improvement of the drainage conditions across the site. This is considered to be acceptable and would accord with the requirements of Policy EN18. Conditions are recommended to secure submission, approval and implementation of drainage strategy. Officers are satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable on sustainability matters.

Other Matters

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.114 The Council's adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule sets out that residential/hotel uses are liable for the levy but that the retail related uses are not. The proposed new hotel building consists of approximately 7500sqm of floor space whilst the eight flats consist of approximately 680sqm of floor space which would equate to a potential chargeable level of approximately £1, 280, 000.

Employment Skills and Training

- 6.115 Policy CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) seeks that development that would result in employment should provide mitigation in line with its impacts on labour and skills. As a major mixed-use proposal and in line with the adopted Employment Skills and Training SPD, the development would be expected to provide both a construction and end user phase employment and skills plan to demonstrate how it would benefit the local employment market. This would be secured by way of a section 106 legal agreement and would include provision for an alternate financial contribution towards local skills and training in the event that plans are not to be provided by the applicant/developer.

Fire Safety

- 6.116 Although fire safety is not a material planning consideration, the application includes details of the fire strategy for the development designed in accordance with Part B of Building Regulations. Whilst owing to the height of the hotel building (less than 30m) building regulation standards do not require the building to be fitted with sprinklers, a full sprinkler system is proposed throughout.

Equalities Impact

- 6.117 In 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 as identified in the Act 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 There are considered to be a number of benefits associated with the proposed development which include:

- Provision of a high-quality hotel within an accessible town centre location and associated economic benefits and job provision enhancing the vitality and interest of the town centre
- Provision of 8 residential dwellings towards the Borough's housing supply and policy complaint contribution towards off-site affordable housing provision elsewhere within the Borough.
- Reinstatement and activation of historic right of way through the site and associated greater activation of Market Way
- Creation of public courtyard area of open space
- Repair and refurbishment of grade II listed buildings at no.s 27-32 Market Place
- Re-provision of public house and two retail units within Market Place active frontage
- High design quality and use of materials
- Enhancement and activation of the Town Hall Square frontage of the building and public realm.
- Significant biodiversity, landscape and drainage enhancements across the site via extensive green roof areas
- Revitalisation of a prominent vacant and derelict site within the town centre

7.2 However, as set out in appraisal section of this report above Officers have identified that the proposed hotel building as a result of its height and siting would result in 'less than substantial harm' to setting of nearby listed buildings (Grade II listed no.s 23-34 Market Place and Grade I listed St Laurence's Church) as well as the setting of the London Street /Market Place Conservation Area. In accordance with Paragraph 196 of the NPPF this 'less than substantial harm' is required to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development.

7.3 The proposed developments lack of compliance with some parts of the site allocation Policy CR14d must also be considered including not bringing forward new office or residential development (as per the extant planning permission on the site) as well as loss of the arcade form.

7.4 However, on balance Officers consider that the benefits of the proposed development would outweigh the shortfalls and identified 'less than substantial harm' to heritage assets. The proposed hotel and associated ancillary uses are acceptable land uses within their own right within the town centre which together with the proposed reinstatement of the historic right of way through the site and creation of small area of public open space, green roofs and landscaping are considered to contribute positively to the interest and vitality of the town centre. The mechanism of securing the repair and refurbishment works to bring the Market Place listed buildings back into viable use within an agreed timeframe required by a

S106 is also a benefit of the proposals in terms of conservation of the listed buildings.

RECOMMENDATION

210163FUL - GRANT full planning permission, subject to conditions and section 106 obligations set out in the recommendation box at the beginning of this report.

210164LBC - GRANT listed building consent, subject to the conditions set out in the recommendation box at the beginning of this report.

Case Officer: Matt Burns

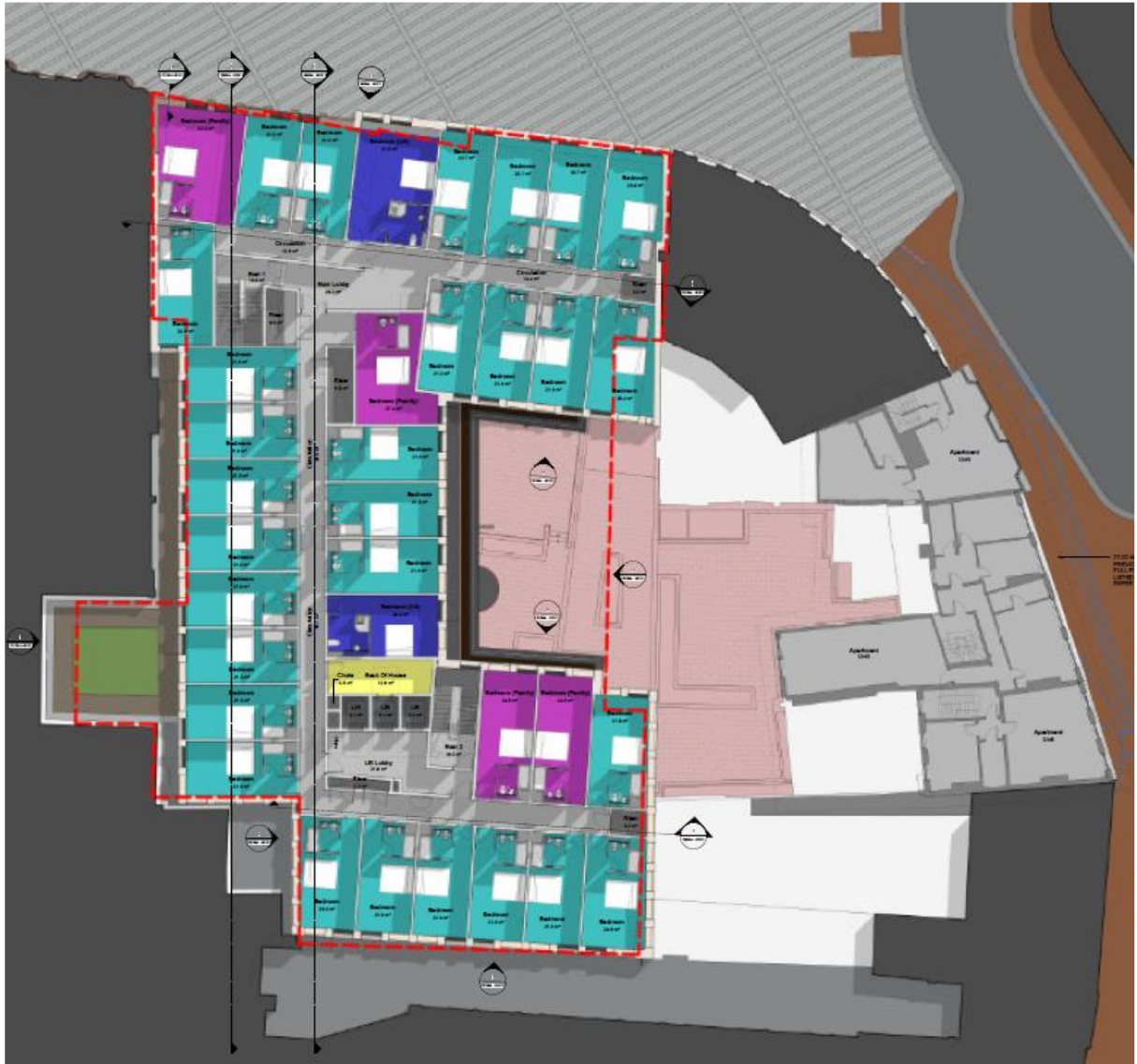
Proposed Plans:



Proposed Ground Floor Layout Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



Proposed Second Floor Plan



Proposed Third Floor Plan



Proposed Fourth Floor Plan



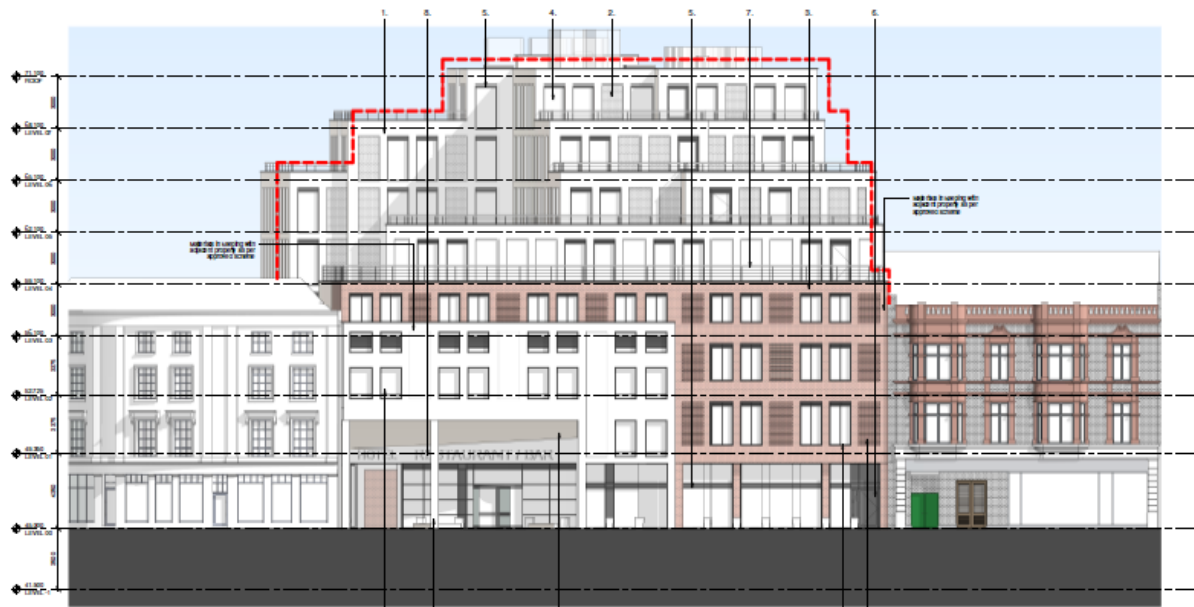
Proposed Fifth Floor Plan



Proposed Sixth Floor Plan

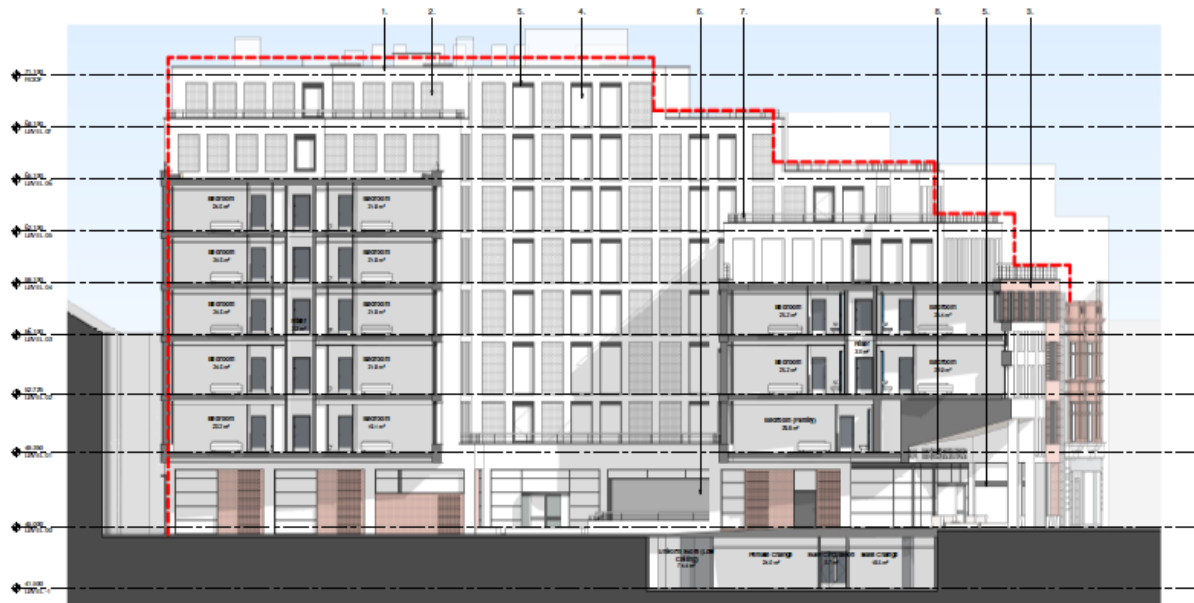


Proposed Roof Plan



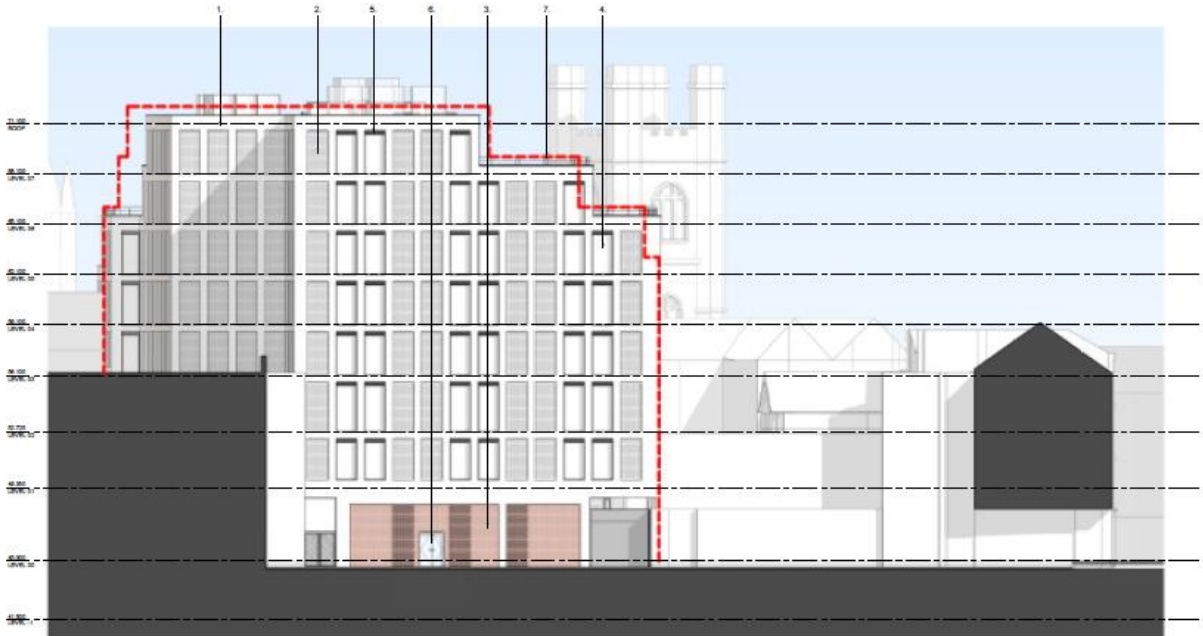
1 GA ELEVATION - NORTH 1
SCALE: 1:100

Maintain the existing white stone on existing building adjacent to facade
 Add this to existing with stone to provide a new appearance
 Maintain the existing stone on corner corner building corner
 Coordinate entrance with existing entrance to provide a new appearance
 Provide new lighting for porch area and provide a new appearance
 Coordinate with existing stone on existing building

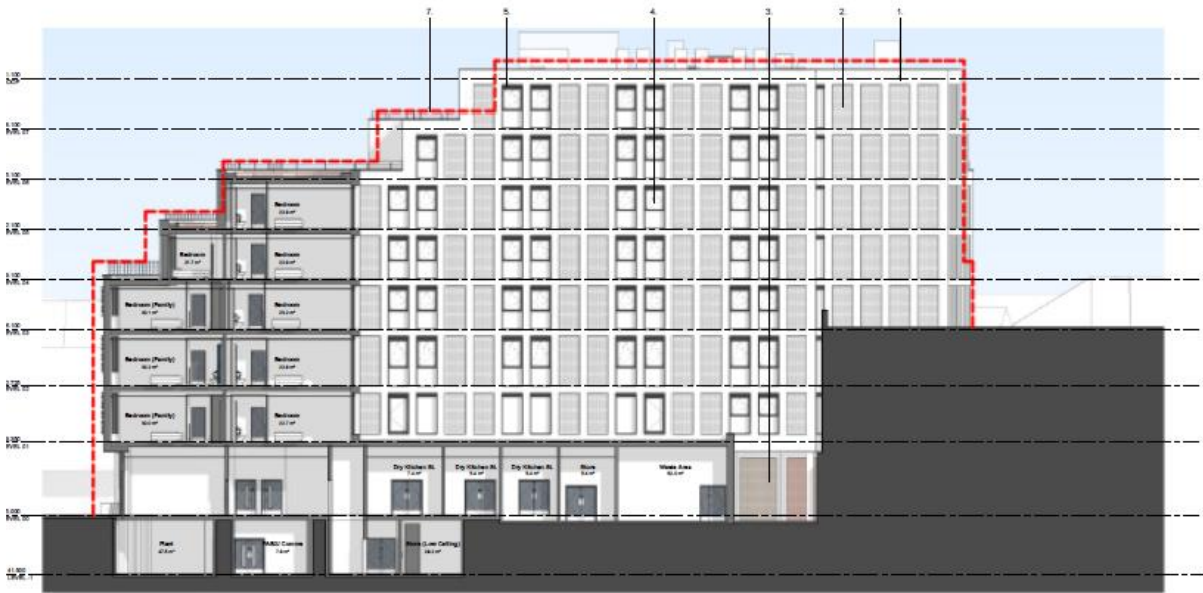


2 GA ELEVATION - EAST
SCALE: 1:100

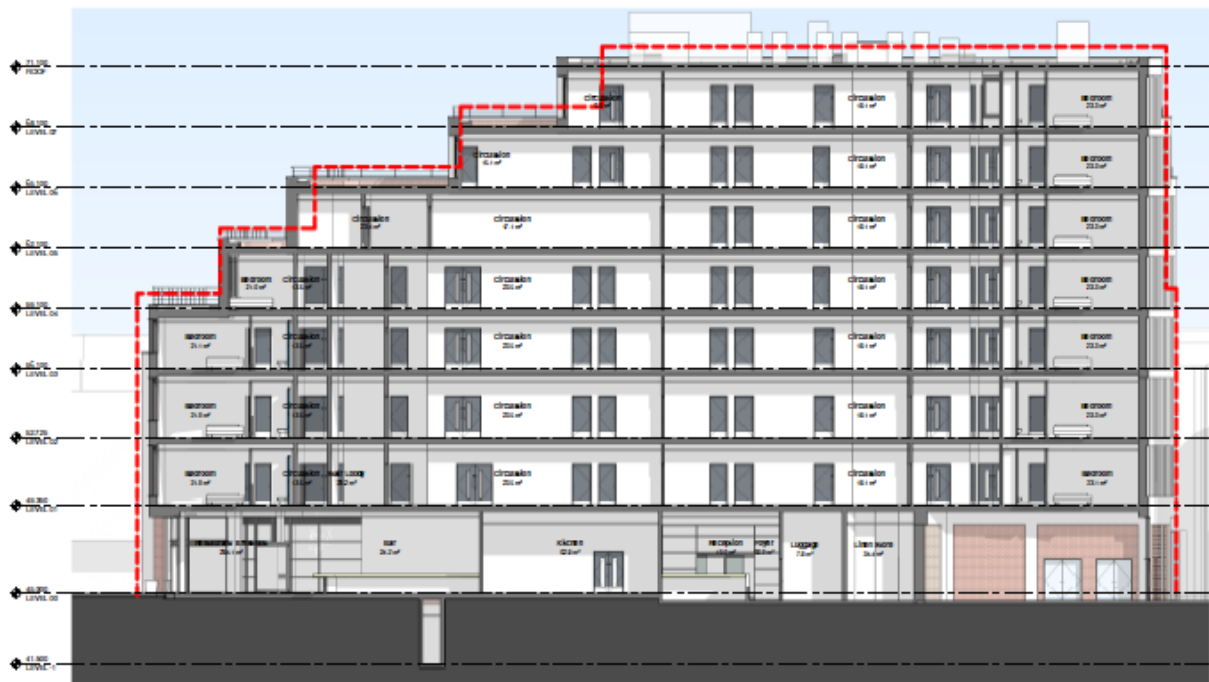
Proposed North and East Elevations



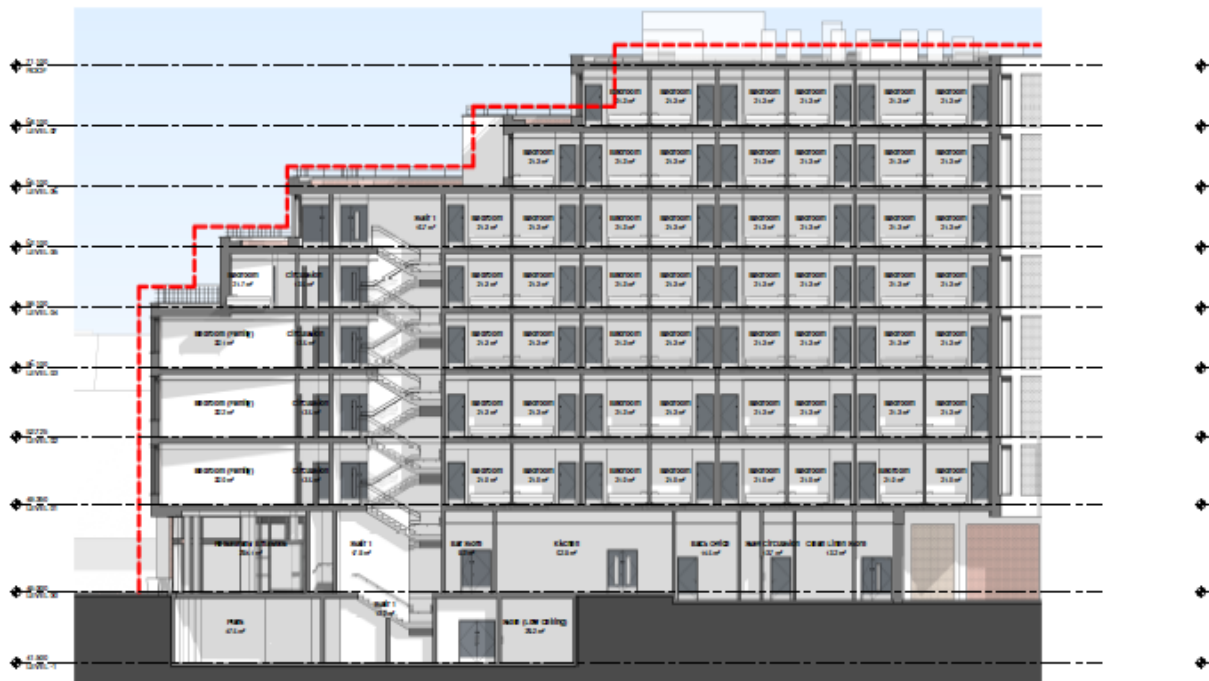
① GA ELEVATION - SOUTH 1
SCALE: 1/8\"/>



Proposed South and West Elevations



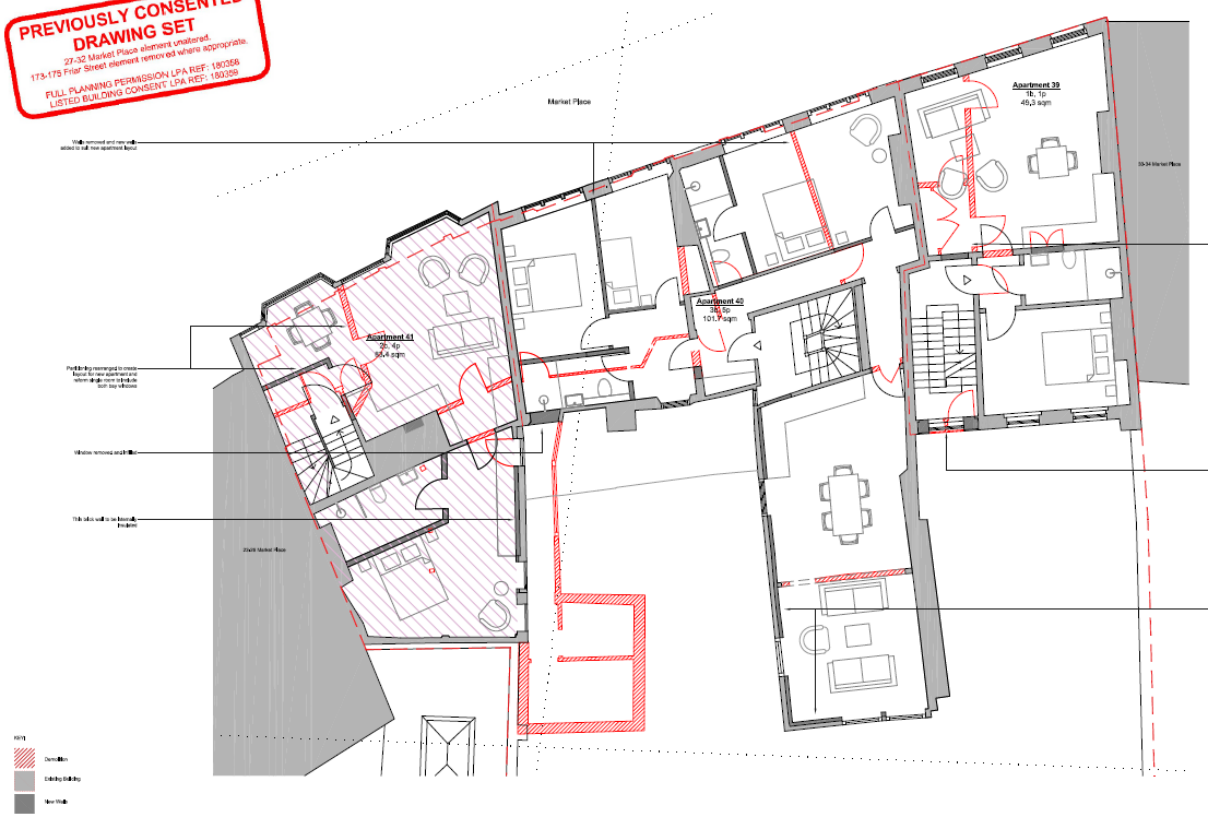
① GA SECTION - LONG 1
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



② GA SECTION - LONG 2
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

Proposed Sections

**PREVIOUSLY CONSENTED
DRAWING SET**
 27-32 Market Place element unaltered.
 173-175 Prior Street element removed where appropriate.
 FULL PLANNING PERMISSION LPA REF: 180266
 LISTED BUILDING CONSENT LPA REF: 180389



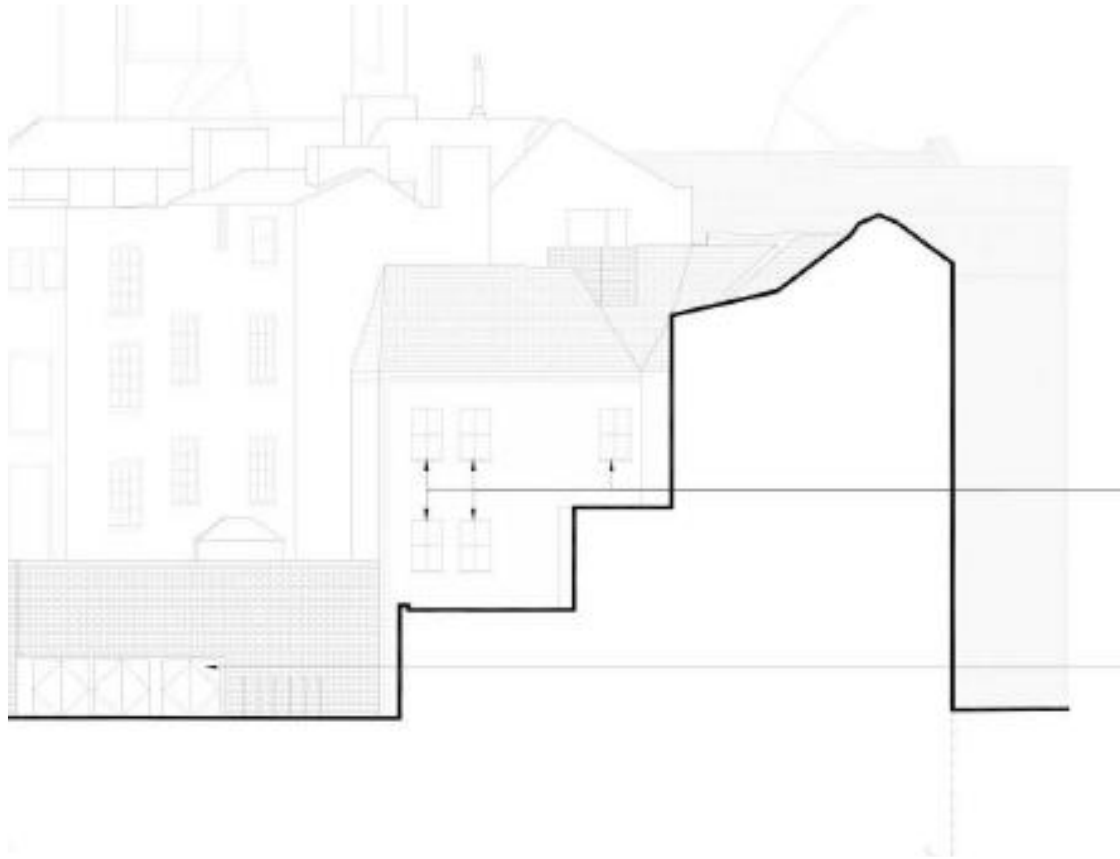
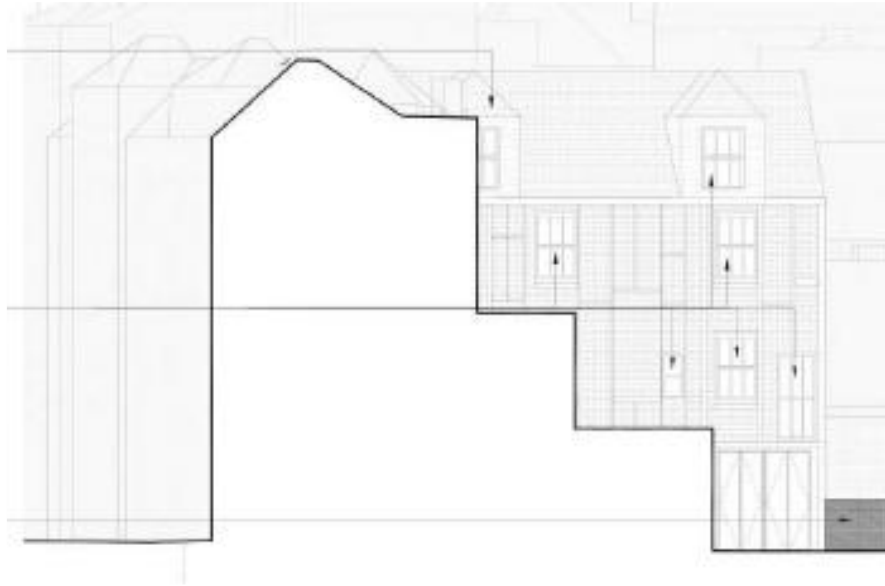
Market Place Units - Proposed Second Floor Plan



Market Place Units - Proposed Rear (passageway) Elevation



Market Place Units - Proposed Front (Market Place) Elevation



Market Place Units - Proposed Side Elevations



1 VIEW 1 - THE FORBURY PERSPECTIVE



3 VIEW 3 - MARKET PLACE PERSPECTIVE

Proposed Visuals



2 VIEW 2 - FRIAR STREET PERSPECTIVE



4 VIEW 4 - BLAGRAVE STREET PERSPECTIVE

Proposed Visuals

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21st July 2021

Ward: Abbey

App No: 210349/FUL

Address: 115 Chatham Street, Reading, RG1 7JX

Proposal: Demolition of the existing buildings on site and erection of a 3 - 5 storey building to provide 54 residential units (Class C3). Provision of private and communal external amenity areas, car and cycle parking and refuse storage.

Applicant: Archel Homes Ltd

Received Date: 4 March 2021

13 Week Target Date: 18 Aug 2021 (Pending agreement)

RECOMMENDATION:

Delegate to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services (HPDRS) to:

- i) **GRANT** full planning permission subject to
- ii) (1) no objection being raised by RBC's Ecology consultants to the satisfactory submission of a Bat Survey, and
- iii) (2) satisfactory completion of the Section 106 agreement;

The S106 to include the following Heads of Terms:

- Secure the agreed level of on-site affordable housing consisting of 16 units (6x one-bedroom, 8x two-bedroom and 2x three-bedroom), of which 12 would be for Reading Affordable Rent and 4 shared ownership.
- In the event that an Affordable Housing provider is not secured. The developer to pay to the Council the sum equivalent to 15% of the Gross Development Value of the development for provision of Affordable Housing elsewhere in the Borough. To be calculated (the mean average) from two independent RICS valuations to be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to first occupation of any market housing unit. To be paid prior to first occupation of any market housing unit and index-linked from the date of valuation
- The developer to fund the provision of a car club bay on the surrounding highway network for a duration of 5 years.
- The provision of one car club vehicle should be provided on first occupation of the development.
- The car club usage should be reviewed on an annual basis to establish whether a second vehicle is required.
- A contribution of £5,000 towards a Traffic Regulation Order to provide a car club bay, to be paid prior to commencement of the development.
- The applicant is required to enter into a S278 Agreement to provide the following:
 - Footpath access to the residential units and associated landscaping along the Chatham Street frontage

- Access to the parking area / service access to the rear of the site.
- Car club bay on Eaton Place to the south of the site
- Secure a construction phase Employment Skills and Training Plan or equivalent financial contribution (contribution as calculated in the Council's Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013)) - payable on commencement.

All financial contributions index-linked from the date of permission.

Or;

- i) Refuse full planning permission if sustainability matters not resolved or the S106 agreement is not completed by 18 August 2021 (unless the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services Officers agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement)

Conditions:

1. THREE YEAR TIME LIMIT (STANDARD)
2. APPROVED PLANS
3. DWELLING MIX (RESTRICTION)
4. MATERIALS (TO BE APPROVED)
5. SAP ASSESSMENT MAJOR - AS BUILT (TO BE APPROVED)
6. SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE (TO BE IMPLEMENTED)
7. LANDSCAPING LARGE SCALE (TO BE APPROVED)
8. HABITAT ENHANCEMENT SCHEME (TO BE APPROVED)
9. DEMOLITION (BATS)
10. DEM outside bird nesting season
11. SECURED BY DESIGN (TO BE APPROVED)
12. NOISE MITIGATION SCHEME AND TESTING (AS SPECIFIED)
13. NOISE ASSESSMENT & MITIGATION BUTLER PH (TO BE SUBMITTED)
14. CONTAMINATED LAND ASSESSMENT (TO BE SUBMITTED)
15. REMEDIATION SCHEME (TO BE SUBMITTED)
16. REMEDIATION SCHEME (IMPLEMENT AND VERIFICATION)
17. UNIDENTIFIED CONTAMINATION
18. HOURS OF CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION (STANDARD)
19. CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT (TO BE SUBMITTED)
20. NO BONFIRES
21. VEHICLE PARKING (AS SPECIFIED)
22. VEHICULAR ACCESS (AS SPECIFIED)
23. REFUSE STORE (AS SPECIFIED)
24. CYCLE PARKING (AS SPECIFIED)
25. SUDS (AS SPECIFIED)
26. PARKING PERMITS 1
27. PARKING PERMITS 2
28. EV CHARGING POINTS
29. ADAPTABLE UNITS
30. EXTERNAL LIGHTING (TO BE APPROVED, IF ANY IS PROPOSED)
31. PROVISION/RETENTION OF LIFTS

Informatives

1. Positive and Proactive Working - approval
2. Pre-commencement conditions
3. Highways

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 4. | S106 |
| 5. | Terms |
| 6. | Building Control |
| 7. | Complaints about construction |
| 8. | Encroachment |
| 9. | Contamination |
| 10. | Noise between residential properties - sound insulation of any building |
| 11. | Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) |
| 12. | Parking Permits |
| 13. | Ongoing information conditions |
| 14. | Access construction |
| 15. | Canopies and structures overhanging the highway |
| 16. | Noise mitigation measures available to reduce the risk of later complaints to adjoining venues |

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site for which this application relates is 0.42 hectares and fronts north onto Chatham Street and south on to Eaton Place. The site is occupied by two buildings and a large proportion of the site is given over to car parking. The first of the two buildings, an uninspiring two-storey office building, fronts directly onto Chatham Street. The second building, an older two-storey converted warehouse, is located to the rear of the office building and is largely obscured by the insensitive siting of the first building. At present, the remainder of the site is entirely covered by hardstanding.
- 1.2 The site is located within close vicinity to Reading town centre providing easy access to local amenities and is within short walking distance of two railway stations. The immediate area is characterised by a mix of large-scale modern residential developments (Chatham Place/Square, Weldale Street), traditional small scale retail (along Oxford Road), dated office and commercial uses (Eaton Place and Eaton Court), and finally a range of community uses such as the Chatham Street Surgery, The Butler PH, The Face Bar, The Reading Irish Centre and Church of the Holy Trinity, Oxford Road. Both Oxford Road and Chatham Street are busy arterial routes connecting West Reading with the IDR and across into the Town Centre. This gives the area a strong urban neighbourhood/town centre character as defined by the National Model Design Code (2021).
- 1.3 With reference to the adopted Local Plan, the application site is within the 'West Side Major Opportunity Area', and specifically within a site allocation known as 'CR12c'. CR12 includes Chatham Street, Eaton Place and parts of Oxford Road.
- 1.4 The site is not located within a Conservation Area, although the northern boundary of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area is located approximately 50 metres to the south. However, there are a number of listed buildings adjoining the site. These consist of the Grade II listed Butler PH directly adjacent to the site to the east (known as The Butler) and there are two Grade II listed buildings situated 50m to the south-west of the site (Trinity Church and 118 Oxford Road) and 65m to the southeast, the Royal Meteorological Society at 104 Oxford Road. There are also no locally-

listed buildings within or within close vicinity of the site. The site is also situated within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk).

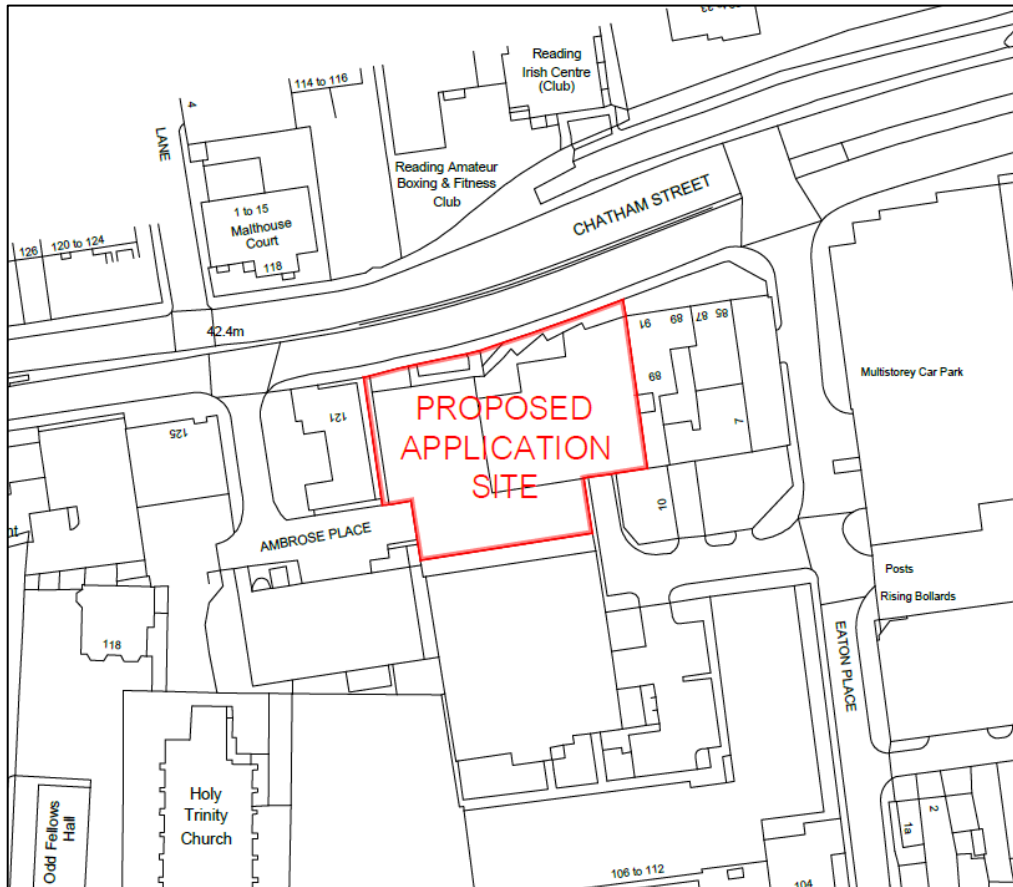


Figure 1 - Extract from site location Plan

- 1.5 Vehicular access is gained from the south off Eaton Place. The site can also be accessed by pedestrians from the south along Eaton Place, the west via Chatham Street. The site is accessible via public transport along Oxford Road, with frequent bus links into Reading town centre. Reading West Station is approximately 9 minutes' walk and Reading Station is an 11 minute walk.

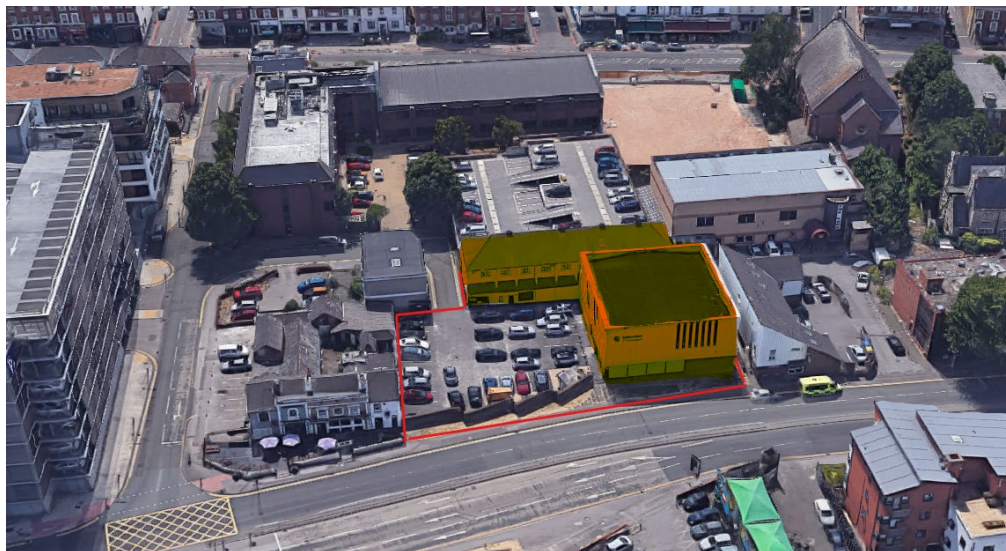


Figure 2 - Aerial image looking south showing application site and buildings to be removed (Google maps 2021)

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing buildings on site and the replacement with a new residential apartment block to accommodate 54 units together with car and cycle parking and private and communal amenity space. The development would provide a range of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments. Of the 54 units, 16 will be affordable (equating to 30%).
- 2.2 Vehicular access will be maintained to the rear via Eaton Place and pedestrian and cycle access will be from both Chatham Street and Eaton Place. A total of 15 vehicular spaces (including 2 disabled-accessible spaces) and 32 cycle parking spaces (within a secure part of the building) will be provided.
- 2.3 The proposal includes new areas of soft landscaping, including new tree and shrub planting in order to enhance the site's contribution within the immediate area. In addition, private 'winter gardens' and balconies for the apartments are proposed, along with a rear communal amenity area and an accessible roof terrace at third floor level.



Fig 3 - CGI visual of proposal (view south west across Chatham Street)

- 2.4 It should be noted that a suite of revised plans was received on the 18th June 2021.

In summary, the revisions consist of the following:

- Reduction in parking from 17 to 15 parking spaces (equating to 0.27 spaces per dwelling)
- Inclusion of obscure windows on the side elevation fronting The Butler Public House (as requested by Officers)
- Provision of additional landscaping details (as requested by our Natural Environment Team)
- New CGI (Illustrative View 6) showing how the proposal sits alongside both Eaton Court and Eaton Place developments (as requested by Officers and Cllrs).

- 2.5 Submitted Plans and Documentation:

Original proposed plans submitted with application:

022014-ARC-01	Presentation Planning Layout
022014-ARC-02	Supporting Planning Layout
022014-ARC-03	Location Plan
022014-ARC-04	Illustrative Block Plan
022014-ARC-PER01	Illustrative Perspective View 01
022014-ARC-PER02	Illustrative Perspective View 02
022014-ARC-PER03	Illustrative Perspective View 03
022014-ARC-PER04	Illustrative Perspective View 04
022014-ARC-PER05	Illustrative Perspective View 05
022014-ARC-SS	Streetscene
022014-ARC-E1	Apartment Block - Elevations
022014-ARC-E2	Apartment Block - Elevations
022014-ARC-P1	Apartment Block - Ground Floor Plan
022014-ARC-P2	Apartment Block - First & Second Floor Plan
022014-ARC-P3	Apartment Block - Third Floor Plan
022014-ARC-P4	Apartment Block - Fourth Floor Plan

Supporting statements:

Design and Access Statement DHA Architecture
Transport Statement and Travel Plan i-Transport
Daylight / Sunlight Assessment EB7
Phase I Desk Based Study ENZYGO
Archaeology and Heritage Statement EDP
Sustainability and Drainage SuDS Water Environment
Ecology Assessment Aspect Ecology
Landscape Plan Aspect Landscape
Energy and Sustainability Statement XCO2
Air Quality Assessment XCO2
Acoustic Assessment XCO2
Utilities Statement XCO2
Ventilation and Extract Statement XCO2
Open Space Assessment Boyer

2.6 Revised plans/documents received 17 June 2021

022014-ARC-03-REVB	Site Location Plan
022014-ARC-04-REVB	Proposed Block Plan
022014-ARC-01-REVB	Proposed Site Layout
022014-ARC02-REVB	Proposed Site Layout (in black and white)
022014-ARC-P1-REVA	Proposed Ground Floor Plan
022014-ARC-P2-REVA	Proposed First and Second Floor Plan
022014-ARC-P3-REVA	Proposed Third Floor Plan
022014-ARC-SS-REVA	Proposed Street Scene

2.7 Revised documents received 29 June 2021

Noise Technical Note

3. PLANNING HISTORY

There is no relevant planning history associated with this proposal.

200748/PREAPP Pre-application Engagement - The applicant has engaged with in a collaborative way with the Council. This have involved four pre-application meetings, involving Planners, Heritage, Landscaping/Sustainability and Highways Officers. The Council's final pre-application advice was provided on 22 December 2020. This advice has directly informed this application submission.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 RBC Transport

No objection subject to conditions.

4.2 RBC Environmental Protection

No objections in relation to noise, air quality, contaminated land and construction and demolition phase subject to conditions see discussion below in Appraisal section.

4.3 RBC Ecology

No objection subject to receipt of a satisfactory bat survey which demonstrates no evidence of bats.

Officer comments - The bat survey is currently underway and results expected for inclusion in the update report. The recommendation reflects this outstanding information.

4.4 RBC Natural Environment Team (Landscape)

No objection. Further details are required of tree species and surface water observations.

4.5 RBC Housing Officer

Supports the on-site affordable housing offer and the policy compliant tenure split.

4.6 Crime Prevention Design Advisor

No comments received.

4.7 RBC Sustainability/Energy Officer

No comments received.

4.8 Thames Water

No objection.

4.9 Conservation and Urban Design Officer

No objection subject to conditions. Conservation Officer comments included below for completeness:

“The site 115 Chatham Road has a listed Grade II property on its eastern boundary.

I have been involved in two pre-app design evolution works for this site. During this process the proposed design has evolved and been amended to address the site of the historic Butlers Public house.

The current proposal is lower on the eastern side (3 storeys) adjacent to the listed building, but then the steps up to towards the west (5 storeys).

The context, scale and materials of the current proposal was discussed and considered quite carefully in relation to the historic Public House, during the two pre-app I attended. The final design has evolved and is supported.

The owner of the Listed building has raised the issue of whether the use of the Pub as a live music is an existing issue, that needs to be allowed for as a material consideration. So this should be considered as part of the consent, in addition to a standard materials condition to ensure the new development enhances the setting which includes the heritage building.

Conclusion

The scheme is considered appropriate and is supported, subject to the standard material condition and details allowing for sound attenuation for live music.”

4.10 Public representations

A site notice was displayed at the site viewable from the public realm for the requisite period. At the time of writing, five letters of representation have been received objecting to the development, including a letter from the owner of the Butler Pub. The letters raise the following summarised issues:

- Need to preserve our town’s vital nightlife venues. This application threatens the existence of an important venue in Reading’s limited array of live venues and entertainment spaces (The Face Bar). Considered a cornerstone of Reading’s music/gig heritage.
- Six of these flats are single aspect, north-facing only, overlooking a busy roadway. A further three have a second aspect looking directly at the neighbouring surgery building, which only looks to be a couple of metres away.
- RBC should not be accepting this percentage of north, single-facing units. North-facing glazing is poor for heating loss.
- Development is likely to be too close to Face Bar and the sound of the bar is likely to be complained about by the new residents and may well have an adverse effect on the renewal of their licence.
- The parking provision for this central location is too high and against ambitions for increasing active travel. Only disabled persons’ spaces and car club/drop off/loading spaces should be provided.

Letter from the owner of The Butler PH summarised as follows:

- Overlooking impact

There is no assessment as to how the provision for a 14 room boutique hotel (planning permission ref.180365/FUL) has been respected within the application 210349. This compromises the achieved permission 180365/FUL, as the design will allow overlooking into part of the approved proposals.

- Live music and cultural events

Without live music, the Butler would not be a financially viable establishment. It is important in accessing this application that these rights are both returned and even promoted and protected by Reading Borough Council.

- Current planning on the Butler site

As the Council is aware - through correspondence with your officers over the last 2 years - the adjoining owner of the Grade II listed building the 'Butler' has been and is currently working up a scheme for the adjoining site following receipt for approval of a 'boutique' hotel in 2019 (application 180365/FUL).

This relies on the ability to gain natural light coming from the west (ie from the direction of 115 Chatham Street). Whilst this application for 115 Chatham Street is unlikely to directly impact on the pre-application proposals submitted to Reading Borough Council, we would request that the concept of sourcing natural light from the westerly direction for future applications is not restricted due to permittance of east facing windows providing views for habitable rooms.

- Impact on the Listed Building

We feel that this application should include an assessment of any potential harm to the Listed Building caused by the application before determination can be made.

- Greater Pedestrian Permeability

We believe that there is a good opportunity to open up the eastern boundary of this application with the Butler and Eaton Place beyond through a co-ordinated approach in compliance with figure 5.4 of the Local Plan.

Officer comments - These comments are noted and are dealt with in the Appraisal section of this report below.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which also states at Paragraph 11 "Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development".

- 5.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 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 relevant planning policy and guidance is applicable to the assessment of this application.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Feb 2019)

Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
 Section 4 - Decision-making
 Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 Section 7 - Ensuring the vitality of town centres
 Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities
 Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
 Section 11 - Making effective use of land
 Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
 Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

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
 CC9: SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
 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
 EN18: FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

EM3: LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND

H1: PROVISION OF HOUSING
 H2: DENSITY AND MIX
 H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING
 H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING
 H6: ACCOMMODATION FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE
 H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE

TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
TR4: CYCLE ROUTES AND FACILITIES
TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

CR12: WEST SIDE MAJOR OPPORTUNITY AREA
CR12c: CHATHAM STREET, EATON PLACE AND OXFORD ROAD

Supplementary Planning Documents

Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
Planning Obligations under Section 106 SPD (2015)
Employment, Skills and Training SPD (2013)
Affordable Housing SPD (2021)
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Other Reading Borough Council documents

Reading Tree Strategy (2020)
Reading Open Space Strategy Update Note (2018)
Reading Open Space Strategy (2007)
Waste Management Guidelines for Property Developers, Reading Borough Council

Other material guidance and legislation

National Planning Practice Guidance (Updated 2021)
National Design Guide (2019)
National Model Design Code (2021)
Guidance Notes for Design Codes (2021)
Nationally described space standards (2015)
Section 66(1) of the Town and Country (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Section 72 of the Town and Country (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (Amended 2015)
Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment - Berkshire Authorities and Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Final Report, February 2016, prepared by GL Hearn Ltd
Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: a guide to good practice (BRE 209), P. Littlefair, 2011

6. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are the following headings:

- 6.1 Principle of development
- 6.2 Heritage and design
- 6.3 Amenity
- 6.4 Natural environment
- 6.5 Health and wellbeing
- 6.6 Sustainability
- 6.7 Transport
- 6.8 S106/Community Infrastructure Levy
- 6.9 Other matters

6.1 Principle of development

- 6.1.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must have regard to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the development plan for the area is the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). At a national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) constitutes guidance which the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must have regard to. The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making but constitutes a material consideration in any subsequent determination.
- 6.1.2 The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development running through both plan-making and decision-taking. The three dimensions to achieving sustainable development are defined in the NPPF as: economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 11 of the Framework indicates that, for decision taking, where Local Plan policies are up to date: development proposals that accord with the Development Plan should be approved without delay. Both the adopted Local Plan and the NPPF require a positive approach to decision-taking to foster the delivery of sustainable development. These three dimensions of sustainable development are also central to the Council's Local Plan core policy, Policy CC1. This repeats the aims of the NPPF in approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan. How this proposal meets the three dimensions to achieving sustainable development will be concluded at the end of this report weighed against the level of Local Plan compliance.

Land use principles

- 6.1.3 Policy CC1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) requires a positive approach to development proposals that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development which lies at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). To achieve sustainable development a proposal needs to meet economic, social and environmental objectives. It is considered that a proposal for new housing would contribute to providing: sufficient land for housing; a range of homes; and would make effective use of land (Para. 117 NPPF).
- 6.1.4 A key Government objective is to significantly boost the supply of new homes (Section 5 of the NPPF), and the local housing requirement is set out within Policy H1 (of the Reading Borough Local Plan RBLP).
- 6.1.5 The wider principle of re-development is established under Local Plan housing allocation Policy CR12 and specifically sub area CR12c for which this land parcel sits. Specifically, CR12c states:

CR12c, CHATHAM STREET, EATON PLACE AND OXFORD ROAD:

Development of this area will be primarily for residential, with potential for community uses. There may also be some small scale retail and leisure uses on the Oxford Road frontage. This area is surrounded by heritage assets or low-rise residential, and inappropriate building scale at the fringes of the site will not be permitted. There is an opportunity to enhance the Oxford Road frontage, including with tree planting.

Site size: 1.15 ha Indicative potential: 180-260 dwellings.

6.1.6 The local plan is clear that development of this sub-area will be primarily for residential, with potential for community uses. There may also be some small-scale retail and leisure uses on the Oxford Road frontage. The wider allocation recognises the site is surrounded by Heritage Assets or low-rise residential, and importantly establishes the guiding principle that inappropriately scaled buildings at the fringes of the site will not be permitted. This policy also recognises the opportunity to enhance key frontages including via appropriate tree planting. This site is recognised as being on the fringe of the allocation site and a key frontage onto Chatham Street. The parameters set by this policy are applied in tandem with wider in-principle policies securing appropriate densities, appropriate design, affordable housing provision and mixes of new residential development. See below policy map extract (Fig 4).

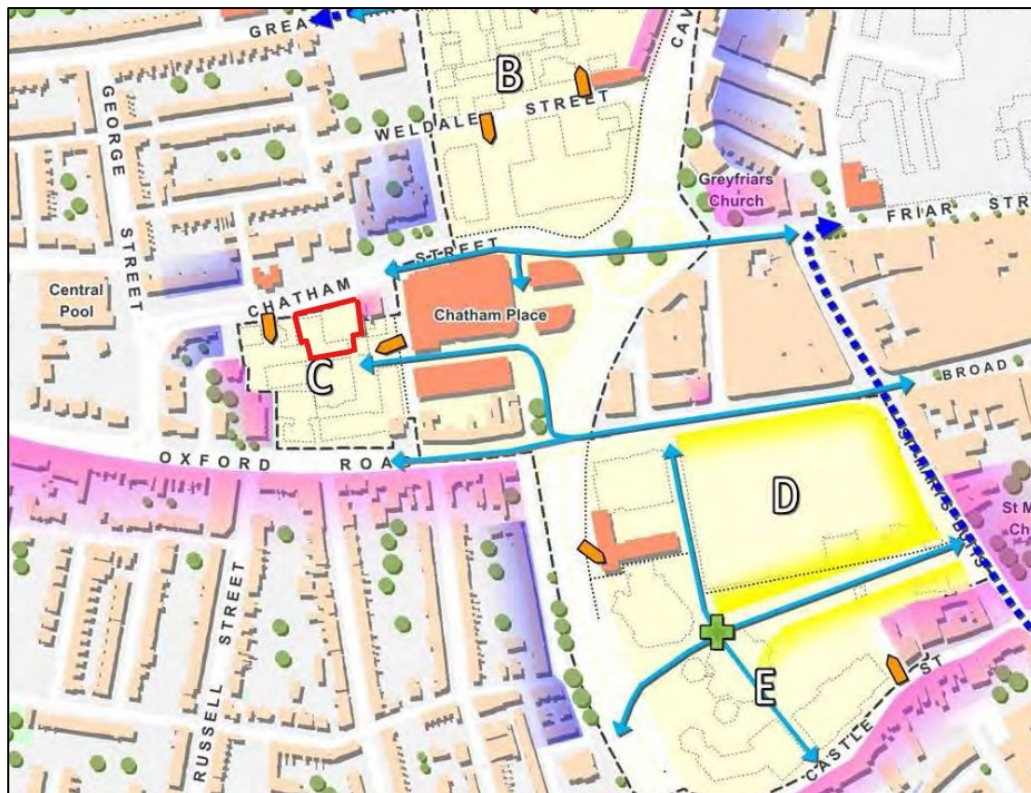


Fig 4 - Local Plan Extract - Policy CR12c (Development site highlighted in red)

6.1.7 With regard to the loss of commercial floorspace, the site is not located within a defined employment area, primary retail frontage or covered by any policies that seek to protect the existing vacant commercial units. The existing use of either building could, via current permitted development rights, be converted into a range of other uses including residential via the prior approval process, thereby resulting in the loss of all employment-generating uses on site. Furthermore, it should be noted that from 1st September 2020, the permitted use of either building changed to Class E (flexible commercial use) which encompasses a much broader category of residential compatible *'commercial, business and service'* uses.

6.1.8 Paragraph 121 of the NPPF advises Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular, LPAs should be supporting proposals which, *"use retail and employment land for*

homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres”. Local Plan Policy RL1 relates to the network and hierarchy of centres and identifies Reading as the regional centre within the area. This policy highlights the need for new development to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of these centres. This has become of increased importance following Covid19 which has introduced increased levels of uncertainty in commercial property market in the borough and across the region.

- 6.1.9 The site allocation policy makes logical reference to non-residential uses being located to the Oxford Road frontage. As there is no explicit requirement for retail or community uses in the northern part of the allocation, nor reference to the requirements of each landowner within the allocation, a residential-only scheme on this part of CR12c allocation would not be inconsistent with the overarching spatial strategy for the site as set by the Local Plan. In its broadest sense, the Local Plan (through its allocation) recognise that the low-density buildings and car park which occupy it, constitute a valuable development opportunity which can positively contribute to meeting the borough’s ongoing housing need and the regeneration of this part of town.

Housing mix and density

- 6.1.10 The NPPF seeks to ‘boost significantly the supply of housing’ and deliver a wide range of homes, of different types and tenures. Achieving an efficient use of the land within the context of any central and sustainably located site is a key priority both at a national and local level. The NPPF states that LPAs should actively “*encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value*”. In general terms, officers support those urban design principles which encourage an ambitious approach to density on such sites.
- 6.1.11 Policy CC6 ‘Accessibility and the intensity of development’ makes the important link between the scale and density of development and its inherent level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities, with opportunities for increased density taking place in the most accessible locations. This does not override other planning considerations but is an important element of meeting the borough’s development needs in the most sustainable way. Policy H2 which specifically considers density and mix, requires that the appropriate density of residential development is informed by the character and mix of uses of the area in which it is located and its current and future level of accessibility.
- 6.1.12 Within the Local Plan, indicative densities for different areas are set out in Local Plan extract Figure 4.5. The supporting text goes on to acknowledge that the criteria discussed above may indicate that a different density may be appropriate based on the individual site characteristics.
- 6.1.13 The proposed development seeks 54 units. This would equate to a density of approximately 370 dwellings per hectare (dph). When considered against the Local Plan allocation (Indicative total potential: 180-260 dwellings), which itself is significantly higher than the indicative density range for the location as defined in Figure 4.5, the site allocation would be expected to deliver a greater number of dwellings than the site’s indicative local plan capacity. Whilst density is recognised as a useful indicator in seeking to meet housing

targets, it is not generally a good indicator of the likely form, quality or appropriateness of any scheme, and as such these factors must be looked at in more detail later in this report.

6.1.14 On the whole, the site is highly accessible by public transport as well as by walking and cycling, and the Local Plan recognises the opportunities available to increase density to help to meet identified needs. Therefore, it is considered that such density range is not precluded yet must be considered in tandem with all other policy criteria which consider the existing character of the area and issues such as heritage, which will be covered separately in this response.

6.1.15 With regard to dwelling mix, Policy H2 states that:

“Wherever possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing set out in figure 4.6, in particular for family homes of three or more bedrooms.”

Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) goes on to specify that residential developments within the town centre area (for which this area lies) should incorporate a maximum of 40% of 1-bedroom units and a minimum of 5% of 3 bedroom units.

The submission identifies the following mix of units:

Dwelling Size	Affordable	Market	Total	Percentage
1 bedroom apartment	6	20	25	47%
2 bedroom apartment	8	18	26	49%
3 bedroom apartment	2	0	2	4%
Total	16	38	54	100%

Figure 5 - Proposed unit mix

6.1.16 The proposal therefore provides a slightly higher proportion of 1-bedroom and slightly lower proportion of 3-bedroom units. The Local Plan at 4.4.13 recognises that Reading is likely to provide a significantly greater proportion of smaller dwellings than its neighbours in the Western Berkshire HMA. Furthermore, given the site’s central location, adjoining a series of busy arterial routes, it is not considered the site would be the most desirable location for which to prescriptively apply the Local Plan housing mix.

6.1.17 Therefore, based on individual site characteristics and the appropriateness and range of units proposed, the proposal is not considered to wholly conflict with the requirement of Policies H2 and CR6 nor weigh heavily against the scheme.

Affordable housing

6.1.18 Affordable Housing is a key identified priority within the borough. Policy H3 of the Local Plan (Affordable Housing) seeks to ensure that development proposals of more than 10 dwellings should provide the equivalent of 30% on-site provision of affordable housing.

- 6.1.19 The Council's currently adopted Affordable Housing SPD (2020) requires that new development should include a range and mix of tenures of affordable housing (as appropriate depending on site size) to reflect local needs. This identifies a tenure mix of 38% Shared ownership and 62% rented, with rented allowed to be Affordable Rent but capped at 70% of Market rent including service charges is required to meet the borough's most pressing needs.
- 6.1.20 More recently in May 2021, the Housing Minister made a Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament which sets out the implementation of the First Homes policy. It comes into effect from 28th June 2021 with a 6-month transition period (to 28th December 2021). First Homes must make up 25% of the affordable housing requirement on a site. After this 25% has been identified, the remaining balance of affordable housing is split in accordance with local policy. For RBC this is as set out in paragraph 6.1.19.
- 6.1.21 It should be noted that planning consents secured before 28th December 2021 or 28 March 2022 (if "significant" pre-app undertaken) are not be required to secure First Homes. As such Officers can confirm that First Homes are not required to be secured on this site.
- 6.1.22 The proposed development would provide 16 affordable housing units on site, the mix of which is set out in Figure 5 above. In order to meet the Council's desired tenure mix, 10 of the units would need to be for affordable rent, with the remaining 6 in shared ownership. Through negotiation your officers, the proposed affordable housing tenure has been amended to provide 12 units at affordable rent (75%) and 4 units at shared ownership (25%). The alteration to the tenure mix provides the LPA with an above policy compliant provision of affordable rented units (most in demand) which would respond to the borough's most pressing housing needs. Overall, the affordable housing provision remains at a policy compliant 30%, however, of added benefit is the fact the Applicant has advised agreement of this quantum and tenure mix with ABRI, a local registered affordable housing provider (RP).
- 6.1.23 In the unlikely event that following an approval, an Affordable Housing provider is not secured, a clause will be inserted into the Legal Agreement requiring the developer to pay to the Council a sum equivalent to 15% of the Gross Development Value of the development for provision of Affordable Housing elsewhere in the Borough. This would be calculated (the mean average) from two independent valuations to be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to first occupation of any market housing units. This would be paid prior to first occupation of any market housing unit and index-linked from the date of valuation. This is based upon the formula contained within the Council's Affordable Housing SPD (2020).
- 6.1.24 A policy compliant quantum and above policy compliant tenure split along with the agreement of a Registered housing provider is considered to be a significant public benefit of the proposal and provides a welcome contribution to addressing local affordable housing needs in the borough. This would be secured via S106 agreement and be considered as part of the overall planning balance for the scheme in a later section of this report.

6.2 Heritage and design

- 6.2.1 Section 12 of the NPPF 'Achieving well-designed places', reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring

the creation of inclusive and high-quality places. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF includes the need for new design to function well and add to the quality of the surrounding area, establish a strong sense of place, and respond to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

- 6.2.2 Policy CC7 ‘Design and the Public Realm’ sets out local top-level requirements to design. It requires that all developments must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in which it is located. In the absence of local design guidance, LPAs will be expected to defer to the National Design Guide 2019 (NDG) and National Model Design Code (2021) which can be used as material considerations in planning decisions.
- 6.2.3 The NDG is clear that well-designed places contribute to local distinctiveness. This may include introducing built form and appearance that adds new character and difference to places. The NDG identifies 10 key components for good design and of particular note is the characteristic of ‘Context’. This states that *“well-designed new development responds positively to the features of the site itself and the surrounding context beyond the site boundary. It should enhance positive qualities and improve negative ones.”* Additionally, there is specific reference to ‘views inwards and outwards’ of such sites.
- 6.2.4 Any decision made affecting listed buildings and their settings and Conservation Areas must satisfy the statutory tests of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see in particular sections 16, 66 and 72) as well as the relevant policies within the NPPF and the Council’s Local Plan.
- 6.2.5 Para 94 of the NPPF states that *“Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.”* Para 196 goes on to state *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal...”*
- 6.2.6 Policy EN1 of the Local Plan requires that historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings will be protected and where possible enhanced. Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special character or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings. Reference is made within the submission to Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015b), in considering the development in relation to the historic Public House to the east.
- 6.2.7 Policy EN6 requires that in areas characterised by heritage assets, the historic environment will inform and shape new development and that new development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development.

- 6.2.8 Any proposal will be considered carefully against the above local and national policy objectives, under the following sub-headings.

Designated Heritage Assets

- 6.2.9 Earlier sections of this report have identified that the development is within close proximity and has the potential to affect the significance of the Grade II listed Butler PH. The significance of this building is discussed below prior to an impact assessment of the development under various headings.

Grade II listed Butler's Wine Vaults

- 6.2.10 In terms of significance, based on an assessment of the information provided within this application and available through existing records, this listed building is identified as deriving the majority of its heritage significance from its historic and architectural interests. It is an example of an early 19th Century public house, with decorative embellishments including fruit and flower carvings and the artistic advertisement for whisky. Similarly, it also derives artistic interest from these decorative embellishments, particularly concentrated on the street-facing northern elevation.
- 6.2.11 In terms of its setting, early maps show a continuous built-up street frontage, aligned east to west, along the southern side of Chatham Street. Towards the turn of the 20th Century, the Pub is shown as contained within a rectangular plot with a divided rear gardens/yard. This arrangement has broadly continued to the present day where the listed building is still experienced in its rectangular plot with outbuildings to the rear - albeit alterations. Otherwise, it is the only surviving building of the original terrace to the southern side of Chatham Street, as depicted on the historic maps. Clearance and redevelopment in the late 20th Century and early 2000s has converted the land immediately to the west into car parks and to the east into an extension of Eaton Place.
- 6.2.12 Modern buildings dominant its setting, including a nine-storey car park to the east, the modern office block within the Site to the west and a four-storey block of flats further to the north west. Chatham Street has also been converted to a dual carriageway and a traffic signal-controlled junction installed immediately to the north of the listed building. In these terms, the surviving pub plot and outbuildings positively contribute to the significance of the listed building, through historic and still extant functional connections. Its position on the Chatham Street frontage on also contributes to its significance, as well as providing a publicly accessible location from which to experience the building's principal elevation. Otherwise, its setting is predominantly the result of more recent development that bears no relation to the former setting of the listed building or terraced which once existed.
- 6.2.13 The car park and office building to the west are considered to make no positive contribution to the listed building's significance. The late Victorian warehouse-type building in the south of the site post-dates the Georgian Pub and was a later addition to the wider built environment and was never part of the Chatham Street frontage. According to the information provided with the application, this warehouse has no known historic or functional links with the listed building and is not considered to contribute to its significance.

- 6.2.14 Therefore, whilst officers acknowledge that the ‘openness’ of the carpark within the application site does allow for views of the western gable end of the pub and the plot boundary wall’s western elevation, these are elements which do not express any of the significance identified above (in terms of historic, archaeological, artistic or architectural interest), other than partial appreciation of its location within its historic, delineated and rectangular plot.
- 6.2.15 This element can be experienced from the east at the junction with Eaton Place, so is not considered a unique view into and across the site. Officers are also mindful that this view is only possible due to the demolition of the former terraced housing within the site, and there is no evidence that it was a designed or intended to be part of an enhancement of the listed building. Indeed, the applicant’s Heritage Assessment makes note of the fact that all of the artistic and architectural embellishments of the Pub are located on the primary north/street facing elevation.
- 6.2.16 Historically the Pub was once part of a domestic street, either side and opposite which were arranged dwellings, little doubt from which it drew most of its custom and for whom it would have formed a social hub for the local community, in a similar way it would function today if located in its original setting. The widespread demolition of the traditional urban fabric which surrounded the pub and depopulation of the immediate area, have weakened any past functional links and understanding of its purpose and role and have not contributed to the building’s significance of in any way.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

- 6.2.17 The development would result in the removal of an industrial warehouse building reportedly first shown on the 1899 Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map. This two-storey white-painted brick building is located to the back of the site behind the car park and the existing office building. The building does not benefit from any form of legal status or statutory protection, but given its age, the officers must consider it as a non-designated heritage asset in the consideration of this planning application. Due to its compromised setting, altered condition and absence of any reference for retention within the Local Plan allocation CR12c, there is no evidence to demonstrate it has any great level of local significance. If approved, a Level 1 Recording would be required to record the building details for historic records. This will be considered in the overall planning balance.

Layout

- 6.2.18 The existing low-quality office building, warehouse to the rear and associated car park would be replaced with a new residential block fronting onto Chatham Street. As described, the historic pattern of built form to the southern side of Chatham Street was almost entirely cleared during the last century in favour of isolated low-density commercial developments and car parking, which now characterised this part of Chatham Street. This left the Butler PH as the only building occupying an unchanged relationship to the street.

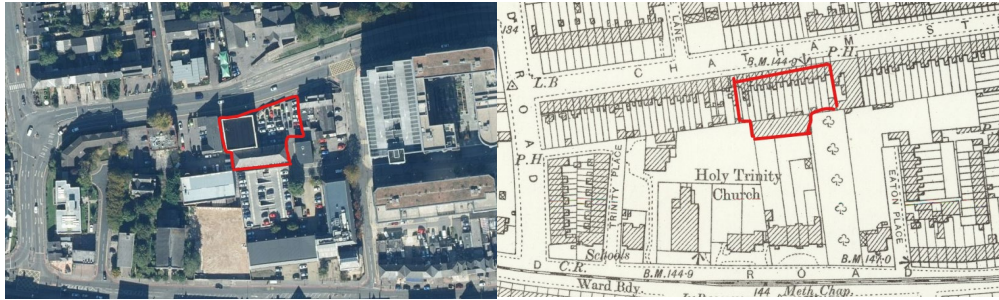


Fig 6 - Site approximate location (red) compared with OS 25 Inch 1892-1914 (Source maps.nls.uk 2020)

6.2.19 Whilst Chatham Street has been significantly altered from its former historic arrangement and built composition, the proposed development would effectively reinstate part of the historic pattern of built form along the frontage, albeit at a more modern scale commensurate with its location and relationship to other recent approved and built residential redevelopment schemes (Chatham Place, Weldale Street and 114 Oxford Road).

6.2.20 The proposed building line will reflect the existing gentle northwards curve in the road, seeking to maintain the primacy of the Butler PH (See Fig 7 below) by allowing part of its gable wall to be visible from the west. To the rear of the site, a setback will provide separation with the pending application live application for the adjoining development at Eaton Court (112 Oxford 200752).

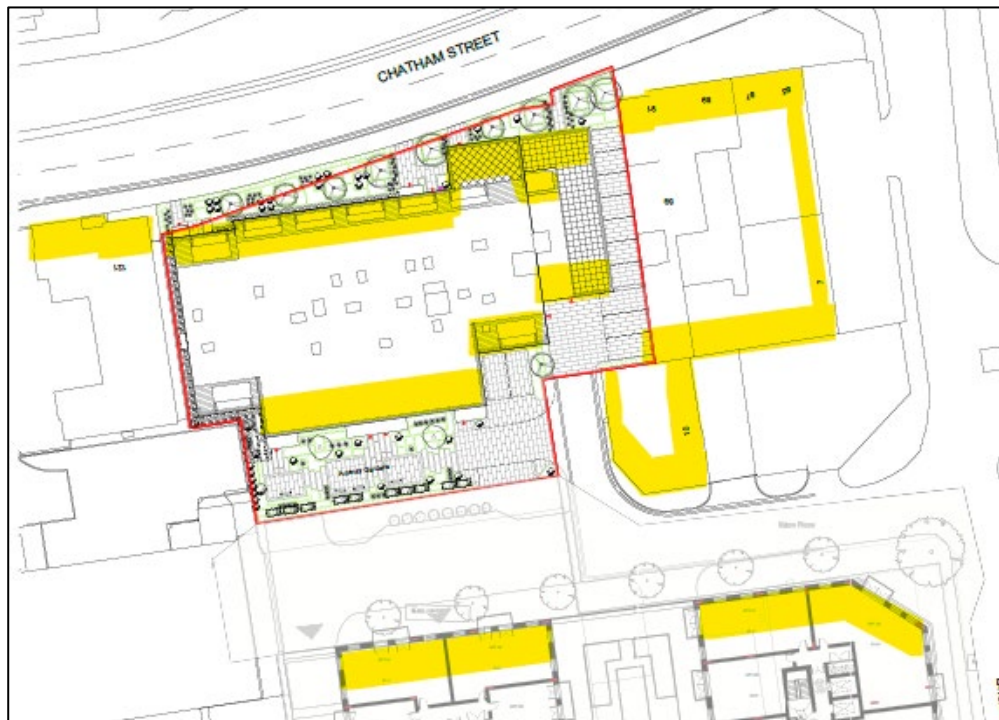


Fig 7 - Proposed frontages in relation to Chatham Street (north) and Eaton Place (south). Proposed 112 Oxford Road shown to the south.

6.2.21 The proposed development is considered to build on and respect the existing layout of surrounding development, providing continuity and enclosure through appropriate relationships between the building and spaces in front of it and behind. The proposed footprint and frontages successfully aligns with the historic Butler PH and more modern Chatham Street Surgery to the

west. Furthermore, the proposed layout is not considered to prevent any wider development being brought forward on the CR12c site allocation.

6.2.22 The reinstatement of a building along Chatham Street is considered to be a logical and appropriate design response and contributes to fulfilling the aspirations of the strategic site allocation within the Local Plan, whilst reinforcing a traditional side-to-side arrangement of built form. Therefore, in this respect, the layout is considered to respond positively to its local context and reinforce the existing structure which exists at this part of town as required by Policy CC7, CR12c the NDG and NPPF.

Scale

6.2.23 As defined within the NDG, establishing an appropriate scale of built form is reliant upon establishing an appropriate relationship with the pattern, sizes and proportions of existing streets in the local area. Along Chatham Street there exists 3-storey apartments further west of the site, previously approved and pending applications for 4-storey apartments to the immediate west of the site (125 Chatham Street, reference 200752), and the very large-scale new developments to the east (Chatham Place). To the rear lies Eaton Place and 104-112 Oxford Road which both have applications pending for large scale redevelopments (reference 201104 and 210639). Many of the present rather dated office buildings along Oxford Road and Chatham Street are very much of their time, like the former Bottomline Technology building which sits on the site.



Fig 8 - Aerial view looking west along Chatham Street showing modern development to the west (Source Google Maps 2021).

6.2.24 When considering the scale of proposed development, it is necessary to acknowledge the degree to which Chatham Street and the Butler PH are themselves dominated by the overwhelming scale of Chatham Place and the multi-storey car park (see below). In particular, the physical form, scale and relatively limited articulation of the car park is already considered to compromise the setting and visibility of the listed building quite significantly. This does not inherently make any proposal on land to the west of the pub acceptable or remove the need for the Council to discharge its obligations under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)

Act 1990, however this context constitutes an important material consideration in the assessment of the street scene and arriving at an acceptable scale.

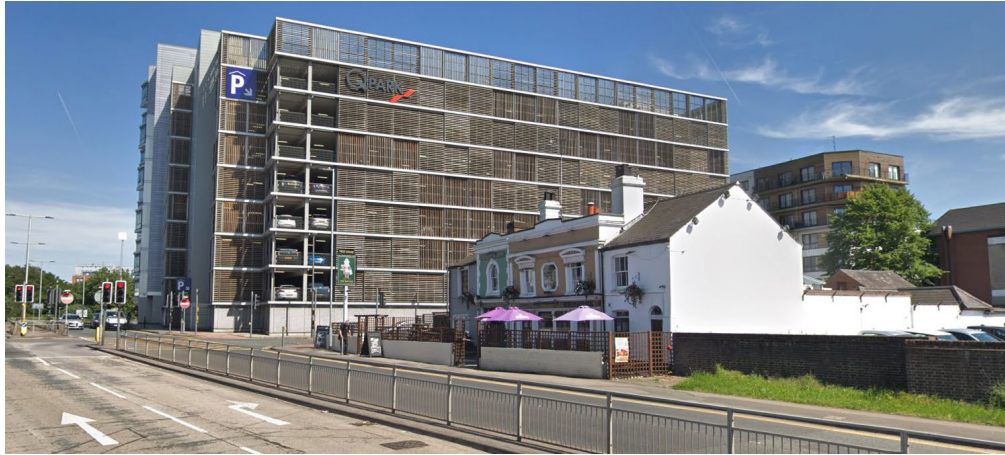


Fig 9 - View looking east towards Chatham Street Car Park (Source Google Maps 2021)

- 6.2.25 As described above, the pub did not always stand in proud isolation, however the current more recent context is that the building does now exist in isolation, and is the only building of its type, scale and age in the immediate vicinity. As in this case, where the scale of new development is very different to the existing historic scale, the NDG confirms it may be more appropriate to create a new identity rather than to scale up the character of an existing place (like the pub) in its former context.
- 6.2.26 The proposal development ranges from 3 to 5 storeys. This follows extensive pre-application engagement with officers, former Heritage Consultant, in-house Conservation and Urban Design Officer, and an independent design review (the Reading Design Review Panel (the DRP)). Through negotiation, the form and massing of the proposal has evolved over four iterations to address concerns raised.
- 6.2.27 The overall scale and massing of the proposed building recognises the established stepping-up in scale and form from existing buildings west to east and increase in scale towards the centre of the site allocation to the south. On this basis, the main part of the building appears four storeys in height, with a setback upper fifth storey. This is visually recessive in its detailed design. The scale of the eastern wing of the building alongside the pub is moderated to three storeys in order to transition and create a respectful relationship with the pub. This is considered to balance the substantial scale of the surrounding built character, whilst maintaining the distinctiveness of the Listed building.



Fig 10 - Street scene elevation showing transition in scale from east to west (Top) and transition between development and Butler Pub (bottom).

6.2.28 Following discussions with the Council’s Design Review Panel, the flank walls of the upper storey were reintroduced in order to create a much simpler and contemporary roof detail. This replaces the earlier proposed pitched roof which detracted from the character and style of the building and the adjoining listed building. The Panel also supported accommodating the fifth floor of accommodation to the rear of the building. They considered that the additional height would not adversely impact upon the Listed building as the increased massing would not be fully seen from Chatham Street, especially at street level. The scheme now includes a clearly defined parapet wall beyond the third-floor window head height with the pitched roof and dormers behind this feature. Officers agree that the parapet wall has the benefit of almost hiding the upper floor completely from view when seen from street level (See below).



Fig 11 - View across Chatham Street

6.2.29 In order to prevent views of the pub being entirely obscured when approaching west along Chatham Street, the proposed footprint was reduced

in order to set back the building from the frontage and increase the amount of meaningful soft landscaping that will be provided to the street frontage. This soft landscaping has the added benefit of providing much needed defensible space and privacy to occupant. The proposed building is now set back to align better with the pub, providing more visibility of the gable end in the street scene. The Council's Conservation and Urban Design Officer is comfortable with the transition now proposed.

6.2.30 Despite the above design evolution and measures taken, it is recognised that the development of a multi-storey residential block to the west of the Listed Building would undoubtedly add to the cumulative negative impact on the setting of this Listed Building. Any introduction of a building of this scale and mass on 'undeveloped land' (a former car park) immediately to the west of the Butler PH, would introduce new built form which would alter views to/from the pub along Chatham Street and therefore cause harm to the setting of the Listed Building.

6.2.31 In summary, the building's height and massing is considered actively maintain a visual gap and transition to the adjoining Grade II listed Butler's Wine Vaults, yet respond likewise to the far greater scale of more modern development either constructed or planned in the immediate vicinity. Whilst juxtaposing with the modest scaled listed building, the scale is considered appropriate in such a central location within a defined opportunity area, and makes the most of the opportunities presented by the disparate scale and uses of surrounding buildings. As supported by the NDG, the proposal creates a new standalone identity rather than seeking to directly replicate or compete with the scale of the more modest listed building, however there ultimately remains an impact upon the setting of the listed building simply through the introduction of built form where none exists at present.

Design

6.2.32 Much of the site is presently dominated by car parking, and the buildings on site currently 'turn their back' on both Chatham Street and Eaton Place, which serves to create opportunities for antisocial behaviour through lack of surveillance to the street. The existing office building fronting onto Chatham Street is clad in vertical white plastic weatherboarding, has a flat roof, limited setback and no active surveillance or windows addressing the street. Such a building would nowadays be considered wholly inappropriate and unsympathetic to both its more historic neighbours and the aspiration for creating a more pleasant people-orientated street. The design of any redevelopment offers a valuable opportunity to not only provide more activity to Chatham Street, but enhance the setting of the adjoining Butler Wine Vaults as required by the statutory obligations contained under the Listed Building and Conservation Area Act 1990 and Policy EN1 of the Local Plan.

6.2.33 The proposal's appearance, using a mixture of flat and parapet- cambered roofs with dormer windows, is designed to reflect the wider historic built environment in Reading, whilst maintaining a distinctly contemporary appearance. As mentioned, the stepped frontage is welcomed, along with individual private entrances and a communal entrance towards the northern Chatham Street frontage (See below).



Fig 12 - Individual private entrances and a communal entrance.

- 6.2.34 With regard to materials officers have encouraged a more contrasting, simpler materials palette on the three-storey section closest to the pub in order to ensure the pub remains a focal point and that the development does not compete with the ornateness and detail contained on that building. The proposal makes use of bricks to the façades, with more ornate brick detailing and a second, contrasting lighter grey brick is proposed to provide consistency and articulation. The lighter grey brick is considered particularly important in ensuring the proposal sits comfortably alongside the white and coloured rendered Pub without replicating it. The feature bay windows are detailed with projecting brickwork with an ornate “chequerboard” pulled header patterns. In addition, the building’s design employs bay elements that establish a rhythm, whilst emphasising verticality to ensure the proposed mass is visually broken down at street level.
- 6.2.35 Officers consider the appearance of the development and the proposed materials reflect the style and materials traditionally used within the local area but employ a much more contemporary and robust style when compared to late 20th Century cladding and rendered blocks of flats within the vicinity. The rear southern elevation contains projecting balconies, winter gardens, recessed brick detailing, yet less verticality, however this frontage also provides much greater domestic variation through residential entrances and communal open space than anything at present.
- 6.2.36 Further to the above, officers encouraged the applicant to enhance the public realm around the building as far as possible, providing more opportunity for both human interaction and additional soft landscaping (for which there is currently none along Eaton Place or Chatham Street). This led to the introduction of an area of amenity gardens to the southern elevation onto Eaton Place. This provides welcome relief to what is recognised as currently being a rather sterile and unpleasant urban back land environment. This area of amenity space not only considered to enliven and enhance what is currently a harsh and poorly-surveyed part of the site allocation, but in conjunction with residential entrances, seating areas and enclosed soft landscaping, will encourage greater resident/public interaction and create a whole new sense of place within the CR12c sub area allocation. In this respect the development is considered to perform a positive role and marks a welcome intervention into an area where this redevelopment will be the

first to deliver public realm improvements and a safe environment (see below) and allow other redevelopment parcels within the allocation area to be brought forward satisfactorily.



Figure 13 - CGI view looking northeast along Eaton Place (Rear elevation).

- 6.2.37 The proposal is considered to represent a robust contemporary design, and through its articulation and appropriate materials, successfully integrates with both the more modern developments to the east and more isolated traditional buildings within its vicinity like the Pub.
- 6.2.38 In summary, the design of this building is considered to respond positively to the opportunity created by the site's current lack of activation and seeks to raise design standards by not simply replicating surrounding buildings and spaces, but by creating a more positive sense of place than would not have otherwise existed at present.

Heritage balance

- 6.2.39 In returning to the national and local policy tests which govern the considering of such proposals on the setting of designated heritage assets, officers consider that the proposal would on the whole, have a negative impact (i.e. it would cause harm) to the existing setting of the Butler Pub due to the re-introduction of built form on its western flank elevation. The identified harm caused to the character and appearance of the Pub has been given considerable importance and weight in your officers' assessment of this scheme.
- 6.2.40 In this instance, officers consider that the harm caused to the setting of the Listed Building would be 'less than substantial', and result in a limited negative impact on the character and appearance of this building. As described earlier in this report, para 196 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 6.2.41 The only way to completely eliminate any such harm upon the current setting of the listed building would be to not develop the car park at all on the eastern portion of the application site, thereby retaining the current

openness and isolated setting of the listed building. This consequently would mean that any proposal along the entire Chatham Street frontage would not be able to come forward in the manner proposed, nor contribute meaningfully to the overall sub-area site allocation as defined by CR12c.

6.2.42 The incorporation of this car park into any scheme allows any new building to span the entire width of the site, creating a single coherent block which respects both the former historical importance of Chatham Street and its current role as a key arterial route to the town centre. Officers therefore consider that any proposal would not be successful architecturally, or by way of fulfilling the aspiration of the site allocation without redeveloping the existing car park along this key frontage. Furthermore, it is clear that the significance of this listed building in particular is derived more from its historic and architectural interest and functional connection to the surrounding urban area (as with any town centre pub), rather than from any sense of isolation (like a standalone monument or isolated farmhouse), which in this case was enforced through the insensitive removal of traditional terraced rows in the mid-20th Century.

6.2.43 It is considered no benefit to the pub's historical significance that it should remain as the only traditional building addressing the north side of Chatham Street, flanked by a significantly and utilitarian multi-storey car park to one side and an open-air car park and vacant dated office building to the other. For the pub to once again be read as part a regenerated Chatham Street frontage is considered a considerable public benefit, one which accentuates its juxtaposition as being a historic community building between two larger modern buildings. This would aid in improving the legibility and understanding of its setting and traditional function as a place of meeting.



Fig 14 - View looking east along Chatham Street with reinstated frontage to the south.

6.2.44 In terms of other public benefits which must be balanced against the less than substantial harm caused, the proposed development (made possible by the removal of the car park and two existing buildings) includes 54 residential units with 30% affordable housing, new soft landscaping onto both Chatham Street and Eaton Place and the creation of a car club (See Transport section). Increasing the supply of housing within the borough is a Council priority and

the uplift of residential units and the provision of on-site affordable housing is especially welcomed. Reading has particularly high property prices, so offer to provide 70% of affordable units provided at 'Reading Affordable Rent' and capped at 70% of market rent is also considered a significant public benefit.

- 6.2.45 The demolition of the unprotected warehouse building to the rear would make it easier for the rest of site allocation to come forward, which includes a substantial range of other benefits in addition to the residential uplift and affordable housing included as part of this particular scheme.
- 6.2.46 In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the LPA must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Officers are therefore of the view that the public benefits are substantial and compelling and outweigh the 'less than substantial harm' caused to the setting of the Butler Pub through the introduction of development in the first place.
- 6.2.47 The proposal therefore complies with the requirements of Section 66 of the Town and Country (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the statutory duties of the Council in this regard have been discharged. Officers therefore support the scale, siting and design of the proposed building along Chatham Street due to the public benefits brought about by redeveloping this part of the CR12c site allocation and due compliance with Policy En1 of the Local plan.

6.3 Amenity

Privacy

- 6.3.1 The site is within a densely built up area of the edge of the town centre with a mixture of large flatted developments near to more high-density traditional terrace neighbourhoods to the west. The proposal would introduce active residential frontages to both Chatham Street and Eaton Place, where currently poorly surveyed inactive frontages and car parking dominate. Windows, winter gardens, balconies and front doors would both front north and south providing a greater sense of activity.
- 6.3.2 Due to the layout and orientation of the application site, the closest facing habitable windows would be (in the event of approval) approximately 23m directly south across Eaton Place within the proposed development at 112 Oxford Road (known as Eaton Court) which is currently pending consideration. The nearest development (in the event of approval) is at 10 Eaton Place (also pending consideration), located directly on the south eastern boundary of the application site. According to submitted plans of this neighbouring scheme, the nearest facing elevation of 10 Eaton Place would contain openings serving a communal decked access corridor on each floor (See below).



Fig 15 - Relationship to 10 Eaton Place (Proposed)

- 6.3.3 Therefore, should this development receive permission, this relationship is not considered to give rise to any significant privacy concerns. On the western and eastern elevations, conventional side to side relationships allow any future redevelopment opportunities within the site allocation to be exercised without privacy concerns. The proposal is considered to comply with Policy CC7 and CC8 of the Local Plan.

Daylight and sunlight

- 6.3.4 The applicant has provided a daylight/sunlight assessment with the application. This technical assessment uses the methods set out in Building Research Establishment's (BRE) "*Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice*" to determine the daylight and sunlight amenity within neighbouring properties. As result of there being no relevant neighbouring residential receptors to the north across the dual carriageway (where most overshadowing would occur), the assessment has concentrated on the quality of daylight and sunlight levels within the proposed accommodation.
- 6.3.5 The report confirms that the development provides daylight levels which meet or exceed the target levels appropriate for such an urban environment. Where transgressions are present, they are generally minor and are in considered in keeping with the prevailing urban context.
- 6.3.6 Separate concern was raised by the owner of the Butler Pub as to the relationship between the proposal and the 2019 planning approval given for a 14-bed hotel located to the rear of the Butler's Pub (permission 180365/FUL). The submitted daylight/sunlight assessment demonstrates there would be no adverse impact on neighbouring properties or future developments, and furthermore, the nearest flank elevation of the pub has no windows within it. As the building does not provide permanent habitable

accommodation, as such, officers consider this proposed relationship to be acceptable in context to its urban location.

Noise and disturbance

- 6.3.7 Both the Face Bar and Butler Pub are popular and important parts of the town's night time economy. As recognised community/leisure facilities and entertainment venues, there is a need for officers to ensure that future residents of this development are able to suitably co-exist without prejudicing the commercial viability of either venue.
- 6.3.8 In this regard, the proposal is considered to trigger the 'Agent of change' principle. This principle is a successful means of protecting such venues from unnecessary closure. Local authorities have traditionally been required to act upon complaints from residents in new developments over noise levels from established music venues in the area in which they are located. Along with the prior approval process, this has been cited as a major factor across the country in the large numbers number of pub and venue closures in recent years.
- 6.3.9 The principle holds that the person or developer responsible for any change in the current situation must also be responsible for managing the impact of the change. This would mean that the developer of this new residential development near both venues is required to include appropriate noise attenuation measures for future occupants to manage the existing noise generated from these venues, or in extreme cases through noise easements. This position is held irrespective of how long the 'nuisance' has existed, historic instances of the same noise being a nuisance, or whether someone has moved into the vicinity of the noise in full knowledge of it.
- 6.3.10 Paragraph 182 of the NPPF recommends that decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated with existing land uses, which "*... should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established.*"
- 6.3.11 The Council's Environmental Protection Team have considered the noise assessment submitted with the application in detail. The information provided has specifically considered noise from both The Face Bar nightclub and the Butler Pub. However, as no live music or club nights were occurring at the time of the application due to Covid19, officers requested further information which contained noise data from approved noise reports for adjoining developments, which contained worst case scenarios from both venues when in full operation and live music occurring.
- 6.3.12 The noise assessment and an additional technical note provides an adequate assessment of the likely noise levels at the façade of the development using the highest noise levels for an event at the Face Bar by an acoustic specialist for a similar development. This confirms that in order to reduce intrusive noise to acceptable levels inside the flats, improved insulation, glazing with an enhanced performance, along with high-performance acoustic ventilators are recommended for those rooms which could be worst affected by potential noise from Face Bar. In order to ensure that the flats meet the required specification once built, it is recommended that a condition is attached, requiring acoustic tests to be carried out prior to occupation.

- 6.3.13 Officers have considered the objection received from the owner of the neighbouring Butler Pub. It should firstly be noted that ordinarily, a pub and residential uses are commonly seen as compatible uses. Most urban and rural pubs across the country are traditionally located next to or within close proximity of a residential use. In Reading itself, there are a number of successful and longstanding pubs which operate successfully with similar characteristics to the application site, which itself was once next to a terrace of housing.
- 6.3.14 The Noise Assessment which was submitted for the 14-bed hotel to the rear of the Butler's Pub (180365/FUL) concluded that the introduction of a hotel use would have no impact on the pub's ability to provide live music. The relevant committee report accepted there would no significant impact in regard to noise in relation to the new hotel use.
- 6.3.15 Based on the information provided within the Noise Assessment, the Council's Environmental Protection Officer considers it necessary for a specific tailored condition to be attached requiring a further assessment to be undertaken in order to specify suitable glazing for the eastern façade closest to the Pub. As currently the specification for that façade is based on the premise that the noise from music at The Butler is not higher than noise from other sources such as traffic noise. This does not take account of the audibility of music causing extra annoyance and the likely higher low frequency levels of that music noise. Therefore, the same, more stringent, criteria for internal noise used for the façades overlooking the Face Bar should also be used for the eastern façade (overlooking The Butler). It should be noted that new noise measurements are not necessarily required, simply a reassessment of required ventilation and glazing based on the existing measurements with the more stringent internal noise criteria applied.
- 6.3.16 With the use of these mitigation measures, Officers are of the view that the re-introduction of a residential use to the west of the Butler Pub is not considered to adversely affect the ability of the Pub to provide live music, as protected by the 'agent of change' principle.
- 6.3.17 In regard to both the Butler Pub and the Face Bar, once any required noise mitigation measures are implemented, the officer agree with EP officer that it will be necessary to require acoustic testing via condition to ensure that the mitigation provided is sufficient to ensure these noise levels are complied with, and therefore acceptable living standards for new residents are provided. National guidance also suggests that developers should inform potential purchasers/occupiers of the mitigation measures available to reduce the risk of later complaints to these adjoining venues. This advisory note can be included as an informative on any permission granted.

Air quality

- 6.3.18 An air quality assessment was submitted with this application. Following feedback from the Environmental Health Team, an additional technical note was required to determine whether future occupants would be exposed to concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) or particulate matter (as PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) above the UK air quality objectives set for the protection of health.
- 6.3.19 Detailed dispersion modelling of traffic on the local road network has been undertaken to predict pollutant concentrations at the proposed development in 2022, the anticipated opening year. The results of the modelling indicate

that there may be an exceedance of the annual mean air quality objective at the ground-floor residential façade and therefore it is recommended that the affected dwellings are mechanically ventilated to minimise exposure to poor air quality.

- 6.3.20 At the rear of the development and at first-floor level, the predicted concentrations are within the relevant objective limits. Ideally, any air intake for the mechanical ventilation system would be located at the rear of the development or above ground-floor level. If the intake is at the ground-floor roadside façade then NO_x filtration will be required. These matters can be secure via condition as recommended by the assessment.

Living conditions of future occupiers

- 6.3.21 All dwellings have been proposed to meet or exceed the nationally described space standard (as outlined in Policy H5) for the type of dwelling/number of bedrooms. Furthermore, the majority of flats contain designated home office spaces separate to bedrooms. This is a welcome feature which responds to changing lifestyle and employment habits accelerated by Covid19 and resulting in more working from home. As such, the internal arrangement of the flats are considered generous in this regard.

- 6.3.22 Policy H10 states that “... flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens”. In this instance, the majority of units have a private balcony/terrace (51 out of 54 units). Each balcony/terrace is accessed via the primary living space/habitable rooms by either glazed door or a set of bi-fold doors. The balcony/terraces are a sufficient size to allow a table and chairs and are considered commensurate with the size of such features within the area.

- 6.3.23 As described, a landscaped communal courtyard of 152sqm is proposed to the rear of the site by Eaton Place. This communal amenity area is to be enhanced with soft and hard landscaping. This space is considered to create a contemporary courtyard which provides access to the apartment frontages from the parking court, while creating more intimate seating areas for the residents to sit and enjoy as a landscaped space, whilst providing valuable defensible space to those ground floor units.

- 6.3.24 Despite balcony/terraces and communal landscaped courtyard providing sufficient amenity space for all occupants, for informal recreation residents will continue to require access public open space. The site is located 500m from the Victoria Park (5 minutes’ walk away). This park contains open space and play equipment for families.

Accessibility and lifetime homes

- 6.3.25 Policy H5(f) requires that on all developments of 20 or more new build dwellings, at least 5% of dwellings will be wheelchair user dwellings in line with M4(3) of the Building Regulations. Any market homes provided to meet this requirement will be ‘wheelchair adaptable’ as defined in Part M, whilst homes where the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating an individual may be ‘wheelchair accessible’.

- 6.3.26 The development includes 6 of the units (11%) are designed to be M4(3) compliant accessible units, and Officers are satisfied that this overprovision of accessibility/adaptability of the units is a welcome social benefit. To

ensure these units are provided and maintained as such, a compliance condition is recommended to state that a policy compliant proportion of wheelchair user dwellings are ready prior to first occupation and are retained as such thereafter.

6.4 Natural environment

6.4.1 The Local Plan recognises the importance of natural features, the valuable contribution they can make to a place and to people's quality of life, especially in a developed urban areas like this. There is a need for development in such locations to take all opportunities realistically available to integrated additional natural features into the overall design. These include natural and designed landscapes, a high public realm, and trees, grass, planting etc. This is a key aspect in demonstrating the Council's ambition and commitment to tackling climate change via the declared climate emergency and supported through the Council's Tree Strategy (2020) which identifies the area as having a low canopy coverage.

6.4.2 A detailed landscape plan is submitted with the application (See below). The proposals show a significant increase in tree and vegetation planting to the front and rear of the site. In particular, the generous tree planting fronting Chatham Street will enhance both local biodiversity and visual amenity of the local area, linking the site in to proposed landscaping to occur to the frontage of the Butler Pub in the hotel planning permission. The principles of the landscaping have been discussed at length with the Council's Natural Environment Officers during pre-application discussions and the scheme is supported by them and officers in this regard.



Fig 16 - Extract from Landscape Strategy plan 7396/ASP3.

- 6.4.3 With reference to the Landscape Strategy, officers agree that the precise tree species will need to be revisited and confirmed when final landscape details are determined via condition. The planting currently suggests inclusion of Cherries - with reference to our Tree Strategy, this species has been identified as being over-represented in the Borough (on Council land) and an over-reliance can risk disease spread. Agreement over the final positioning of the trees should consider where they will have minimal negative impact on the future residents, e.g. be placed in front of bedroom windows rather than living room (principal habitable room) windows. In addition, species will have to be of fastigiate (slender upright) form given the space available and provision of suitable tree pits and soil volume will have to be provided.
- 6.4.4 With reference to the Surface Water Drainage Strategy from a natural environment perspective, this provides the hierarchy that should be followed, however the proposal on this site is for an attenuation tank to store all surface water drainage from the proposed roof area, amenity gardens and shared parking area. Whilst officer preference would be for rainwater harvesting or to direct this to water the landscaping, it is recognised that this is challenging on restricted urban sites. These shortcomings do not represent a in principle conflict to the Council's Local Plan in order to warrant refusal.
- 6.4.5 In considering the level of greening that can be realistically secured on a what is a constrained site in an urban location, officers are of the view that the proposal provides a meaningful contribution to the local natural environment and performs a considerably greater role than the site does at present (car park and office buildings). This overall contribution is afforded positive weight in the overall balance.
- 6.4.6 With regard to ecology, the Council's Ecologist has considered the proposals and notes that demolition is involved which contains features suitable for use by roosting bats. Government guidance makes it clear the need for the presence or otherwise of protected species and the impact upon them to be established before the planning permission is granted. Covering such matters via planning condition after the grant of consent should only be explored in exceptional circumstances. As the Bat survey had not been received at the time of writing this report, but is expected prior to Planning Committee, any recommendation is subject to no objection being raised from the Council's Ecologist to the results of any submitted survey.
- 6.4.6 With regards to biodiversity enhancements, Section 6.3 of the Ecological Appraisal proposes a total of three 'Bat Tubes' (a kind of bat box built into the building fabric), or similar, to be integrated into the new build and a total of four bird boxes to also be integrated into the new build.
- 6.4.7 Subject to acceptance of other bat-related matters above, these enhancements can be secured via a condition. In addition a condition is required to ensure that if the buildings are to be demolished outside of the bird-nesting season (March - August inclusive) or if this is not practicable, a suitably qualified ecologist will survey the building prior within 48 hours of demolition and advise whether nesting birds are present. If active nests are recorded works that may any disturb active nest shall proceed until the nest is no longer occupied.

6.5 Health and wellbeing

- 6.5.1 The current Covid19 pandemic has highlighted the critical role our urban environment has on the way we live and work. It also highlights how, as a Local Planning Authority, supporting well planned development can have a huge impact on peoples' health, wellbeing, safety and overall comfort. In addition to the above discussion on amenity, the Council has an obligation to consider the following health and wellbeing topics in relation to any new development.
- 6.5.2 Maximising exposure to natural daylight, providing users with an external view and connection to nature are crucial measures in supporting the mental wellbeing of occupants and supported strongly by Policy CC8 'Safeguarding amenity'. As described, for an urban location all proposed flats have access to natural light, and outdoor space, with the smallest flats benefitting from multiple windows and external balconies serving living areas. Larger flats benefit from dual aspects in addition private balconies and in some case large private terraces. This access to private outside space would assist with recovery from respiratory illnesses, support any unintended or prolonged occupation should the situation require, or home working by choice. The development will maximise the use of natural daylight and reducing the need for artificial light by occupants through generous amounts of glazing.
- 6.5.3 In recognition of the challenges presented by climate change and with due regard to the Council's recently declared climate emergency, extreme temperatures can also have an immediate and detrimental effect on health and wellbeing of residents. Effectively controlling and regulating temperature both in warmer months and those colder months is crucial in maintaining a healthy and comfortable environment which is supported by Policy CC3: 'Adaptation to climate change'. Private balconies provide the opportunity for natural ventilation to habitable room, whilst also serve as shading elements for the openings of the floor below, obstructing direct solar gains during the peak hours of the summer.
- 6.5.4 Crime and the fear of crime also have a major impact on quality of life and the wellbeing of a building occupants and must be considered carefully on this site. Enabling occupants to feel safe and secure is therefore essential to successful, sustainable communities and is supported by Policy CC7 'Design and the public realm'. The proposed development now provides welcome natural surveillance of the adjacent streets and pedestrian areas between buildings.
- 6.5.5 As described in the previous section, green infrastructure and access to green space provides benefits not only to the natural environment, but to the building's occupants. This development provides all flats with private external amenity space or in a few cases, access to communal amenity space within the site. This offers the opportunity for fresh air, drying of clothes and importantly ventilation of internal spaces. Finally, designated working from home space is also considered a material and tangible benefit to occupants. Accordingly, the above health and wellbeing factors are considered material planning benefits which must be afforded weight in the overall balance.

6.6 Sustainability

- 6.6.1 Local Plan Policy H5 'Standards for New Housing' seeks that all new-build housing is built to high design standards. In particular, new housing should

adhere to national prescribed space standards, water efficiency standards in excess of the Building Regulations, zero carbon homes standards (for major schemes), and provide at least 5% of dwellings as wheelchair user units. Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) and Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that development proposals incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) seeks that developments of more than 20 dwellings should consider the inclusion of combined heat and power plant (CHP) or other form of decentralised energy provision.

- 6.6.2 The applicant has submitted a Energy and Sustainability statement as part of the application which follows the relevant policies and Sustainable Design and Construction SPD guidance applying the recognised energy hierarchy of 'be lean', 'be clean' and 'be green'.
- 6.6.3 The information submitted demonstrates that through the measures outlined in the energy strategy, it is anticipated that a 40.8% improvement below Building Regulations Part L compliant baseline is achievable (the Policy/SPD requirement is 35% improvement). In terms of decentralised energy, the inclusion of a decentralised system is not financially viable for a development of this size.
- 6.6.4 A sustainable drainage strategy (SuDs) has also been submitted as part of the application. No objection is raised by the Local Flood Authority (RBC Transport), subject to conditions to secure a timetable for its implementation and details of management and maintenance of the scheme and its implementation in accordance with the approved details.
- 6.6.5 Officers are satisfied that the proposals demonstrate a good standard of sustainability and in particular the requirement adhering to zero carbon homes standards and therefore the development exceeds policy compliance in this regard.

6.7 Transport

- 6.7.1 The site is located to the south of Chatham Street to the west of Reading Town Centre, and is accessed via Eaton Place. Eaton Place forms a junction with Chatham Street to the north and Oxford Road (A329) to the south which is a main transport and red route 'no stopping' corridor. The site is located within the Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area which is an area at the very heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments. This area is well served by rail and bus links and also contains the largest proportion of public car parking spaces. The site is within a 5-10 minute walk of Reading's primary shopping area.
- 6.7.2 Policy TR1 of the Reading Local Plan states that planning permission will not be granted unless there is a commitment to implement measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities, such as through provision to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport, and Policy TR5 states that 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.
- 6.7.3 A reduced total of 15 parking spaces (including 2 disabled spaces) will be provided within the site accessed from Eaton Place. While parking provision

is well below RBC's required standards, this is considered acceptable as it takes account the extensive parking restrictions in the area and the location of the site in terms of opportunities for both public transport and access to local services and facilities.

- 6.7.4 Policy TR5 of the Local Plan also states that ***“Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point.”*** In view of this, the development has committed to provide 4 no. Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to promote the use of renewable electric vehicles at time of build which is in excess of the required standard.
- 6.7.5 Pedestrian access is gained from Chatham Street, and as such the Council are processing a Section 278? agreement to dedicate land along the Chatham Street frontage of the site as Public Highway. The applicant is required to enter into a S278 Agreement to provide footpath access to the residential units and associated landscaping. The adoption of the land allows for the applicant to enter into a Section 142 licence with the Council permitting the developer to plant and maintain the proposed planting along that Chatham Street frontage.
- 6.7.6 It is proposed that large deliveries and servicing will be undertaken within the site (i.e. from Eaton Place and not Chatham Street). Swept path analysis has been undertaken for a refuse vehicle entering and turning within the site. The bin store is conveniently located on the ground floor of the building with direct access to the collection point. To allow the turning manoeuvre for a service vehicle, a new access is proposed off Eaton Place which is in the form of a bellmouth junction. This will necessitate the need for a S278 Agreement in its own right; however this can be in the form of a joint agreement given the alterations required along the Chatham Street frontage.
- 6.7.7 A cycle store will be provided on the ground floor of the building with direct access to Chatham Street. The proposed location is acceptable, however, officers require detailed plans confirming that the cycle parking provision meets the Council's adopted standards in terms of layout. Officers are content for this to be dealt with by way of a condition.
- 6.7.8 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. This will be secured via condition.

Car club

- 6.7.9 In line with the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD, the proposed development is required to provide a car club facility so as to reduce car ownership and the dependence on the private car but still allow residents to have access to a vehicle for those journeys where alternative modes may not be viable.
- 6.7.10 The Highway Authority are of the view that providing the car club on the Public Highway would be of benefit given that it would not only serve the application site but the wider area. The reason for this is that it becomes more accessible to the general public therefore increasing usage and giving the car club(s) more of an opportunity to be successful, particularly given

the opportunity for further patronage as other sites within the site allocation come forward.

- 6.7.11 To facilitate this, the applicant would be required to contribute £5,000 towards a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) so that the car club space/bay can be provided on the Highway. Given that the car club will need to serve this application site, it is proposed for the car club bay/space to be provided on Eaton Place, south of the application site. The delivery of such a bay, the line marking and signing, would be provided by the applicant by way of the S278 works which would be required as part of these works.
- 6.7.12 Given the size of the development, the Highway Authority are happy that the development provides a single car club vehicle on occupation of the development; however this should be continually reviewed so that should there be an increase in demand, an additional car club vehicle can be provided. In line with the Council's Parking Standards and SPD, the car club should be provided/funded by the developer for a duration of 5 years.
- 6.7.13 In light of the above, no transport or access objections to this application are raised subject to the recommended conditions.

6.8 S106/Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.8.1 The proposals would be liable for CIL. Any calculation may be subject to change, as the applicant could apply for relief on the on-site affordable housing units and or deferral of payment as permitted under new legislation enacted because of Covid19.
- 6.8.2 A construction phase Employment Skills and Training Plan would also be secured via the Section 106 legal agreement as per the Council's Employment Skills and Training SPD. This could be in the form of a site-specific plan or equivalent a financial contribution. As such, the S106 will secure this in a flexible manner covering both options.
- 6.8.3 With regard to any required planning obligation, a Section 106 Agreement would be required to secure the following heads of terms as described in this report:
- Secure the agreed level of on-site affordable housing consisting of 16 units (6x one-bedroom, 8x two-bedroom and 2x three-bedroom), of which 12 would be for Reading Affordable Rent and 4 shared ownership.
 - In the event that an Affordable Housing provider is not secured. The developer to pay to the Council the sum equivalent to 15% of the Gross Development Value of the development for provision of Affordable Housing elsewhere in the Borough. To be calculated (the mean average) from two independent RICS valuations to be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to first occupation of any market housing unit. To be paid prior to first occupation of any market housing unit and index-linked from the date of valuation
 - The developer should fund the provision of a car club bay on the surrounding highway network for a duration of 5 years
 - The provision of one car club vehicle should be provided on first occupation of the development.

- The car club usage should be reviewed on an annual basis (for 5 years) to establish whether the second vehicle is required.
- A contribution of £5,000 towards the Traffic Regulation to provide a car club bay, to be paid prior to commencement of the development.
- The applicant is required to enter into a S278 Agreement to provide the following:
 - Footpath access to the residential units and associated landscaping along the Chatham Street frontage
 - Access to the parking area / service access to the rear of the site.
 - Car club bay on Eaton Place to the south of the site
- Secure a construction phase Employment Skills and Training Plan or equivalent financial contribution. As calculated in the Council's Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013) - payable on commencement.
- All financial contributions index-linked from the date of permission.

6.8.4 Policies CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) and DM3 (Infrastructure Planning) allow for necessary contributions to be secured to ensure that the impacts of a scheme are properly mitigated. It is considered that each of the obligations referred to above would comply with the NPPF and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that it would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

6.9 Other matters

Equalities Impact

6.9.1 In 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 as identified in the Act 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.

Representations

6.9.2 All relevant matters raised are considered covered within the Appraisal section above.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposal would see a residential scheme on underutilised land allocated for housing within the local plan. The principle of development in land use terms is therefore considered acceptable. The overall dwelling mix proposed by the development is acceptable in accordance with the requirements of the local plan.

- 7.2 Economically, during the construction phase the proposed development would clearly contribute to and encourage associated economic activity by directly sustaining jobs in the borough. This would be supported further by a construction phase Employment Skills and Training Plan which can be secured via the Section 106 legal agreement. Through development of an under-utilised brownfield site, the development would make an important and positive contribution to the economic recovery of the borough throughout and following the Covid19 pandemic.
- 7.3 In the longer term, future occupants of 54 new flats will contribute to the viability and vitality of businesses in local area at a time where the economic health of the town is a key Council priority. Other related economic benefits include CIL contributions, the matters set out in the S106 Heads of Terms Council Tax receipts to the Council. The development would therefore clearly perform a positive economic role.
- 7.4 In terms of the social role, the proposal will undoubtedly fulfil one of the NPPF's core aims to 'boost significantly the supply of housing' and deliver a wide range of homes of different types and tenures. The proposal would contribute to meeting the Borough's identified housing need through an uplift in the site allocation, and of a mix and density appropriate to its sustainable location.
- 7.5 The proposal also makes positive policy complaint contribution towards affordable housing in the borough (30%). Ensuring a supply of good quality, secure and affordable housing to meet identified local housing needs is a key priority for Reading Borough Council as highlighted in the Council's Homelessness Strategy 2016-2021, Local Plan, and corporate objectives. Not only does this development provide a policy complaint on-site contribution, but also a tenure-mix in excess of policy. The development would therefore make a welcome contribution to improving access to local affordable housing to meet local needs and would constitute a significant and tangible public benefit in accordance with Policy H3 of the Local Plan
- 7.6 In design terms, the site is currently a notable underutilised site next to a prominent listed building. The proposed development is considered to positively improve the character and appearance of the immediate area, by providing much needed visual uplift to what is a busy arterial route, allow better passive surveillance and activity along what is currently an inactive frontage and to the backland along Eaton Place.
- 7.7 In terms of health and wellbeing, as described, the development is considered to create a good quality level of residential accommodation that would not prejudice or prevent future occupiers from enjoying a good quality of life, hinder any recovery from respiratory illnesses, or make any unintended or prolonged occupation by residents difficult should the situation require. This includes the internal provision of home offices for occupants. Accordingly, the above health and wellbeing factors are considered key material social benefits and comply with Policy CC8 of the Local Plan.
- 7.8 Finally, with regard to the historic environment, Officers do consider that the proposal would on the whole have a negative impact (i.e. it would cause harm) to the existing setting of the Butler Pub due to the re-introduction of built form on its western flank elevation. As made clear, in this instance,

Officers consider that the harm caused to the setting of the Listed Building would be 'less than substantial'. As described earlier in this report, para 196 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

- 7.9 As concluded, Officers are of the view that the above public benefits are substantial and compelling and outweigh the 'less than substantial harm' caused to the setting of the Butler Pub through the introduction of development in the first place. This complies with national requirements and that of Policy EN1 of the Local Plan.
- 7.10 With regard to the natural environment and the role this development will play in meeting the challenge of climate change, it is recognised that this residential development would inherently meet an enhanced level of sustainability than existing through compliance with the Council's enhanced energy efficiency and sustainability standards. By utilising allocated previously developed land, the proposal will meet the Council's spatial strategy for the location of new development by reusing land of low environmental value.
- 7.11 In terms of sustainable transport and supporting the Council's key objective of reduced car usage and improved air quality, the proposal would provide desirable cycle facilities for residents and a S278 agreement and TRO allowing the creation of a new car club for residents. These are additional wider public benefits which fulfil the environmental dimension of sustainable development.
- 7.12 On-site planting and landscaped amenity areas would provide visual and environmental benefits to immediate area, thereby allowing the site to confidently perform a far greater environmental role than it does currently.

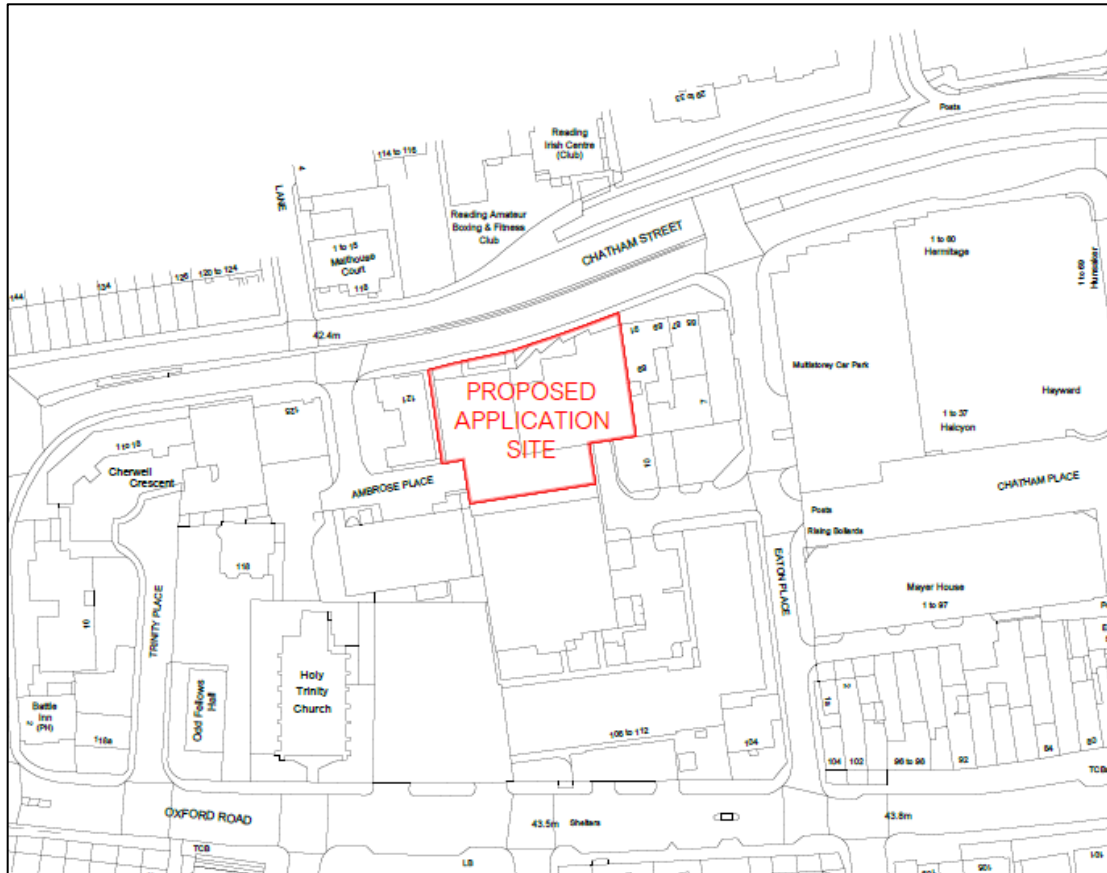
Summary

- 7.13 In conclusion, the proposed development is considered to provide substantial and compelling public benefits, fulfilling many aspects which contribute to achieving the three dimensions of sustainable development.
- 7.14 Having regard to all matters raised, it is considered that the 'less than substantial harm' caused to the setting of the Butler Pub would be significantly and demonstrably outweighed by those identified benefits when assessed against the relevant policies in the Framework as a whole and the Council's Local Plan. Therefore, when applying an overall critical planning balance of all material considerations presented, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of a S106 Legal Agreement.

Case Officer: Brian Conlon

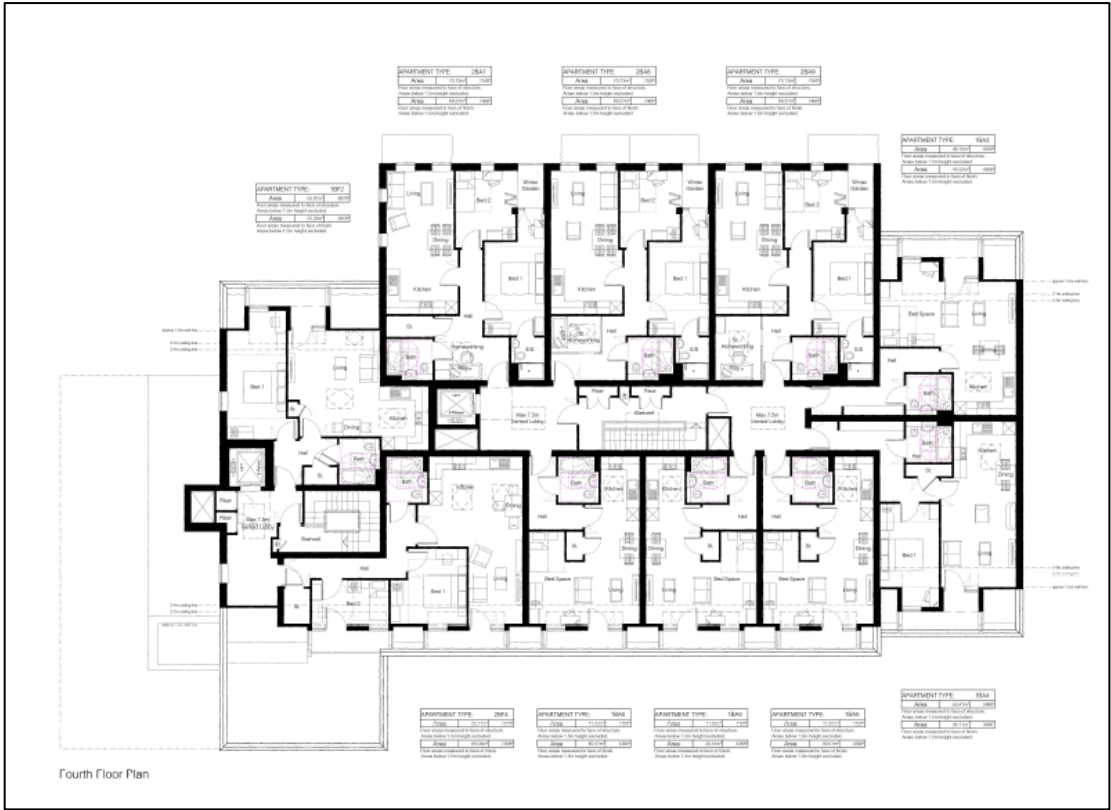
8. Plans and photos

Site Plan



Site Layout





Fourth Floor Plan

North and west elevation



Front Elevation

Side Elevation

South and east elevation



Landscape Strategy Plan





SITE PHOTOS

Looking west along Curzon Street



Looking north east from Oxford Road



Looking east towards Butler PH



Looking south into site



Looking south into site



Looking southwest into site



Looking west in the site



Looking northwest from Eaton Place



COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21 July 2021
ITEM NO.

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 210879

Address: 134 Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7NL

Proposal: Install Artwork on existing metal railings on a vacant site to the West of 134 Oxford Road

Applicant: Reading Borough Council Economic & Cultural Development

Deadline: 22/07/2021

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant

Conditions

3 years to implement

Materials as proposed

Construction Methods Statement

Informatives

Positive & Proactive

Section 59 Highways Act advice

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is on the pavement immediately to the south of the railings bordering the car park that once served Central Swimming Pool. The site is in the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area.



Site Location Plan



Site photo



Aerial View

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for two art works presented on aluminium sheets to be located on the railings. As shown below they would measure 6 metres long by 1.8 metres high.



- 2.2 Submitted Plans and Documentation:
ECD/21/001/01 Proposed Plan and Elevations
Location Plan
Block Plan
Planning Statement including Heritage Statement
- 2.3 The Planning Statement explains that in connection with the High Street Heritage Action Programme running in parts of the town centre, including this town centre end of Oxford Road the Council was awarded £9,231 from Historic England to initiate a cultural pilot project around the Oxford Road.
- 2.4 As part of the project, the University of Reading collected residents' stories and memories that would be used as the inspiration for three new art projects along the Oxford Road. Three local artists were selected by a community panel to produce exciting new art works along the eastern end of Oxford Road, their projects aiming to amplify the local heritage and rich multicultural history of the road. Gemma Anusa has been asked to produce this artwork for the railings at the Oxford Road end of the Battle Street Car Park, which is the subject of this Planning Application.
- 2.5 The Planning Statement describes the proposed works as follows:
“The proposed work is called “Through Your Eyes” and will consist of two parts, which will be presented either side of the pedestrian entrance to the car park. The content of the design will be two half portrait faces which reflect the diversity of the area, with a gradient skin tone and hair and eye colourings. Embedded into the portraits and background will be quotes, dates, stories that reference the history of the Oxford Road area and the resident’s stories and memories, which were collected from the research by the University of Reading. The installation will be on display for at least until the end of the Oxford Road HSHAZ project, which would be March 2024.”
- 2.6 The Heritage Statement explains that:
“Early 19th century mapping evidence suggests that shops with residential accommodation above them extended westward from the town centre; notably between Alfred Street and Eaton Place and also between Russell Street and Waylen Street. However, the nature of the shops and services has altered over time, reflective of incoming immigrant populations. The current speciality hair salons, grocers and bakers, along with the estate agents, key cutters, pharmacies and dentists, all serve the needs of the diverse local community and Reading’s wider population. Today’s

businesses are a continuation of the Oxford Road's history of diverse retail services established over many generations.

The application site for the art work is the boundary fence of a modern car park that once served the Central Swimming Pool. The pool has recently been demolished and the site is to be redeveloped for residential use. The existing railings to the remaining car park provide an ideal opportunity to brighten the appearance of this part of the Oxford Road while celebrating the local history.

The site of the proposed Artwork Installation is on a busy pedestrian and vehicular traffic route and the diverse nature of the local community and the character of the area makes the application site the ideal location”.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant to this application.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Statutory: As the site is in a conservation area a notice was displayed on site and published in the local paper.

Non-statutory:

Conservation Area Advisory Committee: No objections received

Conservation and Urban Design Officer: No objections received

Valuations: No objections received

Transport: No objections received

Public

Neighbouring properties were notified by letter. No objections received.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.2 The development plan for this Local Planning Authority is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

EN6: New Development in a Historic Context

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

RL3: Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 Principle of development

6.1.1 The principle of providing the art works as proposed in the selected location has been considered in the context of the site being in a Conservation Area and forming part of the public realm and as discussed further below raises no policy concerns and so the structures are therefore acceptable in principle.

6.2 Design & Appearance - Impact on Conservation Area

6.2.1 The pair of artworks would be large and eye catching and located in a position where they would be seen by many members of the public, which is the objective of the scheme. The proposed location on existing car park railings would screen what is an unattractive area of unused car park from view and so would be a benefit to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The image being provided on an existing functional structure makes it an object of interest and fun so would also contribute to the vitality of this area of local shops.

6.2.2 Policy EN1 requires that historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment will be protected and where possible enhanced. Policy EN3 then focuses on conservation areas by requiring that development proposals within these areas should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

6.2.3 Overall the conclusion is that the proposed works would not harm or detract from any historic features or other elements of the historic environment and as mentioned above would hide the unused car park. It would be an improvement in that respect to the public realm and while clearly a very modern piece of work through its connection with the local area would make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The proposal is therefore compatible with the aims of Policy CC7, EN1 and EN3. It is also clearly relevant that the project is supported by Historic England as part of the local High Street Heritage Action Zone.

6.3 Impact on neighbours

6.3.1 Officers are satisfied that given the distance from closest residents or occupiers the art work structures will not lead to any harm to amenities. Therefore, there is no breach of Policy CC8.

6.4 Highway matters

6.4.1 No transport or highways related concerns have been however an informative is recommended to advise on the need to consider the Highways Act when works are being carried out to install the works to ensure pedestrians and road users are not obstructed and any damage caused is repaired.

6.5 Equalities Impact

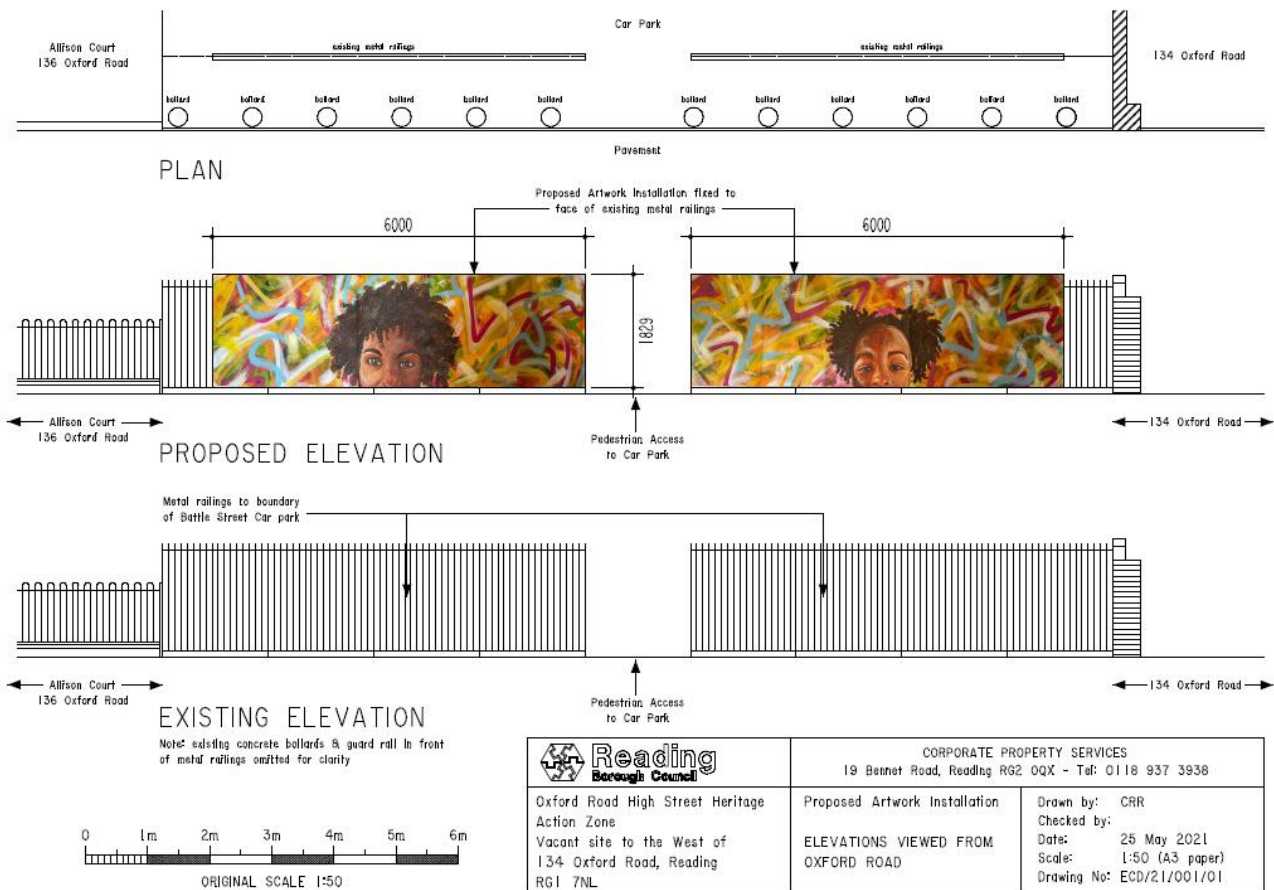
6.5.1 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will

have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this 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 proposed development.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This proposal has been carefully considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and has been found to be acceptable. The recommendation is shown above.

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes



Proposed Plan

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COMMITTEE REPORT TEMPLATE

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21 July 2021

Ward: **Battle**

App No.: **210583**

Address: **75 Loverock Road, Reading**

Proposal: Change of use of 75 Loverock Road from B8 to B2 requiring minor alterations and erection of substation and external plant area.

Applicant: **Stephen George & Partners**

Deadline: **2 August 2021**

RECOMMENDATION: 210583/FUL

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives.

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

- 1) TL1 - 3 yrs
- 2) AP1 - Approved Plans
- 3) M2 - Materials to match existing
- 4) C1 - Hours of Construction
- 5) C4 - No Bonfires
- 6) DC7 - Refuse and Recycling to be approved (to be vermin proof)
- 7) SU6 - BREEAM Post construction
- 8) DC1 - Vehicle Parking as specified
- 9) DC3 - Vehicle Access as specified
- 10) DC5 - Cycle Parking as specified

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

- 1) IF5 - Terms and Conditions
- 2) IF6 - Building Regulations
- 3) IF2 - Pre-Commencement Conditions
- 4) IF3 - Highways
- 5) IF7 - Complaints about Construction
- 6) IF8 - Encroachment
- 7) IF1 - Positive & Proactive.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

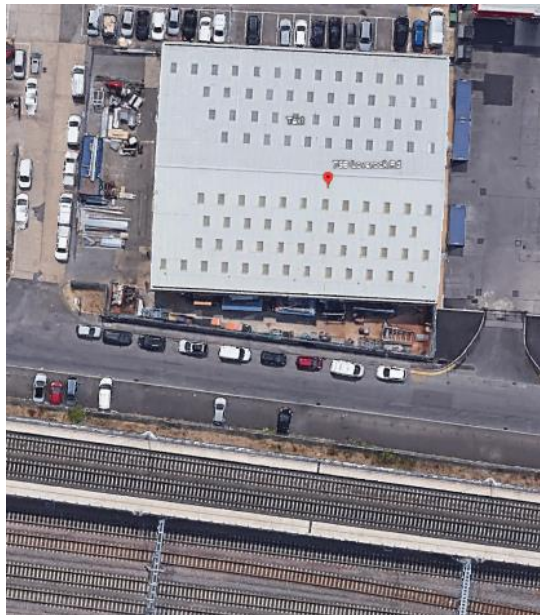
1.1 The site is located in the EM2h: Portman Road industrial estate, Core Employment area and AQMA. The site comprises 2 industrial units, split into 75A and 75B Loverock Road. The site area measures 1628 sqm has a self-contained yard and 20 car parking spaces on the opposite side of Loverock Road.

1.2 Loverock Road is accessed from Richfield Avenue and the Great Western main railway line is located to the north of the site.

Site Location Plan



Aerial photo (not to scale)



2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for a change of use from B8 to B2 for the entire premises at 75A and 75B Loverock Road, with a long lease taken for both units operating in tandem. It is proposed to maintain the existing 3 points of vehicular access to the site.
- 2.2 Minimal changes are proposed to the existing building with minor changes to fenestration on the East elevation to enable a new internal layout. New flues, air intake and extract grilles are proposed with a new substation and external plant.
- 2.3 Submitted Plans and Documentation:
The following plans and supporting documents have been assessed:

Received 7 June 2021

21-035-SGP DR A 130100 Rev P0 Existing floor plans

21-035-SGP DR A 130200 Rev P0 Existing elevations and section

21-035-SGP DR A 131000 Rev P0 Proposed location plan

21-035-SGP DR A 131001 Rev P0 Proposed site plan

21-035-SGP DR A 131100 Rev P0 Proposed floor plans

21-035-SGP DR A 131200 Rev P0 Proposed elevations and section

Other documentation

Steris Reading Design & Access statement, 25.03.21

Sustainability statement, Couch Perry Wilkes, Rev P01

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. No additional gross internal area (0 sqm) is proposed and so it is not CIL liable.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The following is a summary of some of the main decisions.

Listed as 75a Loverock Road

- 160757/FUL (PP-05046602) Change of use from waste transfer facility to flexible Class B8 (storage and distribution)/ Class B2 (General Industrial)/Class B1 (Business) use. Permitted (5 August 2016)
- 110790/FUL (11-01898-FUL). Change of use and conversion of the existing warehouse into a church and community centre (resubmission of planning application 11/01066/FUL). Refused (16 August 2012).
- 111485/FUL (11-01066-FUL) Change of use and conversion of the existing warehouse into a church and community centre. Withdrawn (2 September 2011)

Listed as 75 Loverock Road

- 090611 (09-00909-FUL). Change of use of land and building to waste transfer facility. Permitted (28 August 2009) Subject to legal agreement of £14,000 as a contribution towards the Council's costs (including preliminary investigation, design and supervision fees) of carrying out transport improvements and measures identified in the central and western action plan areas as identified in the Local Transport Plan and Reading Urban Area Package.

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Statutory

No statutory consultations were required given the nature of the application.

4.2 Non-statutory

RBC - Transport

No comments have been received at this time.

Environmental health

No comments have been received at this time.

Sustainability team

No comments have been received at this time.

Officer note: Transport or Environmental Health had objections to application 160757 for a Change of use from waste transfer facility to flexible Class B8 (storage and distribution)/ Class B2 (General Industrial)/Class B1 (Business) use. However, should comments be received from consultees they will be provided to the meeting in an update report.

4.3 Public

A site notice was displayed and letters were sent to 61-73, 75, 83 Loverock, 22, 22, 24 and 24b Portman Road. No comments have been received.

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which also 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:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 6 - Building a Strong Competitive Economy

Section 8 - Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places

Section 14 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan - November 2019

Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN15: Air Quality

Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

Policy EN17: Noise Generating Equipment

Policy EN18: Flooding and Drainage

Policy EM1: Provision of Employment Development

Policy EM2: Location of New Employment Development

Policy EM4: Maintaining a Variety of Premises

Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Policy TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
- Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
- Planning Obligations under S106 (2015)

Other Relevant Documents

- Technical Guidance to the NPPF (Mar 2012)
- National Planning Policy Guidance: Flood Risk and Coastal Change, March 2014
- National Planning Practice Guidance: Noise, 27th July 2019
- National Design Guide (MHCLG, October 2019)

6.0 APPRAISAL

6.1 The main matters to be considered are - eg:

- (i) Principle of development
- (ii) Transport/Parking
- (iii) Environmental matters
- (iv) Design
- (v) Sustainability
- (vi) Other Matters
- (vii) S106
- (viii) Equalities impact

(i) Principle of development

6.2 The proposed uses (B1, B2 and/or B8) are appropriate within a Core Employment Area. The closest residential dwellings are 146 metres from the building, with existing warehouses in between.

6.3 Policy CC1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) requires a positive approach to development proposals that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which lies at the heart of the National Policy Framework (para. 11 NPPF).

6.4 The three overarching objectives defined in the NPPF, to achieving sustainable development are economic, social and environmental. With regard to the economic role, the proposal would contribute to economic activity through contributing to *“building a strong, responsive and competitive economy”* as defined in the NPPF, both through the construction period and as part of the ongoing operation of the proposed distribution and retail uses. The proposal would also enable businesses to adapt and would support economic growth (para 80. NPPF).

6.5 Policy EM4 supports maintaining a variety of premises and the site does not lie within the areas south of the Basingstoke Road which should maintain the overall level of storage and distribution uses.

6.6 The change of use will contribute towards employment in the area on behalf

of Steris, 'a leading provider of infection prevention and other procedural products and services' as a company focussed primarily on healthcare, pharmaceutical and medical device customers. The principle of the change of use is considered to be acceptable.

(ii) Transport/Parking

- 6.7 In August 2009, planning permission was granted for 'Change of use of land and building to waste transfer facility' for non-hazardous and dry commercial waste. Prior to the waste transfer use, the property was used as a warehouse for storage and distribution (Use Class B8) and in August 2016 for 'Change of use from waste transfer facility to flexible Class B8 (storage and distribution)/ Class B2 (General Industrial)/Class B1 (Business) use'. Parking provision is being retained with a self-contained yard and 20 car parking spaces.
- 6.8 It has not been indicated whether the change of use will increase vehicle trips to the site, however, it is unlikely that the proposal would result in a material impact on the safety and efficiency of the local highway network. In addition, the site is located in a Core Employment Area which is suitable for commercial traffic associated with B2 and B8 type uses. The proposed development is not considered to create a harmful increase in volume of traffic and parking.

(iii) Environmental matters

- 6.9 **Noise** - Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) states that development should not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties including, but not solely, with respect to artificial lighting and noise. The nearest residential dwellings are 146m away at the closest point. Due to the distance between the site and the nearest residential housing, in addition to its location adjacent to the railway lines, the development is not considered to create a harmful impact on the environment in terms of noise or odour. The change of use will be subject to Building regulations and if relevant, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health COSHH safety guidelines.
- 6.10 In terms of noise generating equipment and the requirement for plant noise level to be at least 10db below the existing background noise (Policy EN17) the submitted Noise Assessment confirms that the maximum noise levels would meet this requirement.
- 6.11 **Air** - The site is located within an Air Quality Management Area (Policy EN15), but it is unlikely that air quality would worsen as a result of the development, and the proposal is therefore, acceptable in this regard.
- (iv) Design
- 6.12 RBLP Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm, requires all development to be of a "high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located." Design includes layout, landscape, density and mix, scale: height and massing, and architectural details and materials. Developments will also be assessed to ensure that they respond positively to their local context".
- 6.13 Minor changes are proposed to the external building elevations, substation and external plant that are not considered to have any adverse impact on

the function or setting of 75 Loverock Road and would accord with Policy CC7.

(v) Sustainability

- 6.14 There are several policies within the local plan which are relevant to new development and sustainability. The newly adopted Supplementary Planning Document ‘Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)’ also emphasises the need and importance of securing positive environmental improvements as part of any new major development.
- 6.15 The overarching sustainability policy CC2 requires proposals for new development including the refurbishment and redevelopment of existing building stock, to reduce the consumption of resources and materials and includes that *“All major non-residential developments .. meet the most up-to-date BREEAM ‘Excellent’ standards, where possible”* and that *“Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.”*
- 6.16 The supporting text (para 4.1.4) accepts that *“some types of development, such as industrial uses, warehouses and schools might find it more difficult to meet these standards. In these cases, developments must demonstrate that the standard to be achieved is the highest possible for the development, and at a minimum meets the BREEAM ‘Very Good’ standard.”*
- 6.17 Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change, requires that *“all developments demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change.”*
- 6.18 Policy CC4: Decentralised Energy states *“Any development of more than 20 dwellings and/ or non-residential development of over 1,000 sq m shall consider the inclusion of decentralised energy provision, within the site, unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is not suitable, feasible or viable for this form of energy provision”*. Supporting text in para. 4.1.19 states that this policy would mainly apply in Central Reading.
- 6.19 Policy CC5 requires minimisation of waste during construction and the life of the development.
- 6.20 The proposed design promotes *‘reduced CO2 emissions from delivered energy consumption by minimising operational energy demand through best-practice measures’*. The following actions are proposed:
- Incorporate energy efficiency measures and best practice design
 - Incorporate recycled materials and materials with low embodied energy impact
 - Incorporate water efficiency measures
 - Incorporate measures to reduce waste.
 - Incorporate measures to encourage sustainable transport
- 6.21 The Sustainability report submitted by Couch Perry Williams conducted an appraisal of measures that would be feasible and not all options were

available due to the limitations of the site. Officers are satisfied that the measures that are proposed would be sufficient to meet sustainability policy requirements, subject to conditions regarding the submission and approval of a post construction BREEAM report, as included in the Recommendation above.

(vi) S106

6.22 In accordance with Policy CC9 and TR2, the following obligation has been considered:

- Employment, Skills and Training - construction and end user

6.23 Due to the continued provision of employment and the existing use of half the site in B2 use, in this instance it is not considered reasonable to request any S106 contribution. The applicant will be encouraged to work with Reading UK CIC to prepare employment Skills Plans.

(vii) Equalities impact

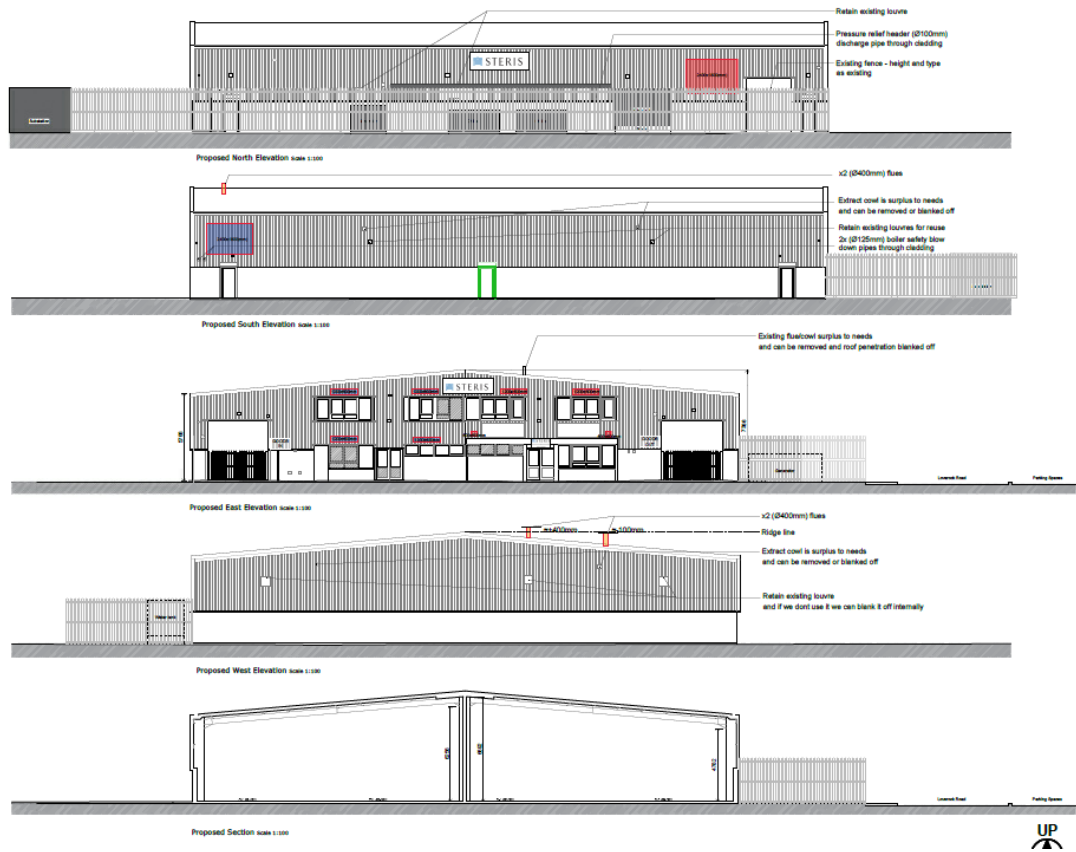
6.24 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified in the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, 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.

7.0 CONCLUSION

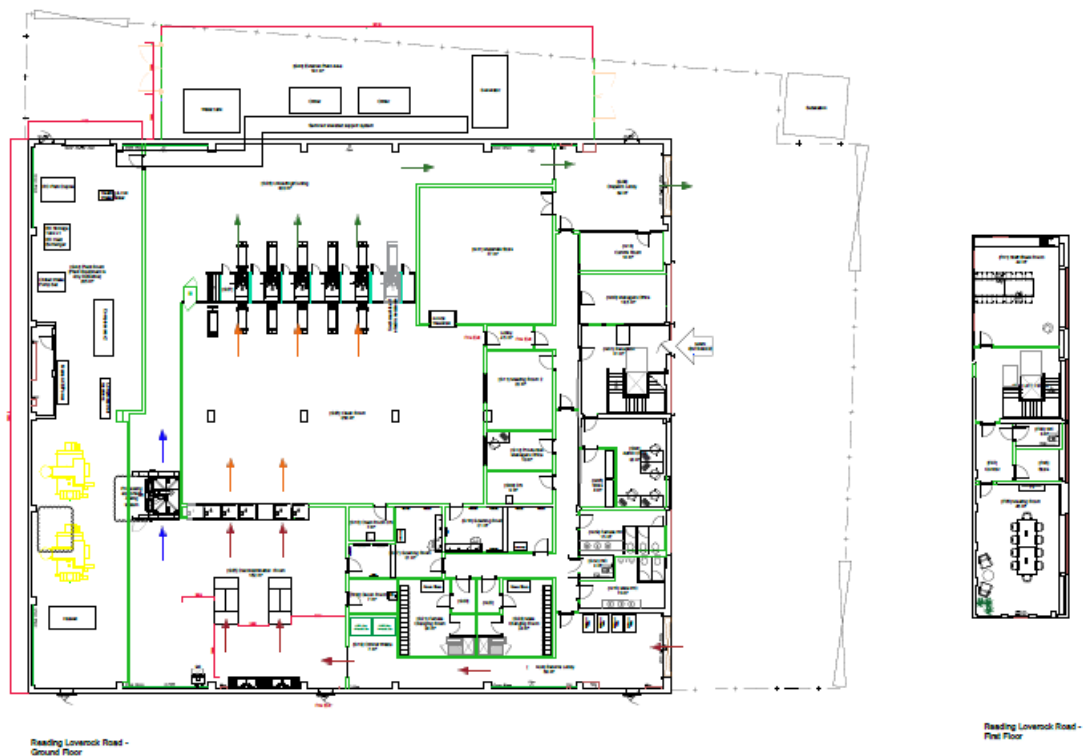
7.1 The proposal is considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions. Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant to obtain additional information in relation to the proposed development.

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

Proposed elevations



Proposed floor plans



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21st July 2021

Ward: Caversham

App No: 210471/LBC

Address: Caversham Court Environmental Centre, Church Road, Caversham, Reading

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for Listed Building Consent for the installation of a toilet facility in a store room in single storey outbuilding of the main Stable Block.

Applicant: Property Estates & Valuation

Date validated: 25/3/2021

Target Date: 20/05/2021

Extended target date: 23/07/2021

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT listed building consent subject to conditions, to include:

1. Time limit for implementation
2. Approved plans
3. Materials as submitted

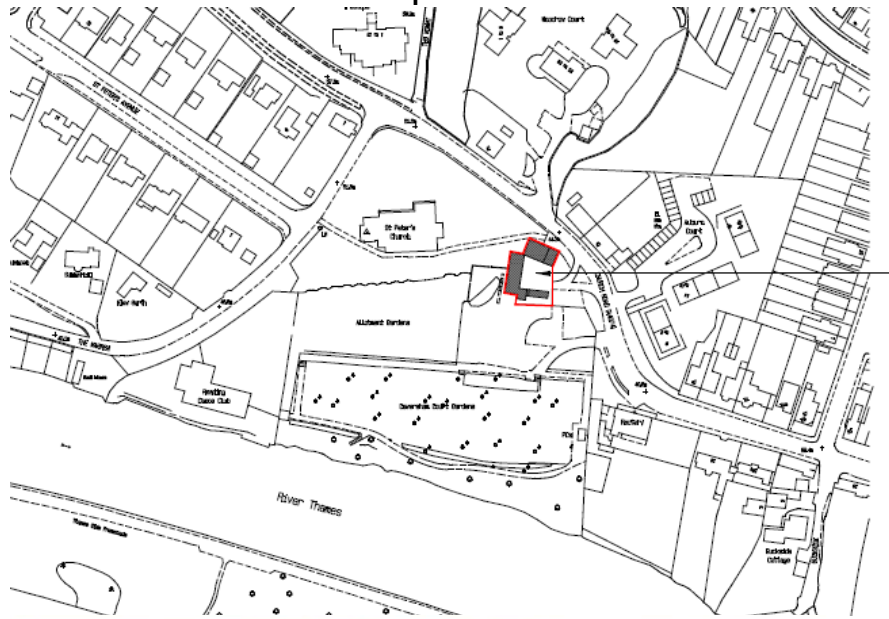
Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The proposal site forms part of the Caversham Court Stables building and is located within the grounds of Caversham Court Gardens, which are a Grade II Listed Park and Garden. The site also lies in the St. Peter's Church Conservation Area of Caversham and the Caversham Ward of Reading. The buildings are Grade II Listed.
- 1.2 The Gardens are adjacent to St Peter's Church (which is Grade II* listed) and the associated churchyard. There are also several other Grade II listed structures within the park itself, including a 17th Century Gazebo, retaining walls to the raised walk/causeway to the gazebo, retaining walls to the axial east-west garden walk, the crinkle-crankle retaining wall forming the north boundary of the allotments and the stable block (to the demolished mansion house).
- 1.3 This listed building consent application is reported to the Planning Applications Committee for a decision as the application has been submitted by the Council's Property Estates & Valuation section.

Site Location Plan and aerial photo



Caversham Court Stables
 Project: Proposed Park Officer's Toilet
 Title: Aerial photograph of site
 Scale: 1:500 @A3



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Site photos provided by applicant within Design & Access Statement



Stable Block and part of the Victorian Coach House (west & north wings)



Elevation of southern wing of stable block - location of proposed toilet

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Listed building consent is sought to provide toilet facilities in one of the stores in the single storey southern wing of the Stable Block. It will be adjacent to the existing Park Officer's Office which is located in the same block. The toilets would for use by Park Officers that work in Caversham Court Gardens.
- 2.2 The applicant has explained that these new facilities are needed to replace the existing dilapidated toilet located in the main Stable Block. Reading Borough Council is committed to retaining an on-site gardener to maintain the park and gardens to the high standard that the numerous national awards testify to. The existing toilet and store will be refurbished to become part of the Stable Block so that the entire building can be leased to a tenant and the

subsequent income from the rent will help to ensure the long-term future of the building.

- 2.3 The proposed new doorway which is to be formed in the brick wall in the covered passageway will be fitted with a security door and frame manufactured from steel to match the existing door to the Park Officer's Office.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

Most relevant:

130168 - Re-configuration of the main stairs in the stable block and minor alterations to the internal layout including new partitions and doors. Structural repairs to the coach houses and alterations to provide conference/meeting rooms with supporting facilities. Permitted 17/10/2013.

130169 - Re-configuration of the main stairs in the stable block and minor alterations to the internal layout including new partitions and doors. Structural repairs to the coach houses and alterations to provide conference/meeting rooms with supporting facilities. New open covered walkway between the buildings with a clear glass roof. Permitted 19/06/2013.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Statutory:

The limited scope of the application and the classification of the buildings and gardens (not Grade I or Grade II*) means that the proposed works fall outside of the criteria set for when proposals for development need Historic England to be consulted. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Amendment (England) Regulations 2105 (SI 2015/809).

Non-Statutory:

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee did not respond to their consultation.

The Reading Borough Council Conservation & Urban Design Officer raised no objection to the proposals.

Public:

The applicant has confirmed a site notice was displayed on 21st April 2021. A press notice was published on 29 April 2021. No responses from the public have been received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 The Notification to Historic England and National Amenities Societies and the Secretary of State (England) Direction 2015, which came into force on 15 April, 2015, confirmed that applications submitted by the local authority for works to its own listed buildings should only be referred to the Secretary of

State if an objection has been received from Historic England or a National Amenity Society.

- 5.3 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
Reading Borough Council Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

6.0 APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The main issue to consider for this application is the effect the proposal may have on the historic fabric and character of the Grade II listed building and adjacent gardens.

- 6.2 Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that all proposals will be expected 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. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits. Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.

- 6.3 The details of the proposed works are described as follows:

- The proposed external door and frame will be manufactured from steel with a powder coated finish in a matt green colour (RAL 6024) to match the existing metal window frames and doors.
- The proposed toilet cubicle will be constructed from timber studwork clad with plasterboard mounted on plywood to provide a robust assembly.
- The plasterboard will be decorated with matt emulsion paint to match the internal walls of the Store.
- The cubicle door will be a flush plywood door hung in a softwood frame, decorated with gloss paint. The door will be fitted with appropriate hardware.
- The new sanitaryware will consist of one commercial quality w.c. suite and one wash hand basin, both made from white vitreous china and fitted with appropriate accessories.
- The existing window in the new toilet cubicle will have an obscure privacy film applied to the internal face of the glass.

The conclusion reached is that the proposed development will have minimal impact on the character of the building and will not be visible from the public areas of Caversham Court Stables or the Gardens or the Conservation Area.

- 6.4 The Heritage Statement emphasises that the works are mainly internal and not visible from the street scene. The proposed works are considered minor and would not cause material harm to the heritage asset or its surrounding

and are therefore in accordance with Policies CC7, CC8, EN1 and EN3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Equality

- 6.5 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age 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 proposed works are considered to be acceptable in the context of national and local planning policy, and would involve no greater material harm to the fabric of the Heritage Asset, as set out in this report. The application is recommended for approval on this basis.

Plans considered:

Planning & Heritage Statement

Drawings:

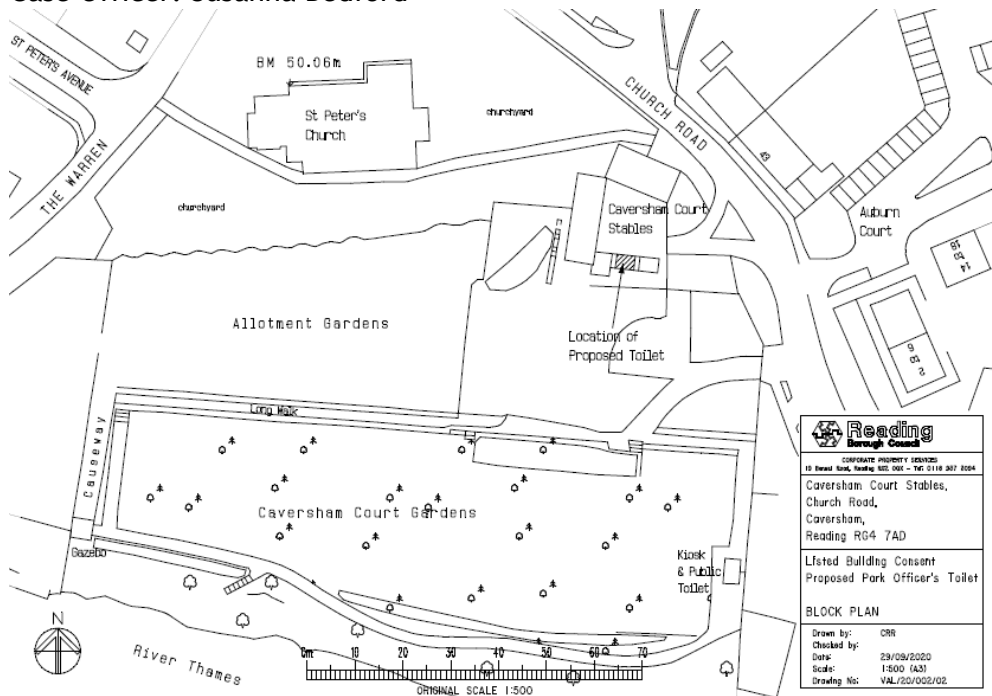
Location Plan VAL/20/002/01

Block Plan VAL/20/002/02

Existing Floor Plan VAL/20/002/03

Proposed Floor Plan VAL/20/002/04A

Case Officer: Susanna Bedford



Block plan

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21st July 2021

Ward: Church

App No.: 201141/FUL

Address: 65 Northcourt Avenue, Reading

Proposal: Construction of a 15 bedroom building (C2 use) with ancillary accommodation and associated works.

Applicant: Northcourt Lodge Nursing Home

Deadline: 27th October 2020 and an extension of time has been agreed to 30th July 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT full planning permission, subject to conditions, to include:

1. Time limit for implementation
2. Approved plans
3. Materials to be used externally
4. Obscure glazing
5. Hours of construction and demolition
6. Construction Method Statement (to be submitted)
7. No bonfires
8. Bin storage (to be approved)
9. Vehicle Parking (as specified)
10. Cycle parking (to be approved)
11. Car Parking Management Plan
12. EV Charging Points
13. Landscaping including additional planting to the north boundary (to be approved)
14. Arboricultural Method Statement (as specified)

Informatives to include:

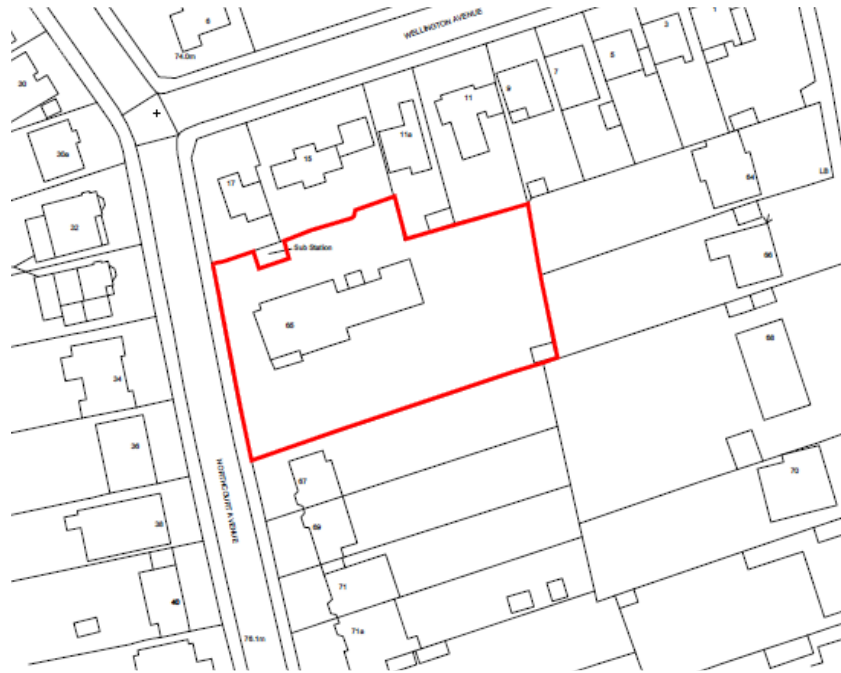
1. Pre-commencement conditions
2. Positive and proactive
3. Terms and conditions
4. Building regulations
5. Complaints about construction
6. Highways
7. Do not damage the verge
8. Thames Water - Groundwater Risk Management Permit
9. Thames Water - Public Sewers
10. Thames Water - minimum pressure

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is Northcourt Lodge Nursing Home which is currently a 22 bedroom care home. The care home accommodates registered care categories such as dementia, Alzheimer's, cancer care, other specialist care for people over the age of 65 and more recently requests for long term COVID beds as well as respite beds. The home is located on a large plot and bound by residential properties on Wellington Avenue, Shinfield Road and Northcourt Avenue.

- 1.2 The care home has been extended in the past and is a two storey rectangular shaped building with some attractive features to the original building. A car park is located to the north of the building.
- 1.3 The application has been called in to Planning Applications Committee by Councillor Pearce following neighbour concerns.

Site Location Plan



2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the construction of a two storey detached building within the grounds of the existing nursing home to provide an additional 15 bedrooms.
- 2.2 The proposal as originally submitted was for a detached building to accommodate 17 bedrooms and a new access from Northcourt Avenue along with 4 additional parking spaces. The proposal was amended which reduced the number of bedrooms to 15, reduced the size of the two storey front and rear projections, increased the parking, removed the proposed new access and included the submission of an Arboricultural Report, Tree Protection Plan and Tree Plan.
- 2.3 The proposal involves a new driveway within the site, additional parking, planting and landscaping. The materials consist of brick (and render to the top of the gables) and tiles.

3. SUBMITTED PLANS AND DOCUMENTS:

The following plans and documents were submitted on 13th August 2021:
 Drawing No: 0001 - Site Location Plan
 Drawing No: 100 - Existing Site Plan
 Drawing No: 101 - Existing Floor Plans
 Drawing No: 102 - Existing Elevations

Drawing No: 110 - Proposed Site Plan
Drawing No: 111 - Proposed Northcourt Lodge Elevations
Drawing No: 112 - Proposed Floor Plans
Drawing No: 113 - Proposed Elevations
Drawing No: 114 - Proposed Street Scene & Site Sections
Drawing No: 115 - Building Sections
Design & Access Statement

The agent submitted the following amended plans, received on 16th December 2020:

Drawing No: 0001 - Site Location Plan
Drawing No: 100 - Existing Site Plan
Drawing No: 101 - Existing Floor Plans
Drawing No: 102 - Existing Elevations
Drawing No: 110 Rev C - Proposed Site Plan
Drawing No: 111 - Proposed Northcourt Lodge Elevations
Drawing No: 112 Rev C - Proposed Floor Plans
Drawing No: 113 Rev C - Proposed Elevations
Drawing No: 114 Rev C - Proposed Street Scene & Site Sections
Drawing No: 115 Rev B - Building Sections

The following documents were submitted on 15th January 2021:
Arboricultural Report
Tree Protection Plan
Tree Plan

Amended plans were submitted on 18th March 2021:

Drawing No: 0001 - Site Location Plan
Drawing No: 100 - Existing Site Plan
Drawing No: 101 - Existing Floor Plans
Drawing No: 102 - Existing Elevations
Drawing No: 110 Rev E - Proposed Site Plan
Drawing No: 111 - Proposed Northcourt Lodge Elevations
Drawing No: 112 Rev C - Proposed Floor Plans
Drawing No: 113 Rev C - Proposed Elevations
Drawing No: 114 Rev E - Proposed Street Scene & Site Sections
Drawing No: 115 Rev B - Building Sections

4. PLANNING HISTORY

89/00408/FUL (Civica Ref: 891329) - Erection of front and side two storey extension to existing nursing home for the elderly. Refused 27/07/1989.

89/01365/FUL (Civica Ref: 891331) - Erection of rear first floor extension to existing nursing home. Permitted 12/04/1990.

97/00036/FUL (Civica Ref: 960712) - Installation of two storey lift enclosure at the rear of Northcourt Lodge Rest Home to serve the ground and first floor. Permitted 18/02/1997.

00/00249/FUL (Civica Ref: 990783) - New two storey house. Refused 28/04/2000.

01/01138/FUL (Civica Ref: 010126) - Erection of single storey extension forming a garden room on the south side of the elderly care home. Permitted 26/10/2001.

03/00717/FUL (Civica Ref: 030203) - First floor rear extension and two storey side extension to provide store and enclosed staircase to first floor. Permitted 12/09/2003.

05/00927/FUL (Civica Ref: 050070) - Single storey ground floor rear extension to provide 10 additional bedrooms to existing care home. Withdrawn 30/09/2005.

06/00280/FUL (Civica Ref: 060477) - Retrospective application for first floor rear extension to provide 7 additional bedrooms to existing care home. Permitted 18/08/2006.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Statutory

None.

5.2 Non-statutory

RBC Development Control Transport

Original comments

The application site is currently (C2 use) a 22 bedroom residential care home tailored to suit the needs of people over the age of 65. The proposal would seek full planning permission to utilise the site to increase the residential accommodation (C2 use) following the construction of a 17 bedroom building.

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. The Council has produced a Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which includes different standards in four different zones according to the accessibility of those zones. The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities. The closest bus stops are situated on Shinfield Road (A327), approximately 220 metres from the entrance of the site.

In accordance with the adopted SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 per FTE staff & 1 per 4 residents. No information has been submitted with the application regarding staffing levels or shift patterns to determine the required number of parking spaces for the staff. Given that the proposed development will result in an increase of 17 residents which would equate to 4-5 parking spaces, it does not appear that any additional provision has been made for staff. Therefore, it appears that the scale of the development does not comply with Policy TR5 of the Local Plan.

In terms of access, a new secondary pedestrian and vehicular access will be introduced from Northcourt Avenue. The plans demonstrate that the visibility requirements of 2.4m x 43m can be met. In principle, I have no

objections to the proposed access arrangements, however, the proximity of the proposed access may impact on tree roots. Therefore, it is recommended that the Natural Environment Officer is consulted for comments on this issue.

In accordance with the adopted SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 cycle parking space per FTE staff. The D & A statement indicates that secure, enclosed cycle storage has been provided within the development for staff use. However, we require detailed plans confirming that the cycle parking provision meets the Council's adopted standards in terms of number of spaces and layout. Therefore, further information is required regarding staffing levels.

In view of the above, I am not satisfied that the development complies with policy TR5 of the Reading Local Plan and I object unless this can be adequately addressed.

Updated comments following revised plans - Proposed Site Plan 2685-110 Rev E

I note that the amendments have reduced the number of bedrooms from 17 to 15, and an additional parking space has been provided (7 parking spaces in total). However, provision should also be made for an electric vehicle charging point which should be covered by condition.

The applicant has confirmed that the car parking provision is based upon 3 additional staff members generating a requirement for 3 parking spaces. The 15 resident bedrooms generate a requirement for 4 parking spaces equating 7 parking spaces in total staff & residents.

The applicant has confirmed that the type of care being provided requires the care home to have a 12 hour day shift and a 12 hour night shift. They currently operate and will continue hours of 7am to 7 pm or 8 am to 8pm. The shift changes are outside of peak visiting hours.

The applicant has also indicated that the visiting policy is by appointment only and these will be on a staggered basis which controls the demand for parking spaces. To ensure that the applicant is committed to managing the on-site parking spaces, a car park management plan should be conditioned to ensure that there is no additional overspill onto the surrounding roads.

In terms of access, the new parking spaces will utilize the existing vehicular access from Northcourt Avenue. No additional access will be introduced on Northcourt Avenue.

In accordance with the adopted SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 cycle parking space per FTE staff. The Design & Access statement indicates that secure, enclosed cycle storage has been provided within the development for staff use. However, we require detailed plans confirming that the cycle parking provision meets the Council's adopted standards in terms of number of spaces and layout. To be covered by condition.

In view of the above, I have no objection to the proposal subject to the conditions set out above.

Natural Environment Trees

Original comments

The site at 65 Northcourt Avenue is not part of any TPO and it is not part of a conservation area.

However, my current stance on the matter is to object to the application.

(1) the presence on the site of a fairly large broadleaved tree (crown diameter approx. 12 metres) is not mentioned anywhere in the application. Comparing the Design and Access Statement document against the satellite view of Google Maps (2020 imagery data) results in the conclusion that this tree will have to be felled to accommodate the proposed building. There is no tree condition survey of the whole development site which should include the accurate plotting (trunk position, canopy spread and Root Protection Area) of the trees on site and the street trees, as should have been provided.

(2) Northcourt Avenue is a tree lined road and I would expect any development of the size proposed to incorporate landscaping to soften the extensive building and provide screening. No landscape masterplan demonstrating how an adequate level of landscaping can be incorporated into the development.

(3) the lack of an Arboricultural Impact Assessment to demonstrate acceptability of any works required within the Root Protection Area of any retained trees (on and off site).

(4) Quoting from the Application Form "Are there trees or hedges on the proposed site ? Answer No" - I note the lack of taking into consideration important landscape features (eg. Point (1) above) when clearly there are trees present.

I advise a thorough re-examination of the landscaping implications of such an ample project and adoption of equally sound plans for a net improvement of tree numbers or tree cover, with strong regards for the social, environmental and health benefits this brings. A tree condition survey and Arb Impact Assessment are required along with landscape principles. Without these, the development fails to demonstrate that it is acceptable in tree or landscape terms.

Reason: In order to ensure that appropriate protection is given to trees of amenity value within and adjacent to the site in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Updated comments following the submission of an Arboricultural Report, Tree Protection Plan and Tree Plan

I note the latest indexed 'Proposed Site Plan Drawing no. 110, rev. C' is not consistent with the site plan in the Arboricultural Report: on the former additional site access is provisioned between the street lime trees, while the latter does not use that solution anymore. My comments below will refer to the layout as presented in the Arboricultural Report of January 2021 by Sarah Duckworth.

My previous comments to this application focused on the lack of documentation to demonstrate that sound landscape principles are being considered. The latest submission provides a tree survey, a tree protection plan and the encompassing Arboricultural Report (all with ref: SCD 05500 / 2021).

Overall the Arboricultural Report clearly indicates the retained and to be removed trees, it defines a thorough protection strategy for the retained trees and provisions the appropriate phasing of works and demonstrates the natural environment and landscaping principles are considered and meet the necessary criteria.

Although in terms of quantity and maintenance the principles of tree planting are met, we are not satisfied with the replacement species selection in terms of balanced representation and our biodiversity aims. Prunus are over-represented in the borough, while of the rest, arguably, only the Hawthorn and the Amelanchier have any biodiversity value (most of them non-native species). Therefore, a landscaping condition should be attached in order that we can guide the applicant to a better suited species selection. Furthermore, please attach a condition to secure development in accordance with Arboricultural Method Statement.

If the applicant wishes to avoid a pre-commencement condition, amendments to landscaping (species selection) should be re-submitted prior to a decision. Hard landscape details would still need to be secured, but a condition could be attached for that.

RBC Environmental Protection

Environmental Protection concerns - Noise impact on development and bin storage.

Construction and demolition phases

We have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses).

Fires during construction and demolition can impact on air quality and cause harm to residential amenity. Burning of waste on site could be considered to be harmful to the aims of environmental sustainability.

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.

No objections subject to conditions relating to the submission of a Construction Method Statement, hours of construction, no bonfires and details of bin stores.

Thames Water

Waste Comments

With regard to SURFACE WATER drainage, Thames Water would advise that if the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water we would have no objection. Where the developer proposes to discharge to a public sewer, prior approval from Thames Water Developer Services will be required. Should you require further information please refer to our website. <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Apply-and-pay-for-services/Wastewater-services>

We would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures will be undertaken to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Groundwater discharges typically result from construction site dewatering, deep excavations, basement infiltration, borehole installation, testing and site remediation. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to approve the planning application, Thames Water would like the following informative attached to the planning permission: "A Groundwater Risk Management Permit from Thames Water will be required for discharging groundwater into a public sewer. Any discharge made without a permit is deemed illegal and may result in prosecution under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991. We would expect the developer to demonstrate what measures he will undertake to minimise groundwater discharges into the public sewer. Permit enquiries should be directed to Thames Water's Risk Management Team by telephoning 020 3577 9483 or by emailing trade.effluent@thameswater.co.uk. Application forms should be completed on line via www.thameswater.co.uk. Please refer to the Wholesale; Business customers; Groundwater discharges section.

There are public sewers crossing or close to your development. If you're planning significant work near our sewers, it's important that you minimize the risk of damage. We'll need to check that your development doesn't limit repair or maintenance activities, or inhibit the services we provide in any other way. The applicant is advised to read our guide working near or diverting our pipes. <https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Planning-your-development/Working-near-or-diverting-our-pipes>.

Thames Water would advise that with regard to WASTE WATER NETWORK and SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application, based on the information provided.

Water Comments

If you are planning on using mains water for construction purposes, it's important you let Thames Water know before you start using it, to avoid potential fines for improper usage. More information and how to apply can be found online at thameswater.co.uk/buildingwater.

On the basis of information provided, Thames Water would advise that with regard to water network and water treatment infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application. Thames Water recommends the following informative be attached to this planning permission. Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

5.3 Publicity

Notification letters were sent to: Wellington Avenue - 9, 11, 11A, 15 and 17. Shinfield Road - 64, 66, 68, 68A and 68B and Northcourt Avenue - 32A, 34, 36, 38, 67, 69.

8 letters of objection were received on the first neighbour consultation with regards to:

1. Loss of sunlight and daylight;
2. Loss of privacy and overlooking;
3. The proposed development by way of loss of light and loss of privacy will make worse an existing personal condition;
4. Not had enough time to consider the application; planning application dated 30th September 2020 but neighbouring properties only received written notification on 8th October 2020; *Officer Note - the statutory 21 day consultation period was given.*
5. The proposal is too near Wellington Avenue gardens;
6. The density is too high compared to the suburban surrounding area, the maximum density at present is 30 per hectare, this will jump to 190; *Officer Note - Policy H2 (Density and Mix) of the Reading Borough Local Plan refers to appropriate density for residential developments. As the application is for an extension to an existing care home this policy is not applicable in this instance.*
7. Parking is insufficient;
8. Reading Borough Council must implement robust traffic calming/safety/parking measures on Northcourt Avenue and measures to stop uses as a cut through;
9. Plans indicate the rooms will be small and not allow for the equipment that may be needed;
10. Insufficient communal space;
11. Noise and disruption during construction;
12. Northcourt Lodge is a business in a residential area and the proposal to nearly double the size of the business does not commit to how the proposed buildings will be used; *Officer Note - the existing building is a care home and has been for many years in a residential area. The application is for additional accommodation to the care home and no other purpose.*
13. Increase in noise from traffic, visits and nursing home residents;
14. At present the business activities are reasonably discrete but concern that an expansion would result in a general increase in noise especially from service vehicles;
15. Overdevelopment and the size of the development proposed is not compatible with a residential area;
16. Overbearing;

17. Poor design and internal layout that does not allow the residents adequate views or space outside their windows;
18. Location of bin storage/collection points and siting are a concern as a health issue;
19. A similar proposal some years ago was rejected and there is no change in circumstances that would make this application any more acceptable by the local community; *Officer Note: application 05/00927/FUL (Civica Ref: 050070) was submitted for a single storey extension to the rear of the property to provide 10 bedrooms. This proposal filled the majority of the rear part of the site and was considered unacceptable and the application was withdrawn. The current application is different in terms of design and floor area and has to be considered against current policies and guidance.*
20. Little communal space for residents;
21. Amenity space should be preserved and developed for the benefit of the residents;
22. Possibility that other buildings will be added haphazardly; *Officer Note - this is not a matter that affects the current planning application.*
23. The increase in residents in the 'special needs' category will increase hazards on the local roads where complex bends in the road and considerable on-street parking adds to the danger; *Officer Note - the owners of the care home will have their own safety measures in place with regards to protecting existing and future residents.*
24. If this were a residential application it would be automatically refused because of back land development; *Officer Note - this is not an application for residential development but for an extension to an existing care home and it has to be assessed as such.*
25. Building relates poorly to the existing building being separated and unconnected;
26. Being a separate building it could easily be separated off and converted in to flats in the future with little control by the local authority; *Officer Note - planning permission would be required to change the use from a C2 care home to residential use.*
27. New access would result in a very steep driveway, substantial excavations and impact on tree roots;
28. A very modest single storey extension - directly linked to the building might be considered suitable for this site;

Amended plans letters were sent to all neighbours and objectors on 21st January 2021 advising them of a reduction in the number of bedrooms from 17 to 15, a reduction in the size of the two storey front and rear projections and the submission of an Arboricultural Report, Tree Protection Plan and Tree Plan. 6 letters of objection have been received some detailing the same concerns as previously raised and others with regards to:

1. Streetview degraded because architecture not in keeping with existing building frontage;
2. Concerns with internal layout for instance no kitchen included; very limited WC facilities for staff and visitors;
3. Disabled access from car park to building entrance via path unsatisfactory;
4. Bin storage now shown but a portacabin has been placed in its location and has a larger footprint than the bins - what is this for?
5. Inconsistencies with Design & Access Statement and amended plans; *Officer Note - the Design & Access Statement was not amended from that originally submitted and this document was not included in the*

amended plans letter. There will therefore be inconsistencies however Officers are clear on what is being proposed due to ongoing discussions with the applicants agent.

6. Inconsistencies between the drawings which showed the proposed access and the Tree Protection Plan which removed this access; *Officer Note - this matter was resolved and an amended plans letter sent on 11th May 2021 to consult on this.*
7. Construction methods - there is no description in the application as to how this will be managed; *Officer Note - conditions requiring a Construction Method Statement and restricting the hours of construction and demolition will be imposed.*
8. The amended proposal does not comply with Policy H6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan;
9. The proposal is tandem development contrary to Policy H11; *Officer Note - Policy H11 refers to proposals of new residential development in private residential gardens. The existing use is as a care home and the proposed building is for further accommodation associated with the care home. Policy H11 is therefore not relevant in this particular situation.*

Amended plans letters were sent to all neighbours and objectors on 11th May 2021 advising them of the removal of the proposed access. 7 letters of objection have been received some detailing the same concerns previously raised and others with regards to:

1. The new single width driveway to the new parking area creates a significant safety hazard as it passes directly in front of the main entrance to the house and crosses pedestrian access;
2. If the application were to be granted then PAC should be encouraged to attach conditions relating to the possible change of use of the proposed new building and controls on construction times, disturbance and waste storage.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING 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”.

6.2 The development plan for this Local Planning Authority is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- H5: Standards for New Housing
- H6: Accommodation For Vulnerable People
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

Supplementary planning documents/guidance
Sustainable Design & Construction SPD (Dec 2019)
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (Oct 2011)
Tree Strategy (2021)

7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Principle of development
- The effect upon visual amenity and the public realm
- Impact on neighbouring properties and future occupiers
- Traffic generation and parking
- Landscaping
- Other Matters

Principle of development

- 7.1 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. Paragraph 4.7.4 of Policy OU1 continues that *“given the dense, built up nature of Reading and the lack of appropriate new sites, it is inevitable that some of the Borough’s community facility needs will have to be met through intensification of the use of existing sites”*.
- 7.2 Policy H6 (Accommodation for Vulnerable People) states that “provision will be made for at least an additional 253 residential care bedspaces for elderly people between 2013 and 2036”. Although the care provided at 65 Northcourt Avenue is not specifically for elderly people i.e. sheltered housing, it does provide specific care for people over 65 which fall within care categories such as dementia, Alzheimer’s and cancer along with other specialist care and more recently long term COVID beds as well as respite beds. The site is within an existing care home and would provide extended and improved community facilities which would meet an identified need within the Borough. As such it is considered that the general principle of increased care home provision is in accordance with Policies OU1 and H6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

The effect upon visual amenity and the public realm

- 7.3 The proposal is for a two storey detached building with a pitched roof located at the rear of the site. The proposed building is rectangular in shape and has a two storey front and rear projection. The proposal has been amended to reduce the depth of the front and rear projections. The height of the rear projection has also been significantly reduced. The plans as originally submitted and those now proposed are shown at the end of the report.
- 7.4 The proposed building is set back from Northcourt Avenue by approximately 40m and the front of the site is screened by street trees, hedging and

vegetation along the front boundary. The proposed building will be significantly screened from Northcourt Avenue and would not have a significant impact on the appearance of the street scene. There is also dense and mature vegetation along the south and east boundaries as shown on the photograph below.



Photo showing the rear of the site with the southern boundary on the right.

- 7.5 The proposed materials consist of brick with the top section of the gables rendered and tiles to the roof. Although less decorative than the existing building it is an ancillary addition at the rear of the site which does not compete with the attractive frontage of the original building. It is acknowledged that this is a large addition to the site however taking into consideration the benefits of the scheme by providing additional bed spaces which would meet an identified need within the Borough, the significant set back from Northcourt Avenue and the large size of the existing plot, on balance, the proposal is not considered to detract from the character and appearance of the area and is in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Impact on neighbouring properties and future occupants

- 7.6 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:

- o Privacy and overlooking;
- o Access to sunlight and daylight;
- o Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- o Harm to outlook;
- o Noise and disturbance;
- o Artificial lighting;
- o Vibration;
- o Dust and fumes;
- o Smell;
- o Crime and safety; or

- o Wind

Impact on neighbouring properties

- 7.7 The proposed building is approximately 10m from the boundaries of properties on Wellington Avenue and Shinfield Road and the distance between the proposed building and the rear of these properties is approximately 23m and 30m respectively. There is substantial screening in the form of dense and mature vegetation along the boundary with the properties on Shinfield Road as shown on the photograph above. There is less mature dense screening provided along the boundary with properties on Wellington Avenue although there are trees along this boundary as shown on the photograph below. Although there is adequate distance between the proposed building and the rear of properties on Wellington Avenue, Officers consider additional planting to this boundary would be beneficial as there is no planting along this boundary within the application site. This additional planting can be secured by condition. It is likely that the residents of the properties on Wellington Avenue will have clearer views of the proposed building than those on Shinfield Road however the distance of approximately 23m side to rear along with new planting is considered to reduce the impact of the proposal on the residents of these properties. As such the proposal is not considered overbearing or visually dominant on the residents of these neighbouring properties.



Photo showing the boundary with the rear of properties on Wellington Avenue

- 7.8 The proposed building is 1.5m from the boundary with the neighbouring property at 67 Northcourt Avenue however there is a distance of approximately 25m from the front of the proposed building and the rear of this neighbouring property and there is substantial dense and mature vegetation along the boundary as shown on the above photograph. New planting is also proposed along this boundary. 67 Northcourt Avenue has a long rear garden and the proposed building would be located at the rear of it. Although the residents of this neighbouring property will notice the additional height and depth of the proposal the distance between the two buildings means the proposal would not be overbearing and with the existing and proposed planting although visible it is not considered visually dominant.

- 7.9 The proposal will be visible from neighbouring properties but as mentioned above there is sufficient distance between the proposed building and neighbouring properties to ensure there is no harm to outlook and this is further reduced by the dense mature vegetation along the south and east boundaries and proposed planting to the north boundary. Due to the orientation of, and distances between, the properties on Northcourt Avenue, Shinfield Road and Wellington Avenue the proposal is also not considered to have an impact on these neighbouring properties in terms of loss of sunlight and daylight.
- 7.10 The window location in the proposed building has been carefully considered to respect the privacy of neighbouring properties as best it can whilst ensuring each proposed bedroom has the benefit of a window. Windows are proposed to all four elevations. There are front facing first floor windows, with views in to the garden, and one of which is close to the boundary with 67 Northcourt Avenue and there is one side window facing the boundary with 67 Northcourt Avenue. However, taking into consideration the dense vegetation along this boundary and the additional planting proposed it is not considered that this arrangement would be harmful to the residents of this neighbouring property due to the distances afforded and the screening provided.
- 7.11 Two bedroom windows and two landing windows are proposed to the rear elevation facing the properties on Shinfield Road but this elevation is staggered and there is a substantial separation distance between the proposal and these neighbouring properties and as such there is not considered to be any impact on the residents of these properties in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy.
- 7.12 One first floor side window is proposed to bedroom 15 which is located towards the boundary with Wellington Avenue however this is a secondary window to this bedroom and plans indicate that obscure glazing to the bottom of the pane will be used. Taking in to consideration the distances between the proposal and the neighbouring properties, existing and proposed planting and the use of obscure glazing, albeit to the bottom half of the window, this is considered to protect the privacy of the residents of neighbouring properties and the proposal is not considered harmful in terms of loss of privacy and overlooking.
- 7.13 A comment has been received from a neighbouring property stating that the proposal, by reason of loss of light and loss of privacy, would make an existing personal condition worse. Although loss of light and loss of privacy are material considerations when assessing a planning application, as shown above, the proposal is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the living environment of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light and loss of privacy.
- 7.14 A number of objections have been received relating to noise and disturbance that would be caused by the development from increased traffic, service vehicles, visits and nursing home residents. Although the proposal would result in an intensification of the site, the use of the proposed building would still be in a residential type use and as stated above there is a need for care of this type within the Borough. The applicant has advised that their visiting policy is by appointment only and the agent has confirmed that there will be no change to the deliveries to

the home. No objection has been received from the Council's Environmental Protection section. Therefore, the proposal is not considered to warrant refusal on these grounds.

- 7.15 Concerns have been raised with regards to noise and disruption during construction and conditions will be imposed requiring the submission of a Construction Method Statement and restricting the hours of construction and demolition.
- 7.16 For the reasons given above the proposal is considered in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the living environment of neighbouring properties in terms of privacy and overlooking, access to sunlight and daylight, visual dominance and overbearing effects of the development and harm to outlook.

Impact on future occupants

- 7.17 A number of concerns have been raised with regards to the internal layout of the proposed building including the size of the proposed bedrooms, window locations, limited WC facilities for staff and visitors, lack of communal space and the reduction in outdoor amenity space and the impact of these on the residents of the care home. The applicant has seen all the comments raised through this application and a 'rationale' has been provided in Appendix 1 below. The agent has advised the rooms are "the required size suitable for this facility incorporating all modern functions and the communal area lounge/dining is 27sqm suitable for the amount of people residing at the facility". Although there is no specific policy for bedroom sizes in care homes, as a comparison Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) states that in order to provide one bedspace, a single bedroom should have a floor area of at least 7.5sqm and be at least 2.15m wide. All the proposed rooms measure between 14-16sqm and are a minimum of 2.5m wide.
- 7.18 It is acknowledged that bedroom 4 on the ground floor and bedroom 15 on the first floor will be opposite the rear elevation of the main building as the proposal slightly overlaps the existing building at the rear. However, both bedrooms have secondary windows to the north elevation, which provides additional light and which could be bigger in size if required, particularly on the ground floor. There is a 2m gap between the proposal and the existing building and views in to the garden will still be possible and due to the orientation will also receive natural light. There will be no overlooking or loss of privacy with bedrooms in the existing building as they do not directly face the proposed windows.
- 7.19 Bedroom 7 on the ground floor and bedroom 10 on the first floor will face the boundary with 67 Northcourt Avenue. As bedroom 10 is at first floor this bedroom will benefit from adequate views and light. This will be more limited for bedroom 7 due to it being at ground floor level and facing the side boundary. However, through the landscaping condition it can be ensured that the planting and existing vegetation is sufficiently away from this window and although views from this window will be limited, on balance, taking the benefits of the scheme as a whole into consideration, this alone is not considered a reason for refusing the application.

- 7.20 Double doors are proposed to three of the ground floor bedrooms and concerns have been raised over loss of privacy to these rooms. However, the main building has a similar arrangement and officers do not consider this to be unsatisfactory.
- 7.21 Comments have been received stating that the proposal does not comply with Policy H6 (Accommodation for Vulnerable People) as it does not give much consideration to the specific needs of patients with special needs such as Alzheimer's or dementia where just having an outdoor green space is not sufficient to prevent them from coming to harm. Policy H6 amongst other things states "*development for specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will fulfil the following criteria....development will incorporate areas of green space, which are particularly important for many groups of vulnerable people*". As mentioned previously the home provides care for a wide range of needs, including more recently COVID related needs. Although the proposed building will occupy a large part of the rear garden there is considered to be sufficient garden space remaining. Officers consider the landscaping scheme proposed is an improvement on the existing garden layout and provides additional planting and seating areas. The care home will have its own safeguarding policies in place to ensure their residents do not come to any harm. As such the proposal is considered in accordance with Policy H6.
- 7.22 The proposal has been carefully assessed and although there may be some minor deficiencies as noted above, on balance, the proposal is considered to provide a scheme that looks after the well being of its residents, existing and proposed, and meets an identified need within the Borough.

Traffic generation and parking

- 7.23 The proposal provides 3 additional staff parking spaces and 4 visitor spaces to the south of the existing building adjacent to 67 Northcourt Avenue which is in accordance with the Council's adopted standards. The existing access is to be retained and a new driveway introduced to the front of the building.
- 7.24 The applicant has confirmed that the type of care being provided requires the care home to have a 12 hour day shift and a 12 hour night shift. They currently operate and will continue hours of 7am to 7 pm or 8 am to 8pm. The shift changes are outside of peak visiting hours.
- 7.25 The applicant has also indicated that the visiting policy is by appointment only and these will be on a staggered basis which controls the demand for parking spaces. To ensure that the applicant is committed to managing the on-site parking spaces, a car park management plan will be conditioned to ensure that there is no additional overspill onto the surrounding roads.
- 7.26 Concerns have also been raised with regards to the new driveway which it is claimed would be a safety hazard as it crosses in front of the main entrance and the pedestrian access. As mentioned above visiting is by appointment only and it would be expected that cars would be travelling at a low speed when they enter and leave the premises. This matter could be addressed in more detail in the car park management plan condition if required.
- 7.27 Comments have been received with regards to traffic calming measures being introduced on Northcourt Avenue however this is not a matter that

can be addressed through this planning application and would need to be raised with the appropriate department.

- 7.28 Bin storage has been raised as a concern and the location of a portacabin in the bin location. The agent has confirmed that the applicant has a contract with 1st Waste who manage the bin management and a condition is also recommended for details of bin storage to be submitted and approved in writing. With regards to the portacabin the applicant has confirmed that this is for the sole purpose for relatives to visit loved ones throughout the COVID period as relatives were not allowed inside the home. This is a temporary measure to address COVID constraints and will be removed when lockdown restrictions are fully lifted.
- 7.29 Subject to the recommended conditions above the proposal is in accordance with the relevant policies and guidance and is considered acceptable.

Landscaping

- 7.30 A Tree Survey, Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Report have been submitted which clearly indicates the retained trees and the trees to be removed. The submitted information defines a thorough protection strategy for the retained trees and provisions the appropriate phasing of works and demonstrates the natural environment and landscaping principles considered and which meet the necessary criteria. Although in terms of quantity and maintenance the principles of tree planting are met a landscaping condition will be imposed to ensure the replacement species are more appropriate and have a biodiversity value.
- 7.31 Although there is significant tree and hedge coverage along the south and east boundaries there is less cover along the northern boundary with the rear of properties on Wellington Avenue. Officers consider that there is scope for additional planting along this boundary and this would be required in a submission to discharge the above landscaping condition. Subject to the conditions outlined above the proposal is in accordance with the relevant policies and guidance and is considered acceptable in landscaping terms.

Other matters

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.32 Although the proposed scheme would be CIL liable development, the development falls into the 'Care Homes' category. As such the development would be CIL liable, but zero rate.

Equalities Impact

- 7.33 When determining an application for planning permission 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 as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this 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 proposed development.

8 CONCLUSION

The proposed building and its use are considered to be acceptable in the context of national and local planning policy, and other material considerations, as set out in this report. The application is recommended for approval on this basis.

Case Officer: Claire Ringwood

As existing



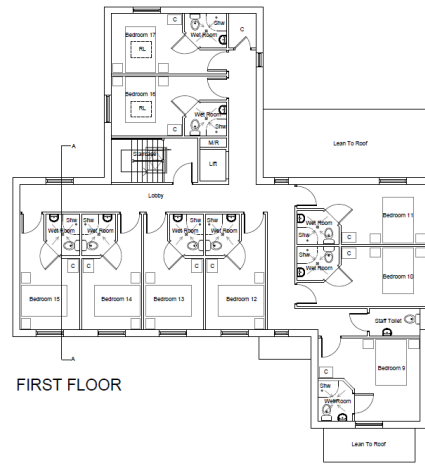
As originally proposed



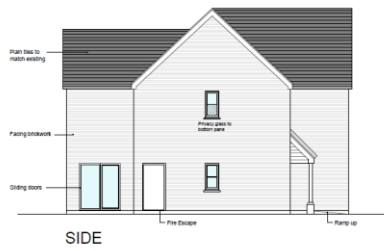
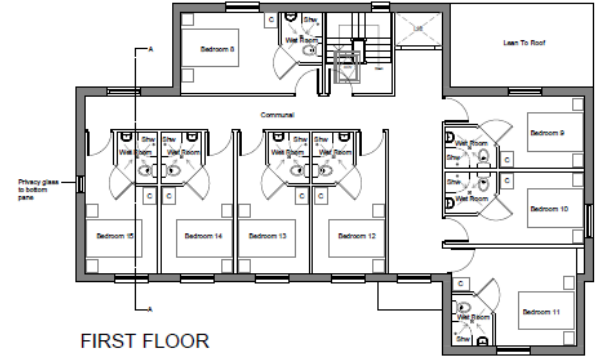
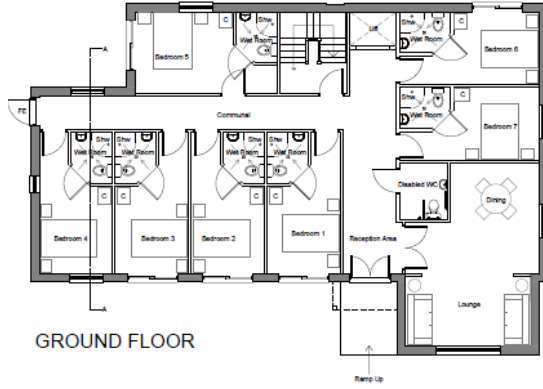
As amended



As originally proposed



As amended



Appendix 1

(note ABI = Acquired Brain Injury)

Rehabilitation – The Need Good Rehabilitation and Re-ablement (outside of hospital) after ABI and Post Covid Syndrome

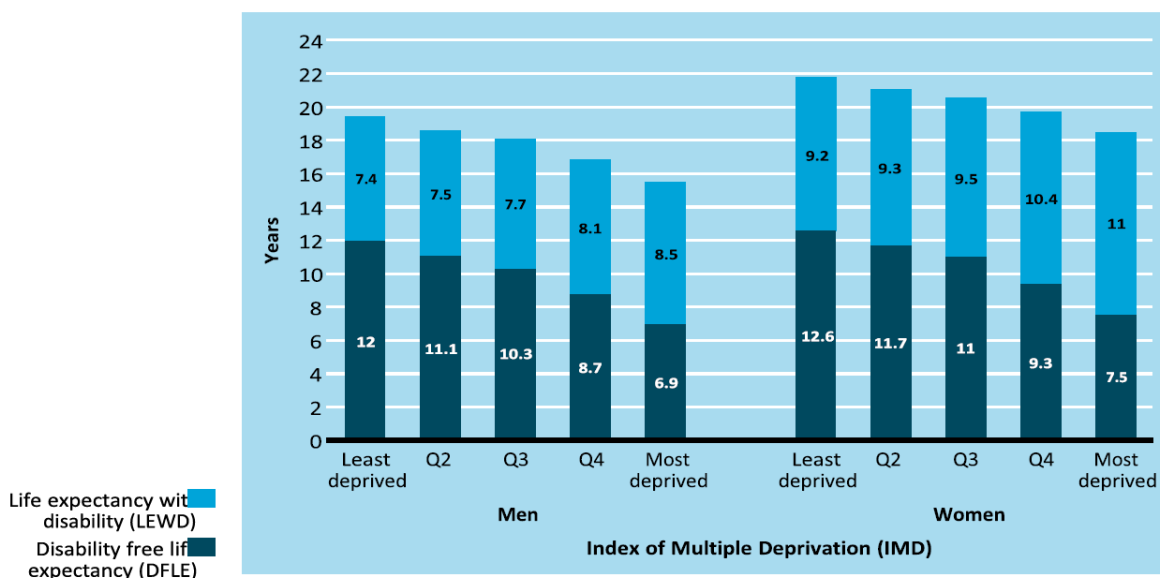
Rationale for 15 bed extension to North court Lodge 65 North court Avenue. Reading RG2 7HF

Background

People should receive adequate rehabilitation and re-ablement when needed, to prevent permanent disability, greater reliance on care and support, avoidable admissions to hospital, delayed discharge from hospital, and to provide adequate periods of assessment and recovery before any decision is made to move into long-term care. Acute hospitals must play their part in ensuring adequate inpatient rehabilitation, but most rehabilitation services could be provided outside hospital settings.

Rehabilitation and re-ablement are two services on a continuum of intermediate care. Rehabilitation is primarily a health model that includes physical therapy and occupational therapy to prevent admission to acute care or facilitate a stepped pathway out of hospital. Re-ablement is primarily a social care model that focuses on promoting and optimising independent functioning rather than resolving health issues ([Social Care Institute for Excellence 2013](#)). Despite these formal definitions, the terms are often used interchangeably, and many localities provide several differently named services providing elements of both. Most of the rehabilitation and re-ablement services are step-down services following a hospital stay, but they can also be step-up services, aiming to provide the necessary support to prevent any further deterioration that could lead to a hospital stay (Allen and Glasby 2010).

The Kings Fund Paper 2014 (Making our health care systems fit for an ageing population) states that Local service leaders and services should ensure that there is enough capacity and responsiveness to meet the needs of every older person who might benefit from these services.

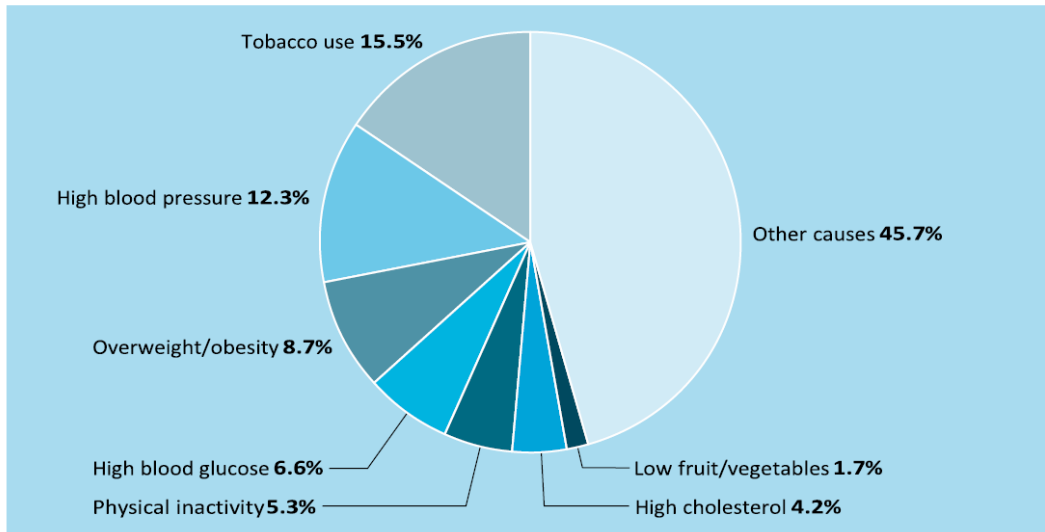


Source: Office for National Statistics 2011

Fig 1. Life expectancy with and without disability.

The National office for statistics data reveals that in some cases mostly in women and some cases in men, the life expectancy with disability or illness is now equal or in some cases most than disability free life. This number has only since increased and will be published in the 2021 statistics ten years on.

The NHS white paper , “ Next steps on the NHS Five year forward view , ” clearly highlights that as people live longer lives the NHS needs to adapt to their needs helping frail and older people stay healthily and independent avoiding hospital stays where possible and with the novel coronavirus this cannot be any more appropriate as they are the most vulnerable susceptible to the disease. To improve prevention and care for patients, as well as to place the NHS on a more sustainable footing, the NHS Five Year Forward View called for better integration of GP, community health, mental health, and hospital services, as well as more joined up working with home care and care homes. There is a huge push now to strengthen support to specialist care homes to ensure they have direct access to clinical advice, including appropriate on-site assessment.



Source: [World Health Organization 2011b](#)

Fig 2 . Causes of disability of illness in the over 55 age group.

In the 45.7% other causes ABI constitutes about 21.6% , which is due to falls or other causes such as stroke. Loneliness, social isolation, and social exclusion are important risk factors for ill health and mortality in older people ([Steptoe et al 2012](#); [World Health Organization 2002](#)). Positive and supportive relationships with close family members contribute to older people’s wellbeing, but those aged 75 and over are least likely to have these networks ([Hoban et al 2013](#)). Given the complex factors involved in isolation and loneliness, it is perhaps unsurprising that evidence about successful interventions is relatively limited, although group activities tend to have better outcomes than one-to-one interventions ([Scottish Collaboration for Public Health Research and Policy 2010](#)). If, at the end of the period of rehabilitation and re-ablement, a person is assessed as having ongoing needs for support, it is important that care is planned to provide those services and maintain the progress made. In practice, this can often be most effectively achieved through joint working between the rehabilitation and re-ablement teams and the ongoing care providers in the time leading up to, during and after transition, and specifying this responsibility in contracts ([Social Care Institute for Excellence 2013](#)).

The Proposal

Given the above background and our expertise in rehabilitation, long term care, complex disability and reablement (including those who suffer from Long Covid Syndrome) we believe this extension to be of great value to the local community, council and clinical commissioning groups. The clinical team appointed will draw our comprehensive, clinical pathways and service specification for rehabilitation of ABI, long term conditions and post covid syndrome.

The Rationale

Our collaborators area of expertise is in area where patient demand is currently growing within the UK, and an All-Party Parliamentary Report published in October 2018 concluded that there is a significant shortage of provision across all neuro-rehab care services.

Demand for our specialist services is increasing due to

- More people are surviving traumatic brain injury due to more effective paramedic response and emergency care
- More people are surviving cardiac arrest, but sometimes with hypoxic brain injury
- More people are surviving major strokes
- There is greater usage of drugs and other stimulants by younger people, which can cause medical problems and brain injury

Most of the long-term specialist provision within an hour of Reading is either through NHS-funded charitable organisations (est. 300 beds) or through private hospitals (est. 356 beds from March 2020). The total number of beds provided by other organisations is shown in the competitor analysis table below and will have increased by over 50 beds in the last 18 months.

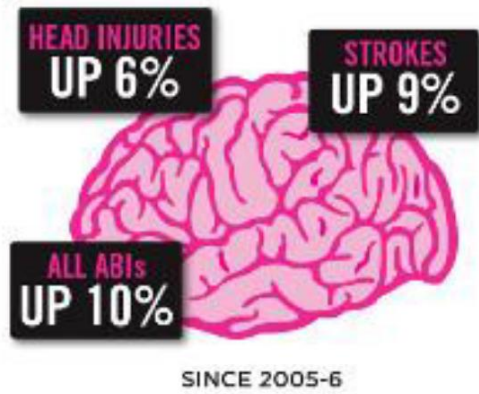
Regional Competitor Analysis

Competitors	Unit information	Market Entrants
Respiratory (Trache/ Ventilator)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remeo Unit, Redhill – 20 bed • Highfield house • Fairlie House, Purley • RHN, Putney 	New 40-bed unit in Banstead opening in March 2020
Complex neuro disability, Long term care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHD Bagshot Park Neurorehab – 35 Beds • CHD Kingston – 36 Beds • Fairlie House – 45 Beds • Highfield House – 45 Beds • Glenside, Farnborough – 22 Beds • BUPA Wingham Court, Esher - 73 Beds • Raphael Hospital, Tonbridge – 60 beds • RHN, Putney – 260 beds • Some patients are in other care / nursing homes 	As above
Slow stream rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above 	

There are some barriers to market entry for organisations considering neuro-rehab services, including recruitment of skilled staff, specialised training, appropriately designed and equipped clinical areas and expensive specialist equipment such as eye-gaze technology.

NHS commissioning is predominantly through the CCG Continuing Care pathway, and the NHS seem to accept and value the specialised units such as ourselves. This is because we will provide care that allows a patient, who cannot be properly cared for in a standard nursing home, to leave an acute hospital ward. This will thereby ensure that our service fulfils the some of the goals mentioned in the Kings Fund briefing, NHS white paper and the All-Party parliamentary report published in 2018.

There were 348,934 UK admissions to hospital with acquired brain injury in 2013-14. That is 566 admissions per 100,000 of the population.



There were approximately 956 ABI admissions per day to UK hospitals in 2013-14 - or one every 90 seconds. The burden of disease and disability is high and the 9% increase in stroke and head injuries seem to be rising in the over

Local ABI numbers 2018(as an example)

The below data is based on research by Headway looking at numbers to inform the NHS planning.

	All ABI Female	Rate	Male	Rate	Total	Rate
IIRE WEST PRIMARY RUST	780	340	983	426	1,763	383
IIRE EAST PRIMARY RUST	741	375	1,029	525	1,770	450

The above does not consider the following areas however data shows there is also a burden of care in these areas which again rely on the approximate 300 beds to rehabilitate or enable these patients to lead a as independent life as possible

- Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead CCG
- Bracknell Forest
- Wokingham

The Application

Given the objections from the local area about the supply and transport issues. We will ensure we follow the "Travel plan good practice Guide". While the care home operates the increased beds, we will minimise the use of staff cars and arrange shuttles from the Reading station and local bus stops to ensure there is minimal travel disruption locally.

The following measures will be taken during any building operations to control noise, pollution, and parking:

- (a) Work that is audible beyond the site boundary will only be carried out between 08:00hrs to 18:00hrs Monday to Friday, 08:00hrs to 13:00hrs Saturday and not at all on Sundays or any Public and/or Bank Holidays.
- (b) The quietest available items of plant and machinery will be used on site. Where permanently sited equipment such as generators are necessary, they will be enclosed to reduce noise levels.
- (c) Deliveries will only be received within the hours detailed in (a) above.
- (d) Adequate steps will be taken to prevent dust-causing nuisance beyond the site boundary. Such uses include the use of hoses to damp down stockpiles of materials, which are likely to generate airborne dust, to damp down during stone/slab cutting, and the use of bowsers and wheel washes.
- (e) There will be no burning on site.
- (f) Only minimal security lighting will be used outside the hours stated above

All other noise pollution and noise measures will be obtained from the Council's Environmental Health Services Unit and will be followed. We will also promote good neighbourliness; we will register with the considerate constructor's scheme.

We understand that the council has difficult decisions to make when such applications are submitted. However, we hope that the presentation of the above data and the need for such a service far outweighs any temporary inconvenience it may cause to the neighbours. More importantly the level of pressure that Long Covid has caused to the community is huge and as a service we will be able to provide holistic rehabilitation to this varied client group which we feel is very important at this stage. We will always maintain the highest standards of consideration for our neighbours and the local community.

We look forward to a favourable consideration to our request.

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21st July 2021

Ward: Minster

App No.: 201070/ADV

Address: Land at Rose Kiln Lane, Reading

Proposal: LED Screen hoardings, supported by hollow steel posts

Applicant: Project Audio Visual Ltd

Deadline: Originally 21/09/2020 - Extended to 23/07/2021

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE advertisement consent for the following reasons:

1. Due to the scale, design and prominent location the proposed LED advertisement would appear as an unattractive and prominent structure in stark contrast to the muted backdrop within which it would be positioned. This is considered harmful to visual amenity, detracting from the open character and semi-rural appearance/character and appearance of the Kennet and Holy Brook Meadows Major Landscape Feature. The proposals are therefore contrary to Policies CC7, EN13 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and the NPPF 2019.

Informatives

1. The decision relates to the following drawings and documents:
2. The decision to refuse consent follows the positive and proactive consideration of the application, including outlining the issues of concern with the applicant prior to a decision being issued.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application relates to the erection of a free standing digital advertising screen.
- 1.2 The screen would be located on the eastern side of Rose Kiln Lane, and to the west of the River Kennet.
- 1.3 The site is subject to designations in the Local Plan as being within the Kennet and Holy Brook Meadows Major Landscape Feature area, as well as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area/Area of Identified Biodiversity interest.
- 1.4 In addition to the above, there are also a number of other site constraints/designations/nearby designations:

- Within an Air Quality Management Area
- Within Flood Zones 2 and 3
- Is part of a Treed Corridor
- Adjacent designated Local Green Space and Public Open Space

1.5 Reading Borough Council is the landowner of the application site but is not the applicant. It is noted, however, that the sign is proposed by the applicant in partnership with Reading Borough Council.

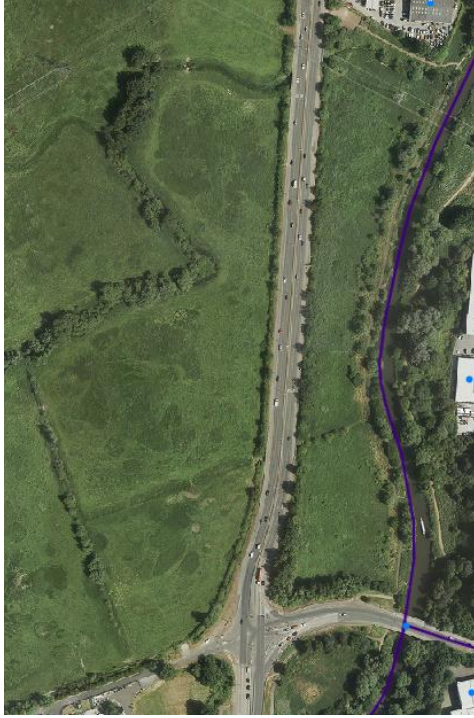
Site Location Plan



Larger scale



Aerial View



Larger scale



2 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is seeking advertisement consent for the installation of a double-sided LED digital advertising display screen (with a width of 3.6m and height of 5.7m). It would be supported by a steel-framed stand and the total height from the ground would measure 8.5m.

- 2.2 The proposed sign would have a display in both directions and the LED screens would display static advertisements and images would change at 10 second intervals.
- 2.3 Information provided with the application states that the LED illumination would reach a maximum luminance of 1000cd/m² during daylight hours, decreased to 300cd/m² during the evenings. The screens would operate 24 hours. The details submitted as part of this application indicate that the luminance of the screens would be controlled via light sensors.
- 2.4 Submitted numerous drawings and documents. Please refer to lists appended to this report.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 As the proposed site is not located to a particular address, planning history is somewhat limited. However, a scheme of a similar nature that has been implemented, albeit in a different location and context, is set out below:

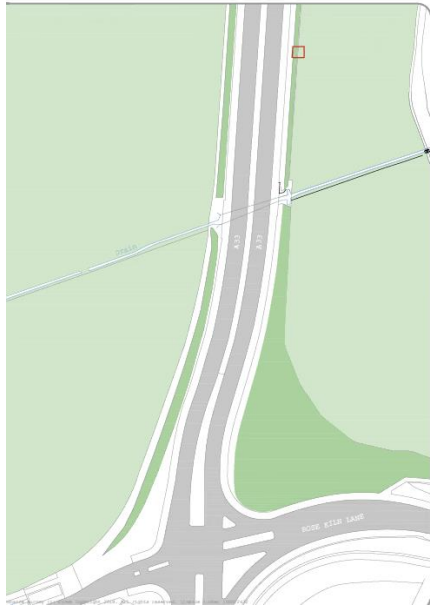
190523 (Land at A33 near Hilton) - Proposed two-sided 6m x 3m LED advertising hoarding on steel support. Advertisement Granted (implemented).

171582 (Land at A33 Relief Road) - 48 sheet digital advertising board. Advertisement Refused and Dismissed at Appeal 5/07/18.

- 3.2 Close-by the application site:

200324 (Land at Rose Kiln Lane) - Display of internally illuminated double side LED screen - Application withdrawn

- 3.3 For context, application 200324 referenced above, proposed in partnership with Reading Borough Council, for a similar LED sign was previously proposed to be located approximately 200m to the south of the sign currently proposed. This application was withdrawn as officers considered that due to its size and prominent location, it would appear as an unattractive and prominent structure that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area (Major Landscape Feature). At the time, there were also objections from the Transport and Natural Environment teams to the proposed sign.
- 3.4 The map below shows the position of the LED sign withdrawn under application 200324 referenced above:



4. CONSULTATIONS

Transport: Further to submission of revised plans, no objection subject to conditions.

Natural Environment: No objection.

Ecology: Further to submission of additional information in respect of light spillage, no objection.

CCTV: No comments received.

4.1 Neighbour Consultation

There is no statutory requirement for publicity in relation to advertisement consent applications. None have been undertaken as part of this application.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 apply.

5.2 Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 requires the Local Planning Authority to exercise its powers under these regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety taking into account the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and any other relevant factors. Regulation 3 states that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural, or similar interest. Factors relevant to public safety include

highway safety and whether the advert would hinder security or surveillance devices, including speed cameras.

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

5.4 **National**
National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
Part 12: Achieving well designed places
Part 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

National Planning Policy Guidance
Advertisements (2019)

5.6 **Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2019**
CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
EN13: Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
OU4: Advertisements
TR2: Major Transport Projects
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

5.7 **Other relevant documentation**
Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Amenity
- ii) Public Safety
- iii) Other Matters

i) **Amenity**

6.2 The NPPG provides a subsection entitled Considerations affecting amenity - What does "Amenity" mean? (Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 18b-079-20140306). For completeness in the consideration of this application, this is reproduced in full below:

- 6.3 *“Amenity” is not defined exhaustively in the [Town and Country Planning \(Control of Advertisements\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#). It includes aural and visual amenity ([regulation 2\(1\)](#)) and factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest ([regulation 3\(2\)\(a\)](#)).*

It is, however, a matter of interpretation by the local planning authority (and the Secretary of State) as it applies in any particular case. In practice, “amenity” is usually understood to mean the effect on visual and aural amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement or site for the display of advertisements, where residents or passers-by will be aware of the advertisement.

So, in assessing amenity, the local planning authority would always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood: for example, if the locality where the advertisement is to be displayed has important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, the local planning authority would consider whether it is in scale and in keeping with these features.

This might mean that a large poster-hoarding would be refused where it would dominate a group of listed buildings, but would be permitted in an industrial or commercial area of a major city (where there are large buildings and main highways) where the advertisement would not adversely affect the visual amenity of the neighbourhood of the site.

If the advertisement makes a noise, aural amenity would also be taken into account before express consent would be given.

- 6.4 With the above in mind, it is considered to be particularly pertinent that the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 state at Paragraph 3 that: Local planning authorities are required to exercise their powers under the Regulations with regard to amenity and public safety, taking into account relevant development plan policies in so far as they relate to amenity and public safety, and any other relevant factors.
- 6.5 In this case, it is the visual amenity of this part of Rose Kiln Lane and the surrounding area - which is within a designated Major Landscape Feature Area as shown on the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 Proposals Map - which is considered to be significantly relevant in this instance.
- 6.6 Policy CC7 requires that:

“All development must of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located”.

6.7 The Policy goes on to say that developments will be assessed to ensure they

“Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm”.

6.8 Further to the above, Policy EN13 requires that:

“Planning permission will not be granted for any development that would detract from the character or appearance of a Major Landscape Feature”

6.9 It is also particularly relevant to note that the supporting text to Policy EN13 also specifies at paragraph 4.2.65 that:

“Reading is primarily an urban area, but it benefits from a number of natural features that have remained undeveloped. The urban context means that the preservation of these features as a backdrop is of particular importance. New development should seek to maintain and enhance the natural beauty and visual amenity of the identified major landscape features”.

6.10 In overall terms, these Policies require that development be compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding environment in order to maintain the visual amenities of the area. Further to this, Policy OU4 states:

“Advertisements will respect the building or structure on which they are located and/or their surroundings and setting in terms of size, location, design, materials, colour, noise, lettering, amount and type of text, illumination and luminance, and will not have a detrimental effect on public safety. The cumulative impact of adverts will be taken into account, and a proliferation of advertisements that detrimentally affects visual or aural amenity or public safety will not be acceptable”.

6.11 The supporting text to the Policy OU4 also specifies at paragraph 4.7.26 that:

“Despite the fact that the policy does not deal specifically with types of advertisements, some types are unlikely to be considered appropriate in terms of how visual amenity and safety is defined in the policy”.

6.12 Further to the above, paragraph 132 of the NPPF 2019 states that:

“The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed”.

- 6.13 The site would be located directly on the eastern side of the A33, Rose Kiln Lane, which is a busy arterial route and main transport corridor to and from the centre of Reading.
- 6.14 Whilst the A33 is home to many industrial and commercial premises to the north and south, this part of Rose Kiln Lane, on the eastern side of the A33, is one of few areas that is devoid of built form - indeed it is an area of openness, covered in vegetation, an area specifically designated as a Major Landscape Feature - and it also forms a landscape buffer between the A33 and the industrial/commercial areas to the north and south and residential development to the east.
- 6.15 The proposed LED sign would have a distinct vertical emphasis and would measure 5.7m in height, with an overall height of 8.5m above ground level. This is considered to result in an advertisement of considerable bulk and scale. Consequently, it would appear as a dominant and incongruous feature, the scale and design of which would fail to assimilate into the surrounding landscape and, indeed, would be in stark contrast to the openness of the surrounding area. Further to this, the siting of the display would set a large, illuminated LED sign (on both sides) against a muted, un-illuminated background, exaggerating the visual impact. In this respect, the application proposes that the signage would have a luminance level of 1000cd/m² during daylight hours, decreased to 300cd/m² during the evenings. Given that the illuminated area would be over 10m² in size, the level of illumination would be well over the 200 cd/m² stated by the Institute of Lighting Professionals as appropriate for this area as per para 4.7.29 the subtext to Policy OU4. Furthermore, the location of the sign in view of its isolated setting is such that it would stand out as an unduly intrusive feature in this pleasant setting, particularly at night when illuminated, despite the fact that the luminance would be automatically reduced from dusk until dawn. As a result, the proposed advertisement would be an unacceptably prominent feature in both directions of the A33 and from various public vantage points within the area, including users of the towpath to the east of the site along the River Kennet, and thereby detracting from users' enjoyment of one of the few semi-rural areas within the vicinity.
- 6.16 Furthermore, the scale and prominence of the sign would be exacerbated by its relative position above the bus sign (required from a Highways perspective). It is also considered that the need to increase the height of the sign so that it does not hinder the bus sign, is further indicative of the unsuitable location for such a sign.
- 6.17 In overall terms, the proposed sign is considered to further unacceptably urbanise this part of Reading which features this designated area of open grassland and would therefore have a harmful effect on the visual amenity of the area - moreover, it is considered to detract, from the character and amenity of the area, which Policy EN13 seeks to avoid.

- 6.18 It is also relevant to note that application 171582, which sought advertisement consent for an LED sign on the A33 close to the Grosvenor Casino was dismissed at appeal on 5th July 2018. In that instance, the proposed sign was sited closer to a commercial area of the A33, surrounded by entertainment, storage and retail uses including a petrol station and car sales. The Inspector made reference to the set back of the buildings from the frontage, and the many trees along the road frontage and around the buildings to further reduce their visual effects. The Inspector considered that in contrast, the appeal sign, due to its size, nature of display and position close to the edge of the highway would amount to an unduly prominent and dominant feature within this general context. Furthermore, the Inspector considered that whilst the appeal site itself was quite scrubby in parts, it nevertheless formed an undeveloped green parcel of land with a number of mature trees in its general environs. The Inspector considered that this created a small, but positive contribution to the area and some relief to the adjoining busy road network. The Inspector concluded that the proposed sign would detract from that contribution.
- 6.19 The sign considered by the Inspector under application 171582, is not too dissimilar in scale (it was less wide) to the sign proposed under this current application. Furthermore, it was proposed to be positioned closer to the commercial area than the current sign proposed. The Inspector placed great emphasis on the contribution that the small green parcel of land made to the wider area, and the relief to the busy A33 afforded by it. Further to this, whilst this application has been considered on its merits, the above context is clearly relevant and considered to be material to the consideration of the current application, given the proximity of the two sites. The proposed sign would be located in an area specifically designated as a Major Landscape Feature and is considered a significantly worse scenario than a scheme previously recently dismissed at appeal. Indeed, the appeal decision only serves to highlight and reinforce the importance of the relief that these parcels of land afford to the area. To this end, the proposed sign, due to its elevated and prominent position adjacent a busy thoroughfare leading in and out of the town centre would be a dominant and discordant feature and would therefore harmfully detract from the relief served by this open area when viewed by those travelling down Rose Kiln Lane over some distance, emphasised by the extensive area of illumination proposed.
- 6.20 It is recognised that as landowners the Council would have input into the use of the LED screen and as such there may be associated public benefits arising from such a proposed use. For example, the screen could display community or important public service information. However, no indication of the information to be displayed has been provided and the over-riding concern is the material harm that would be caused by the LED screen, to the character and appearance of the identified Major Landscape Feature. For the reasons stated above, it is considered by your officers that this harm would clearly be detrimental to the interests of visual amenity and contrary to the Council's own policies which seek to ensure a high quality

of design which respects the wider context and contributes to a high quality of place, and which seek to protect, preserve and enhance a Major Landscape Feature area.

ii) Public safety

- 6.21 Whilst the Council's Transport Officer initially had concerns that the sign as originally proposed would obscure and hinder an existing bus lane sign, further to revised plans showing the advert raised above the height of the bus lane sign, the Transport Officers have removed their objection.
- 6.22 Further to the above, the proposed sign is located in a position such that it is not considered would cause a significant physical obstruction to members of the public using the highway (either pedestrians or vehicular drivers/passengers) nor would it hinder the existing bus lane sign.
- 6.23 There is no transport/highways objection subject to conditions to include the candela (luminance) level stipulated by the applicant to be secured.
- 6.24 The proposal is not considered to compromise any existing CCTV in the local area.
- 6.25 As such, the proposal is considered to be suitable in public safety terms And complies with policies

iii) Other matters

- 6.26 Trees, landscaping and ecology - As above, the site forms part of an identified Treed Corridor in the as well as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area/Area of Identified Biodiversity interest. Whilst the Council's Tree Officer has concerns that the location of the proposed sign could limit future planting (as planting would have to be kept low to maintain visibility of the sign) it is considered that this could be dealt with through careful positioning of any planting and there is no objection. Similarly, whilst the Council's Ecologist originally raised concern that the proposed sign could result in additional light spillage on the adjacent local wildlife site and thereby adversely affecting the wildlife that use it, further to the submission of existing and proposed light levels which demonstrate that there would be no additional light spillage there is no objection.
- 6.28 Flooding - Whilst the site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3, to the nature of the structure, there are not considered to be any adverse flooding risks associated with the proposal.
- 6.27 Equalities Impact - In 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.

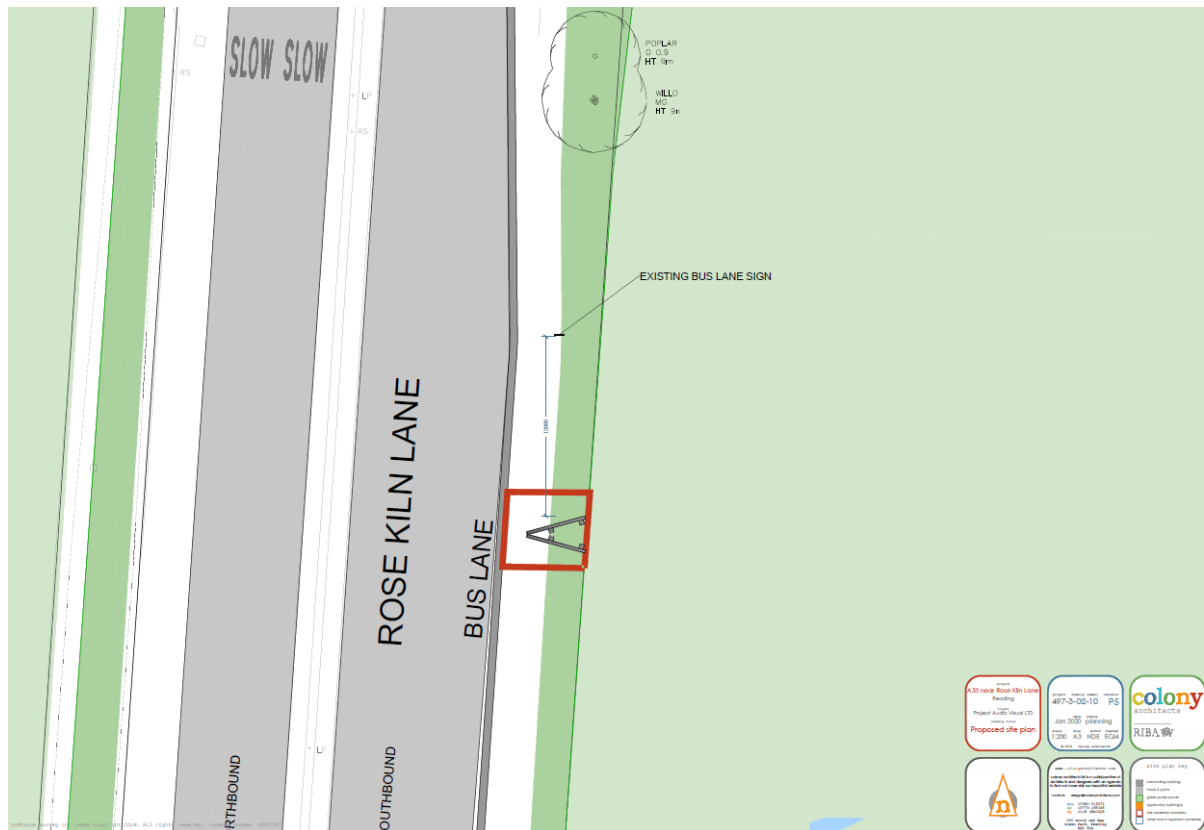
7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed advertising screen is being proposed by the applicant in partnership with Reading Borough Council. However, having regard to the material considerations and all matters raised in the above appraisal, officers have concluded that there are clear conflicts with the development plan and NPPF 2019. Officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. The applicant has been advised of your officers' views on this application but have advised that this application should continue to a determination as opposed to withdrawing. Advertisement Consent is therefore recommended to be refused for the reason as stated at the start of this report.

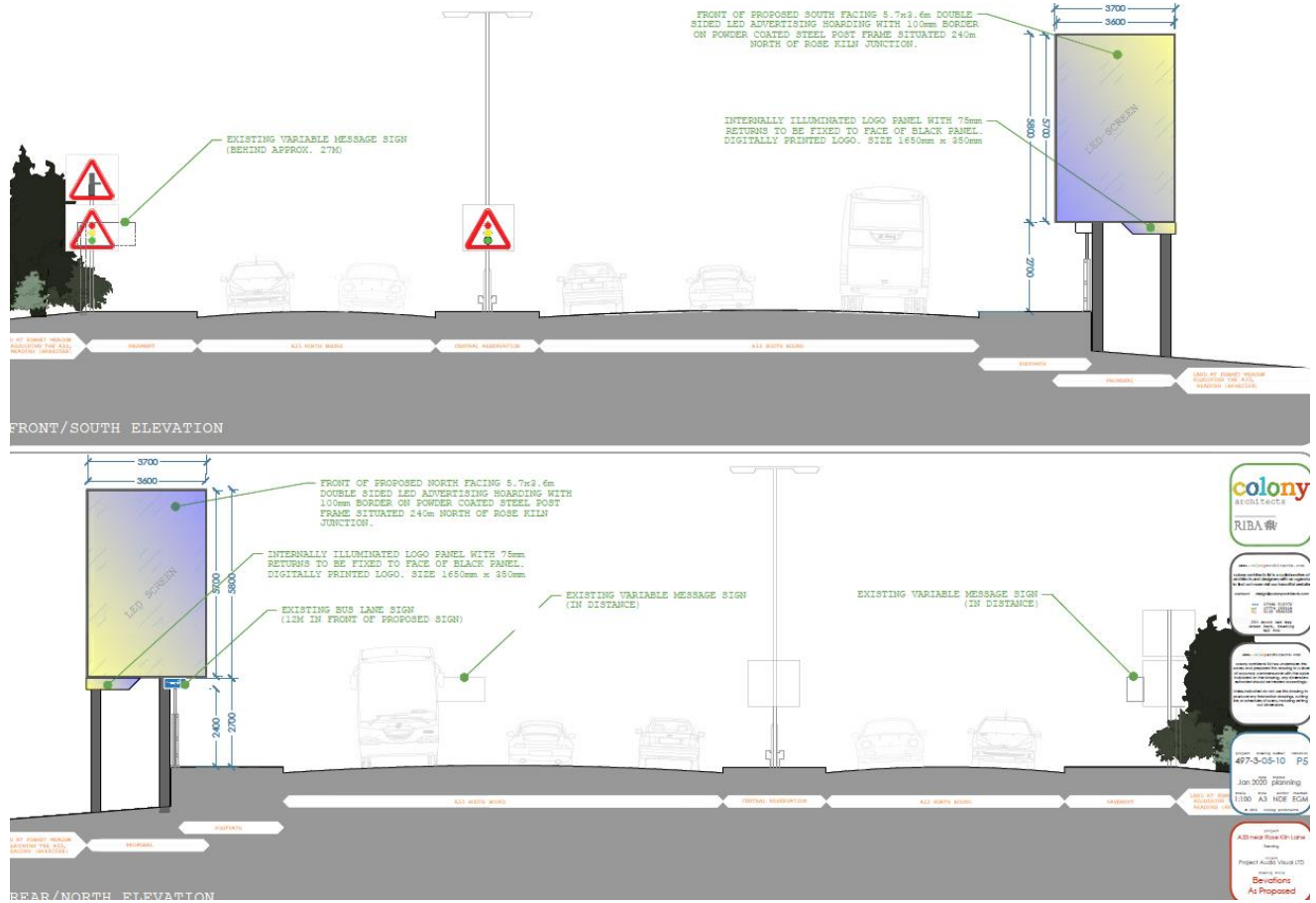
Case Officer: Miss Ethne Humphreys

Plans considered

Proposed Block Plan



Proposed Signage



Proposed Visual - Daytime

PROPOSED VIEW OF LANDSCAPE - DAYTIME

A33 Kia South Bound View (Display positioned behind existing fence line)



A33 Kia North Bound View (Display positioned behind existing fence line)



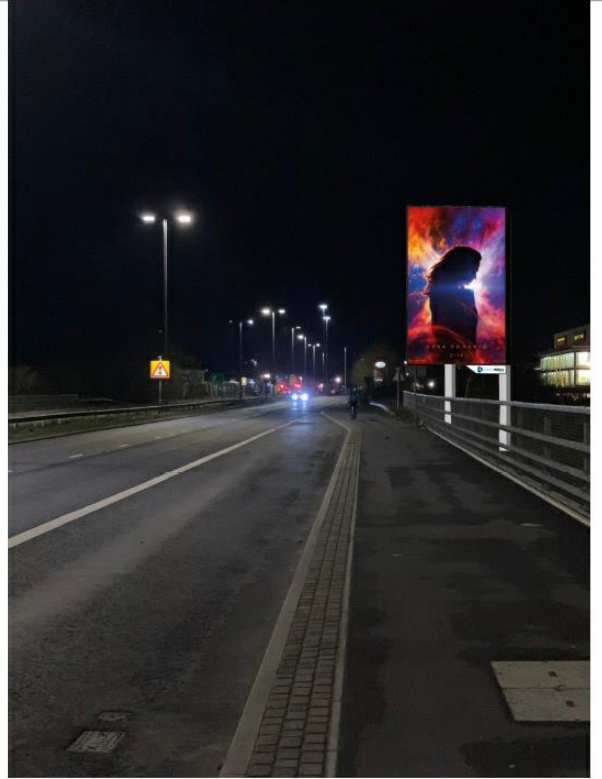
Proposed Visual - Nighttime

PROPOSED VIEW OF LANDSCAPE – NIGHTTIME

A33 Kia South Bound View (Display positioned behind existing fence line)



A33 Kia North Bound View (Display positioned behind existing fence line)



COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE:

Ward: Minster

Application No.s: a) 210549/FUL
b) 210550/ADV

Address: Wensley Court (No. 193), Irving Court (No.203) and Riversley Court (No. 205)
Wensley Road Reading RG1 6EA /B/D

Proposals: a) Full Planning Permission for: Various renovation works to the three tower blocks (Wensley Court, Irving Court and Riversley Court), including: replacement of the external envelope and windows; extended and reconfigured entrance areas incorporating altered refuse and recycling facilities; replacement ground floor escape doors, external stairs and windows; roof level works; various landscaping works including planting and surface treatments, and external cycle parking stores.

b) Advertisement Consent for: Non-illuminated fascia signs on west elevation of No. 193 Wensley Court and No. 205 Riversley Court, and east elevation of No. 203 Irving Court, all at ground floor level; Non-illuminated fascia signs on east and west elevations of No. 193 Wensley Court, No. 203 Irving Court and No. 205 Riversley Court at 13th and 14th floor level.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Dates Valid: 30/04/2021

Application target decision dates: Originally 25/06/2021, but extensions of time for the determination of the application have subsequently been agreed until 28/07/2021

26 week dates: 29/10/2021

RECOMMENDATION

- a) 210549/FUL - GRANT planning permission subject to conditions, including:
1. Time Limit - 3 years
 2. Approved plans
 3. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) details of all external materials to be submitted to the LPA (and sample details to be provided on site) and approved in writing with the LPA. Approved details to be retained on site until the work has been completed.
 4. Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land remediation scheme
 5. Pre-construction contaminated land validation report (implementation and verification of remediation scheme)
 6. Reporting of unexpected contamination at any time
 7. Compliance condition relating to hours of demolition/construction works
 8. Compliance condition relating to no burning of materials or green waste on site
 9. Pre first use of refuse areas details of pest and vermin control measures to refuse and recycling bin stores; provision of approved measures prior to first use of the re-provided bins and maintained thereafter. Wording also incorporates compliance condition in relation to the provision of refuse and recycling facilities as shown on the approved plans prior to first use of these facilities.
 10. Riversley Court refuse collection management plan (pre first use of the Riversley Court refuse store)
 11. Pre-commencement (including demolition) demolition and construction method statement, including transport and environmental protection matters

12. Cycle parking to be provided in accordance with the approved details (as submitted) prior to the first use of external amenity area (where cycle parking is proposed) of the relevant block (compliance condition)
13. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) hard and soft landscaping scheme to be submitted and approved. Implementation prior to first use of any extended entrance block (or alternative timetable later agreed). Replacement of any planting which dies within 5 years.
14. Pre-first use of any extended entrance block approval of boundary treatment details (including mammal gaps)
15. Pre-first use of any extended entrance block landscape management plan to be submitted and approved
16. Pre-commencement (including demolition) submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan
17. Pre-first use of any extended entrance block approval of external lighting
18. Prior to the commencement of any soft landscaping works approved, implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (as submitted and approved by the LPA)
19. Pre-first use of any extended entrance block approval of the access control system and CCTV provision.
20. Compliance condition relating to the development being carried out in accordance with the measures proposed/included (option 4) within the energy statement

Informatives:

1. Positive and proactive working
2. Pre-commencement conditions
3. Highways works
4. Terms
5. Building Control
6. Complaints about construction
7. CIL

b) 210550/ADV - GRANT advertisement consent subject to conditions, including:

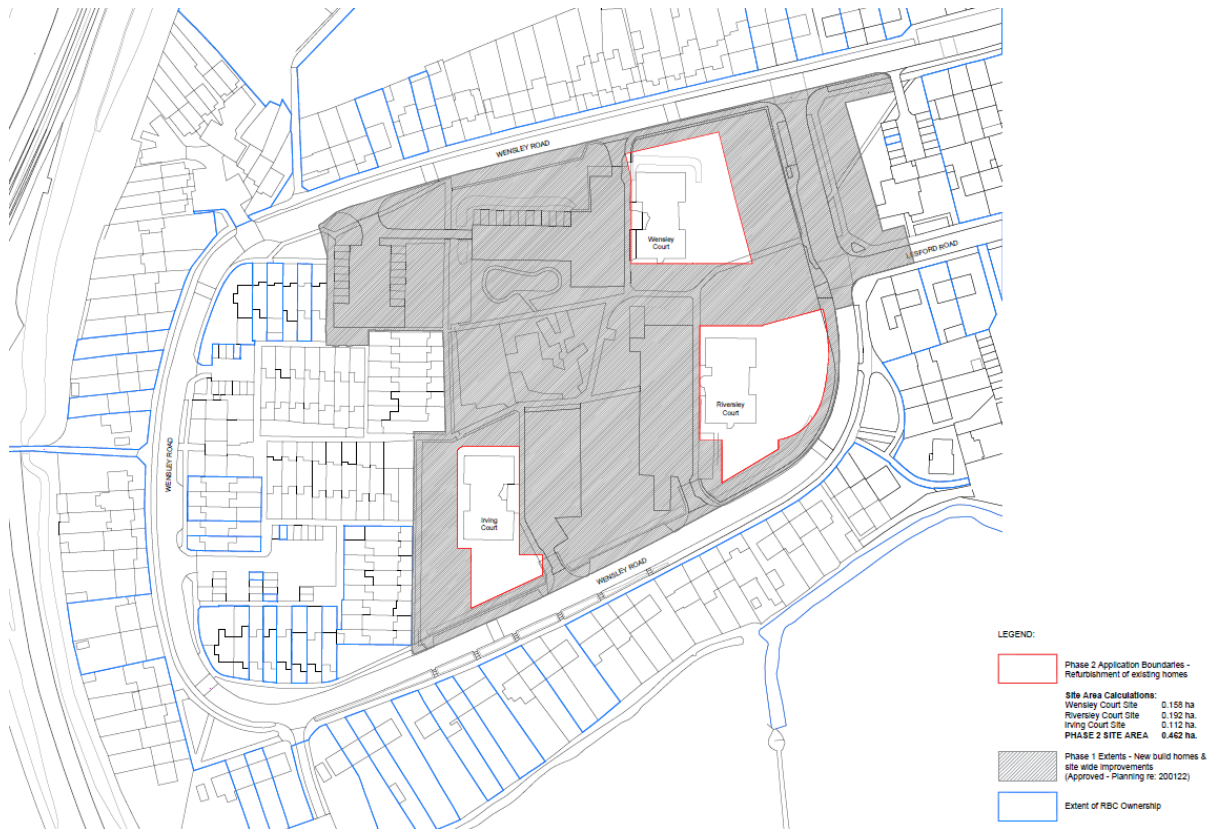
1. The standard conditions
2. Approved plans

Informatives

1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises land at the western end of Wensley Road in Coley. More specifically it solely comprises the three existing residential tower blocks of Wensley Court, Riversley Court and Irving Court and land immediately adjacent to each block. This is detailed within the red line boundary plan shown below, which in this instance comprises three parcels of land (one per block). The towers date from the early 1960s and are each 15 storeys high. In total they comprise 267 flats (89 within each block) and are arranged around open space (some of which is inside the red line boundaries of the site and others which are outside) and associated car parking and access (all of which are outside the red line boundaries).



- 1.2 Outside of the red line boundaries of the proposed development is a central play area, which presently includes a multi-use games area (MUGA), playground, pump track for bikes and seating spaces. There are also a variety of trees within the central green space, such as a Category A Turkish Oak and London Plane. There is also a noticeable fall in land levels across the site from north to south, generally of 5m. A substation and water tank building are also outside of the red line boundaries, to the west of Riversley Court and the south of Wensley Court.
- 1.3 No land at the sites are allocated as either Local Green Spaces or Public Open Space (as per Policy EN7). Accordingly, the open space elements within the red line boundaries can be described as undesignated open space under Policy EN8. The application sites are wholly within Flood Zone 1. There are no specific site allocations or specific planning constraints at the sites.
- 1.4 The wider area outside the sites are predominantly residential in character, with a series of two-storey short-terraces, semi-detached, some detached properties, some garage blocks and the five-storey Lesford Road flats (to the east) surrounding the site. Wensley Road presently forms a loop which runs around the outside of the development (and wider) site, providing a link to Holybrook Road in the east and in turn to Berkeley Avenue. A bus route (Bronze number 11) runs around the loop, with bus stops to the north-east, west and east of the site. Wensley Road is subject to a 20mph speed limit, due in part to the presence of St Mary & All Saints C of E Primary School on Wensley Road. Lit footways are provided on both sides of the carriageway and a formal pedestrian crossing is present in the form of a zebra crossing adjacent to the school.
- 1.5 There are several planning constraints outside of the red line boundaries of the application sites, but in close vicinity. The northern side of Wensley Road is a designated cycle route (Route R6). The main railway line connecting Basingstoke

and Newbury to Reading runs further to the west of the application sites and this route marks a Green Link and an area of identified biodiversity interest (Policy EN12). Another area of identified biodiversity interest is also located to the north of the residential properties located on the north side of Wensley Road. Also, at this point is the designated (Policy EN7) Courage Park Public Open Space, which can be accessed on foot via a public right of way off Wensley Road. Other public right of ways are found to the south-east of the sites (running to the south of Heron Way and Lesford Road) and to the west (connecting to Southcote).

- 1.6 The nearby railway line is also within an air quality management area, as per Policy EN15, which runs as far east as the north-western element of Wensley Road, but does not include the application sites, To the south of the application sites, beyond the residential properties on the southern side of Wensley Road, the land is within Flood Zones 2 and 3, with the Holy Brook River to the south of the application sites. The Kennet and Holy Brook Meadows are a Major Landscape Feature (Policy EN13), with this area also an area of archaeological importance (Policy EN2).
- 1.7 The two applications are referred to committee owing to them being Council's own (regulation 3) development. The Council also owns the land shaded in grey on the plan above, together with land/buildings edged in blue, although these do not form part of these proposals.



Photograph (06/05/21) from the north-west corner of the wider site, looking south-east



The most recent aerial photograph available, looking north

2. PROPOSALS

2.1 Full planning permission is sought for various renovation works to the three tower blocks (Wensley Court, Irving Court and Riversley Court) and the immediate outdoor areas surrounding each block too. The proposed improvements include:

- A range of thermal performance improvements to the three blocks, including:
 - Removing the external envelope of the three existing tower blocks and replacement with a high quality, non-combustible external wall insulation and render system to improve thermal performance;
 - Replace all the existing windows at the three tower blocks with new triple glazed inward opening windows;
 - Replace the existing roof covering and insulation to improve thermal performance
- A series of external elevation changes, including:
 - A new terracotta render (central recessed section of the tower blocks) and light grey textured render (flanking sides);
 - A brick base at ground and first floor levels.
- Entrance area reconfiguration works and stair core improvements as follows:
 - extend and reconfigure the existing entrance areas to the three tower blocks, including the provision of a replacement door entry system, new entrance doors and new floor and wall finishes (it is noted that internal alterations do not in themselves require planning permission, but these are referenced for completeness to illustrate that the works sought are not solely external);
 - the replacement of ground floor escape doors, external stairs and windows / curtain walling;

- Refuse and recycling strategy
 - Reconfigure the refuse and recycling facilities so that the storage areas are integrated within the ground floor of each block (rather than including some separately located external facilities);
 - Each block will include a dedicated internal facility at ground floor level, comprising 5 x 1100 litre General Waste Bins, 6 x 1100 litre Dry Mixed Recycling Bins and 5 x 240 litre Food Waste Bins
 - Although the following are internal works for which planning permission is not required, it is nevertheless referenced that the existing refuse chute serving each block will be replaced by a tri-separator system for general waste, mixed dry recycling and food waste.

- Cycle storage provision
 - The existing limited cycle parking facilities (12 spaces) will be re-provided and an additional 45 cycle lockers (with capacity for 60 cycle spaces overall) to serve the three blocks are also proposed, with these all being proposed to be located externally, close to each block.
 - During the application the applicant has specified that metroSTOR PCM 18 Series Cycle Storage units are proposed.

- Improvements to the communal amenity spaces and landscaping works surrounding the bases of each block
 - Instead of the presently undefined open space around each block, amenity areas with paths, street furniture, equipment for incidental play, cycle stores and tree planting (as part of the phase 1 requirements) are proposed. A perimeter buffer zone around the existing buildings will also be introduced.

2.2 The sustainability improvements sought by the proposals include specific measures:

- Improvement of the fabric specifications of the external walls
- Improvement of the fabric specifications of the roofs
- Provision of triple glazing
- Provision of Mechanical Ventilation and Heat Recovery (MVHR) system in each flat
- Provision of low energy lighting fittings

2.3 Separate Advertisement Consent is sought (Application reference 210550) for ground floor entrance point and high-level non-illuminated signage to all three blocks. First, non-illuminated fascia signs are proposed on west elevations of both No. 193 Wensley Court and No. 205 Riversley Court, and also on the east elevation of No. 203 Irving Court, all at ground floor level. These will simply specify the name and number of each block, adjacent to the reconfigured ground floor entrance points. Second, single non-illuminated fascia signs on both the east and west elevations of No. 193 Wensley Court, No. 203 Irving Court and No. 205 Riversley Court at 13th and 14th floor level are also proposed. These will vertically specify the numbers of each block ('193', '203' and '205' as appropriate). Each of the individual numbers would be 1.5m in height and project 0.3m from the face of the building. All signs would be made of grey aluminium to match the proposed new window frames.

2.4 These proposals effectively constitute phase 2 of the regeneration and estate improvement works at this part of the inner loop of Wensley Road. Phase 1 was approved in December 2020 for 46 dwellings and various amendments to the open space and road network (see relevant history below). Three separate sets of plans

have been submitted with this current application to aid understanding. As well as the standard existing and proposed (phase 2 only) plans, a set of combined phase 1 & phase 2 plans have been submitted for information purposes to indicate how the wider site will appear if both phases are completed. A visualisation and annotated infographic are extracted from the submission below to demonstrate this:



Visualisation provided by the applicant of phases 1 and 2 of the scheme combined, aerial view from the north-west corner of the wider site, looking south-east



- 2.5 During the course of the application some revised and additional plans/details have been submitted following initial officer feedback on the proposals. This includes providing further details and clarity regarding the cycle parking, landscaping proposals, swift boxes and crime prevention measures.
- 2.6 In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the applicant duly completed a CIL liability form as part of the submission of this application. The information submitted specifies that the increase in floorspace is below 100sqm and therefore the development will not be CIL liable.
- 2.7 Plans and documents submitted:

210549 - planning application

Existing

- HTA-A_DR_0001 Rev A Site Location Plan, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0002 Rev B Existing Site Plan, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0003 Rev A Existing Constraints Plan, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0030 Rev B Existing Site Section AA & BB, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0031 Rev B Existing Site Section CC & DD, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0032 Rev B Existing Site Section EE & FF, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0033 Rev B Existing Site Section GG & HH, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0040 Rev A 193 Existing Plan - Level 00, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0041 Rev A 193 Existing Plan - Level 01, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0042 Rev A 193 Existing Plan - Level 02,04,06,08,10,12&14, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0043 Rev A 193 Existing Plan - Level 03,05,09&15, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0044 Rev A 193 Existing Plan - Level 07,11&13, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0045 Rev A 193 Existing Roof Plan, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0050 Rev B 193 Existing Elevations - Front/West, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0051 Rev B 193 Existing Elevations - Rear/East, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0052 Rev B 193 Existing Elevations - Side, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0055 Rev A 193 Existing Sections - AA & BB, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0060 Rev A 203 Existing Plan - Level 00, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0061 Rev A 203 Existing Plan - Level 01, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0062 Rev A 203 Existing Plan - Level 02,04,06,08,10,12&14, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0063 Rev A 203 Existing Plan - Level 03,05,07,09,11&13, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0065 Rev A 203 Existing Roof Plan, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0070 Rev B 203 Existing Elevations - Front/East, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0071 Rev B 203 Existing Elevations - Rear/West, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0072 Rev B 203 Existing Elevations - Side, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0075 Rev A 203 Existing Sections - AA & BB, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0080 Rev A 205 Existing Plan - Level 00, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0081 Rev A 205 Existing Plan - Level 01, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0082 Rev A 205 Existing Plan - Level 02,04,06,08,10,12&14, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0083 Rev A 205 Existing Plan - Level 03,05,07,09,11&13, as received 08/04/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0085 Rev B 205 Existing Roof Plan, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0090 Rev B 205 Existing Elevations - Front/West, as received 14/05/2021
 HTA-A_DR_0091 Rev B 205 Existing Elevations - Rear/East, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0092 Rev B 205 Existing Elevations - Side, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0095 Rev B 205 Existing Sections - AA & BB, as received 14/05/2021

Proposed Phase 2 only

HTA-A_DR_0110 Rev B Proposed Phase 2 Site Plan, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0130 Rev B Proposed Phase 2 Site Sections AA & BB, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0131 Rev B Proposed Phase 2 Site Sections CC & DD, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0132 Rev B Proposed Phase 2 Site Sections EE & FF / A B, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0133 Rev B Proposed Phase 2 Site Section GG & HH / A B, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0140 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 00, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0141 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 01, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0142 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 02,04,06,08,10,12&14, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0143 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 03,05,09&15, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0144 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 07,11&13, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0145 Rev B 193 Proposed Phase 2 Roof Plan, as received 21/06/2021
HTA-A_DR_0150 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Front/West, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0151 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Rear/East, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0152 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Side, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0155 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Sections - AA & BB, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0160 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 00, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0161 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 01, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0162 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 02,04,06,08,10,12&14, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0163 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 03,05,07,09,11&13, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0165 Rev B 203 Proposed Phase 2 Roof Plan, as received 21/06/2021
HTA-A_DR_0170 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Front/East, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0171 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Rear/West, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0172 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Side, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0175 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Sections - AA & BB, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0180 Rev A 205 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 00, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0181 Rev A 205 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 01, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0182 Rev A 205 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 02,04,06,08,10,12,14, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0183 Rev A 205 Proposed Phase 2 Plan - Level 03,05,07,09,11&13, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0185 Rev C 205 Proposed Phase 2 Roof Plan, as received 21/06/2021
HTA-A_DR_0190 Rev B 205 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Front/West, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0191 Rev B 205 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Rear/East, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0192 Rev B 205 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Side, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0195 Rev B 205 Proposed Phase 2 Sections - AA & BB, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0900 193 Proposed Phase 2 Landscape Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0901 203 Proposed Phase 2 Landscape Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0902 205 Proposed Phase 2 Landscape Plan, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0630 193 Proposed Cycle Stores, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0631 203 Proposed Cycle Stores, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0632 205 Proposed Cycle Stores, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0640 Swift Brick Locations, as received 21/06/2021

HTA-A_DR_0340 193 Proposed Phase 2 Boundary Treatments Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0350 193 Proposed Phase 2 External Lighting Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0360 203 Proposed Phase 2 Boundary Treatments Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0370 203 Proposed Phase 2 External Lighting Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0380 205 Proposed Phase 2 Boundary Treatments Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0390 205 Proposed Phase 2 External Lighting Plan, as received 08/04/2021

Phase 1 (already approved) and 2 (proposed) schemes combined (submitted for information purposes)

HTA-A_DR_0210 Rev B Proposed Phase 1&2 Site Plan, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0230 Rev B Proposed Phase 1&2 Site Sections AA & BB, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0231 Rev B Proposed Phase 1&2 Site Sections CC & DD, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0232 Rev B Proposed Phase 1&2 Site Sections EE & FF, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0233 Rev B Proposed Phase 1&2 Site Section GG & HH, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0240 Rev B 193 Proposed Phase 1&2 Plan - Level 00, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0260 Rev B 203 Proposed Phase 1&2 Plan - Level 00, as received 14/05/2021
HTA-A_DR_0280 Rev B 205 Proposed Phase 1&2 Plan - Level 00, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0990 193 Proposed Phase 1&2 Landscape Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0991 203 Proposed Phase 1&2 Landscape Plan, as received 08/04/2021
HTA-A_DR_0992 205 Proposed Phase 1&2 Landscape Plan, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0440 Rev B 193 Proposed Phase 1&2 Boundary Treatments Plan, as received 02/07/2021

HTA-A_DR_0450 193 Proposed Phase 1&2 External Lighting Plan, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0460 Rev B 203 Proposed Phase 1&2 Boundary Treatments Plan, as received 02/07/2021

HTA-A_DR_0470 203 Proposed Phase 1&2 External Lighting Plan, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0480 Rev B 205 Proposed Phase 1&2 Boundary Treatments Plan, as received 02/07/2021

HTA-A_DR_0490 205 Proposed Phase 1&2 External Lighting Plan, as received 08/04/2021

Other plans submitted

HTA-A_DR_0600 193 Existing & Proposed GIA - CIL Areas, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0601 203 Existing & Proposed GIA - CIL Areas, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0602 205 Existing & Proposed GIA - CIL Areas, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0610 193 Existing & Proposed Open Space Areas, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0611 203 Existing & Proposed Open Space Areas, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0612 205 Existing & Proposed Open Space Areas, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0800 Existing Accommodation Schedule, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0810 Existing & Proposed GIA Schedule, as received 08/04/2021

Other documents submitted:

Planning Statement Wensley Road: New Build & Estate Improvements Phase 2 Wensley Road, Reading RG1 by HTA Ref RBC-CRR dated April 2021, as received 08/04/2021

Coley Rise Refurbishment: Design & Access Statement Reading Borough Council Wensley Road: New Build & Estate Improvements Phase 2 by HTA Ref RBC-CRR_HTA_A, as received 08/04/2021

Reading Borough Council Wensley Road: New Build & Estate Improvements Phase 1 Approved Planning Drawings Application Ref: 200122, as received 08/04/2021

Reading Borough Council Wensley Road: New Build & Estate Improvements Phase 2 Energy Statement by HTA Sustainability Issue 1 dated 31/03/2021, as received 08/04/2021

Ecological Impact Assessment by ECOSA Ref 20.0406.0004.F0 dated 31/03/2021, as received 08/04/2021

Ground Appraisal Report by Geo-Environmental Ref GE18760-GARv2.0-MAR21 Version 2.0, dated 10/03/2021, as received 08/04/2021

Construction Method Statement by Gleeds dated 19/03/2021, as received 08/04/2021

metroSTOR PCM 18 Series Cycle Storage specification, received 24/06/2021

Reading Borough Council Wensley Road: New Build & Estate Improvements Phase 2 Coley Rise Refurbishment: Design & Access Statement - Updated Tree Planting Strategy July 2021, as received 02/07/2021

210550/ADV plans and documents

HTA-A_DR_0620 193 Proposed Signage, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0621 203 Proposed Signage, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0622 205 Proposed Signage, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0050 Rev B 193 Existing Elevations - Front/West, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0051 Rev B 193 Existing Elevations - Rear/East, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0070 Rev B 203 Existing Elevations - Front/East, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0071 Rev B 203 Existing Elevations - Rear/West, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0090 Rev B 205 Existing Elevations - Front/West, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0091 Rev B 205 Existing Elevations - Rear/East, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0150 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Front/West, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0151 Rev A 193 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Rear/East, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0170 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Front/East, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0171 Rev A 203 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Rear/West, as received 08/04/2021

HTA-A_DR_0190 Rev B 205 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Front/West, as received 14/05/2021

HTA-A_DR_0191 Rev B 205 Proposed Phase 2 Elevations - Rear/East, as received 14/05/2021

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 At the application sites there have been a number of applications in relation to telecommunication works, none of which are considered to be especially relevant to this application. The following relates to Wensley Court, Riversley Court and Irving Court:

3.2 920610 - External alterations to include new cladding, windows and roof treatment; front extension to Riversley Block; alterations to site layout/boundaries. REGULATION 3. Granted 18/9/1992.

3.3 The following applications are outside of the red line boundaries of the application sites, but are considered relevant to the consideration of the proposals:

3.4 181448 - Riversley Court 205 Wensley Road - Single storey detached prefabricated water storage and treatment plantroom. Granted 07/12/2018.

3.5 200122 - Demolition of 29 garages and development of 46 new dwelling units, including the provision of affordable homes, provided in a mixture of houses and apartments (1 bed / 2 bed / 3 bed / 4 bed) in blocks of between 2.5 to 4 storeys, and the provision of bicycle parking spaces, car parking spaces and public realm works. Granted following completion of legal agreement 16/12/2020.

- 3.6 210271 - Discharge of condition 5 (Demolition and Construction / Environmental Method Statement) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020 (amended description) (partly sought retrospectively). Condition not discharged 18/03/2021 as vegetation clearance/tree removal works commenced prior to details being submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. However, it was confirmed on the basis of the information provided, there were considered to be no outstanding planning matters in relation to this condition, nor matters of enforcement, providing that the remainder of the development is undertaken in accordance with the above details.
- 3.7 210386 - Discharge of condition 30 (Design Stage SAP Assessment) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020. Condition discharged 16/03/2021.
- 3.8 210387 - Partial Discharge of condition 39 (Written Scheme of Investigation of Archaeological works) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020 (amended description) (partly sought retrospectively). Partial condition not discharged 18/03/2021, as vegetation clearance/tree removal works commenced prior to details being submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. However, it was confirmed on the basis of the information provided, there were considered to be no outstanding planning matters in relation to the relevant part of the condition, nor matters of enforcement, providing that the remainder of the development is undertaken in accordance with the above details.
- 3.9 210453 - Discharge of condition 16 (Contaminated Land Assessment) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020 (sought retrospectively). Condition not discharged 19/04/2021, as vegetation clearance/tree removal works commenced prior to details being submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. However, it was confirmed on the basis of the information provided, there were considered to be no outstanding planning matters in relation to this condition, nor matters of enforcement, providing that the remainder of the development is undertaken in accordance with the above details.
- 3.10 210462 - Discharge of condition 28 (Habitat Enhancement Scheme) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020. Condition discharged 14/05/2021.
- 3.11 210498 - Discharge of condition 4 (finished floor levels) of planning permission 200122. Condition discharged 27/04/2021.
- 3.12 210514 - Discharge of condition 17 (Contaminated Land Remediation) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020 (sought retrospectively). Condition not discharged 19/04/2021, as vegetation clearance/tree removal works commenced prior to details being submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. However, it was confirmed on the basis of the information provided, there were considered to be no outstanding planning matters in relation to this condition, nor matters of enforcement, providing that the remainder of the development is undertaken in accordance with the above details.
- 3.13 210515 - Discharge of condition 27 (Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020 (sought retrospectively). Condition not discharged 09/04/2021 as vegetation clearance/tree removal works commenced prior to details being submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. However, it was confirmed on the basis of the information provided, there were considered to be no outstanding planning matters in relation to this condition, nor matters of enforcement, providing that

the remainder of the development is undertaken in accordance with the above details.

- 3.14 210715 - Discharge of condition 7 (vehicle access serving the refuse collection area details) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020. Discharged 28/05/2021.
- 3.15 210754 -Partial discharge of condition 39 (Archaeological Fieldwork Evaluation) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020. Current application under consideration.
- 3.16 210866 - Discharge of condition 23 (hard and soft landscaping scheme) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020. Current application under consideration.
- 3.17 210890 - Discharge of condition 40 (Sustainable Drainage Strategy) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020. Current application under consideration.
- 3.18 211123 - Discharge of condition 38 (Secured by Design) of planning permission 200122, as granted on 16/12/2020. Current application under consideration.

4. CONSULTATIONS

i) RBC Transport Development Control

- 4.1 Pedestrian access to Wensley Court, Riversley Court and Irving Court and the surrounding grounds is to be facilitated by dedicated footways surrounding the site / wider site. These are to be provided by separate planning permission 200122 (see relevant history) and as such the proposal is acceptable in principle.
- 4.2 The site is provided with 12 cycle storage spaces and the proposals seeks to provide an improvement in terms the number and type of cycle storage on the site. Wensley Court, Riversley Court and Irving Court will each be provided with the following form of cycle parking:
 - 5 family cycle stores
 - 10 individual cycle stores
 - 4 individual cycle stores relocated.
- 4.3 In the initial planning submission there was inconsistency between the Design and Access Statement and submitted plans as to whether the cycle stores would be stored horizontally (acceptable) or vertically (unacceptable). During the application the applicant provided clarification through the submission of an acceptable specification (metroSTOR PCM 18 Series Cycle Store). This is deemed acceptable and is in excess of the current provision and therefore the Highway Authority have no objection to the cycle parking provision.
- 4.4 An internal refuse store has been provided which is located directly adjacent to the refuse collection area and therefore has been deemed acceptable, subject to RBC Waste Services comments (see below).
- 4.5 A Construction Method Statement has been submitted to accompany the planning application; however, no plan illustrating how the Phase 2 works will be managed has been provided and therefore the standard pre-commencement condition is

recommended. In the circumstances there are no transport objections to the planning application subject to the pre-commencement CMS condition and compliance conditions relating to cycle parking and refuse storage facilities being provided as shown.

4.6 RBC Transport has no objections to the advertisement consent application.

ii) RBC Environmental Protection

4.7 There are potential EP based concerns in relation to contaminated land, the demolition and construction phase and bin storage.

4.8 In terms of contaminated land, the site investigation concludes that there is some contamination present on site. Therefore, a remediation strategy will be required for the soft landscaped areas. This will be secured via condition, together with the subsequent validation report and unidentified contamination conditions too. These conditions are required to ensure that occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.

4.9 During the demolition and construction phase concerns arise regarding noise, dust and bonfires possibly adversely impacting nearby residents (e.g. impact on air quality from on-site fires). Although a construction method statement has been submitted, this does not include specific practical noise/dust measures and no pest control/drain capping measures. Accordingly, specific measures will be required to be submitted as part of the recommended demolition and construction method statement condition, hours of work and no bonfires being permitted. With these conditions secured the proposals will safeguard amenity from an EP perspective.

4.10 There has been a well-know widespread issue with rats in the area, with rats encouraged to food sources by poor waste storage. There is a greater risk of rats being able to access the waste where facilities are shared, owing 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 stores to be vermin proof to prevent rats accessing the waste. Consequently, a pre-occupation condition is recommended to secure details of the measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing the bin stores. This will also require the provision of the approved measures prior to first use of any of the re-provided bins and maintained thereafter.

iii) RBC Ecology consultant (GS Ecology)

4.11 The Ecological Impact Assessment (ECOSA, March 2021) has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the proposals are unlikely to adversely affect wildlife and there are therefore no constraints to the proposals.

4.12 The proposals include more than 70 new trees around the site and the inclusion of twelve swift boxes on each tower block. In principle, these biodiversity enhancements are supported. The positions of these swift boxes at roof level have been referenced on revised plans submitted during the application, following a request for clarification by officers. This approach is welcomed and supported, with there accordingly being no objections to the proposals from an Ecology perspective, with the swift boxes being implemented in line with the recommended 'development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans' condition.

iv) RBC Planning Natural Environment

4.13 In initial comments provided it was confirmed that there were no objections in principle to the proposals, but some clarifications were sought. These also cross-referenced the proposals back to the tree and landscaping requirements of the phase 1 permission, bearing in mind the landscaping condition is presently under consideration (see relevant history above - refs 200122 and 210866). The clarifications sought are summarised as including:

- Details about the extent of the Irving Court and Riversley Court railings
- Query about the proposal for Scots pine feature species serving Wensley Court and the choice of a Honey Locust
- Concern about long term success of 'dense grid' planting and for the woodland planting mix to be expanded for diversity
- Potential conflict between lighting columns and future need to prune trees
- Clarity over the implementation period for phase 1 and 2 planting

4.14 The initial response facilitated a series of correspondence and a virtual meeting with officers. Subsequent to this an updated Tree Planting Strategy was submitted. The Natural Environment Officer confirmed that, considering the further information submitted, the proposal is now supportable in tree and landscape terms. Whilst some minor adjustments to species will need to be considered by the applicant, this can be resolved through landscape details at a later stage. A series of conditions will be required as part of any permission, as follows:

1. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) hard and soft landscaping scheme to be submitted and approved. Implementation prior to first use of any extended entrance block (or alternative timetable later agreed). Replacement of any planting which dies within 5 years.
2. Pre-first use of any extended entrance block approval of boundary treatment details (including mammal gaps)
3. Pre-first use of any extended entrance block landscape management plan to be submitted and approved
4. Pre-commencement (including demolition) submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan
5. Pre-first use of any extended entrance block approval of external lighting

v) RBC Landscape Architect / Parks Team

4.15 No objections.

vi) RBC Conservation and Urban Design Officer

4.16 The site is not in a conservation area and will not impact on any of the listed buildings to the east, which are a reasonable distance away. The proposed works relate to a renovation of three residential towers. The scheme has been designed by HTA Design LLP. The scheme has been subject to positive Pre-Application discussions with RBC Officers and a review by the Design Review Panel, both of which took place in January 2021.

4.17 The proposed works will be an enhancement of the Residential Estate and are supported. In addition, the works are considered to comply with the policies (e.g.

NPPF and Policies CC2 and CC7) and planning constraints. In conclusion, there are no objections to the proposal and approval is recommended.

vii) RBC Waste Services

4.18 The reconfiguration of the refuse and recycling facilities and incorporation of food waste facilities are welcomed and supported in principle, representing a significant improvement when compared with the existing arrangements at the site. The level of provision serving each block is consistent with that advised at pre-application stage.

4.19 Several queries were raised in the initial response, which facilitated replies from the applicant to clarify and confirm details. Waste Officers sought for the Riversley Court bins to be within 10m walking distance for collection, but phase 1 approved bollards would prevent this occurring (the walking distance would therefore be just over 10m - unlike the other blocks where the distance is within 10m). RBC Transport confirmed the bollards would not be able to be lowered for pedestrian safety reasons (only to be lowered for emergency access as the footpath that runs along the frontage of Riversley Court will be a well-used public footpath providing access to the adjacent residential block and the adjacent play space, the Highway Authority therefore cannot agree to the use of the area by refuse vehicles given that this will block the footpath for pedestrians and could also result in potential conflict with pedestrians to the detriment of Highway safety) and, by consequence, a planning condition will need to secure a refuse collection management plan for Riversley Court, to confirm how the bins will be presented for collection to allow access within the 10m national standard. In addition, the following was also confirmed:

- the phase 1 approved dropped kerb locations have been specified on the clarify this for refuse collection purposes
- the glass bank locations approved through phase 1 (next to the existing substation, adjacent to the new road, by Riversley Court) were confirmed as remaining in the same position for phase 2.
- The applicant provided details as to how the bins will be cleaned and maintained: The new refuse stores will include plumbing and drainage within the stores themselves to allow the areas to be easily and regularly jet washed. All of the finishes to the refuse stores will be specified to robust, durable and ensure ease of maintenance.

viii) RBC Access Officer

4.20 No objections.

ix) RBC Sustainability

4.21 The Sustainability Manager is generally supportive of the proposals, with replacement of the external wall insulation, windows and doors, together with ventilation and heat pump improvements all resulting in energy savings and improvements in comparison with the existing arrangements. A query was raised in relation to why photovoltaics were not proposed at roof level, to help deliver further savings, with the applicant responding that this was not financially possible as part of the scope of the scheme. A further query regarding the air permeability value of the mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR). The applicant clarified that the air permeability value has been set to balance fabric efficiency and challenges related to the fact that this is not new construction, with the

intention to create a tighter envelope to match the air levels of Phase 1. This is accepted in the circumstances and in overall terms the proposals, in particular the initial fabric works being a suitable step in improving the thermal performance of the buildings.

x) RBC Leisure

4.22 No objections.

xi) Reading Design Review Panel (at pre-application stage)

4.23 The Reading DRP considered the proposals at pre-application stage in January 2021. The overall design approach was supported subject to further resolution and that the facade alterations to the 3 tower blocks had been well considered. There were several suggested areas where design development could evolve:

- The 1.5m-2m defensible space proposed around the base of each tower
- Better articulation of the front entrances. Entrances and bases of towers will make an enormous difference to the quality of the proposal.
- The top of each tower is slightly unresolved (e.g. parapets & combining the top floors.
- Fabric first approach is welcomed; questions around buildability with residents in-situ during the works
- Queries regarding the weathering / longevity and longer views of the proposed signage.
- Materiality generally supported and the window surrounds add variation and depth
- Questions regarding cycle parking and DRP encourages the applicant to design new, innovative and well-integrated external storage and landscaping solutions.

xii) Berkshire Archaeology

4.24 The archaeological evaluation undertaken in relation to the application 200122, while eliminating much of the site from further archaeological intervention (due to disturbance from modern construction impacts), has identified an area of prehistoric interest, where further archaeological features are likely to be present below ground. Tree planting as part of the phase 2 works could have a harmful effect on these, and its impact should be mitigated in line with local and national planning policy. Berkshire Archaeology has discussed this with the applicant's consultant, and it appears that a small area of archaeological stripping would be appropriate to achieve the required mitigation. Berkshire Archaeology therefore recommends a condition securing the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation.

xiii) Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police

4.25 Initial comments, following input at pre-application stage: It is disappointing that previous concerns relating to the residential communal entrance, secure lobby and postal services do not seem to have been addressed. The lack of an airlock entry lobby containing secure post boxes at ground floor level would prevent unauthorised individuals gaining access into residential areas. Conflicting use and activity is likely to negatively impact on sense of residential ownership and

community cohesion. An airlock entrance lobby would promote ownership and establish defensible space, enabling residents to identify visitors and prevent unauthorised access in to their private areas whilst maintaining a safe and secure distance. Unrestricted postal delivery access into and throughout a large residential block such as this will provide a legitimate excuse for unauthorised individuals to be in private areas where they have no right to be, this in turn raises the fear of crime and provides opportunity for ASB and criminal activity.

- 4.26 In terms of physical security, details of an access control system should be secured via condition. Such a condition will help to ensure that the development achieves the highest standards of design in terms of safety and security, safeguarding future residents.
- 4.27 The applicant responded to the initial comments, summarised as follows in terms of postal services:
- Important to emphasise this is a refurbishment proposal, rather than new build
 - The RBC client and Housing Management Teams day-to-day experiences of the blocks deemed that retrospectively introducing 89 postal boxes within an airlock entrance would present several management challenges and cause disruption to existing residents. Instead, new CCTV within the internal entrance area and a secure audio-visual door entry system will be included, but ground floor postal boxes will not.
- 4.28 In terms of potential compartmentalisation between floors, again the existing constraints of the building would make this being completed retrospectively very challenging. The new visitor audio-visual door entry system is instead proposed, with it is also noted that all existing compartment doors within the lobbies are glazed, providing good visible and natural surveillance through the corridors. In addition, new CCTV cameras are to be installed in a centrally located position, adjacent to the refuse chutes to enhance security.
- 4.29 The CPDA responded to the comments from the applicant, maintaining significant concerns with the postal delivery proposals, noting that whilst CCTV may deter some, those that persist will cause nuisance and damage regardless. The change in consumer habits since the construction of the buildings in the 1960S means there is now a steady flow of courier and postal services on a daily basis. In terms of compartmentation, it is assumed that financial constraints mean there is no further scope for secondary doors or access controls to enter each floor. As such, formal surveillance would be appropriate at this stage, but should any compartmentation between floors be possible then it should be provided.
- 4.30 The applicant provided a further response. Whilst appreciating the further comments from the CPDA in terms of postal services, it is reiterated that it is not feasible within the constraints of the existing building to provide posts boxes for all 89 existing flats in each building within the entrance lobby. RBC Housing also cite concerns regarding congestion, large items being vulnerable to theft and damage and residents with limited mobility having challenges collecting post. Whilst postal boxes within an airlock lobby were included in the phase 1 apartment block, the spatial and logistical challenges of the existing buildings mean this is not possible in phase 2.

4.31 The CPDA has provided a final response, stating that whilst it is appreciated that the application relates to a refurbishment, this shouldn't mitigate the need to address the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour which would negatively impact the future residents as well as police resources. The intention to allow access would suggest the presence of a 'trades' button also allowing unrestricted access to anyone. The applicant's proposal for CCTV is a positive measure which should be present in communal dwellings of this size, however appropriate postal services could also increase the effectiveness of these systems on subsequent floors. Unfortunately, without appropriate secure postal provisions and the presence of a 'trades' button this should be considered a formal objection from Thames Valley Police.

xiv) Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service

4.32 At this stage there is no legislative duty placed upon the Fire Authority to make any comment on the application. The proposals have however been briefly examined and appear to meet the basic principles of means of escape in case of fire and fire-fighting access. Any structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirements.

Public consultation

4.33 Notification letters were produced to be sent to occupiers of the three blocks on 05/05/2021. 12 site notices were erected on 06/05/2021, expiring on 27/05/2021. No responses have been received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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 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 application has been assessed against the following policies:

5.3 National

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.4 The relevant Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) 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
EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space
EN8: Undesignated Open Space

- EN9: Provision of Open Space
- EN10: Access to Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN13: Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- H14: Suburban Renewal and Regeneration
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

5.5 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

5.6 Other relevant documentation:
Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- a) Planning Application 210549
 - i) Principle of development and land use considerations
 - ii) Design matters - demolition, scale, appearance, detailed design
 - iii) Quality of accommodation for future occupiers
 - iv) Amenity for nearby occupiers
 - v) Transport
 - vi) Open space, trees, landscaping and ecology
 - vii) Sustainability and energy
 - viii) Other matters - Archaeology, Fire Safety
- b) Advertisement Consent 210550
 - i) Amenity
 - ii) Public Safety
- c) Both applications
 - i) Equality

a) Planning Application 210549

- i) Principle of development and land use considerations

6.2 It is firstly clarified that the proposals do not seek to increase the number of residential units at the site, nor increase the number of bedrooms within any of the 267 flats either. Instead, the proposals comprise a variety of renovation works with the aim of improving the overall quality of accommodation for occupiers, including extended reception areas, refuse and cycling facilities, and most visibly alterations to the external envelope of the buildings. Policy H14 concerns suburban renewal and regeneration, with there being a general presumption in favour of renewal and regeneration improving the local built environment (sought as part of this proposal), improving and modernising the housing stock (sought as part of this proposal) and delivering additional homes (not sought in this proposal, but was in 200122 as the linked phase 1 proposal at the wider site). Where such

aims are met, the policy then details that such proposals would generally be supported subject to other policies in the plan and a series of Policy H14 specific requirements. These are identified and commented upon below:

- Any loss of undeveloped land would be outweighed by a qualitative improvement in open and green space and by the benefits of development to the community as a whole - *officer comment: the proposed works will result in the loss of some undesignated open space around the bases of each base, with amenity areas comprising paths, street furniture, equipment for incidental play, cycle stores and tree planting proposed instead. The loss of open space is discussed in detail later in this appraisal, with the overriding conclusion being that the proposed amenity space represents a qualitative improvement. There are also several beneficial elements to the scheme as a whole, which means in overall terms these outweigh the loss of undesignated open space.*
- Buildings and features that make a positive contribution to the area's character are retained - *officer comment: the existing blocks are not considered to include any specific features which are worthy of retention, having been re-rendered and uPVC windows installed in 1993.*
- There would be adequate community facilities to serve the resulting community - *officer comment: there is no increase in the community as a result of this proposal and it is envisaged that a standalone tenant liaison building could be introduced at the site at a later date).*
- There would not be an unacceptable impact on the highway network as a result of loss of parking areas or garages - *officer comment: no loss of parking or garages is sought as part of this proposal.*

6.3 Accordingly, in land use principle terms, the proposals are considered to be acceptable.

ii) Design matters - demolition, scale, appearance, detailed design

6.4 As a starting point, as alluded to in the previous section, the existing blocks are not considered to include any specific features which are worthy of retention. This is from an architectural or cultural perspective. Having been constructed in the early 1960s the buildings were rendered in 1993 (having originally included a brick central area and pebbledash sides), with uPVC windows installed at this time too. Accordingly, the replacement of the external envelopes of the building raises no issues in terms of demolition of existing elements of the buildings. In scale terms, there is no increase in overall height of the tower blocks, with the only extensions to the buildings occurring at ground floor level to facilitate reconfigured entrance areas with dedicated internally located refuse facilities. These extensions occur in current forecourt / parking areas associated with each block and have been developed alongside the phase 1 proposals, to successfully knit these proposals into the wider regeneration scheme in the locality.

6.5 Moving onto appearance and detailed design matters, it is firstly acknowledged the proposals have been informed by public consultation, a pre-application meeting with officers and consideration by the Reading Design Review Panel (see section 4 xi) above). The Design and Access Statement describes each in detail, together with a clear outline of various design responses considered and a justified rationale for the choices made to inform the finally proposed scheme. At

application stage the proposals have been considered by the Council's Conservation and Urban Design Officer, who is supportive of the proposals in full (see section 4 vi) above).

- 6.6 With the above in mind, there are acknowledged to be several key themes and components of the proposed replacement elevations, relating to the base, top section and the mid-floor components, with the latter two elements incorporating a central contrast aligning with the recess in the building at this point. Each element is considered in-turn.
- 6.7 Starting with the base of the blocks, it is proposed to introduce brickwork to the two lowest floors, to provide a solid but welcoming base for residents and utilising design principles with align with the phase 1 materials. With the entrances moving forward of the main building line, a greater emphasise is added to the entrances. Details such as brick piers (incorporating Flemish bond brickwork), a cast stone canopy over the main entrance and reconstituted stone string course coping parapets provide extra richness to create in overall terms a high-quality entrance area to each block. The high floor to ceiling height and use of rooflights will aid natural light within the buildings, which will be accessible for all. Also at ground level on the north and south (side) elevations are new means of escape, with fire doors replaced to meet current building regulations. These appear more integrated with the overall design composition, rather than the existing arrangement which distinctly appears as a later addition.



Visualisation by applicant from close to the existing junction of Wensley Road and Lesford Road, looking north-west, showing both the phase 1 and phase 2 works

- 6.8 The top floors of the building incorporate elongated windows on the upper two levels, in order to create a more distinct termination point to the building than existing. This, together with the proposed signage (as separately assessed later in this appraisal) creates both visual interest and visual emphasis when viewing the buildings from a distance.
- 6.9 Within the mid-section of the buildings, key component has been the provision of a central bay material contrast, with terracotta coloured render proposed at this point, rather than the light grey textured render on either side. This helps break up the overall massing of each tower (whilst simultaneously creating a strong vertical emphasis), with the colour choice complementing the brick base. These appear as natural materials and provide a simple but elegant finished appearance, marking an evident improvement on the existing appearance and aligning with the architectural language of phase 1 works. The replacement windows have also been carefully considered, with ground floor windows being recessed and including double stacked soldier course lintels. Cills have also been emphasised to add more depth, whilst also helping from a practical perspective to allow space for insulation to be added (whilst retaining the Wimpey no fines concrete structure), aiding the thermal performance of the building. All windows will be alu-clad timber framed and triple glazed.
- 6.10 In order to ensure that the design quality envisaged materialises in practice, precise details of all external materials is recommended to be secured via condition, including the provision of sample panel details being erected on site prior to approval. With this condition secured it is evident that the proposals will represent a considerable visual enhancement in comparison with existing, both in itself and within the context of the phase 1 permission. Furthermore, the improved visual appearance of the blocks will be discernible in both short and long views in and around the application site and wider area.

iii) Quality of accommodation for future occupiers

- 6.11 The various works proposed all seek to improve the quality of accommodation for current and future occupiers of the blocks. For example, the improved thermal performance of the building (e.g. triple glazed windows) is anticipated to reduce energy costs to occupiers, whilst the refuse and cycle parking upgrades represent significant improvements in comparison with existing provision. The inclusion of defensible space around the base of each tower will benefit ground floor occupiers, whilst the communal amenity spaces proposed around each block (comprising paths, street furniture, equipment for incidental play, cycle stores and tree planting) are considered in overall terms to contribute positively to an improved living environment for occupiers. Whilst it is acknowledged that some of these works will potentially lead to 'busier' spaces around the blocks for ground and first floor occupiers in particular, reducing outlook in comparison with the largely open outlook as existing, the wider and overall benefits of the proposals are considered to outweigh any potential loss of amenity in these regards.
- 6.12 It is acknowledged that the Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) at Thames Valley Police objects to the proposals based on the refurbishment works not incorporating a new postal system, whereby post boxes are provided within an airlock lobby. This would contrast with existing arrangements, where deliveries are made throughout the buildings to individual front doors. The applicant has indicated and reiterated through the application process that it is simply not feasible (due to spatial, logistical and practical reasons) to retrofit this element into the proposals, as explained in section 4 xiii) above. The applicant instead

proposes new CCTV within the internal entrance area and other parts of the building, together with a secure audio-visual door entry system.

- 6.13 Officers can appreciate the merits raised by both the CPDA and the applicant in these regards. In overall terms it is considered that, mainly as a result of the practical factors raised by the applicant, it would not be reasonable to seek to refuse the overall application on this basis when applying an overall critical planning balance of the benefits of the proposals versus the shortfalls. Whilst acknowledging that an airlock lobby with postal boxes would have been preferable, the inclusion of an increased CCTV system (details of which are suggested to be secured via condition, together with the exact access control systems) and entrance level improvements partially mitigates the various concerns raised by the CPDA. With details secured via condition, officers are content that the safety and security of residents is improved in overall terms as part of the proposals, whilst also recognising the airlock lobby for postal services would have resulted in further improvements.
- 6.14 In terms of Environmental Protection based amenity considerations, as per section 4ii) above, the proposals are considered to be acceptable subject to several recommended conditions (e.g. contaminated land).
- 6.15 The applicant has detailed that the buildings will remain in full occupation throughout the works. In addition, there is anticipated to be some overlap in the timings of both phases 1 and phases 2 being implemented, meaning wider potential noise and disturbance concerns during the construction period. This would be in addition to potential temporary reduction in outlook during the construction period for occupiers, associated with the scaffolding and associated works required to facilitate the proposed works. Therefore, the applicant is committed to providing a detailed plan to ensure that the safety of all residents is maintained.
- 6.16 In recognising this, the applicant submitted an initial demolition and construction method statement (CMS) as part of the application, which has been assessed by Transport and Environmental Protection officers (see sections 4i) and 4ii) above). For example, for each individual flat works internal will comprise replacement windows, installing MVHR systems and redecorating as necessary. The applicant has specified that residents will be given the option of either remaining in their flats but in an adjoining room away from the works while they are executed or in a “day room” portacabin, which will provide seating and canteen facilities. A dedicated liaison point of contact will also be provided for residents. Whilst the CMS provides a useful starting point in demonstrating how the proposed development would be implemented, there are further elements which Transport and Environmental Protection officers consider to be necessary. Accordingly, it has been agreed with the applicant that the full CMS will be secured via a pre-commencement condition.
- 6.17 Therefore, in overall terms, the standard of accommodation for current and future occupiers will greatly improve as a result of the proposed works.

iv) Amenity for nearby occupiers

- 6.18 In terms of existing nearby occupiers, and future occupiers as a result of the phase 1 works, it is considered that the proposals would not result in any significant loss of amenity, as per the various Policy CC8 considerations. Whilst windows are being replaced at each block, these follow the pattern of those existing. This means no

additional overlooking or loss of privacy is anticipated, whilst noting that there are presently significant distances between the blocks and nearby properties. Where there are increased in footprint of the blocks, these are solely at ground floor level, mitigating any impact on nearby occupiers, again due to the distances involved. As referenced in the quality of accommodation section above, there will be some overlap between the implementation of the phase 1 and 2 works, thereby increasing the cumulative impact on nearby residents of on-going construction activity. The CMS to be secured via pre-commencement condition will seek to manage this process in order to not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties.

v) Transport

6.19 As per the observations at section 4i) above, there are no transport-based concerns with the proposals subject to a series of conditions. In particular, it is worthwhile reiterating that the proposals will radically increase the cycle parking provision at the site. In line with Policy TR4 in particular, cycling is acknowledged to be one of the most sustainable forms of transport, and forms an important part of Reading's transport strategy. This development, in line with policy, makes full use of opportunities to promote cycling.

6.20 Linked to this, the waste storage facilities, a known long-term local issue, will be far improved, with dedicated internal facilities incorporating refuse, recycling and food waste. The applicant has liaised with the Senior Recycling and Enforcement Officer at both pre-application and application stage to ensure that the provision is suitable, and this provides a robust solution for residents.

vi) Open space, Trees, landscaping and ecology

6.21 As referenced in the land use principles section, the proposals would result in the reduction of undesignated open space within the red-line boundary of the site. In addition to Policy H14, Policy EN8 specifies that development should not result in the loss of or jeopardise use and enjoyment of undesignated open space. It is however also recognised that the Policy also states that development may be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that replacement open space, of a similar standard and function, can be provided at an accessible location close by, or that improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space. Furthermore, Policy EN9 relates to the provision of open space, which should be appropriate to the development. With the above in mind, it is also noted that the existing spaces within the red-line boundary are underused and low value. In contrast, the redesigned amenity spaces will provide new legible routes that link into the new pedestrian network proposed as part of the phase 1 scheme. These links will encourage activity in redesigned amenity spaces, which incorporate opportunities for imaginative play and increased cycle storage. In short, the partial loss of open space is outweighed by the proposed improvements to the space, which will assist the overall function of the reconfigured wider area.

6.22 As part of the amenity space proposals input has been sought and provided by the Natural Environment Officer, with a series of initial queries details in section 4 iv) having been resolved during the application, enabling the specialist officer to subsequently confirm there are no tree / landscaping objections to the proposals subject to a series of conditions.

6.23 In relation to ecology matters, the Council's consultant has confirmed at section 4 iii) above that the ecological impact assessment submitted with the application is acceptable and the provision of swift boxes on each block is welcomed and supported. Accordingly, the proposals are considered appropriate in these regards.

vii) Sustainability and energy

6.24 The sustainability and energy benefits of refurbishing the three buildings are considered to be a key tangible planning benefit of the proposals. The nature of the application meant that a formal energy statement was not a statutory requirement for the application, but the applicant, in recognising this being an important element of the scheme, submitted a report detailing the measures proposed. In these regards the various measures (see section 2 for a summary of these and the Sustainability Manager comments at section 4 ix) above) mark a significant improvement compared with the existing context and, in themselves, are in line with the principles of Policies CC2 and CC3 of the Local Plan. In the circumstances, in order to ensure that the measures specified in the information submitted at application stage materialises, a compliance-based planning condition is recommended for the development to be carried out in accordance with the measures proposed/included (option 4) within the energy statement. Accordingly, the measures shall be implemented in practice and these are welcomed and supported.

viii) Other matters - Archaeology, Fire Safety

6.25 With regard to archaeology, as per the comments received from Berkshire Archaeology at section 4 xii) above, there is some overlap with the phase 1 works (these details are presently in the process of being approved through discharge of condition applications - see section 3 above) and therefore a condition will secure further details in due course.

6.26 In terms of fire safety, owing to the nature of the proposals, the applicant has provided fire strategy details within the Design and Access Statement. This includes works incorporated within phase 1 (e.g. improved fire tender access) and works already been carried out within the tower blocks (e.g. sprinklers to all 267 flats and communal areas, and a new fire alarm system in communal areas). Within this phase 2 proposal several additional measures are proposed too, including:

- Existing external fabric to be replaced with a non-combustible, mineral wool insulated render system
- Maintained and improved access routes to and from existing means of escape.
- Relocation of the dry riser inlet to an external location, adjacent to the new entrances.
- Recent sprinkler system proposed within the extended/reconfigured entrance and refuse areas
- Stair core windows incorporate automatic opening vents
- Existing fire escape doors and steps replaced
- A minimum of 60-minute fire rated walls to new internal refuse store, with fire rated hoppers to the refuse chute and refuse lobby.

6.27 Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service have been formally consulted on the application and, as per section 4 xiv) above, raise no in-principle concerns at this stage. Accordingly, for the purposes of this planning application the details

provided by the applicant are welcomed in satisfactorily demonstrating that these matters have been frontloaded in the overall design process, with exact details to be confirmed through Building Control regulations in due course, in conjunction with further input from the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service.

b) Advertisement consent application 210550

6.28 The separate advertisement consent application is considered from amenity and public safety perspectives, as prescribed by the regulations.

i) Amenity

6.29 Considering amenity matters first, the NPPG (Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 18b-079-20140306) provides clarification as to the exact context amenity should be considered. In short, it includes aural and visual amenity and factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. Furthermore, at the local level, policies CC7 and OU4 require that development be compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding environment in order to maintain the visual amenities of the area. Policy OU4 states:

“Advertisements will respect the building or structure on which they are located and/or their surroundings and setting in terms of size, location, design, materials, colour, noise, lettering, amount and type of text, illumination and luminance, and will not have a detrimental effect on public safety. The cumulative impact of adverts will be taken into account, and a proliferation of advertisements that detrimentally affects visual or aural amenity or public safety will not be acceptable”.

6.30 With the above in mind, it is considered that whilst the 13th and 14th floor level 5m high and 0.86m wide signs affixed to the front and rear elevation of each block are undoubtedly significant in size (both individually and collectively), within the context of the works as a whole these high-level signs are not considered especially harmful. In particular, the non-illuminated nature of the signs, which depict the number of each building (193, 203 or 205 - with each number being 1.5m and aligning with the height of adjacent windows) and the colour of the text assimilating with the façade of the building means they sufficient respect the buildings / windows and in-fact help wayfinding by clearly identifying each of the separate blocks. The ground floor signage adjacent to the new entrances simply state the building name and number. These are considered to align with the overall look and feel of the proposed entrances and raise no amenity issues.

ii) Public Safety

6.31 The NPPG (in particular Paragraph: 068 Reference ID: 18b-068-20140306 & Paragraph: 078 Reference ID: 18b-078-20140306) provides guidance as to the considerations affecting public safety. These are detailed below, together with officer responses in relation to the proposal (in bold):

i. The main types of advertisement which may cause danger to road users are:

(a) those which obstruct or impair sight-lines at corners, bends or at a junction, or at any point of access to a highway; **No**

(b) those which, because of their size or siting, would obstruct or confuse a road-user's view, or reduce the clarity or effectiveness of a traffic sign or signal, or would be likely to distract road-users because of their unusual nature; **No, the signs would be visible from various parts of Wensley Road and from a variety of longer distances predominantly to the east and west, but not to the extent to be harmful. The height of the upper floor signs means they would not obstruct or confuse, particularly owing to being non-illuminated. The signs would also possibly be visible from the rail line, but are not of a nature/extent to distract drivers. No issues arise from the ground floor signs.**

(c) those which effectively leave insufficient clearance above any part of a highway, or insufficient lateral clearance for vehicles on the carriageway (due allowance being made for the camber of the road-surface); **No**

(d) those externally or internally illuminated signs (incorporating either flashing or static lights) including those utilising light emitting diode technology: **N/A**

i. where the means of illumination is directly visible from any part of the road; **N/A**

ii. which, because of their colour, could be mistaken for, or confused with, traffic lights or any other authorised signals; **No**

iii. which, because of their size or brightness, could result in glare and dazzle, or distract road-users, particularly in misty or wet weather; **No**

iv. which are subject to frequent changes of the display; **No**

(e) those which incorporate moving or apparently moving elements in their display, or successive individual advertisements which do not display the whole message; **N/A**

(f) those requiring close study (such as Public Information Panels), which are situated so that people looking at them would be insufficiently protected from passing vehicles; or those advertisements sited on narrow footpaths where they may interfere with safe passage by causing pedestrians to step into the road; **No**

(g) those which resemble traffic signs, as defined in section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and may therefore be subject to removal by the traffic authority under section 69 of that Act, for example:

i. those embodying red circles, crosses or triangles, or any traffic sign symbol; or those in combinations of colours which might otherwise be mistaken for traffic signs; **No or**

ii. those incorporating large arrows or chevrons with only the arrow or chevron made of retroreflective material or illuminated, causing confusion with similar signs in use at, or approaching roundabouts. **No**

(h) those which embody directional or other traffic elements and which need special scrutiny because of possible resemblance to, or confusion with, traffic signs, for example, advertisements which:

i. contain a large arrow or chevron (or have a pointed end and have only a few words of message); **No**

ii. invite drivers to turn right on a main road, or where there is fast moving traffic; **No**

iii. invite drivers to turn, but are sited so close to the turning that there is not enough time to signal and turn safely; **No** or

- i. are so close to similar advertisements, or official traffic signs, that road-users might be confused in the vicinity of a road junction or other traffic hazard. **No**
- ii. The prevention of crime is a public safety consideration and local planning authorities should consider whether granting express consent could block the view of CCTV cameras, or whether illumination from an advertisement would cause glare on such cameras. **No**.

6.32 In light of the above it is confirmed that the proposals are considered to be satisfactory on public safety grounds.

6.33 Accordingly, in both amenity and public safety terms the proposed advertisements are individually and cumulatively considered to be appropriate. Therefore, advertisement consent is recommended to be granted subject to the standard conditions referenced in the recommendation at the outset of this report.

c) Both applications - Equality

6.34 In determining these applications the Council 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. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to these particular applications.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions. Similarly, the separate advertisement consent application is also recommended for approval, again subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell



Site photograph 06/05/2021 from Wensley Road looking south-west



Site photograph 06/05/2021 from the west looking east



Site photograph 02/03/2021 from the south-west looking north-east



Most recent aerial views looking west (above) and east (below)





Site photographs 06/05/2021 - Existing Irving Court entrance



Below: Site photograph 02/03/2021





Site photographs 06/05/2021 - Existing Riversley Court entrance and surrounding area





Site photographs 06/05/2021 - Existing Wensley Court entrance and surrounding area



2.4 Existing Site Photos

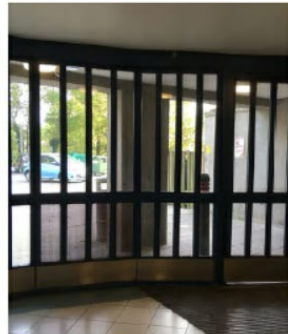
Internal Views - Ground Floor

Within each building the main entrance and lift foyer connects to a north-south circulation corridor, which terminates with a stair core at either end.

Glazed doors and partitions separate the circulation areas allowing views and natural light through these spaces. A secondary glazed corridor at ground floor level provides a lobby to the existing cleaners and refuse store.



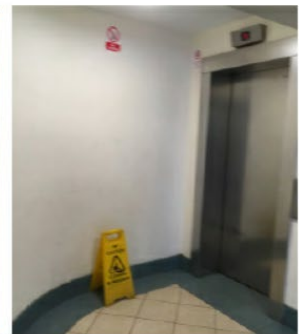
Key Plan - Ground Floor



1 - Entrance Lobby



2 - View into entrance lobby



3 - Lift Entrance



4 - Communal Corridor



5 - Communal Corridor



6 - Staircore Entrance

2.8 Context Views Analysis

Distance Views



Image A. Southcote Farm Lane - Looking east along Windsor Drive



Image B. Berkeley Avenue - Looking south along Ashley Road



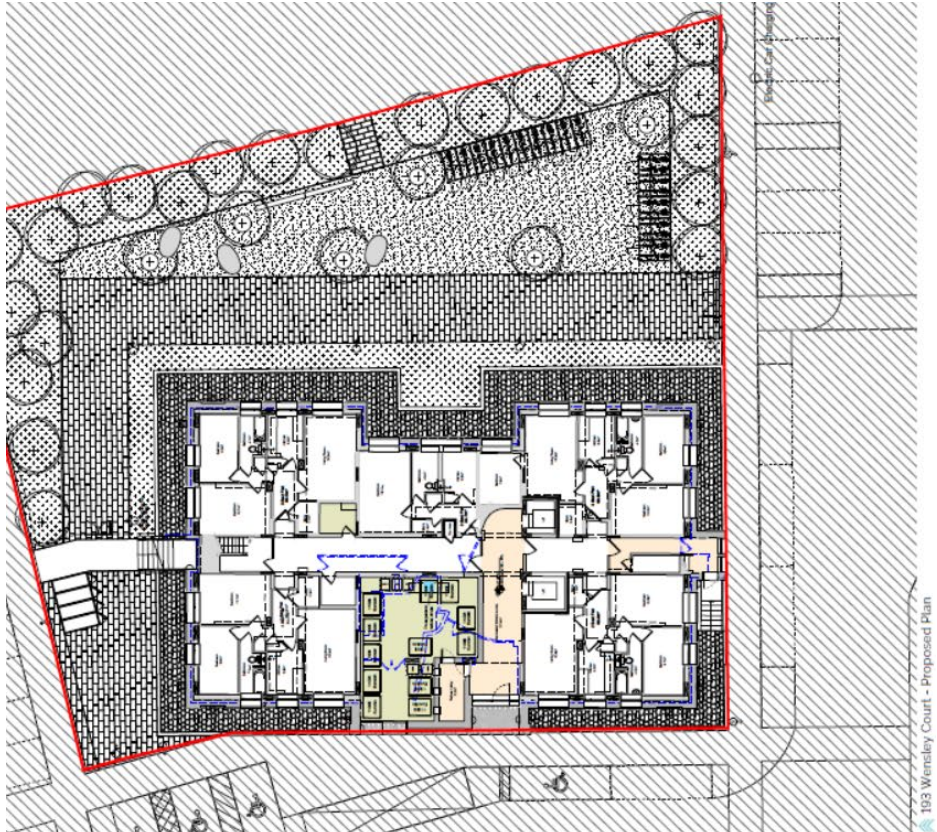
Image C. Holy Brook - Looking West toward Wensley Road



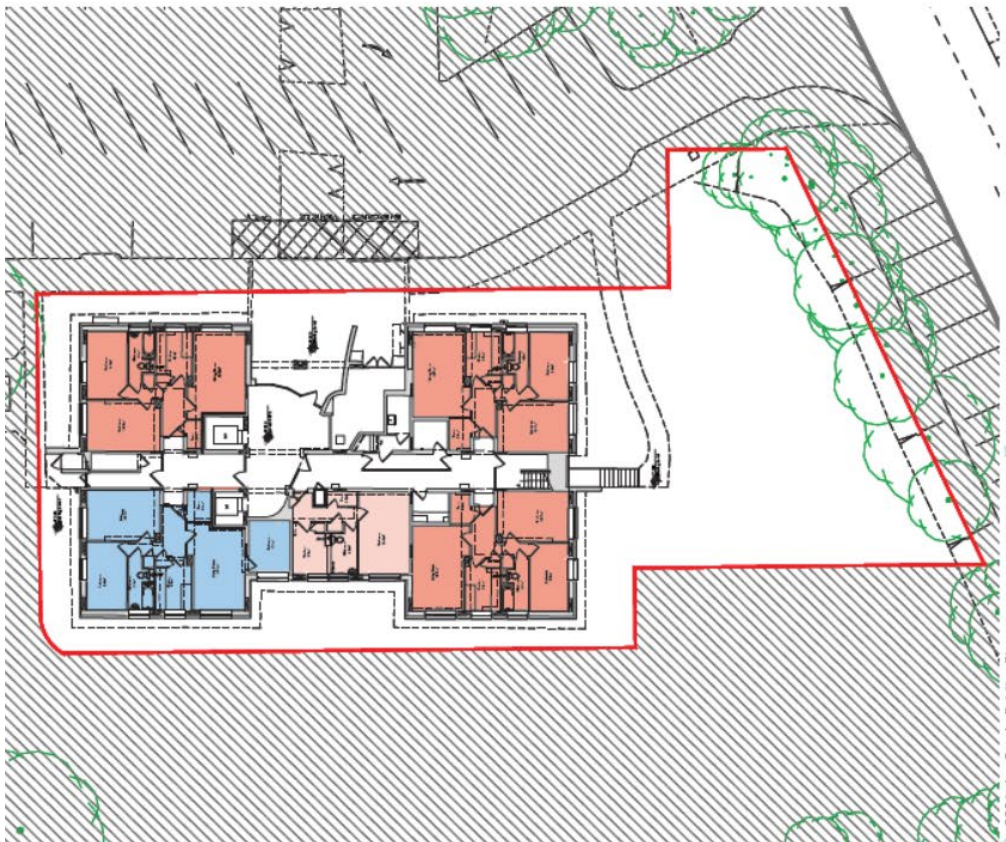
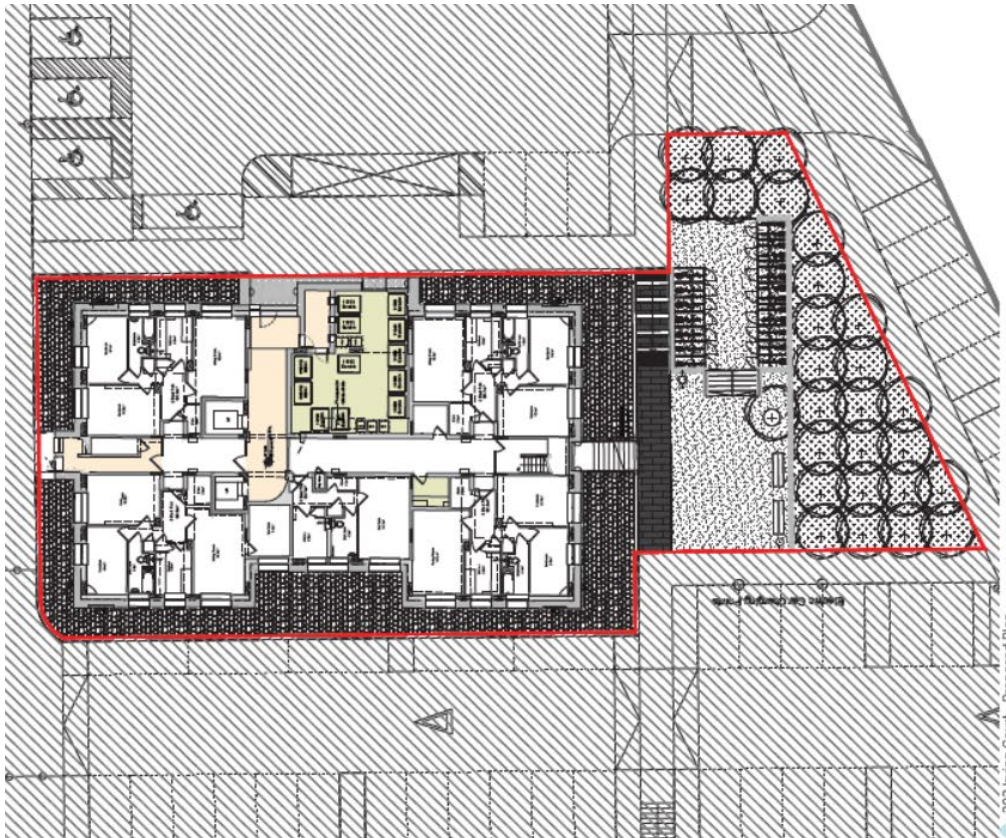
Image D. Waterloo Meadows - Looking North



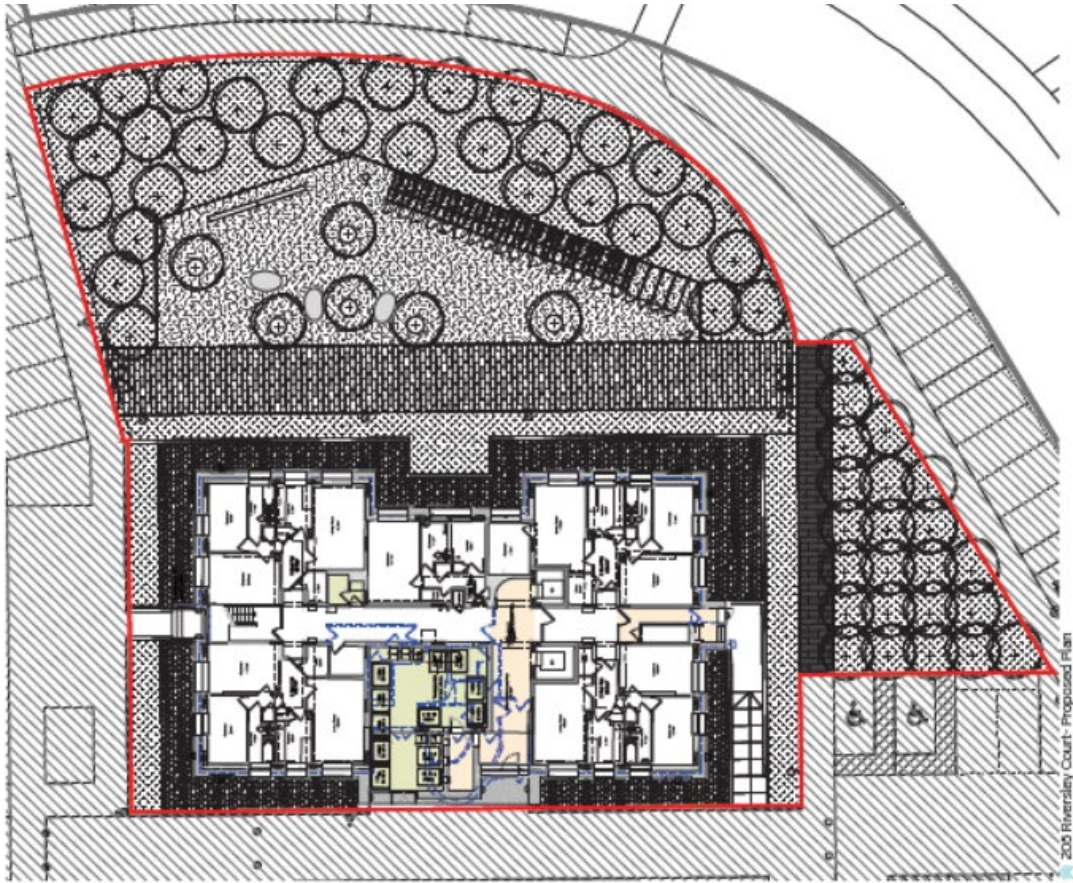
Image E. Train into Reading - Looking North-East



Existing and Proposed Wensley Court ground floor plans (from DAS)



Existing and Proposed Irving Court ground floor plans (from DAS)



Existing and Proposed Riversley Court ground floor plans (from DAS)



Long east and west site sections

Main Entrance Elevation

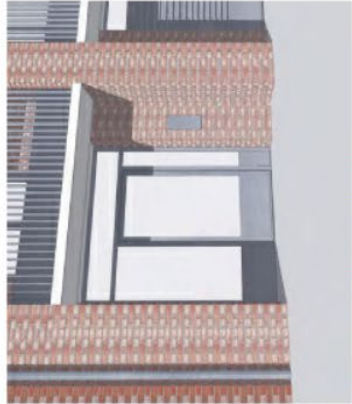
The new extended entrances have been focal points of the design, as this area will effect the daily experience of existing residents as they enter and exit the buildings.

A key principle was to ensure the language and the materials of the entrances had a clear relationship with the entrance of the phase 1 apartment building, as well as tie into the proportions of the existing buildings.

The overall design of each of the three entrances is proposed to be the same. However the intention is to utilise the central panel, separating the main entrance and refuse doors on each of the buildings to introduce a community led design piece, along with the building signage which would be distinct for each of the three buildings and create an individual identity for each of the towers at ground level.



Design Proposal - Entrance Elevation



Phase 1 External Entrance Visualisation

Entrance details

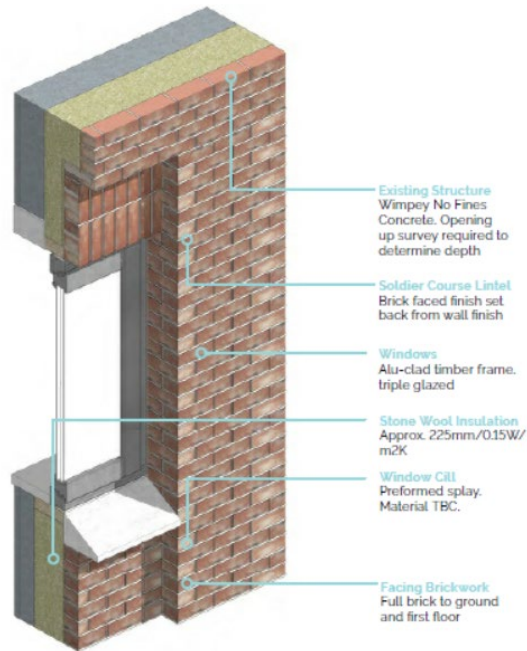
4.5 Key Details

Brick Base

At ground and first floors, external brick work is proposed to provide a more robust and durable material at the lower level where there is increased wear, creating a two storey brick datum which continues across the phase 1 new build homes and the existing buildings.

To the ground floor windows, a recessed, double slacked soldier course lintel is proposed. The height of the lintel is consistent with the brick lintels on the new build phase one houses, however slightly different brick pattern is proposed, to create a subtle distinction.

Consistent with the lintels, recessed brickwork panels are proposed vertically between the windows and a double height blank recessed panel is proposed to the corners. This creates visual affect of engaged brick columns, which is intended to relate to the brick colonnade on the new build phase 1 apartment building.



Red/Pink Multi - Facing Brickwork

Lower Floor Window Reveal

4.5 Key Details

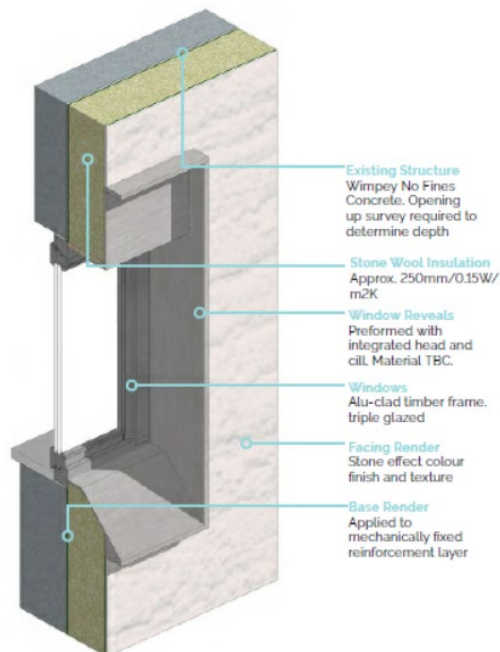
Upper Floors

From the second floor up to the top of the building, an insulated render system is proposed. To reflect the original 1960s elevation treatment, a lighter colour of render is proposed to the side sections of the buildings, whilst the central recessed section of the building is proposed as a terracotta colour.

The intention to select render colours and textures that have the appearance and quality of natural materials, that will weather gracefully over time. A long-last, high-quality, durable render will also be specified.

Replacement of the existing windows and the installation of new window reveals will have significant impact on the character of the elevations. The accentuated cill and lintel within the window reveal have been designed to create more vertical, elegant proportions.

The will be further develop during the technical stages of the design, however the adjacent images are intended to illustrate the design intent.



Textured Render



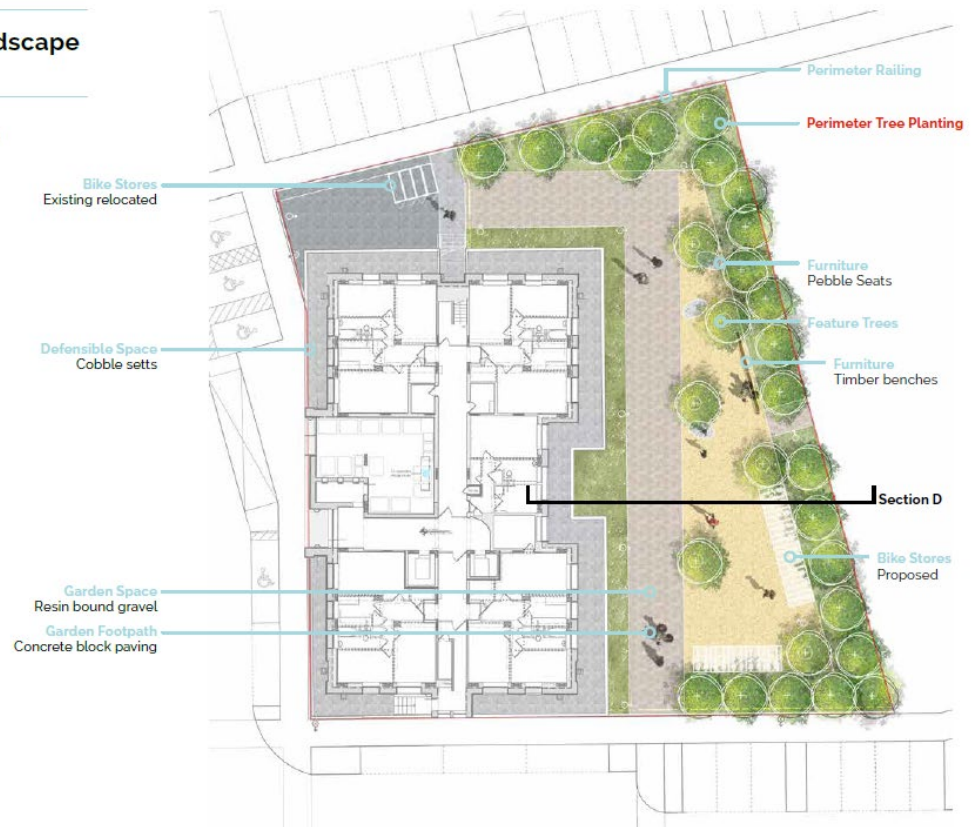
Textured Render

Upper Floor Window Reveal

Elevation and window details

5.9 Detailed Landscape Proposals

193 Wensley Court - Site Plan



193 Wensley Court - Site Section

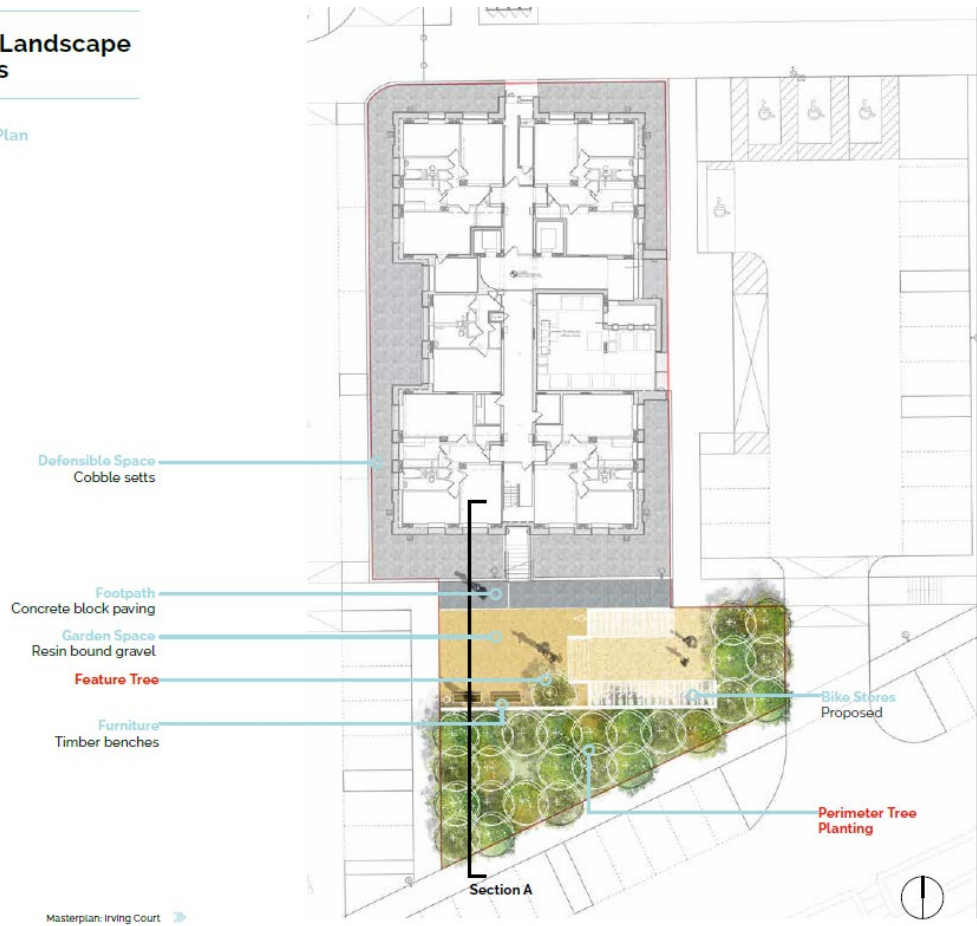


Section D: Wensley Court

Wensley Court landscaping details

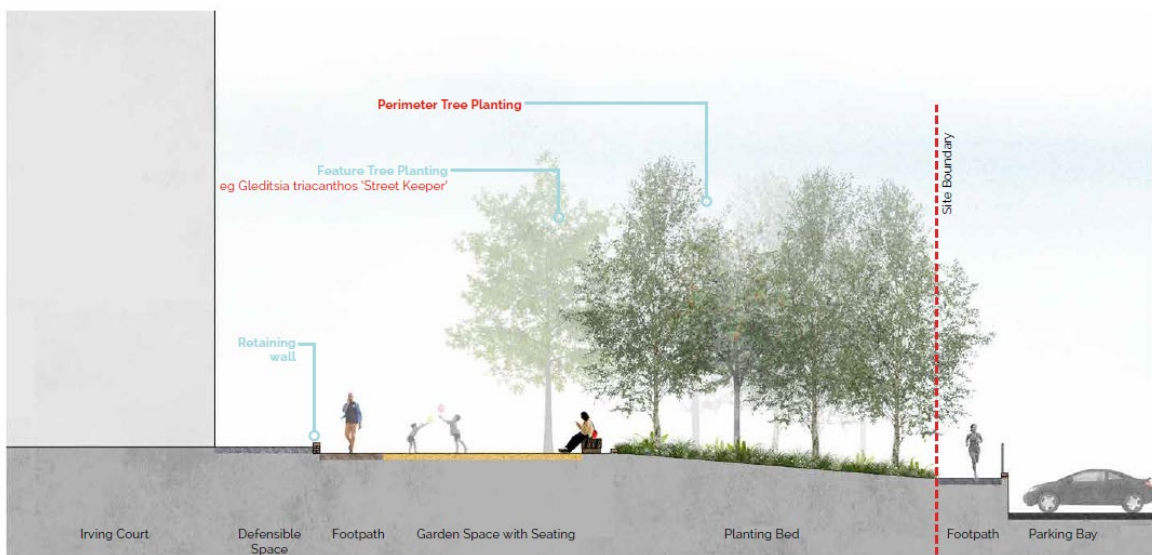
5.9 Detailed Landscape Proposals

203 Irving Court - Site Plan



5.9 Detailed Landscape Proposals

203 Irving Court - Site Section

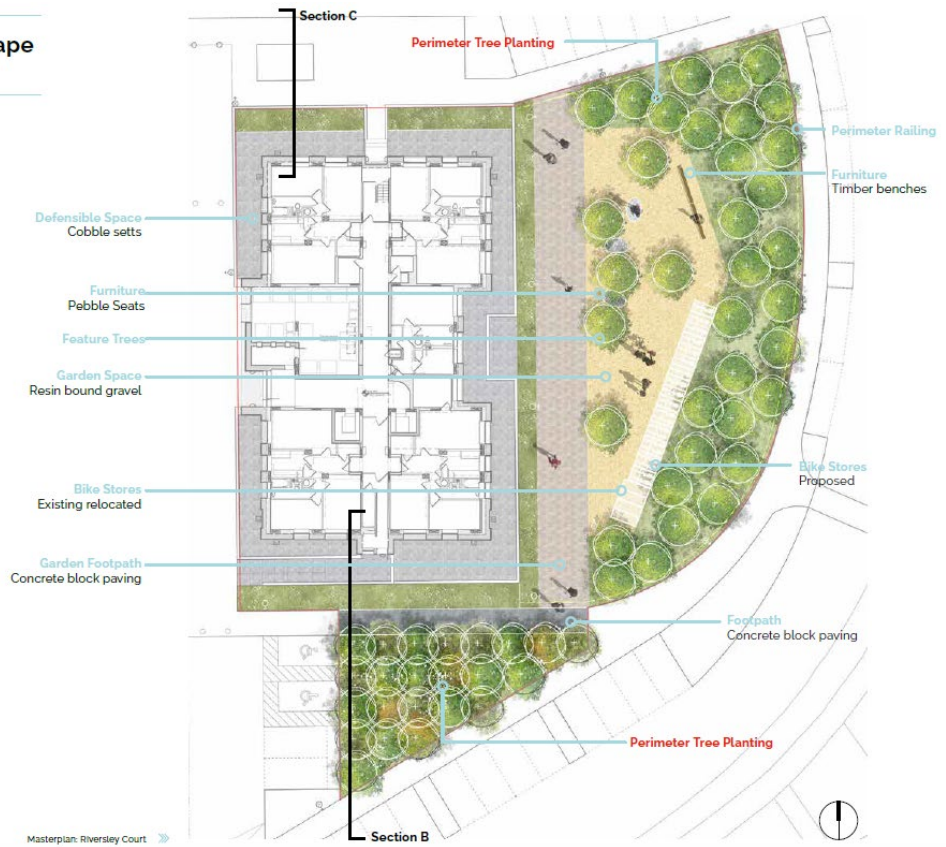


Section A: Irving Court

Irving Court landscaping details

5.9 Detailed Landscape Proposals

205 Riversley Court - Site Plan

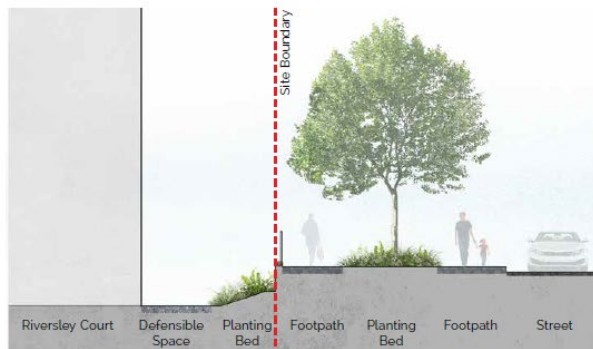


5.9 Detailed Landscape Proposals

205 Riversley Court - Site Section



Section B: Riversley Court



Section C: Riversley Court

Riversley Court landscaping details

6.5 Refuse Strategy

The internal refuse store is to be extended and reconfigured to accommodate the tri-separator refuse system and all refuse, recycling, and food waste bins internally. The following capacity is proposed: -

- 5 x 1100litre General Waste
- 7 x 1100litre Recycling
- 5 x 240litre

RBC Housing Management and Waste Management teams intend to review the proposed mixed of refuse bin provision at regular intervals to response to requirements of the residents.

The proposed improvements to the refuse and recycling facilities are an essential element of the improvements works. It will be combined with wider communication and engagement strategy that is being developed by the housing management team to ensure that the new facilities are used correctly by residents.

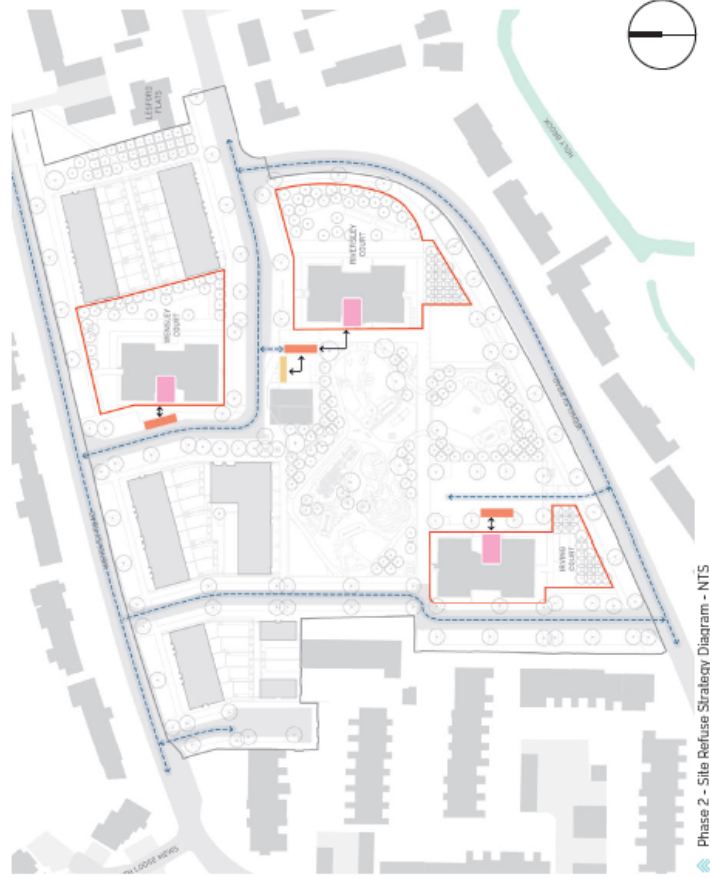
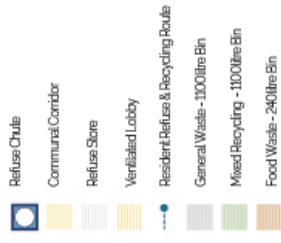
Diagram Legend

Site Plan

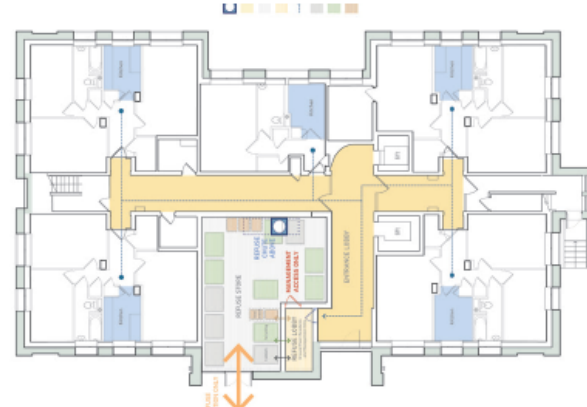


Diagram Legend

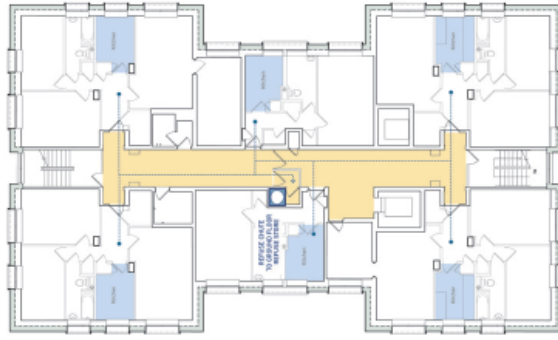
Building Plan



Phase 2 - Site Refuse Strategy Diagram - NTS



Ground Floor Refuse Strategy Diagram - NTS



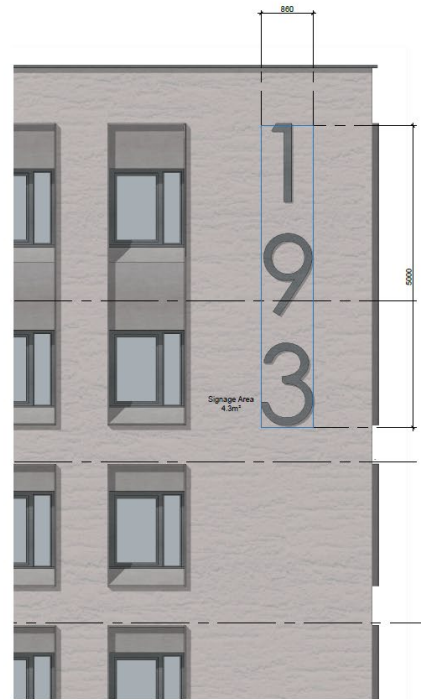
Upper Floor Refuse Strategy Diagram - NTS

Example of proposed signage (same approach applicable to 203 and 205 as well)

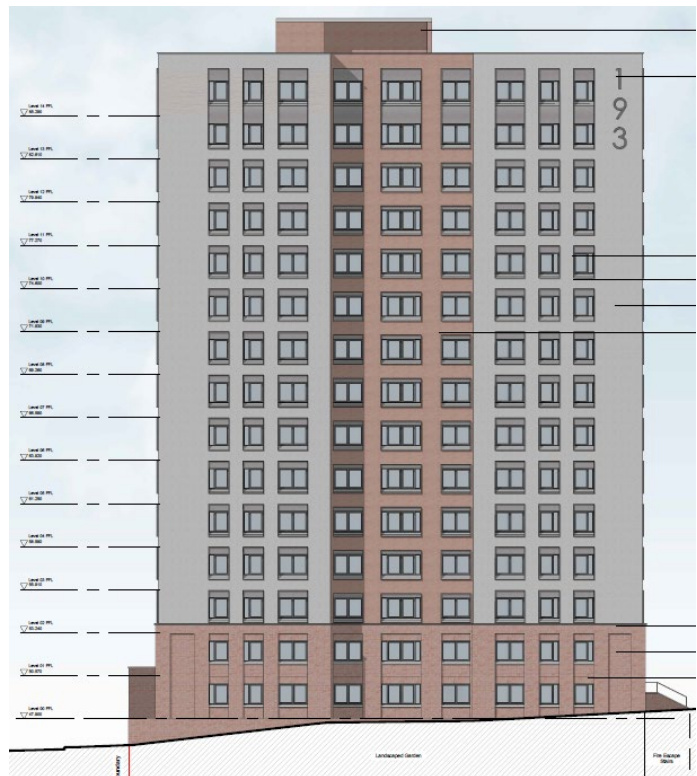
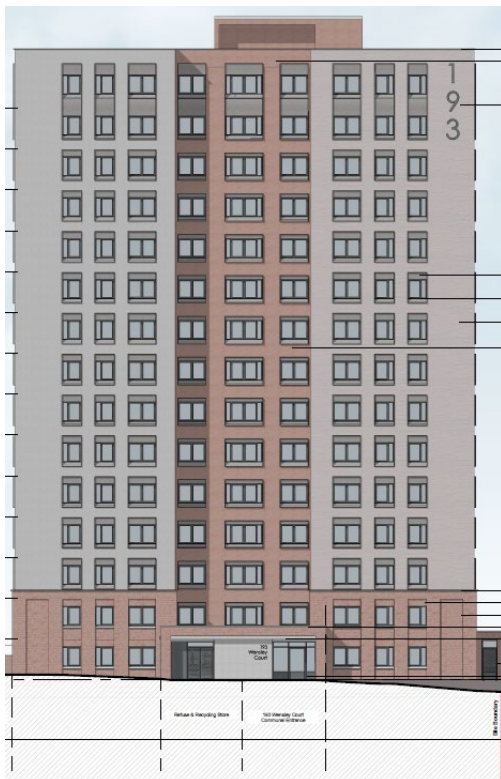
Measured survey information of typical elements only and dimensions inclusive of existing finishes. All dimensions to be checked and confirmed.



0020 Main Entrance Signage



0020 Upper Floor Signage



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21st JULY 2021

Ward: Minster

App No: 201197/LBC

Address: 5 The Brookmill, Reading, RG1 6DD

Proposal: Replacement of windows

Applicant: Cllr David McElroy

Extended target date: 23/07/2021

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT listed building consent subject to conditions, to include:

1. Time limit for implementation
2. Approved plans
3. Materials and specifications as submitted

Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 5 The Brookmill is a dwelling located within Coley Park Farm Barn, a Grade II listed building (List Entry Number: 1113610), part of a complex of listed buildings at Coley Park Farm. The building dates to 1619 and was first listed on 22nd March 1957. The listing states:

“Very large brick barn circa 1619. Brick English bond. 6 bays. Old tile roof patched with others and partly with Roman tiles. Main part has 2 rows of vents to north and central segmental headed entrance flanked by buttresses. Courtyard side to south has projecting gable with segmental arch over lintel and flanking lean-tos. Interior: queen-post roof with 2 rows of purlins on each side, the upper with small windbraces; 3 eastern bays repaired without windbraces. Ventilated panel to east with high lean-to shelter. 'L'-plan south wing slightly later as smaller central gable with weatherboarded tip, partly timber frame with brick. 5 bays, aisled to west. Large shelter to east. Interior, queen-post roof.”

1.2 5 The Brookmill has undergone various alterations, including the recent replacement of external doors (160243/LBC and 190741/LBC). The windows subject of this application are not original and are in a generally poor state of repair.

1.3 This application for listed building consent is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee for a decision as the applicant is Councillor David McElroy (Redlands Ward).

Site Location Plan



Annotated Site Photos



2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Listed building consent is sought for the replacement of nine, non-original, single glazed windows in varying states of repair, with double glazed hardwood timber framed windows of a similar design. Seven of the windows would be like-for-like replacement in terms of external appearance. Two of the windows would be of slightly altered design/configuration, but with no change to the existing window shape or opening. The replacement windows would have black iron internal fittings, to match the fittings of the recently replaced doors.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

160243/LBC - Replacement of French doors - Permitted 27/05/16
190166/APC - Approval of details reserved by conditions 2 and 3 of 160243/LBC - Conditions discharged 29/04/19
190741/LBC - Replacement of door - Permitted 07/08/19

4. CONSULTATIONS

External - None required

Internal - Conservation & Urban Design Officer
No objections.

Public

- 4.1 Neighbouring owners and occupiers at 1-11 The Brookmill were consulted by letter. A site notice was displayed. No representations have been received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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

- 5.2 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm

Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

6. APPRAISAL

- (i) **Effect on the historic character of the listed building and the setting of the heritage asset**

- 6.1 Policy EN1 requires that all proposals will preserve and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located. The existing windows are non-original and are in various states of poor repair. The proposal seeks to upgrade the windows with double glazed replacements, improving the energy efficiency of the building without compromising the

appearance of the heritage asset. Seven of the windows would be a like-for-like replacement. Two of the windows would be of a slightly different design but are not considered to cause harm to the appearance of the building. The hardwood timber frames would complement the buildings original form.

6.2 The proposals would not cause material harm to the heritage asset or its surrounding and are therefore in accordance with Policy EN1 and CC7 of the Local Plan.

(iii) Equality

6.3 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age 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 proposed works are considered to be acceptable in the context of national and local planning policy, and other material considerations, as set out in this report. The application is recommended for approval on this basis.

Plans considered:

Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement

Site Location

Block Plan

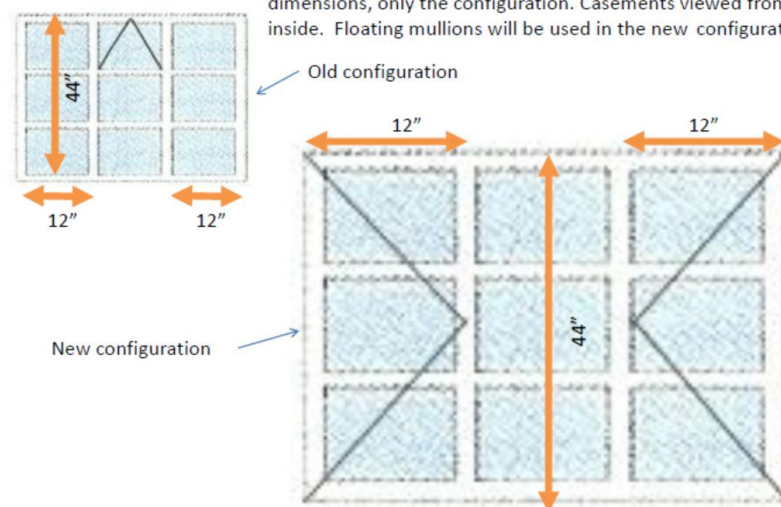
Proposed Site Plan

Site Photographs and Proposed Window Specifications (extract below)

As received 26/08/20

Case Officer: Tom Hughes

Figure 7C: Proposed third bedroom window which involves no changes to current dimensions, only the configuration. Casements viewed from inside. Floating mullions will be used in the new configuration.



COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: July 21st 2021

Ward: Peppard

App No.: 210018

Address: Reading Golf Club, 17 Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green

Proposal: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential-led scheme (C3 use to include affordable housing) and the provision of community infrastructure at Reading Golf Club

Applicant: Fairfax (Reading) Limited and Reading Golf Club Limited

Deadline: Original 16 week date 18/5/2021 - Extended to 30/7/2021

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons:

1. The application site forms a significant area of Undesignated Open Space within Reading Borough. The application proposals fail to either provide suitable upgraded/enhanced open space within the application site due to the loss of a significant part of this space through built form and related enclosed domestic gardens, roads and driveways and quality of open space provided; or on the remainder of the golf club land; or demonstrate that a suitable off-site compensation arrangement is deliverable to provide additional recreational open space, sufficient to outweigh this harm. The Layout applied for in this application proposal will therefore lead to an unacceptable erosion of open space opportunities on the site/in the local area, contrary to Policy EN8 (Undesignated Open Space) of the adopted Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).
2. The outline application has failed to demonstrate how the proposed Layout, Scale and Landscaping would bring forward an acceptable development of up to 257 residential units with public open space and a Health Care Facility for the following reasons:
 - The uniformity of the layout leads to repetitious groupings of buildings across the site failing to create a development with its own identity, character areas and a strong sense of place;
 - Poor relationship of the proposed Layout and Scale of buildings and plots would lead to an adverse effect on retained protected trees in terms of pressure to fell; and compromise the functionality of amenity space in particular for plots 1, 21-24, 49, 78 & 84, 8-15, 59-66 and 161-164;
 - Fails to suitably enhance/retain a continuous green link for ecology through the site;
 - There is a failure to provide suitable usable areas of on-site open space for the needs of the residents of the development due to the quality of provision of green infrastructure and landscaping as these areas are fragmented and eroded by road infrastructure and poor quality communal spaces;
 - By building so close to the adjacent open space the layout would introduce unacceptable urbanisation on the settlement edge blurring the distinction between urban and rural failing to preserve, enhance or respond positively to the

local context of this sensitive urban fringe location of the Borough and to the detriment of the pleasant landscape character of this part of Reading.

Therefore, this outline application is considered to be unsympathetic to the landscape setting of the site leading to overdevelopment of the site, contrary to the objectives of Reading Borough Local Plan Policies EN9 (Provision of Open Space); EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network); CC7 (Design and the Public Realm); EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) and H10 Private and communal Outdoor Space, paragraph 127 of the NPPF and objectives of the adopted Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (2021) and Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (2021).

3. The proposal fails to propose any improvement to the Peppard Road / Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road junction to mitigate the impact of the development, this would result in a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network contrary to Reading Borough Local Plan Policy TR3.
4. The proposal results in a net loss of biodiversity within the site, where it is not considered that there are exceptional circumstances, where the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of this substantial area of open space, to justify the provision of off-site compensation to ensure there is no loss of biodiversity. The proposal is therefore contrary to Reading Borough Local Plan Policy EN12 Biodiversity and the Green Network and paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
5. The proposal fails to make an appropriate contribution to the housing needs of the Borough, fails to mitigate its impact on the social and economic infrastructure of the Borough, fails to make an appropriate contribution to the provision and improvement of existing open space in the borough, fails to acceptably adapt to climate change, achieve zero carbon homes standards and not provide appropriately towards energy infrastructure, fails to implement measures to improve sustainable transport facilities and meet the objectives of the Local Transport Plan, and fails to mitigate and compensate the ecological impacts of the development.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CC3, CC4, CC6, CC7, CC9, EN9, EN12, EN15, H3, H5, TR1, TR3 and OU1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019), the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and the following adopted Reading Borough Supplementary Planning Documents: Affordable Housing (March 2021); Employment, Skills and Training (2013); Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011); Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015); Sustainable Design and Construction (2019).

Informative:

1. Drawings and documents that the decision relates to
2. Positive and proactive
3. Without prejudice to any future application or appeal, the applicant is advised that part of reason for refusal 5 could be overcome by entering into a Section 106 Legal Agreement or unilateral undertaking for a scheme that was in all other respects acceptable.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site, delineated by the red line boundary, is 12.5ha in size and forms part of the former Reading Golf Club playing course. The application site consists of holes 1 and 18 and part of holes 2, 3, 4 and 17; and facilities including the existing clubhouse; storage; access and car parking. The land ownership of Reading Golf Club in its entirety consists of 42ha of land that spans the administrative boundary between Reading Borough and South Oxfordshire District. The 'redline' boundary of the application site is contained wholly within the Borough of Reading as illustrated on the Site Location Plan below:

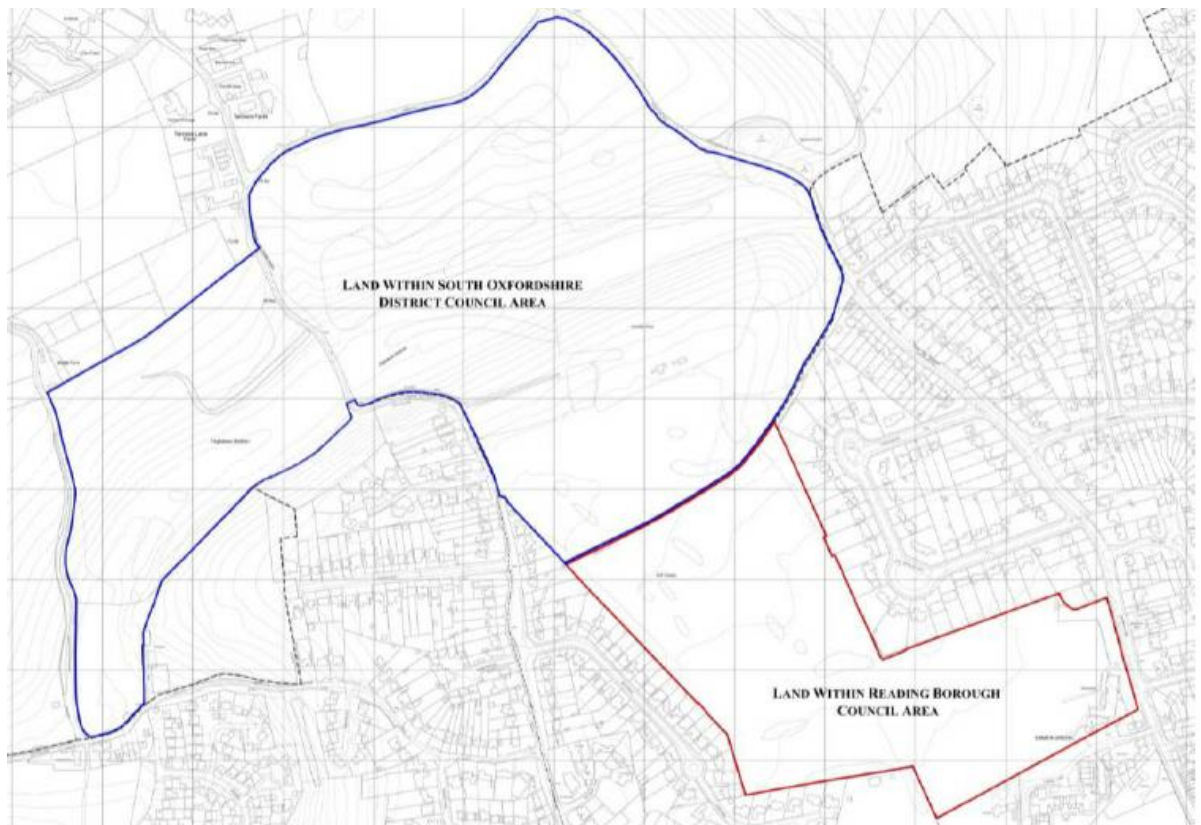


Figure 1 – Indicative boundaries of Local Authority Administrative areas in context of RGC land ownership

- 1.2 The application site is irregular in shape with the site frontage on Kidmore End Road.
- 1.3 The lower southern part of the application site is bounded to the south by the rear boundary line of the playing fields at Emmer Green Primary School; and the road access to Lyfield Court and The Conifers a retirement complex of 2-storey accommodation; and the boundary of a large residential dwelling at The Brindles.
- 1.4 The upper northern part of the application site to the east and west is bounded respectively by the rear gardens of the two storey detached dwellings on Brooklyn Drive; and various styles of dwellings on Gorselands, Eric Avenue and

Highdown Hill Road. Many of these dwelling plots contain gated access directly onto the Golf Course. The surrounding area within Reading Borough has a sylvan, low to medium density, suburban character. The northern alignment of the site has no physical boundary at present as it adjoins the remainder of the playing course located within South Oxfordshire District.

- 1.5 It is noted that Reading Golf Club is no longer operating at the site, however the application site is laid out as a golf course, with records of a Golf Course existing in this location for over 100 years. The application site currently consists of extensive areas of open managed grassland with existing mature trees and hedgerows. Due to the extent of existing trees, of varying categories, the site is subject to an Area Tree Preservation Order (ref Area TPO 4/18) and TPO 96/02 which includes 23 individual trees and 9 groups of trees.
- 1.6 Areas within the site are subject to Reading Borough planning designations as set out on the adopted proposals map as a 'Site for development in Caversham and Emmer Green'; an area of identified biodiversity interest, and existing or proposed Green Link. The site is also located within an Area of Archaeological potential. Within South Oxfordshire District within the Reading Golf Club land ownership is an Area of Ancient Woodland known as 'Cucumber Wood' and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) also lies approximately 1km to the north of the site.
- 1.7 Kidmore End Road is a single carriageway local distributor road operating a speed limit of 30mph. A footway is provided on the western side of Kidmore End Road and is segregated from the main carriageway by means of a 2.5m-wide grass verge.
- 1.8 Emmer Green Local Centre is located within 350m from the site boundary and provides amenities such as a Post Office; Convenience Store; Express Supermarket; Pharmacy and Take-aways, Cafes. Emmer Green Primary School is the closest primary school to the site, located approximately 850m away by foot. The nearest secondary school and sixth form is Highdown School and Sixth Form, this is located 1.1km west of the site, by foot.
- 1.9 Bus stops are located on Kidmore End Road in close proximity to the site access and egress, providing services into Reading Town centre and Reading Train Station (Premier Routes 23 and 24). The station is 3.3km from the site and can be reached in approximately 15-minutes by bicycle. Reading Borough Council (RBC) branded cycle routes R40 and R41 provide a connection to Reading Station and Town Centre.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal has been submitted as an Outline planning application, however the only matter reserved being Appearance. The application was also accompanied by an Environmental Statement.
- 2.2 The following reserved matters are therefore required to be considered and subject to determination within this application:

Means of access - the accessibility to and within the site, for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network

Landscaping - the treatment of land (other than buildings) for the purpose of enhancing or protecting the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated and includes:

- a. screening by fences, walls or other means
- b. the planting of trees, hedges, shrubs or grass
- c. the formation of banks, terraces or other earthworks
- d. the laying out or provision of gardens, courts, squares, water features, sculpture or public art and
- e. the provision of other amenity features

Layout - the way in which buildings, routes and open spaces within the development are provided, situated and orientated in relation to each other and to buildings and spaces outside the development

Scale - the height, width and length of each building proposed within the development in relation to its surrounding

Site Layout Plan Rev G May 2021



- 2.3 The proposal is for the demolition of the existing one and two storey clubhouse within the site and the erection of up to 257 residential units (C3 use) with public open space and a Health Care Facility. The vehicular access to the site is via Kidmore End Road creating a new primary spine road layout. This creates a direct route into the centre of the site and then a circular road to access the upper part of the site, a section of this road length runs parallel to the northern boundary of the site. Secondary roads and cul de sacs are also created within the site to serve the proposed residential units. A secondary vehicular access is proposed from Kidmore End Road (adjacent to 21 Kidmore End Road) to serve the proposed Health Care Facility/ residential units orientated towards the site frontage.

2.4 The proposed mix of residential accommodation as submitted in May 2021 is set out in the table below. It is noted that the Affordable Housing offer has now been increased to 35%, but no details have been submitted in relation to the what types of houses or tenure they would be.

Size of Unit	Total Number	Market Housing Tenure Split at original 30% offer	Affordable Housing
1 bed flat / Maisonettes	30	21	9
2 bed flat / Maisonettes	26	18	8
2 bed houses	37	25	12
3 bed houses	83	58	25
4 bed houses	81	58	23
Total	257		

2.5 The proposed residential units are predominantly individual dwellings with building heights of 2-storey to eaves level with pitched roofs. “Appearance” has not been applied for but the applicant has indicated that at Appearance Reserved Matters stage some of the roof space can be proposed for additional accommodation. The applicant has provided examples of indicative appearance using a suggested house design with an ‘Arts and Crafts’ movement style. The dwellings have individual gardens, with flatted units specified to have balconies or outdoor amenity space.

Indicative Elevational Treatment illustrated within the submitted in Design Access Statement:





- 2.6 The proposed Health Centre building has a floor area of approximately 600 sqm containing indicatively 5 treatment rooms at ground floor. The 3 storey building also contains 34 flatted units with 2 indicated at ground floor with the remainder at upper floors. The ground floor units can be used as accessible flats as they can provide direct access at street level. This building has associated car parking located to front in the location of the existing car parking that serve the Golf Club and to the side and rear.
- 2.7 In terms of parking for the flats, it is indicated that a maximum of 69 spaces will be provided within communal parking areas to cater for residents of apartments who do not have access to a garage or driveway. Visitor parking has been calculated based on the number of apartments provided within the development only - at a ratio of 1 space per 4 dwellings.
- 2.8 Plot numbers 174 to 185 consist of 6 x 1-bedroom and 6 x 2-bedroom flats. A total of 21 parking spaces has been provided for these plots which complies with the Council's parking standards.
- 2.9 Plot numbers 224 -257 consist of 20 x 1-bedroom and 14 x 2-bedroom flats and are located at the front of site above the Health Care Facility. The health centre has been assumed to have 5 treatment rooms and 10 FTE Staff but the indicative floorplans do not confirm the number of treatment rooms.
- 2.10 A total of 85 parking spaces are provided for the health/medical centre and the residential flats equating to 60 spaces for the flats and 25 spaces for the medical centre which complies with the Council's parking standards. It is stated that there is no further detail at this time regarding the health centre size. However, parking will be provided as per the RBC parking standard requirements when delivered under the reserved matters application.
- 2.11 With regard to cycle parking, a total of 449 cycle spaces will be provided for the dwellings. Cycle parking will be provided for the health centre in line with the standards set out in Revised Parking Standards and Design Based on 5 treatment rooms and 10 FTE staff, this equating to 10 cycle parking spaces.

Plan: Green Space Provision on Site Rev 04 May 2021



Table of Green Space Provision On Site

Public Open Space	Equipped / Designated Play Area	0.16ha (plus informal play throughout within parks and gardens)
	Parks and Gardens	1.05ha
	Amenity Green Space	1.03ha
	Natural and Semi-Natural	1.29ha
Public Green Space	SUDS	0.49ha
	Street Planting	0.09ha
Private Green Space	Front Garden	0.54ha
	Rear Garden	2.86ha
Total Green Space		7.51ha



2.12 The development site also incorporates areas of Green Space as set out in the applicant’s table and Green Space Plan set out above. Public Open Space is formed from a single 1.21ha LEAP ‘Local Equipped area of Play (LEAP)’ and park/garden in the centre of site adjacent (area shown in yellow and pink) near the north eastern boundary; and further 2.32 ha of amenity green space and natural and semi natural open space (areas shown in dark and light green). These

areas a located around the site in linear strips sited adjacent to the central vehicular route through the site or adjacent to the site boundary to the rear of proposed dwellings containing some of the trees to be retained. Further open space (0.58 ha) is in the form of SuDS and incidental areas. Private green space (3.40ha) also provided in front and rear garden areas for the proposed residential units.

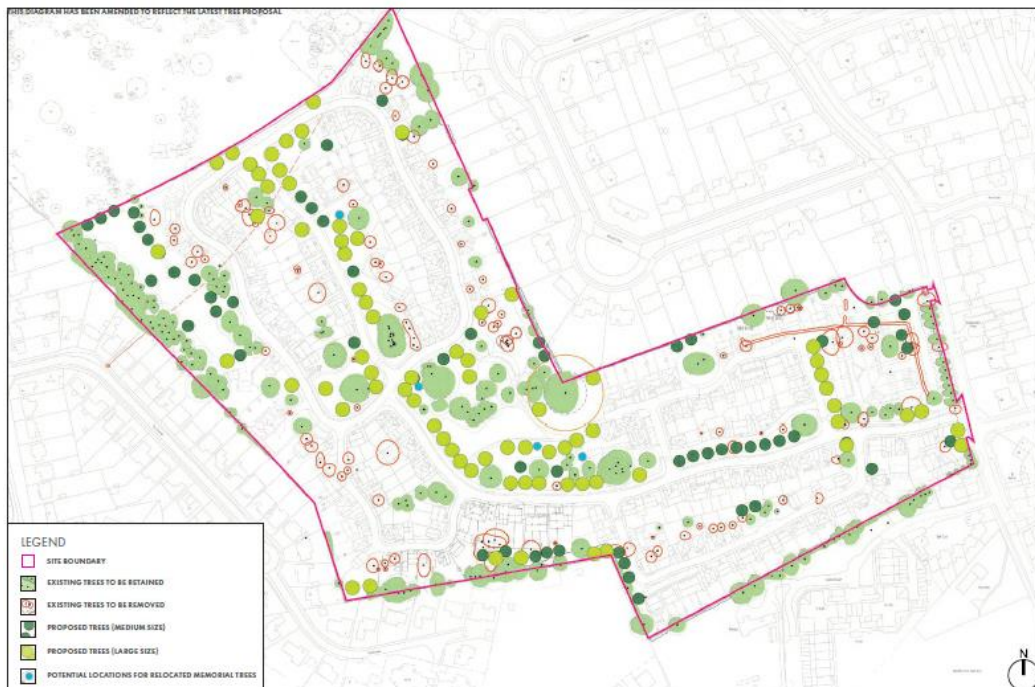
The applicant sets out that land use within the site would be as follows:

4.11ha (36%) will be retained as Public Open Space, SuDS or street planting.

3.4ha (30%) will be retained as front or rear garden space.

3.93ha (34%) will be developed in terms of built form and infrastructure.

Tree Retention, Removal and Proposals Plan' May 2021



2.13 The proposals seek the removal of 117 trees or groups of trees (130 trees in total) to allow the construction of dwellings, parking spaces and associated infrastructure. The applicant also proposal new tree planting for (134 new trees). The proposed tree planting is located within the areas of public realm and includes large tree species along the spine road. There is no reliance on planting in rear gardens, but existing trees of significance would be located within proposed rear gardens. Further tree planting off site within South Oxfordshire District is proposed by the planting a new woodland adjacent to Cucumber Wood, which the applicant states will provide indirect benefits to the Borough by planting in this location.

2.14 The applicant considers that the development proposals sited within Reading Borough meet the requisite policy requirements of the Reading Borough Local Plan, in particular in relation to Policy EN8. However, the applicant sets out that

an additional 5ha parcel of land within the applicant's ownership to the North of the application site, situated in SODC could additionally be secured within this application to provide benefits to residents of Reading Borough.

- 2.15 The applicant has also submitted a Community Infrastructure Plan which sets out the intended uses for the land within the ownership of Reading Golf Club outside the application site within South Oxfordshire District.

Community Infrastructure Plan Rev H



- 2.16 The land directly adjacent to the application site is illustrated as existing grassland. An area of additional woodland tree planting of circa 1000 trees is shown adjacent to existing Ancient Woodland; and a potential site for 5ha country park and allotments to the north are indicated. The remainder of the land within SODC forms a foot golf, disc golf and a 9-hole short game golf that are now operational as the 'Fairways Family Golf Centre', open 7 days a week. A café and outdoor seating area are also provided. Upgrades to this facility are subject to planning application SODC currently under consideration (ref P21/S2089/FUL).

- 2.17 During the course of the application in response to consultee comments changes have been made to the Masterplan (2054-PL04 Rev G Site Layout) and these as specified by the applicant are:

Access to Emmer Green Primary School omitted

Units 52 - 66 reconfigured to infill school access and by reducing the number of houses shown behind Gorselands reduce the pressure on the trees on the common boundary. Units in this area have gardens that are now 4-5 metres longer.

Additional area of open space created to the west of Plot 66.

Additional area of ecology/bio-diversity added behind Plots 52-59

Additional new tree planting shown - as per Fabrik details
Two 'push-out' kerb lines incorporated for speed reduction measures
Additional footpath access off Kidmore End Road shown to connect to the Medical Centre
Provision of a direct pedestrian link from the bus stop to the health centre
Build outs along the proposed spine road to reduce traffic speeds

The changes to the masterplan have also necessitated minor alterations to the Landscape DAS Addendum, associated landscape plans, Tree Report and the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan & Biodiversity Impact Calculation.

2.18 EIA Matters

The application submission is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment, which is used to assess the likely significant effects of a proposed development upon the environment. The Environmental Statement (ES) is required to provide the LPA with sufficient information about the potential effects of the development prior to a decision being made on the planning application. The information provided as part of the ES has been taken into account in the determination of the application and was consulted on in accordance with Regulations. The submitted additional and amended information (received 27th May 2021) on a number of matters but involving only minimal changes to the assessment of significant effects, was subject to publication and re-consultation of relevant consultees and local residents and is considered within the main body of the report.

2.19 Submitted numerous drawings and documents:

Plans:

2054-PL01 Location Plan

2054-PL02 Constraints Plan

2054-PL03 Opportunities and Parameters Plan

2054-PL04 Site Layout, Rev G (May 2021)

2054- PL04 Site Layout Rev G (Mau 2021)

2054-PL05 Site Layout Section 1, Rev A

2054-PL06 Site Layout Section 2, Rev A

2054-PL07 Site Layout Section 3, Rev A

2054-PL08 Site Layout - Affordable Units Rev A (May 2021)

2054-PL09 Site Layout - Car Parking Rev A (May 2021)

2054-PL10 Indicative Street Scenes Sheet 1

2054-PL11 Indicative Street Scenes Sheet 2

2054-PL12 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 1

2054-PL13 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 2

2054-PL14 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 3

2054-PL15 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 4
2054-PL16 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 5
2054-PL17 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 6
2054-PL18 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 7
2054-PL19 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 8
2054-PL20 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 9
2054-PL21 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 10

2054-PL22 Indicative Floor Plans Sheet 11

P19-2877_01H Community Infrastructure Plan, Rev H

P19-2877_03 Density Plan

- Landscape and Open Space Plans by fabrik, comprising:

D2743 Reading Golf Club L_101 Compensatory Tree Planting Plan, Rev 01

D2743 Reading Golf Club L_102 Green Space Provision, Rev 03

D2743 Reading Golf Club L_103 Tree Plan, Rev P11 (May 2021)

D2743 Reading Golf Club L_104 Cross Sections, Rev 03

D2743 Reading Golf Club L_105 Key Area 1, Rev 03

D2743 Reading Golf Club L_106 Key Area 2, Rev 03

D2743 Reading Golf Club L_107 Wider Open Space, Rev 02 (May 2021)

- Tree Constraints and Protection Plans by Arbortrack Systems, comprising:

Tree Protection Plan (Proposed layout + tree data & shadows), Rev G

Tree Protection Plan (Proposed layout + tree data), Rev G

Tree Constraints Plan (Tree survey plan on existing layout), Rev F

Utilities Plans by Temple Group/Ridge and Partners LLP, comprising:

5010065-RDG-XX-ST-PL-ME-9901 - C Services Diagram

2054 Rev G Schedule of accommodation and parameters detail by Paul Hewett Architects (May 2021)

Design and Access Statement by Paul Hewett Architects - as Amended May 2021

Landscape DAS, December 2020 Addendum, by Fabrik - as Amended May 2021

Arboricultural and Planning Integration Report, December 2020 Update, by Arbortrack

Dormouse Survey Report by Ecology Co-op

Energy and Sustainability Strategy by Temple Group/Ridge and Partners LLP

Geophysical Survey Report by Magnitude Surveys

Landscape and Ecological Management Plan & Biodiversity Impact Calculation (LEMP & BIC), by Ecology Co-op Issue 2 (May 2021) and Calculation Tool (May 2021)

Lighting Assessment, December 2020 update, by Stantec

Minerals Resource Assessment by Stantec

Planning Statement, including Affordable Housing Statement and CIL/S106 Obligations Statement, by Pegasus Group

Soils Survey Report and Figures by Temple Group/Reading Agricultural Consultants

Statement of Community Involvement by Cumpsty Communications

Superfast Broadband Strategy Statement, December 2020 Update, by Stantec

Topographical Survey by MAP

Environmental Impact Assessment, by Temple Group with consultant input from Fabrik, Stantec, Archaeology South East and the Ecology Co-op, comprising:

Statement of Environmental Impact Assessment Conformity, December 2020

Volume 1 Non-Technical Summary (NTS) Summary of the ES in nontechnical language.

Volume 2 Main Text

1. Introduction
2. The Site Description of the Site and its surrounding environs
3. EIA Methodology Methods used to prepare each chapter (including limitations), description of ES structure and content, generic significance criteria, scoping and consultation.
4. Alternatives Considered and Design Iterations Description of the main alternatives considered.
5. The Proposed Development and Construction Overview Description of the Proposed Development and details of the construction.
6. Socio-Economic Assessment of effects on social factors, housing and recreational facilities.
7. Air Quality Assessment of air quality effects, December 2020 update.
8. Traffic and Transport Assessment of traffic and transport effects, December 2020 update.
9. Noise and Vibration Assessment of noise and vibration effects.
10. Water Resources, Drainage and Flood Risk Assessment of effects on water quality, including effects relating to drainage and flood risk.
11. Ecology Assessment of ecological effects.
12. Archaeology and Built Heritage Assessment of effects on local archaeology and built heritage.

13. Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Assessment on the effect on global climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.
14. Effect Interactions Assessment of potential for both intra (Type 1) and inter (Type 2) cumulative effects.
15. Residual Effects and Conclusions Summary of the conclusions of the technical chapters of the ES (including Residual and Cumulative Effects).

Volume 3 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of effects on landscape and views.

Volume 3 LVIA Addendum, December 2020

Volume 4 ES Technical Appendices Supporting Assessments, Data, figures and photographs to support of Volume 2.

Technical Appendices:

A: Consultation A1: Scoping Report A2: Scoping Opinion

B: Traffic Assessment

C: Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment

D: Water and Flood Risk D1: Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) D2: Outline Drainage Strategy (SuDS) D3: Utilities Strategy

E: Air Quality

F: Phase 1 Ground Contamination Survey

G: Ecology G1: Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) G2: Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA)

H: Archaeology and Built Heritage H1: Archaeology Desk Based Assessment (Heritage Statement)

I: Climate Change

Technical Note No 5500/TN008 dated 19th March 2021.

Further Information received 27th May 2021 - Amended plans referenced above

Response to Minerals Resource Assessment May 2021

D2743 Landscape DAS Addendum revised -Part 1

D2743 Landscape DAS Addendum revised -Part 2

D2743 Reading Golf Club LVIA Revised

Response to Transport Officer comments

Response to Tree Officer comments Reading golf Club Tree Report Part 1,2 and 3

Compliance Check List re Reading Borough Local Plan Policies

Briefing Note issued to LPA on behalf of the developer :

- Dated 24th June 2021 received 24/6/2021

- Dated 2nd July 2021 received 5/7/2021 to include Counsels Legal Opinion re the interpretation of Local Plan Policy EN8
- Further Legal Opinion received re the interpretation of Local Plan Policy EN8 received 6/7/2021

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 Application site

161871 : Re-pollard 2 lime trees (T1 and T2). Permitted 11th October 2016.

181992 : Cut back one oak overhanging 3 Gorselands from the Golf Course to give 6.5m clearance from property. Permitted 9th January 2019.

200229 : Request for an EIA Scoping Opinion in accordance with Regulation 15 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) with regard to the proposed development at Reading Golf Course to develop a scheme for a mixed-use residential led development to incorporate up to 275 new homes; medical space; associated open space and landscaping; vehicle parking, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular accesses, associated highway works; and associated infrastructure. Advice from RBC Officers and statutory consultees provided between April and May 2020 due to National Lockdown 1.

200713: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential-led scheme (C3 use to include affordable housing) and the provision of community infrastructure at Reading Golf Club. This scheme was based on a development of 260 dwellings.
Withdrawn on 25th November 2020.

This proposal was considered by officers to result in the loss of Undesignated Open Space leading to an unnecessary urbanising effect. This was in relation to on-site concerns in relation to means of access, over-engineered roadways, trip analysis, parking provision; the proposed layout resulting in unacceptable proximity of proposed built form to existing protected trees; and the extent of future landscaping/ other measures to secure a green link and biodiversity enhancements or suitable deliverable mitigation via S106.

Pre application discussion were undertaken with the LPA between 2019 and 2020 and a previous development layout was considered by the South East Design Panel in March 2020 (report issued 17/4/2020).

Final pre-application advice was issued in May 2020 which outlined similar concerns as those set out above.

No further pre-application advice was undertaken between the application being withdrawn in November 2020 and the scheme resubmitted in January 2021 which reduced the number of units by from 260 to 257.

3.2 Development within South Oxfordshire District:

Land within Reading Golf Club:

P21/S2089/FUL: Replacement of existing halfway hut with proposed family golf centre building and associated landscaping.
Kidmore End Road, Chalkhouse Green, Kidmore End, RG4 8SQ
Under consideration at the time of writing.

- 3.3 Land at Caversham Heath Golf Club:
P20/S1340/FUL Amendments to existing golf course to create new 18th green and practice putting green.
Permitted 16th July 2020

P20/S1619/FUL
Extension to existing clubhouse and minor amendments to existing vehicular access (as amended to reduce size of gables and extent of glazing).
Permitted 23rd November 2020

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 The final comments received from consultees in relation to the latest submissions by the applicant are summarised below. Where relevant or where they are the only comments received, comments made on the original submission are referenced.

Statutory

Department for Communities and Local Government 'Planning Case unit':
Acknowledge receipt of the environmental statement relating to the above proposal.

- 4.2 **Environment Agency:** No objection.

Issued advice to local planning authority: Continued dialogue between the developer and Thames Water re Foul Sewage and Utilities' is essential to ensure any upgrades of the existing network to accommodate the new connection are in place before occupation of the development.

There is a private abstraction point (for the golf club) in the area of the new development this would be made unusable by this development. The permit would be void as the golf course will have no right of way for abstraction and a new licence would need to be applied for. Documents indicate that the abstraction will be obsolete due to the golf club closure.

- 4.3 **Natural England:** No objection
Based on the plans submitted and mitigation proposed, Natural England has no objection to the proposed development. We do not consider that the proposed development would compromise the purposes of designation or special qualities of the AONB. We would advise that the proposal is determined in line with relevant NPPF and development plan policies, landscape and visual impacts are minimised as far as possible and landscape advice is obtained from the AONB Partnership or Conservation Board.
Further general advice on the consideration of protected species and other natural environment issues was also provided as an Annex.

4.4 **SUDS:** No objection

The submitted documentation provides an overview of the proposed drainage strategy for the site which would be developed further should permission be granted. At this stage the applicant is only required to demonstrate that the proposal will reduce surface water run-off from the site, and I am happy that the proposal does provide for this.

It is however noted that the drainage strategy includes exceedance routes which at Figure 7.3 illustrates to be along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site, this would need to be addressed further at the detailed design stage to ensure that the proposal complies with the following.

S9 The design of the site must ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, flows resulting from rainfall in excess of a 1 in 100 year rainfall event are managed in exceedance routes that minimise the risks to people and property.

Regardless this would not be sufficient to refuse the application and the overall principle is to reduce surface water run off which is accepted and therefore I am happy that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions.

Non Statutory

External

4.5 **Berkshire Archaeology:** No objection subject to conditions.

There are some potential archaeological issues with this application, as previously noted for the site, because of its location within an area of identified archaeological potential. The applicant has supplied a desk-based assessment, which notes the potential for archaeological remains dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods, as well as some possibility for later features. A geophysical survey has also been carried out on the site, and whilst this did not identify any specific significant features, the report did not rule out the presence of more ephemeral archaeological deposits. The assessment concludes that, given the anticipated impact of redevelopment on the survival of archaeological assets, a programme of archaeological works should be required, to mitigate the effects of the proposals, in line with national and local planning policy.

4.6 **Chilterns Conservation Board :** Conclude that that the application site here falls broadly within the wider setting of the AONB and sits next to or just beyond a wider valued landscape, itself a part of the setting and contained within the National Character Area 110 and with a landscape character that shares much with the South Oxfordshire LCA Chilterns Plateau with Valleys. In this respect, the CCB has concluded that there is little impact on the immediate setting of the AONB boundary, as exists. We would recommend that the status of the wider valued landscape is given weight in any planning decision and that a landscape masterplan and management plan protects and indeed enhances the relationship between the existing site edge and the wider landscape. The CCB accepts that a direct visual impact upon the setting of the existing boundary would be assessed as minimal. The valued landscape status and the potential for an AONB boundary review are matters of relevance and some weight can be attributed. Set against these material considerations CCB promotes a sympathetic boundary treatment towards the northern section of this site.

4.7 **Reading Design Review Panel**

Site: The uniformity of the layout was considered to be problematic, leading to repetitious groupings of buildings all across the site without any hierarchy or variation. The adoption of a graded density approach was recommended with higher densities towards Kidmore End Road and reduced densities towards the proposed country park. The residential use of the enlarged site area was considered to be appropriate. Whilst the strategic landscape ideas are drawn clearly they have been eroded in the layout plans by excessive road infrastructure and poor quality communal spaces, defined mainly by back garden fences.

Despite being an outline application, there should be a robust spatial strategy for the site to define legibility and character areas including the relationships of building height to street width/type, public realm to front gardens.

Building: The indicative design of the dwellings was considered to ignore criteria of low energy, carbon neutral and contemporary design issues. There was little attention played to orientation of the individual dwellings with repetitive units shown in all orientations throughout the site. The scale and size of the buildings was considered to be appropriate, There is no suggestion that the proposed houses would be adaptable to future requirements.

Sustainability: There was no recognition of passive solar design, energy efficiency, adaption to changing needs of family, or how more imaginative housing options might exploit the varied needs of the future residents. There appeared to be no consideration of the wider issues of the natural environment of the site and it's biodiversity. No evidence of the necessity to reduce car dependence in the layout which replicates excessive attention to car ownership at the expense of the natural environment. How the scheme addresses issues of sustainable design and carbon/energy/circular construction initiatives.

Design approach: There is a clear necessity to reduce car dependence, the use of low impact energy materials construction and design, the inclusion of housing options other than family houses of varying size, incorporation of communal workspace, new communal travel infrastructure thereby avoiding/reducing congestion on the southern section of Kidmore End Road and it's junction with Peppard Road.

Further comment : How can such a magnificent situation and location provoke more than this bare minimum of responses?

The current scheme has low quality design of areas of the 'natural and semi natural open space (with informal play)' bordered by roads and around back gardens with little surveillance and outlook.

4.8 **Forestry Commission:** As a Non Ministerial Government Department, we provide no opinion supporting or objecting to an application. Rather we are including information on the potential impact that the proposed development would have on the ancient woodland.

One of the most important features of Ancient woodlands is the quality and inherent biodiversity of the soil; they being relatively undisturbed physically or chemically. This applies both to Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

4.9 **Historic England:** Not wish to comment.

4.10 **Oxfordshire County Council** - County responsibilities as Highways Authority, Education Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority. We consider that there should be discussion with officers at South Oxfordshire District Council in respect of any legal agreements pertaining to the land in South Oxfordshire prior to bringing this application to the relevant Planning Committee.

Transport Development Control: No objection subject to conditions. Further detailed comments supplied.

Flood Authority: Surface Water Drainage Management Strategy must be aligned with OCC Local Standards. Sought submission of SUDS proforma.

Applicant considers this can be dealt with by condition.

Education: No objection. The proposed development lies within the designated area of Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge (secondary) School and adjoins the designated area of Kidmore End CE Primary School, both of which are located in Oxfordshire. It lies closer to a number of schools within Reading Borough Council, and it would be expected that families would seek places at these schools rather than Oxfordshire schools. Reading Borough Council should, therefore, ensure that sufficient school places are available for the resulting additional population.

4.11 **South Oxfordshire District Council** - confirmed given the existing lawful use of the land as a golf course that the continuation of outdoor recreational use of the land for the purposes of a shorter form of golf, foot golf or disc golf would not require planning permission. The car park referred to by the 7th hole is existing and capable of use in connection with the continued leisure use of the land. However, the car park is small and does not provide space for many vehicles and is accessed close to the junction of Tanners Lane and Kidmore End Lane. Both are narrow country lanes and in my view are unsuitable for any significant increase in traffic associated with the use of the land although the ability to control such vehicle activity is limited if there is no associated change of use of the land or related operational development requiring planning permission. However, the intended use of the car park and poor highway access would be a significant constraint to potential plans to intensify the outdoor leisure use of the land in the future in relation to both highway safety and convenience and the qualities of the surrounding rural landscape.

Para. 6.19 of the Planning Statement states:

The use of this land (within SODC) is necessary to pay for its long-term upkeep and maintenance and so it is considered that there is a credible plan in place for this land.

Again if any long term plan requires an intensification of the land with associated visitor facilities in the form of reception areas, additional parking areas, refreshments etc there are considerable constraints including tree preservation orders, ancient woodland, a local wildlife site, priority habitat areas and

conservation target areas as well as the setting of the Chilterns AONB. I consider that an indicative layout for this land along with details of the routes and construction of any hard surfaced pathways should be provided. This would enable us to ascertain whether there is a requirement for any planning permission, and to inform the proposals for the community use of this open land the site should be subject to an ecological appraisal to identify the ecological constraints and opportunities present. Areas which support protected species or priority habitats should be retained and enhanced. There should be no operational development such as hard surfaced paths within 15-20 metres of the ancient woodland edge as a minimum, but siting these works further away than this would be preferred. Additional footfall and increased public access within the ancient woodland should be prevented as this can have significant adverse impacts on the biodiversity value of the woodland. It is recommended that native edge planting, and potentially discrete fencing, is used to discourage public access to the woodland. These matters should ideally be considered in relation to the current application and are particularly relevant in the event of entertaining the suggestion under Para. 6.20 of the Planning Statement, which states:

In terms of the 4.4ha of which has been identified to provide parkland, allotments, cycle/walkways and tree planting for the benefit of the residential scheme, it is entirely possible to attach pre-commencement conditions to require implementation of these requirements prior to works commencing on the residential part of the site. The exact timing of such implementation conditions can be agreed as part of negotiations with the Council. Whilst the SODC land would not be within the control of the Council, the residential development would and therefore there would be adequate, enforceable legal control in place to cover this part of the requirements.

The application site is approximately 1km from the edge of the Chilterns AONB and the closest part of the existing golf course to the AONB is less than 500m away. As such there should be sufficient regard to the setting of the AONB, and the views out from the site towards the AONB, along with the experience of the users of both existing and proposed public rights of way between the edge of the urban area and the AONB. As the application site is contiguous with the part of the course within South Oxfordshire, I consider that very careful attention should be paid to the northern edge of the site to ensure integration into the open landscape as it extends towards the Chilterns AONB. In this regard I have some concern about the lack of a suitable landscape buffer between the proposed main road running along much of the northern boundary of the site, and the site's boundary. Generally, the housing development on the edge of Reading has a much softer landscaped edge to the open land within South Oxfordshire. The proximity of the main road to the boundary also gives rise to potential landscape and ecological issues regarding light and noise pollution towards the open land. I would also raise/reiterate the further issues below:

- The road network in South Oxfordshire in this area is a network of single track lanes with passing places and is not suitable for a significant increase in traffic.
- The character of the land beyond CA1b is semi-rural, blending into the rural landscape of South Oxfordshire. The proposals go well beyond this strong edge to Reading up to a non-existent physical boundary with no provision to contain the development along that boundary.
- The use of the recreational land within SODC would have to be managed into the long term. Imposing the long-term maintenance cost of a complex landscape and leisure facility of this scale on the 257 new houses could be extremely onerous with the lack of public ownership/management. There is no guarantee

that any development required to increase the financial viability of the use of the land would be acceptable to SODC, particularly having regard to the significant landscape, ecological and highway constraints.

- The emerging Kidmore End NDP has a number of policies/objectives that are relevant to this area of the district which includes the identification of the SODC land as a local valued landscape, and objectives to protect the quiet nature and highway safety of the rural lanes.

4.12 **Sport England** - Supports the application

The proposal will result in the loss of the 18-hole golf club, which is why Sport England is responding. The main difference between the previous scheme (200713) and this scheme is the introduction of a 9-hole golf course which includes footgolf, disc golf and normal golf.

The loss of the 18-hole golf course was supported by England Golf, (EG) who are the country's golf authority. During the ongoing discussions the mitigation of the loss was key as we were concerned that there could be a run on golf courses in the area. However, EG were convinced that the financial sustainability of the nearby golf clubs would be in a better position by the demise of Reading Golf Club, at least for the foreseeable future.

Sport England's Active Design was also discussed for incorporation in the overall development in order to create a healthier and more sustainable development.

Assessment against Sport England's Objectives and the NPPF

The scheme on the site of the golf course is broken into two elements: housing (subject of this planning application) and a country park. The housing of approximately 257 homes is at the south end of the site and has followed a number of the Active Design principles. I welcome the walking and cycling drawings to show how the site fits into the wider networks. I also note in the transport assessment the links to and from the site by public transport.

The applicants are willing to contribute to a cycle hire scheme (para 9.80 in the planning statement), which is to be welcomed.

The proposed country park where informal activity can take place is to be welcomed. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that the country park will attract more activity from local people than the golf course.

I have consulted England Golf formally on this new planning application and they responded on the 22nd February 2021 saying:

There is no change in the position of England Golf from that provided on 10th December 2019 and 19th August 2020: "England Golf are supportive of the club and its plans to relocate and, in turn, develop a more comprehensive golfing offer at Caversham Heath Golf Club".

The investment into Caversham Golf Club is as follows:

- Creation of better facilities at the club house through an extension and remodelling;
- creation of a new practise putting green;
- remodelling of the existing course including levelling, new bunkers and realignment of the 18th hole;
- a new golf sixes/academy course.

NB these works are subject to a separate planning application.

The introduction of a family golf centre (paragraph 10.8) on the north of the site is welcomed and will allow an introduction to the game for families.

Contributions to a much needed 3G Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) (Para 9.137 in the planning statement) would be welcomed by Football Association and could attract funding from the Football Foundation if it was allocated to one their priority sites identified in the Local Facility Football Plan.

Conclusion: Sport England considers that the application is consistent with the following policy objective: Enhance.

4.13 **Thames Valley Police - Crime Prevention Design Advisor**

The health facility /flatted blocks: The lobbies should be large enough to a secure lobby and postal services, be bright and welcoming to residents and guests; and provide direct access to the inner lobby and lift, segregating lift core from private residential corridors one solution could be to relocate the entrance lobby to the current location of the bike store. Buildings should meet 'Secure by Design Standards'.

Defensible space /Natural surveillance: From the plans provided , the majority of dwelling have been setback from the street, However I note that set back (defensible space) has not be afforded to all (for example plots 16 to 21 ; plots 206 to 208). Setback of a dwelling from the access pedestrian footpath has a significant impact on perceived lack of residential privacy, if the set back or defensible space is insufficient residents may feel vulnerable to casual visual intrusion and simply close their blinds or curtain, reducing surveillance opportunity over their parking spaces. Generally, setbacks should be 1.5 - 2 metres in depth with appropriate boundary (identifying ownership). This should be seen as a minimum to ensure that residents are offered appropriate levels of privacy and that windows do not open up over footpaths. Where there are no footpaths (i.e. level surface streets) setbacks should be a minimum of 2 metres.

Surveillance over Public Amenity space and LEAP: I ask that the landscaping scheme ensure that natural surveillance throughout the development and to/from dwellings and LEAP is not compromised. As trees mature they may impinge upon this. Tree positions and final growth height/spread along with a clear stem/trunk and a managed lower canopy height should be considered to avoid this. The LEAP requires careful design in relation to equipment selection, (lighting?), and landscaping. The design should promote the ownership and enjoyment of all users as well as child safety and should also deter criminal and antisocial behaviour.

Boundary treatment: Detailed plans come forward, these should include detailed boundary treatment plans, it is strongly recommended that private rear gardens fencing be close board fencing 1.8m in height. Careful consideration will be needed on the type of boundary treatments used to secure the rear gardens of the dwellings backing on to the edge of the development or green Amenity space (for example plots 53 and 54; plots 153 to 149; plots 173 to 186). Additional planting in these areas is not sufficient and residential materials used must be robust and suitable in the environment

4.14 **Thames Water**

Thames Water recognises this catchment is subject to high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. The developer should liaise with the LLFA to agree an appropriate sustainable surface water strategy following the sequential approach before considering connection to the public sewer network. The scale of the proposed development does not materially affect the sewer network and as such we have no objection.

The application indicates that SURFACE WATER will NOT be discharged to the public network and as such Thames Water has no objection, however approval should be sought from the Lead Local Flood Authority.

With the information provided, Thames Water has been unable to determine the waste water infrastructure needs of this application. Thames Water request that the following condition be added to any planning permission. “No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:- 1. Capacity exists off site to serve the development, or 2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water.”

Water Comments

Following initial investigations, Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal. Thames Water have contacted the developer in an attempt to agree a position on water networks but have been unable to do so in the time available and as such Thames Water request that the following condition be added to any planning permission. No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:- all water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows to serve the development have been completed; or - a development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with Thames Water to allow development to be occupied.

The proposed development is located within 15m of our underground water assets and this should be addressed by way of an informative.

Internal

4.15 Ecology - Consultant Ecologist

The ecological survey work undertaken to inform the application (as reported in the EIA and Volume 4 Appendix G of the EIA) has in general (excluding the Biodiversity Impact Assessment - see below) been undertaken to an appropriate standard. It shows that:

1. The buildings within the application site are unlikely to support roosting bats and although some trees have the potential to host a bat roost these will largely be retained and surveys to determine if any do host a bat roost can be undertaken prior to the trees being felled as the status of any roosts within them (if there are any) will be likely to have changed prior to works commencing on site.

2. Bat activity on the site was limited and mainly from common and widespread species. There were a few recordings of rarer species including Nathusius Pipistrelle, Barbastelle and bats from the genus Myotis (some of which are uncommon) but the number of recordings of these species was low and as bats

can have a large range it is unlikely that the site is of importance for the rarer species. Any impact on this group of species can be reduced by ensuring that a wildlife friendly lighting scheme is provided and an indicative plan showing “no light zones” has been provided within Figure 10 of the most recent ecology report (24 May 2021).

3. No badger setts were recorded within the red line boundary. It is possible that badgers will open up new setts prior to the start of works. If they did these would need to be excluded under licence from Natural England. In the long term (post development) badgers would be able to continue to forage within the gardens and open space within and adjacent to the site.

4. The site is unlikely to be used by reptiles or significant numbers of amphibians. The accidental killing or injury during construction of these animals could be controlled via the implementation of precautionary working practices.

5. The site is unlikely to be used by dormice.

6. Breeding bird surveys recorded 4 Birds Of Conservation Concern (BOCC) Red List species (House Sparrow, Song Thrush and Mistle Thrush, Starling) and five BOCC Amber list species (Bullfinch, Dunnock, Lesser Black Backed Gull, Black Headed Gull and Mallard) within the application site. Of these: House Sparrow, Song Thrush and Mistle Thrush, Starling, Bullfinch, Dunnock and Mallard; have or might breed within the application site. It is likely that they will be able to continue to do so post development because, with the exception of Bullfinch, these species are often found in urban areas. Furthermore, the applicant is proposing to install integral bird boxes and plant new wildlife friendly landscaping within the scheme. Any direct impact on nesting birds can be mitigated by carrying out removal of hedgerows etc., outside of the bird nesting season.

7. The site may be used by hedgehogs. However as many of the boundary features are being retained and enhanced and as long as hedgehog friendly fencing is installed any adverse impact upon this species is likely to be minimal.

In summary then, subject to conditions to minimise any adverse impact on wildlife during construction and to ensure that the development includes wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements, then there is no reason not to approve this application in terms of the impact on protected or priority species.

Habitat assessment and biodiversity impact assessment calculation

The development will result in the conversion of an area of golf course (that has been “improved” through the addition of fertiliser and grass seeds and managed in an intensive manner) to housing, gardens and public open space. The plans (according to the most recent submissions) include 7.51 ha. of on-site green space, some of which will be planted as species rich or wet grassland.

An updated document named “Landscape and Ecological Management Plan & Biodiversity Impact Calculation” dated 24 May 2021 has been produced. This shows the habitat areas that have been included in the calculations post development. The applicant’s ecologists has also provided a DEFRA 2 Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator (BIAC) excel spreadsheet for the scheme.

The 24 May document and spreadsheet conclude that the proposals will result in a net loss of Habitat Units [Habitat Units are a factor of habitat type, condition, distinctiveness, size (area), ease of creation etc.] on site but to offset this an area of grassland to the north of the site (in the former golf course) will be enhanced by managing it so it becomes species rich grassland. Areas of mixed scrub will also be planted in this area (see Figure 8 of the 24 May ecology report).

They also conclude that the development will result in a net gain in Hedgerow Units although there is no map showing where the existing hedgerows referred to in their calculator are or how they have reached the conclusion that the hedgerows are in the conditions that they are.

An outline of the ecologist's calculations in relation to Habitat Units is given below:

- The baseline is that there are 31.88 Habitat Units on site (within the red lime boundary) pre-development
- After development, on site, there will be 27.05 Habitat Units
- This will result in a net loss of 4.83 Habitat Units on site.
- The offsite habitat baseline (i.e. the areas of improved grassland) is 3.88 Habitat Units
- After these areas have been enhanced they will be worth 12.51 Habitat Units, i.e. an increase of 8.63 Habitat Units
- This is a net increase in habitat units of 3.8 Habitat Units (8.63 - 4.83 - shown in the calculator to two decimal points 3.79).
- This equates to an increase in Habitat Units of 11.89%

My advice is that this is an inaccurate assessment of the likely Habitat Units that will be delivered for the following reasons:

1) The area that has been used in the calculator is incorrect. The area of the site, i.e. within the red line boundary is according to the ES [section 5.2.5] 12.15 hectares whereas the BIA has a figure of 11.38 (my measurement using Ordnance Survey Mastermap data is 12.11 hectares).

2) The quantity of woodland pre-development is less than that which actually exists. This appears to be because they have mis-measured the areas of trees on the site (which they have concluded fit the Integrated Habitat System [IHS] category of "Young Trees Planted") and because they haven't included the strips of woodland around the edge of the site particularly the strip of woodland south of Eric Avenue.

It is not clear where their measurements have come from: the 24 May report has a phase 1 map which does not show the true extent of tree cover and in any case has an incorrect red line boundary, nor differentiate between semi improved and amenity grasslands. Without a map (as we asked for before) clearly showing where the habitats used in the baseline assessment are and their extent it is not possible to assess the accuracy of the calculator.

3) There is no justification for the habitat condition assessment that they have used pre-development.

4) They have not used a connectivity or strategic significance multiplier. This should have been used as the site is on a green link and therefore also within an area formally identified in local strategy.

5) The habitat areas post development do not match those given in their recent submissions (below), i.e. 7.51 ha of green space (in the recent submissions) vs 6.57 retained or created green space in the calculator.

I have roughly digitised the extent of tree cover based on the tree survey and aerial photos and my calculation shows that the pre-development baseline is in the region of 67 Habitat Units. As such to deliver a net gain it is likely that a larger amount of off site habitat enhancements (probably twice as much or more) would need to be provided. However, given that the applicant could use the golf course to the north for this it is quite likely to be achievable.

The applicant's recent letter at paragraphs 49 and 50 reads:

"49. We have proposed three solutions for the proposed off-site biodiversity provision, either:

- A commensurate financial contribution is paid to RBC via the S106.*

or

- It is delivered on land within RBC's control. This approach is as set out in our earlier January 2021 LEMP and BIC submission.*

or

- It is delivered on neighbouring land within the Golf Club's control in SODC. The Council's BAP identifies that it is acceptable to provide offset within adjacent authorities, with SODC being one of those named. This approach is as set out in our latest May 2021 LEMP and BIC submission.*

50. It is notable that the above net gain calculation does not take into account any biodiversity value gained by the planting of 1,000 trees."

In relation to bullet points 1 and 2 above. As far as I am aware there has been no discussions with the council about where these units would be delivered, and the "January 2021 LEMP and BIC submission" does not give any confidence that these units could be delivered on council owned land.

Regarding bullet point 3 it may well be that a net gain in Biodiversity Units can be achieved within the golf course. However, it is likely that significantly more grassland (at least twice as much) than is currently proposed would need to be enhanced to achieve these units.

Regarding paragraph 50 I believe the 1000 trees are to be planted in SODC (are these not the areas shown as scrub on the 24 May Figure 8 plan?). However, assuming these will be planted as a single block, saplings at 2m spacings (which is a common density for woodland planting - they are later thinned) equates to an area of woodland 50 x 50m or 0.025ha. which will not make any significant contribution to offsetting the Habitat Units that will be lost on site.

4.16 **Education** - to be updated at your meeting.

4.17 **Environmental Protection**

Air Quality

An air quality assessment has been completed by Temple as part of the Environmental Statement and submitted on behalf of the developers.

Construction & Demolition Phase: The assessment follows IAQM guidance coming to an overall assessment of 'not significant' for dust emissions from the development with mitigation in place. This assessment of the impact is completely reliant on there being suitable mitigation in place. It is therefore essential that the developers ensure appropriate mitigation of dust is implemented at all times.

It is therefore recommended that a condition is attached to the permission requiring that a dust management plan is drawn up and implemented to include all the measures listed in point 7.7.2 of the Air Quality assessment.

Operational Phase: The impact of traffic on Air Quality from the development during the operational phase was found overall to be ‘not significant’.

However there was found to be 1% increases of NO₂ at 9 of the receptors modelled and 2% increases at 2 receptors. The impact at one receptor on Prospect Street was classed as ‘slight adverse’.

Council Policy EN15 requires development to have regard for Air Quality and mitigate any detrimental effect on it. Although there is only a small impact on Air Quality, it is a measurable detrimental impact, which should be mitigated. A suggestion made in the air quality assessment (7.7.1) is for the developer to provide a contribution to introduce a smarter signal operating scheme at the Henley Road/Prospect Street/Peppard Road junction with the aim of improving the traffic flow thereby improving Air Quality. It is recommended that this suggestion is implemented as mitigation for the effect on air quality around this location.

Noise

Noise & Vibration during the construction and demolition phase will have an adverse impact on the nearest noise sensitive receptors, even with mitigation in place. This has been assessed as a minor to moderate adverse effect with mitigation in place.

It would be necessary for the developer to follow Best Practicable Means to minimise the impact during construction & demolition. A condition C2 has been recommended below, to ensure that the specific measures to be implemented are submitted and approved prior to works commencing.

For the operational phase, the assessment indicates that a good internal noise environment can be achieved using appropriate glazing and sound insulation for walls and ventilation.

Table 9.16 of the noise and vibration assessment shows recommended operational noise limit ratings for plant installed at the site. All plant must adhere to these rating levels.

Table 9.16 Recommended Operational Noise Limit Rating Levels

Receptor	Day (07:00-23:00)		Night (23:00-07:00)	
	Lowest Typical Background noise level, LA90 dB	Operational Noise Limit Specific Sound Level dB	Lowest Typical Background noise level, LA90 dB	Operational Noise Limit Specific Sound Level dB
All Receptors	41	31	32	22

Contaminated Land

The developer is responsible for ensuring that development is safe and suitable for use for the intended purpose or can be made so by remedial action.

The phase 1 desk study submitted with the application has identified potential pollution linkages. It recommends that confirmatory samples are collected from the soils underlying the site in the areas of the groundkeeper's sheds, waste oil container, and former chalk quarry.

Landfills have also been identified to the North of the site, therefore a gas monitoring programme is required.

Investigation must be carried out by a suitably qualified person to ensure that the site is suitable for the proposed use or can be made so by remedial action.

Conditions have been recommended to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.

Construction and demolition phases

We have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses).

Assessments have been completed and submitted for noise and air quality which indicate their impact during construction and demolition can be mitigated to within acceptable levels. The developers must submit specific details of the measures that will be implemented to control these in line with the recommendations made in the submitted assessments.

Fires during construction and demolition can impact on air quality and cause harm to residential amenity. Burning of waste on site could be considered to be harmful to the aims of environmental sustainability.

- 4.18 **Housing:** Final: The offer for 35% on site (90 units) with a size mix of the properties to match that of the wider scheme is a fair and welcome contribution to the available Affordable Housing in the town. The affordable homes are pepper potted throughout the scheme which will support the objective of integrated communities.

This application should offer a policy compliant 70/30 split between Social Rent and intermediate/ low cost home ownership. This would be a welcome move towards genuinely affordable (social rent) rented properties and matches the clear need for such properties in the town.

4.19 **Hampshire County Council Minerals:**

Conclusions: Section 4.1 of the MRA states that *'It should be noted that the information available from IDOM (2019) is insufficient to complete a detailed assessment of the Mineral Reserve present within the Site. Additional more detailed Site investigation and analysis would be required to better define any Mineral Reserve'*, while the report goes on to state that Stantec believe they have adequately assessed the mineral potential of the site in the context of RMLP Policy 2. It is our opinion that the MRA does not sufficiently consider the policies set out in the emerging Joint Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan and as such further information is required to satisfy the safeguarding policies of this Plan.

In line with the emerging JCEB Minerals and Waste Plan, the MRA should consider the safeguarded Lambeth Group deposits, however, it fails to do so. Further information is required on the viability of and operator interest in the clay deposits of the Lambeth Group before the safeguarding policies of the JCEB Minerals and Waste Plan are complied with.

We believe that the estimated sand and gravel tonnage provided by Stantec is not supported by sufficient evidence, therefore further investigation and laboratory testing is required into the geological status of the mineral deposits before the viability of the resource can be fully determined. Consultation with local mineral operators is also required to fully explore the options available to the developer.

Officer note: Additional information has been submitted to address the above concerns see consideration section below.

4.20 Conservation & Urban Design Officer : The site does not have a direct impact on two significant heritage buildings at Old Grove Farm and Barn, Surley Row, set 200m from the site, due to the distance and screening from the existing residential development.

4.21 Leisure: In respect of the ‘Matters for Consideration’ document dated 24th June 2021 officers are not convinced that the on-site open space provision provides adequate communal leisure space for the residents of the new development. Moreover, in an area recognised as being deficient in recreational public open space, it is Council policy to seek new, legible, accessible public open space for the neighbourhood. Burying this within a development does not make it an obvious destination for people from the surrounding communities, and there is insufficient activity of interest to attract people in. The off-site contribution, to which we agree, offsets the first of these issues (insufficient on-site provision), but we disagree that the schemes adherence to EN8 is satisfied as stated: ‘replacement space that is more accessible to both adjacent landowners and the neighbouring locality’.

The site is not permeable to neighbourhoods on both sides. There are two reasons why this is desirable. The first is the creation of wildlife corridors across the site. The second is the potential to overlap this with several designated footpaths that allow pedestrian links between the Eric Avenue (and Bugs Bottom) neighbourhoods and the Kidmore End Road community, as well as north-south links, providing access to the countryside. The development of the golf course amounts, in effect, to the loss of a very large wildlife corridor, and cross-site routes would provide some mitigation, particularly if the major vegetation features are part of this. This would also be an important leisure gain that could be secured from this development, recognising the historic desire for this informal use of the golf course site. In our view, the opportunity to use the existing green infrastructure to enhance the green network has not been a driver in the design process.

We disagree with the claim that the proposals at RGC will result in more on-site, higher value trees, a net biodiversity gain, accessible POS and a LAP being provided. There will inevitably be fewer trees high value trees on site; the proposals have an adverse effect on both total tree cover and, by and large, on retained trees. We do not understand how there will be a net biodiversity gain.

We note later on in the document that there is a list of the absolute gains in habitat diversity proposed, but there is no calculation of losses, so it is not clear how the net gains are calculated.

I have an underlying unease about the LVIA, that such a large, tree-ed green space could be totally invisible and, conversely, that a new housing development would be similarly invisible, which is what, in effect, the assessment concludes. In particular, I am concerned about the visual effect on the Kidmore End Road frontage and views into the site from this location.

4.22 Natural Environment Trees -

Initial comments: 11.3.2021

Soil (and implications on retained and new trees): Officers are seeking to avoid potential tree related subsidence claims in the future and the related felling or substantial reduction of large trees. It is confirmed that clay soils exist and as such buildings should be kept outside the potential zone of influence of existing and new trees, especially those high water demand species known to be implicated in subsidence claims.

Trees: The AIA confirms: *There are 320 surveyed trees or groups of trees on or near the site. Of these, 11 are 'A' (high quality) category, i.e. 31, 53, 60-62, 160a, 208, 262, 265, 268 & G294. These are native oak species (Q. robur or petraea) with two native Scots pine (262 & 265). 119 trees or groups of trees are 'B' (moderate quality) category, 174 trees or groups of trees are 'C' (low quality) category, and 16 trees are 'U' (unsuitable for retention quality) category, i.e. 22, 23, 46, 68, 115, 116, 135, 197, 229, 275, 276, 282, 298, 305, 316 & 318.*

The outline proposals require the removal of 109 trees or groups of trees (122 trees in total) to allow the construction of dwellings, parking spaces and associated infrastructure. Of these, 21 trees are 'B' (moderate quality) category, i.e. 9, 37, 38, 95, 96, G138 (8 in group), G165 (3 in group), 175, 181, 190, 201 & 253. The remainder are 'C' (low quality) category (90) or 'U'(unsuitable for retention quality) category (11).

The following concerns re:

- Dominance of trees in gardens to some plots, e.g. plots 161-164 and shading pressure on others, e.g. plots 1, 21-24, 49, 78 & 84, both issues for plots 8-15, 59-66. Plots 8-15 includes Limes 102 103 & 315 to the south (hence shading) at current heights of 16, 16 & 19 metres respectively - I can give examples in the borough of where such close proximity has resulted in regular complaints and pressure to prune.
- 284 Sycamore -I note the report states that there is an intention to retain this in the attenuation feature with the levels unchanged. No clarity is provided on how this can be done.

Landscaping

The LS DAS December 2020 Addendum (LS DAS Add) explains how the landscape strategy has been amended to address concerns raised in my memo of 21/09/20 re application 200713.

With reference to the Tree Planting Plan Rev P10, the species and diversity are acceptable and the planting includes large canopy trees and evergreens - principles are as requested. I note the stock size proposed, which again is acceptable as per the LS DAS Add. The planting notes are generally acceptable although the British Standards referred to are outdated. BS4034:1989 has been withdrawn and BS3882 should be 2015 not 2007. It is appropriate not to refer to BS8545:2014 'Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape. Recommendations'. In addition, as previously advised, a biosecurity statement should be provided in relation to the suppliers to be used - the intention to do this is confirmed in the LS DAS Add.

The LS DAS Add further states: *Furthermore, an area to the west of Cucumber Wood, to the north of the site in the wider golf course, has been identified as a receptor site for the creation of a new woodland area as compensation for the tree removals proposed within the Site. This area will accommodate approximately 1000 trees, whilst also providing strengthening of and extension to the existing woodland.*

Whilst I appreciate that 1000 trees are intended for Cucumber woods, these are in the SODC area hence do not address our policies or canopy cover targets for the RBC area. In addition, although it is not stated, I would assume these 1000 'trees' will be small whips. Their environmental benefit will be limited for many years and it is extremely likely that, as with most whip planting, a significant portion will not establish and survive or remain long term to become nature trees.

I note that in relation to quantity of tree planting, the LS DAS Add supports the out-of-Borough planting as part of the overall strategy and in relation to my concerns that long-term there will not remain as 1000 'trees', it confirms my point by stating: *'As with any planting, there will be some losses and over time the woodland would need to be selectively thinned to ensure the even development of the tree canopy'*.

Climate Change

I note reference to Tree Planting and Removal in 13.8.6-13.6.8. It notes that *'The replacement of mature trees with younger specimens is likely to marginally reduce the carbon sequestration from photosynthetic processes, as well as produce substantial quantities of wood and other vegetation (for which the end uses are not yet known), leading to a shorter term increase in carbon emissions during this stage'* and that (in relation to mitigation) *the Applicant is committing to planting approximately 1,000 new native trees at Cucumber Wood to the north of the Site early in the programme, to help to offset this and lead to a longer-term net reduction in carbon from trees.*

These 1000 'trees' are outside the Borough so strictly speaking should not be counted.

Final Comments:

Soil - satisfactory information provided, can be dealt with by condition

Trees

In relation to the Arb Report:

This states that *the revised outline proposals are for 257 units and that the outline proposals require the removal of 117 trees or groups of trees (130 trees in total) to allow the construction of dwellings, parking spaces and associated infrastructure.* It further states that *the extensive new planting proposed (134 new trees) provides good mitigation at a better than 1:1 planting ratio.* This is a net gain of four trees, less than the six on the previous layout (within the

borough). It is worth noting that since the production of the report, two trees have failed (the southern Oak in G294 and one Lime - T16 I think) - both require a replacement under the TPO. 6.3 mentions the intended 1000 trees in the SODC area on which I commented previously.

6.2 confirms, in relation to works within RPAs, that: *New hard standing (a proposed footpath) within the root protection area (RPA) of trees 147, 148, 149, 150 & 164 will be constructed to a 'No Dig' specification, as indicated on the plan at Appendix A. See section 8.4 & Appendix E. If existing hard standing within the RPAs of trees 2-5, 8, 12-15 & 17-20 is replaced, it can either be to a 'No Dig' specification as indicated on the plan at Appendix A, or existing surfaces can be replaced if the depth of the existing sub-base is not exceeded.* This is acceptable in principle - details to be secured.

6.5 details how the design has been adjusted to respond to the concerns within my memo of 11 March. In relation to those points in 6.5, I have the following comments:

- Oaks 208 & 268 are mentioned but no concerns were raised by me in relation to these, but I note that these are identified on the Zones of Influence tree plan as requiring engineer designed foundations for adjacent houses, which is reiterated in 8.3 of the report. Removal of Ash 181 previously agreed.
- Plots 52-66 - Previously I raised concern over shading of plots 59-66 (now 62-66) in that respect there is no change - the shading pattern shown on the Tree Protection Plan supports this concern. Comment on the change in the area rear of previous plots 54-56 (now 52-59) is given above.
- It is stated that: *The revised layout retains the relationship between retained trees & built form, specifically with regard to plot 98 (tree 211), trees to the rear of plots 114-119 (trees 278 & 279) & plots 78-84 (trees 142, 143 & 182-184* I previously expressed concern about the relationship between particular dwellings and existing trees, as follows: *'Dominance of trees in gardens to some plots, e.g. plots 161-164 and shading pressure on others, e.g. plots 1, 21-24, 49, 78 & 84, both issues for plots 8-15, 59-66. Plots 8-15 includes Limes 102 103 & 315 to the south (hence shading) at current heights of 16, 16 & 19 metres respectively - I can give examples in the borough of where such close proximity has resulted in regular complaints and pressure to prune'*. The arb reports do not comment on all of these and as the design remains the same for these, my concerns remain (see below for plots 161-164).
- I note the Zones of Influence (ZOI) plotted on the ZOI plan, which are helpful. It is stated in the report that: *By our initial estimate 6 dwellings and or garages will require engineer designed foundations and 87 plots and or garages will require deeper foundations - as per NHBC 4.2 guidance. Full details can be provided at the full application stage or via the discharge of an appropriate condition.* This approach is fine in principle but as previously mentioned, this may have an implication on the cost of the development which I assume the applicant has accepted.
- Sycamore 284 - I previously requested clarity on how this could be retained within the attenuation feature without ground levels changing. No clarity on this has been provided; just a reiteration that this is the intention. It is difficult to see how an attenuation basin could be created without dropping levels.

- In relation to the concerns expressed over the dominance of retained tree over plots 161-164, the arb report state: *Trees 295, 299, 300 & 304 are all low quality and are now shown for removal to allay concerns regarding their dominance over plots 161-164. Additional new planting elsewhere on the site ensures that new planting is offered on a better than 1:1 ratio.* The principle of removing trees to address my concern is highly questionable, however, the quality of trees can be considered 'on balance'. These are a 'C' category Hawthorn, two 'C' category Birch and a 'C' category Hazel, the removal of which could be accepted subject to replacement planting. The four account for an additional 4 trees to be removed on top of the original 122, totalling 126 - another four (to total the new 130) remain unaccounted for in this specific section of the report - clarification is required (or of the other 5 if there are 131 trees to be removed - see below). It should also be noted that a 1:1 ratio does not result in a net gain and is lower than the 1:3 the Council aim for on its own land (ref Tree Strategy).

7.1 relates to post-development pressure and states: *The orientation of the retained trees to the proposed outline development is acceptable and the scope for unacceptable post-development pressure is low. The proposed revised outline layout is unlikely to oblige RBC to give consent to inappropriate tree works.* I don't agree with this in relation to shading, an indicated of which can be seen on the Tree Protection Plan and it should be remembered that the shade arcs are based on the current height of the trees, which have the capacity to get taller where not mature. Specific concern in relation to shading would be to plots 1, 8-15, 21-24, 78, 84, 62-66. As stated in my previous comments: *Plots 8-15 includes Limes 102 103 & 315 to the south (hence shading) at current heights of 16, 16 & 19 metres respectively - I can give examples in the borough of where such close proximity has resulted in regular complaints and pressure to prune.*

An AMS will need to be secured for the final design which should take account of a phased approach to the development if this is adopted.

Landscaping

With reference to the Tree Planting Plan Rev P11, the British Standard references have been updated as requested and notes on biosecurity added. In relation to the 'tree aftercare & pruning' notes, I don't see the appropriateness of the recommendation for canopy pruning given that root balled trees are proposed and nursery production should have ensured an appropriate root system to the size of tree. Formative pruning in the early years should be the only pruning required.

As previously stated,: *I note that some proposed trees will result in shading of properties in the future. The orientation of rooms will need to be carefully considered to ensure that principle rooms are not shaded.*

The Planting Plan helpfully plots the zones of influence of proposed trees. It is noted that the majority minimise potential conflicts (subsidence) with new dwellings, however there are a few locations where this is not avoided hence, as with existing trees, foundation type will need careful consideration.

As mentioned above, 130 trees are to be removed and 134 planted giving a (reduced) net gain of 4 within the borough boundary. This is disappointing on a large site such as this to only gain 4 trees.

Landscape Visual Assessment

With reference to the Environmental Statement Volume 3: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Addendum, this states (1.2.2) that 131 trees are to be removed and 134 planted - this is not the same number of removals as stated in

the arb report - documents should be consistent. If 131 is correct, then the net gain is reduced further to 3.

With reference to the DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT - LANDSCAPE CHAPTER MAY 2021 ADDENDUM REVISED VERSION, I have been through the 'response to consultation comments' table. In relation to the net gain (this also states 131 trees to be removed), I have no additional comments to make over and above those in my memo of 11/03/21 and brief comment above.

I note the comments on species, but this has already been accepted. Concerns regarding foundations have been addressed in principle (details to be secured). In relation to SUDs and landscaping, as indicated, a combination of the two could be explored in the final design stage (it is possible) to add natural play. The applicant could also look at incorporating tree planting within the SUDs design to add further tree planting - tree pits can be designed to act as attenuation features.

In conclusion, the design has improved in various revisions but does not address all tree concerns, particularly those of shading hence future pressure to prune or fell. In addition, the net gain of 3-4 trees (within the borough boundary) is poor but I will leave you to consider further the net gain provided if taking in adjacent SODC land into account, in order to decide 'on balance' if this is acceptable - it may be possible (as mentioned above) to reconsider the SUDs design so that it incorporates tree planting to provide an improved net gain. A few points of clarity are required as detailed above.

In terms of formal objection to the proposal, i.e. points on which a reason for refusal could reasonably be based, this would relate to 1) future pressure to prune or fell and 2) insufficient net gain in tree number (if not resolved).

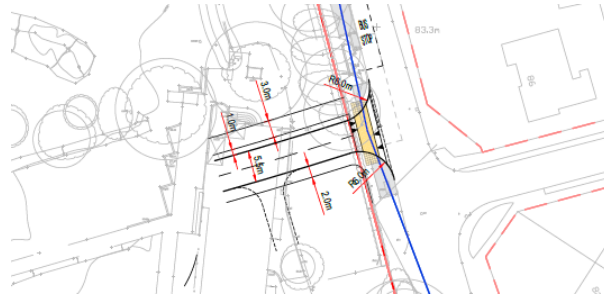
4.23 Transport

Final comments :

As the site is situated on one of the Borough's Local Transport Corridors classified as the C107, all proposals should comply with Reading Borough Council's Design Guidance for Residential Accesses on to Classified Roads to ensure that the safety and efficiency of the classified road network is maintained and enhanced by the design for access to new development. Therefore, the proposed access modifications are assessed with particular care to ensure good design standards are achieved, especially with the respect to layout and visibility.

The primary vehicular access serving the residential accommodation will be located on the eastern boundary of the site from Kidmore End Road, in a similar location to where the existing car park access to the Golf Club is located. The main all modes access design can be seen on **Drawing 45675/5510/001** (Image below). The existing northbound bus stop located on Kidmore End Road has been relocated north to accommodate the proposed site access.

READING GOLF CLUB SITE ACCESS LAYOUT - PRIMARY ACCESS



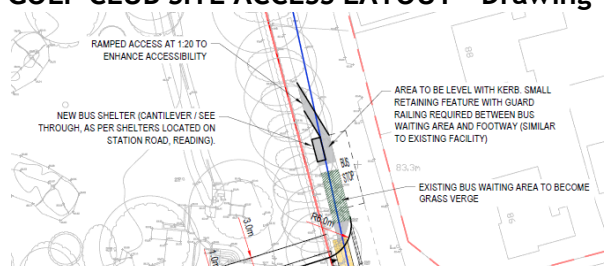
Given the proposed number of units, Reading Borough Council’s Design Guidance states that the residential access should be provided to a width of 5.5m for a distance of 50m with a junction radius of 6m. The vehicle tracking provided within the Transport Assessment (TA) indicates that the access can accommodate both a refuse vehicle and rigid trunk entering and leaving the site. It is noted that the refuse vehicle/rigid truck will overrun the centre line, however, the access design includes measures to improve pedestrian priority and reduce speeds into the site.

In accordance with the Council’s Design Guidance, visibility requirements for new junctions onto classified road are 2.4m x 70m for local transport corridors. Visibility splays have been demonstrated on **Drawing 45675/5510/001**. In terms of design, the layout of the primary access serving the residential accommodation is acceptable and complies with adopted policy.

It is stated (para 4.2.10) that Reading Buses are supportive of the principle of development as it offers to increase local bus Patronage as the current bus stops could serve both the residential development and health facility without amending the current service. Reading Buses do not favour the option to bring the current services into the site using the internal loop road as short extensions offline can lead to impact on frequency, journey time and passenger experience. Therefore, existing bus stops on Kidmore End Road would be utilised until such time further development comes forward and the re-routing of services can be determined.

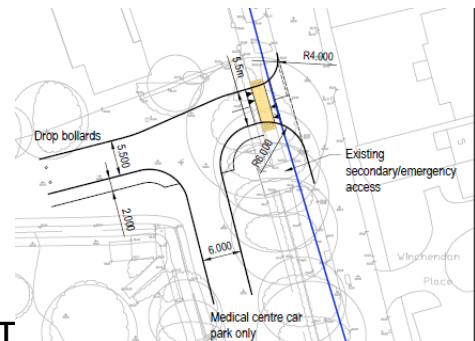
The existing northbound stop will need to be modified as it lies between the new site access to the south and the new GP Surgery to the north. A concept layout for an improved bus stop design with shelter and levelled access can be seen in Drawing 45675/5510/001A. The concept layout includes a ramped access from the northern approach, however, the applicant should investigate whether steps or a ramp could also be accommodated the southern approach as currently provided. It is proposed that the detail design of the bus stop is secured via condition prior to commencement which is acceptable to the Highway Authority.

READING GOLF CLUB SITE ACCESS LAYOUT - Drawing 45675/5510/001A REV A



A secondary access will be located on the eastern boundary of the site providing access only to the health centre and apartments above it. It is noted that this access has been retained (currently providing emergency access for Reading Golf Club), however it has been slightly relocated and improved to include a footway and informal crossing with tactile paving.

The secondary access junction allows direct access to the health facility and reduces the impact of additional trips by all modes entering and exiting the residential development via the main access junction. This access will also form an emergency access with a droppable bollard into the site. The junction design can be seen in **Drawing 45675/5510/003**.



READING GOLF CLUB SECONDARY ACCESS LAYOUT

Given that the access is retained and does not form a new access onto a classified road, I have no grounds to object to the provision of a secondary access.

Tracking diagrams have been submitted to demonstrate a refuse vehicle and 10m long rigid vehicle entering the site requiring the full width of the access road to enter and turn within the site. TRICs data indicates that the health centre could generate in the region of 0.5 - 2 OGV trips per day. However, in order to ensure that deliveries are appropriately managed, a Delivery and Servicing Plan is required detailing how vehicles will access the development without creating safety concerns and congestions within the parking areas. This is to be covered by condition if the application is approved.

There is a large area of land to the north of the development site within South Oxfordshire administrative area which forms part of the existing golf club, but it is outside of the red line area. Currently, there is a lane that runs from the existing clubhouse car park in Kidmore End Road alongside the rear gardens of the existing houses on Brooklyn Drive which accesses the land within SODC.

The applicant's Transport consultants have confirmed that there is no vehicle access to this land from the development site and the internal track will be removed as per the proposed site layout. Land to the north of the development site within South Oxfordshire administrative area will be accessed via Tanners Lane.

A Community Infrastructure Plan is included in Appendix K, illustrating a range of land uses within the SODC land including country park, leisure uses (9 hole golf/footgolf course), allotments and a proposed clubhouse/café. It should be noted that the housing development effectively removes access and parking currently associated with the leisure use of the land. Therefore, all the traffic

associated with the reduced leisure offering will be directed to the road network in South Oxfordshire.

It is indicated that the retained golf use will utilise the existing access close to the junction of Tanners Lane and Kidmore End Lane and the current car park by the 7th hole, using a booking slot basis for games. Whilst SODC has determined that planning permission is not required for such activities, they have noted that the car park is small and does not provide space for many vehicles. Tanners Lane and Kidmore End Lane are both narrow country lanes and unsuitable for any significant increase in traffic associated with the use of the land. The intended use of the car park and poor highway access would be a significant constraint to potential plans to intensify the outdoor leisure use of the land in the future. It is noted that a planning application has been submitted to SODC for a proposed family golf centre building which will be assessed and determined separately to this planning application.

Pedestrian & Cycling Access

Policy CC6 of the Local Plan relates to accessibility and intensity of development.

The site is located in an existing residential area with a well-connected network of streets with footways and footpaths providing access to local facilities. However, the width of the footpath on Kidmore End Road narrows down to a width of 1m (approx.) outside the White Horse pub which is not ideal for people with mobility impairments traveling between the application site and the pedestrian crossing facilities on Peppard Road.

To improve pedestrian facilities in the local area, a raised informal crossing, comprising a flat-top speed hump with a Duratherm herringbone imprint, is proposed on Kidmore End Road, Lyefield Court at its junction with Kidmore End Road, and on Grove Road at its junction with Kidmore End Road. The alternative route avoids the narrowing, taking people to the other side of Kidmore End Road where the footpath is wider.

Pedestrian and cycle access into the residential development will be facilitated from the main site access on Kidmore End Road and the secondary access to the Health Centre. Footways and cycle routes are proposed within the development for greater permeability within the site through landscaped areas between properties. Pedestrian links from the main access road to the Health Centre and from the bus stop (on Kidmore End Road) to the Health Centre have been provided and are shown on the updated masterplan.

The Institute of Highways and Transportation's (IHT's) guidance, Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot (2000) asserts that the pedestrian routes should be designed so that the walking distance along the footpath system to the bus stops should not be more than 400m from the furthest houses (approx. 5 min walk). Whilst it is desirable to provide bus stops within 400m, it is recognized that people are prepared to walk much further. In relation to travel to public transport, the WYG document 'How far do people Walk?' identifies greater distances of 800m as acceptable distances to bus services which equates to approx. 10 min walk.

Paragraph 4.2.3 states that a link into Emmer Green Primary School could be provided. However, the applicant has confirmed that this is only an aspiration for the masterplan and needs agreement with the school which has not been

ascertained. As such, the link has been removed from the latest site layout plan. The alternative route to the school is via the main access, Kidmore End Road and Grove Road which is a significantly longer walking distance.

The Transport Assessment states that pedestrian and cycle links can be extended from the northern end of the site, connecting to the traffic free cycle route NCN 5 to the north, as shown in Figure 6.1 within the Transport Assessment. These do not form part of this application (redline area) but would provide enhanced accessibility to/from the site for pedestrians and cyclists. Planning permission is not required to implement the foot/cycle paths on private land. The applicant has agreed to the provision of pedestrian and cycle links prior to commencement of development and will accept a planning condition to satisfactorily control this matter to deliver a foot/cycle route from the northern edge of the proposed development to NCN5. Details of the construction of any hard-surfaced pathways should be conditioned to ensure they are suitable for users including pedestrians, cyclists and disabled users.

Public Transport

The bus services within Caversham are constantly under review given the lower mode share towards bus use and higher dependency on the private car. COVID 19 has complicated matters in terms of predicting travel patterns and behaviours but it is evident that the proposal will generate increased demand for bus use and therefore to support the increased bus use a contribution should be provided equating to £50,000 a year for the duration of the build for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 5 years.

Internal Layout

Manual for Streets (MfS) is expected to be used predominantly for the design, construction, adoption and maintenance of new residential streets. The internal roads should be designed to provide a network of connective routes to a maximum design speed of 20mph.

The internal layout includes a 5.5m wide spine road, looping at the northern end with footways on either side. The street is designed to meander through the development and not have excessive sections of straight road. There are several junctions, building frontage, driveways and foot/cycleways along the side of the carriageway.

Long, straight streets with good forward visibility can lead to higher speeds, therefore, one way working / give-way build outs are indicatively shown on the updated masterplan (Appendix A) as further traffic calming features. The build outs are distanced greater than 70m apart as they will work in conjunction with the meandering street, junctions and driveways/frontage to slow traffic. They have been placed between junctions, and driveways at suitable locations and achieve 20mph MfS forward visibility. Full details will be designed through Reserved Matters which is acceptable to the Highway Authority.

Shared use streets which serve more than one property are acceptable, but the length and number of properties served from each shared surface should be kept to a minimum. A footway is provided on at least one side of all roads within the development that serve more than 6 plots.

The Transport Assessment states that the development will be designed to accommodate appropriate vehicles used for servicing and deliveries. Full details should be submitted as apart of future reserved matters applications.

Parking & Cycle Parking The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council’s adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency ‘Premier Route’, which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities. In accordance with the adopted SPD, the development would be required to provide;

- 1.5 spaces per 1 or 2 bedroom unit
- 2 spaces per 3 bedroom unit
- 2 spaces per 4 bedroom unit
- 1 space per 4 dwellings for visitor parking (Flats only)
- 3 spaces per consulting room + 1 per FTE staff for D1 Healthcare Centre

The proposed schedule of accommodation is as follows;

Table 4.1: Indicative Development Schedule

Unit Type	Number of Units
1 Bedroom Apartment	26
2 Bedroom Apartment	20
1 Bedroom Maisonette	6
2 Bedroom Maisonette	6
2 Bedroom House	40
3 Bedroom House	78
4 Bedroom House	81
Total	257

Healthcare	Size (sqm)
Health Centre	600 sqm

Policy TR5 of the Local Plan states that 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. It is important that enough parking is provided so that there is not a knock-on effect on the safety and function of the highway through on-street parking.

The development comprises predominantly three and four bedroom houses with garage and/or driveway parking. In order to comply with the Council’s adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the internal dimensions of a single garages must comply to 7000mm long x 3000mm wide to allow easy access to/from the vehicle and sufficient storage to the rear to accommodate a bicycle. Garages not complying to the standard dimension cannot be counted in the overall parking provision for the development.

The applicant has confirmed that the garages will comply to the dimension of 7000mm long x 3000mm wide. Manual for Streets states that garages are not always used for car parking, and this can create additional demand for on-street

parking. Research shows that in some developments, less than half the garages are used for parking cars, and that many are used primarily as storage. Therefore, the garages should be conditioned to be retained for vehicle parking only to ensure that they are not converted to living accommodation under permitted development rights.

In terms of parking for the flats, it is indicated that a maximum of 69 spaces will be provided within communal parking areas to cater for residents of apartments who do not have access to a garage or driveway. Visitor parking has been calculated based on the number of apartments provided within the development only at a ratio of 1 space per 4 dwellings.

Plot numbers 174 to 185 consist of 6 x 1-bedroom and 6 x 2-bedroom flats. A total of 21 parking spaces has been provided for these plots which complies with the Council's parking standards.

Plot numbers 224 -257 consist of 20 x 1-bedroom and 14 x 2-bedroom flats and are located at the front of site above the health/medical centre. For the purpose of this TA, the health centre has been assumed to have 5 treatment rooms and 10 FTE Staff but the indicative floorplans do not confirm the number of treatment rooms.

A total of 85 parking spaces are provided for the health/medical centre and the residential flats equating to 60 spaces for the flats and 25 spaces for the medical centre which complies with the Council's parking standards. It is stated that there is no further detail at this time regarding the health centre size. However, parking will be provided as per the RBC parking standard requirements when delivered under the reserved matters application.

Accessible parking will also be provided in line with RBC's parking standards (5% of the total parking capacity). Accessible parking provision typically excludes residential developments, and therefore the number of spaces has been calculated based upon the number of spaces required for apartments and for the health centre. Based upon the above information, a minimum of 5 of the parking spaces for the apartments will be accessible spaces and 2 for the health centre.

The Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 includes policies for investing in new infrastructure to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. Policy TR5 of the Local Plan also states that 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.*

Based upon the guidelines set out in the Local Plan, the development will provide an active charging point for electric vehicles at all houses that have dedicated off-street parking. 8no. active charging points will be located within communal parking areas for the apartments and 3no. active charging points will be provided for the health centre parking. This would be secured through condition.

The Transport Assessment (para 4.4.11) states that the site will provide for a car club vehicle. Confirmation from local car club providers Co-Wheels will determine the demand for new car club spaces in this area. This will be determined through reserved matters applications but at least one space will be provided. A plan should be submitted prior to commencement illustrating where the car club space will be sited within the development.

Regardless of this the proposal is required to secure the provision of a car club for a period of 5 years.

Cycle parking should be provided in line with Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD Section 5. The SPD notes 0.5 cycle spaces is required for 1 or 2 bedroom flat, 1 space is required for 1 bedroom dwellings and 2 spaces are required for 2+ bedroom houses.

The two blocks of flats are provided with internal cycle stores on the ground floor of the buildings. Cycle parking for the houses will be provided within garages. It is stated that dedicated secure cycle parking will be provided when a secure internal facility cannot be provided. The details will be secured by condition.

Person Trip Analysis

The Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) database has been used to calculate the proposed trip rate and subsequent trip generation for the proposed residential development. TRICS survey data is used to analyse individual or selected sets of survey counts to produce trip rate information based on user-defined development scenarios. The results provide an estimate of the likely activity at a development, and it is widely used by both transport planning consultants and local authorities. The TRICS outputs are included in Appendix E of the Transport Assessment.

It is noted that many factors influence mode share, such as walking and cycling infrastructure, public transport provision and distance to railway stations; and that mode shares vary for each site. However, TRICS enables users to select appropriate criteria and ranges in order to achieve robust and reliable trip rates. The system enables the user to filter the database to provide a representative sample.

A complex methodology has been used to derive the trip demands and patterns for the total residential person trips (obtained from TRICS) which is outlined in Section 5 of the Transport Assessment.

The trip demands and patterns for the total residential person trips have been considered by trip purpose, based on the Department for Transport (DfT) National Travel Survey (NTS). The National Travel Survey (NTS) is a household survey designed to monitor long-term trends in personal travel providing data on personal travel patterns. However, this data relates to residents of England as a whole and does not specifically relate to the region nor does it provide a representative sample of the area surrounding the development site. The applicant's Transport Consultants contend that use of National Travel Survey data to determine trip purpose is a standard approach widely accepted for Transport Assessments. It is stated that following trip categorisation by trip purpose, localised data has been used to determine trip distribution and mode share to reflect local travel patterns.

Although this is a complex assessment and the Highway Authority do not agree with all of the assumptions made within the Transport Assessment in particular relating to trips associated with school travel the comparison TRICS vehicle trip data has been reviewed and this represents a similar outcome than that presented. It should be stated that the PM peak has in fact been assessed more robustly as part of the applicant's assessment than would be the case if TRICS data had been used in isolation.

Given the above the Highway Authority are happy that the vehicle trips identified by the applicant are a robust assessment of the proposed development.

Highway Impact

To establish the existing traffic flows within the vicinity of the application site the applicant has stated that surveys were undertaken by '*means of a manual classified traffic counts (MCTCs) carried out at six locations on Tuesday 25th June 2019 and automatic traffic counts (ATCs) carried out at 13 locations around the Site from Saturday 22nd to Friday 28th June 2019 inclusive.*'

The automatic traffic counts (ATCs) were not initially provided alongside the planning application but have been provided as part of Technical Note 5500/TN010 dated 19/05/21. This identifies that the survey data throughout the week is relatively consistent and does not substantially differ from day to day.

The Highway Authority are aware that residents have identified road works that took place at the time of the traffic counts and have advised that these would have affected the results of the survey undertaken. It is noted that the road works took place between 26th June 2019 and Monday 1st July 2019. However, it has now been clarified by the applicant that the junctions were assessed utilizing the manual classified traffic counts which took place on 25th June 2019 which would be prior to any road works taking place.

As stated above the ATC survey data does not fundamentally change during the assessment period either before or after the installation of the roadworks and the MTC surveys have been assessed against the ATC data and have identified that they are comparable against one another. It should be stated that in some cases the MTC data does represent an increased traffic flow and therefore the assessment of the development is robust.

The Highway Authority therefore have no planning grounds to dispute the survey results undertaken by the applicant as they comply with the DfT standards for traffic surveys.

It is acknowledged that the residents have provided photographic evidence of queues along Peppard Road but having reviewed those provided they are not for the Peak travel periods of the days and also they have been taken within the months were DfT would advise that surveys should not be undertaken as the results would not provide a reliable result i.e. in holiday seasons.

Vehicle trips attributed to the development have been assigned to the local highway network using CUBE software opposed to distributing traffic via existing

turning count data. The resulting AM and PM peak hour development traffic assignment plots are included in Appendix H.

The study area for the development, scoped with RBC, includes the following junctions:

- Golf Course Access / Kidmore End Road / Chalgrove Way;
- Grove Road / Kidmore End Road;
- Kidmore End Road / Peppard Road;
- Buckingham Drive / Peppard Road mini roundabout;
- Peppard Road / Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road; and
- Peppard Road / Prospect Street / Henley Road / Westfield Road.

In respect of the Kidmore End Road and Peppard Road priority junction, the results demonstrate that the junction currently operates efficiently, and that traffic generated by the proposed development causes minimal delay to traffic and can be accommodated at the junction in its current form of a priority T-junction.

Despite the capacity assessment predicting that the current design can accommodate traffic generated by the development, a mini roundabout arrangement has been designed to help better manage traffic flows and aid vehicles exiting from Kidmore End Road. However, the junction assessment clearly demonstrates that the roundabout will result in increased queues and delay along Peppard Road above that of the current road layout. This includes the southbound queues along Peppard Road starting to approach the theoretical capacity for the junction whereas the existing T-junction design has no capacity issues on any of the approaches. The Highway Authority therefore cannot agree to any alterations to the junctions that would increase queues within the vicinity of the site.

The applicant is therefore happy for the proposal for the roundabout to be removed and have therefore put forward a revised layout, drawing 45675/5510/006, and this is deemed acceptable by the Highway Authority.

The capacity impacts of the Peppard Road / Prospect Street / Henley Road / Westfield Road signalised control junction indicate that the junction currently operates above the maximum theoretical operating capacity and the impact of development traffic at the junction will worsen this. The development will also result in additional pedestrian and cycle trips through the junction and therefore in conjunction to the MOVA improvements pedestrian and cycle facilities should be incorporated within the junction improvements.

The developer has stated that they will provide a contribution to RBC to introduce a smarter signal operating scheme such as MOVA to increase capacity at the junction. However, it is likely that the junction would require some significant upgrading of the equipment (not just installing the MOVA kit and some additional loops) and specialist setup of MOVA. Therefore, the contributions would need to fully cover the totality of this work in order to accommodate the additional flows.

To facilitate the appropriate changes to the junction a contribution of £50,000 is required to mitigate the impact at the junction.

For the purposes of the assessment, the Peppard Road / Kiln Road priority junction and the Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road priority junction have been linked and assessed together due to the interaction between the two junctions because of their close proximity and this is deemed acceptable.

Lane based models for the AM and PM peak hours have been created in Junctions 9 in order to effectively assess the operation of both priority junctions in terms of blocking back between junctions.

It was previously identified during the withdrawn application that the proposed impact at the Peppard Road / Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road junction has not been assessed / presented accurately. This has now been addressed by way of updated junction assessment data that corresponds with Table 7.6 within the Transport Assessment and the Highway Authority are therefore happy with the data presented. For reference Table 7.6 can be found below:

Table 7.6: Peppard Road / Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road Junction Assessment Results

	AM Peak Hour 0800 - 0900		PM Peak Hour 1700 - 1800	
	Queue (Veh)	Delay (s)	Queue (Veh)	Delay (s)
2019 Base Year				
Peppard Road (N)	0.1	0.59	0.0	0.08
Kiln Road	2.5	26.08	1.4	16.72
Peppard Road (S)	0.9	5.40	0.5	2.57
Kiln Road (N)	0.3	8.19	0.0	0.98
Caversham Park Road	16.7	178.67	1.0	13.63
Kiln Road (S)	0.9	7.22	0.7	7.17
2026 Future Year				
Peppard Road (N)	0.1	0.78	0.0	0.08
Kiln Road	2.6	28.28	1.8	18.29
Peppard Road (S)	1.3	7.39	0.4	2.54
Kiln Road (N)	0.3	10.27	0.1	1.56
Caversham Park Road	30.7	330.26	1.9	24.74
Kiln Road (S)	1.0	7.53	0.7	7.20
2026 Future Year + Development				
Peppard Road (N)	0.2	0.83	0.0	0.17
Kiln Road	2.6	28.29	1.9	18.21
Peppard Road (S)	1.8	8.39	0.6	2.81
Kiln Road (N)	0.4	10.44	0.1	1.95
Caversham Park Road	35.5	389.78	2.4	24.77
Kiln Road (S)	1.2	7.56	0.9	7.24

The Table above confirms that the Caversham Park Road approach to the junction currently exceeds capacity and this is to exceed further as a result of the 2026 future year and the 2020 future year with development.

As has been previously stated given the existing junction is already exceeding capacity any development that seeks to increase traffic through an over capacity junction cannot be supported without mitigation being provided.

The applicant has referred to Policy RTS1 of the draft Reading Transport Strategy 2036 (RTS) which requires the “[prioritisation of] sustainable travel modes to offer an attractive and realistic alternative to the private car”. The applicant has continued to state that delivery of additional highway capacity in an area well served by public transport and with good access to the town’s cycle network is likely to encourage further car usage and undermine RBC’s aim to facilitate and encourage mode shift away from the private car, and the effectiveness of sustainable travel improvements identified in the RTS to be delivered over the lifetime of the plan.

However, it should be noted that Bus service Berry 23 that serves the development site would be required to travel through the junction in question and would be detrimentally impacted by the increase in traffic therefore affecting reliability of the service and encouraging a shift towards the private car instead of the use of an alternative mode of travel.

It has also been stated that the Local Plan has a duty to identify infrastructure requirements to support development and that no requirement for improvements at this junction has been identified either in direct relation to the allocation, or due to development over the wider area. However, it is not for the Local Plan to specify every junction that would need mitigation as a result of a planning application, this is to be determined through the assessment of the application. This is also backed up by Policy CA1 of the Local Plan that states that the development should ‘*Take measures to mitigate impacts on the highway network, particularly on Kidmore End Road and Tanners Lane*’. This is clear that the application will need to assess the impacts of the increased traffic generation and mitigate these impacts, which includes this junction.

In line with NPPF, mitigation is required for “significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity or congestion), or on highway safety” (paragraph 108). The NPPF continues to state that “development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe”.

The Government response to the draft revised National Planning Policy Framework consultation dated July 2018 states that ‘The wording of the paragraph dealing with highways impacts has been altered to make clear that the ‘severe’ test relates to road capacity rather than highway safety’. It is clear from the assessment undertaken that the junction exceeds capacity and the development worsens this impact, the Highway Authority are of the opinion that this constitutes a severe impact and therefore must be mitigated.

Off-Site Highway Works

A concept drawing of the proposed pedestrian improvements are shown on Drawing 45675/5510/004.

A raised informal crossing, comprising a flat-top speed hump with a Duratherm herringbone imprint, is proposed on Kidmore End Road, Lyefield Court at its junction with Kidmore End Road, and on Grove Road at its junction with Kidmore End Road. Traffic calming measures such as these have been introduced on other strategic routes within the borough such as along the A4 Bath Road which provided off-carriageway pedestrian/cycling improvements and the creation of a new National Cycle Network route (NCN422).

Traffic calming measures can improve traffic safety at the junction by slowing vehicles down when entering and exiting the junction as well as increasing visibility of pedestrians to other road users. These informal crossings will be provided with tactile paving to facilitate the crossing of visually impaired pedestrians.

The pedestrian priority measures are also provided at both the main and secondary access to provide a connected route from the Emmer Green local centre to the development site. The proposed pedestrian priority measures are shown on Drawing 45675/5510/001A and Drawing 45675/5510/003.

A concept drawing has been submitted for a mini roundabout at the junction of Kidmore End Road/Peppard Road, Drawing 45675/5510/005. However, given the comments above regarding the roundabout junction assessment, the Highway Authority cannot agree to any alterations to the junctions that would increase queues within the vicinity of the site. A revised drawing Drawing 45675/5510/006 has been submitted demonstrating pedestrian priority improvements at the existing pedestrian refuge crossing.

In terms of the raised table, Reading Buses have been consulted and they oppose the raised crossings, regardless of height, at Grove Road and Kidmore End Road. The applicant's Transport consultant has submitted two options to better provide for pedestrians, either the current raised imprint crossings (designed to minimise impact to buses) with tactile paving or drop kerbs with tactile paving and imprint crossings at road level.

In principle, the proposed pedestrian priority measures are acceptable subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit being undertaken. The works will be secured through the S106 process and a highway agreement will need to be entered into for works undertaken on the public highway.

Construction

The applicant should be aware that there would be significant transport implications constructing the proposed development within the existing urban area of Reading. One of the key concerns of planning is to ensure that new development does not reduce the quality of the environment for others, particularly where it would affect residential properties. Therefore, any full application would be conditioned to ensure a Construction Method Statement is submitted and approved before any works commence on-site to regulate the amenity effects of construction. As well as demonstrating a commitment to ensuring the number of HGV movements are managed and controlled, the CMS must demonstrate that appropriate measures will be implemented to ensure the

safety of pedestrians and cyclists on the road network around the construction site. The agreed measures included in the CMS become a formal commitment and will be approved by the Local Highway and Planning Department separate to the determination of this outline application.

Refusal Reasons: The proposal fails to propose any improvement to the Peppard Road / Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road junction to mitigate the impact of the development, this would be contrary to Local Plan Policies TR3

4.24 **Sustainability Manager** Taking account of the Energy Report (May 2020) and 'matters for consideration' documents. The applicant has not provided all of the information required in order to demonstrate compliance with policies H5, CC3 and CC4.

4.25 No responses have been received from the following:

Emergency Planning; Licensing; Waste Services; Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG); Reading Buses; Southern Gas Networks; SSE

4.26 **Group Responses**

CAVERSHAM AND DISTRICT RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (CADRA) (dated 10/3/21)
-OBJECTION

The following is a summary of CADRA's comments and there is further detail in appendices, which can be viewed on the RBC website.

- If the measures presented by the applicant for the whole course including: enhanced golf facilities at Caversham Heath; a new country park; short golf; allotments; community orchard; and new walking and cycling links, as a means of seeking to outweigh the negative impacts of a much larger development on the Reading land than was envisaged in the LP allocation, are accepted by RBC, then it is essential that a binding agreement is secured across the whole course regarding the proposed facilities.

Allocation

- It does not meet the allocation CA1b, which was agreed after extensive and detailed consideration - more houses, no sports facilities, adverse effect on the landscape, infrastructure, transport and education.

Transport

- Cumulative effects of piecemeal developments north of the Thames have created unacceptable transport pressures and the developer has failed to demonstrate that the proposal would not have a material detrimental effect on transport with implications for air quality, congestion, severance and economic viability.
- Kidmore End Road is unsuitable for a main access road.
- New homes within South Oxfordshire need to be factored into traffic predictions.
- Internal road design needs to reduce car domination.

Landscape

- Detrimental effect on the valued landscape; visually dominant and out of character.

Biodiversity and Climate Change

- Significant loss of biodiversity from removal of 122 mostly mature and protected trees; replacement planting falls short of policy requirements.
- No assurance of delivery of proposed trees outside of the Borough.

Housing

- No provision for self or custom build.

CAVERSHAM GLOBE (received 3rd March 2021)- OBJECTION

Issues raised:

- Building on a greenfield site when brownfield land is available
- Golf course provides visual amenity for the area
- Object to the felling of 122 trees which help to reduce CO2 emissions and provide habitat to wildlife.
- The proposal to plant replacement trees falls far short of the requirements in Reading's revised Tree Strategy. Planting small replacement trees would not be adequate compensation for the loss of mature trees
- Planting trees outside of the borough is not adequate compensation for the loss of mature trees and it would be hard to enforce by Reading Borough Council
- How the provision of open space for this development in South Oxfordshire - a different local authority area - could be guaranteed in the longer term Provision for open space should be made in the Reading Borough
- Increase in traffic and air pollution
- Number of proposed homes - 260 homes is double the number allocated for this site by the Local Plan
- Impact on the landscape, including the Chiltern Hills
- Impact of noise and light pollution on wildlife

EMMER GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (EGRA) (received 19th March 2021) OBJECTION

The following is a summary of EGRA's comments (under 6 topic papers) which can be viewed in full on the RBC website:

- The proposal does not comply with the requirements of the allocation CA1b.

Traffic

- Detrimental impact on junction of Henley Road and Peppard Road, Caversham town centre, Caversham road network and Emmer Green.
- The additional impact of up to 500 cars has been underestimated, which will cause catastrophic detriment to road users, commuters, cyclists, pedestrians
- Proposed parking for the Health centre is not adequate to meet the needs of the Health centre.

Impact on Local Infrastructure

- Insufficient doctor and school capacity; adding a new medical centre will help alleviate some of the capacity, providing that it is staffed appropriately and has the capacity and services required by the local community.
- Detrimental impact on roads during construction and operation.
- Water infrastructure would need to be increased - Thames Water is not satisfied.
- Loss of recreational facilities and open space.

Environmental

- Loss of green space; the green areas proposed would have reduced environmental characteristics.
- Detrimental impact on wildlife, flora and fauna - how can assessments conclude negligible or minor adverse impacts without full surveys having been undertaken?.
- The 10% net biodiversity gain quoted in the application cannot be quantified or substantiated and how does the proposal align with BAP?
- Removal of protected trees - The proposed replacement with sapling trees will again take many years to reach the same level of maturity and absorb CO₂ to the same level as present- would not meet Policy EN14.
- The proximity of development to existing TPO trees will lead to overshadowing and potential requests to remove branches or the entire tree.
- Pollution impact - It is difficult to see that the proposed residual benefits would outweigh the adverse effects listed in the applicant's ES.

Design

- Proposed houses would be out of keeping with the character of the area.

Safety

- Potential for more accidents and increased crime and anti-social behaviour in a more urban environment.

KEEP EMMER GREEN (KEG)

Submitted seven papers (totalling 91 pages, received 3rd March 2021), which are summarised under the paper headings below. Each paper includes detailed evidence and data within appendices, which can be viewed on the Council's website:

PLANNING PAPER

- Conflict with RBLP allocation Policy CA1b - Larger site and more houses
- RGC will be relocating and the applicant is putting pressure on the Council to consent to the plan and has intentions to build out more than the LP site with detrimental implications for SODC and Reading residents.
- This proposal poses similar concerns to the Gladman proposal on the outskirts of Emmer Green. RBC objected to that proposal on the grounds of impacts on infrastructure and services in Reading and a consistent approach is requested.
- There are inconsistencies, basic arithmetical errors and extremely biased interpretations of data throughout; entirely non-compliant with many significant Council policies.
- Impact of construction noise, vibration and airborne pollutants on vulnerable residents, primary school, senior living accommodation and GP surgery and on highway safety and safety of residents.
- If the proposal were for the allocated area only there would be access to 9.4 hectares of open space, nearly three times the current proposal!

- To suggest that building 257 homes is the only way to prevent something bad from happening to the non-developed land is outrageous

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT PAPER

- There are significant errors or unreasonable interpretations of traffic data in the applicant's plan including (summarised - detailed in Appendices to KEG Traffic and Transport Paper): An increase of 42% on queue lengths on Peppard Road is not negligible; Baseline data does not reflect reality; The traffic increase on Kidmore End Road would not be 39%, but closer to 65% with detrimental effects on highway safety; the sites used for trip data are not comparable.
- There will be implications to areas north of the river and the applicant's claim that the suggested single smart signal operating system (MOVA) will improve the traffic is refuted; a complete revamp of the entire Caversham traffic system will be required; the improvement of one junction will have little effect.
- The proposed spine road is not wide enough for buses to pass.
- There is vehicle access from Kidmore End Road contrary to applicant claims.
- Development is not accessible by sustainable transport modes contrary to Policy CC6.

LANDSCAPE AND LEISURE PAPER

- It will result in the destruction of 12.15 hectares of high-quality green landscape, 8.4 hectares more development than was allocated in CA1b.
- The submission contains many errors in its assessment of landscape issues. The baseline landscape value and adverse impact on the visual amenity of key receptors have been underestimated; it is not urban fringe, but a quiet, semi-rural, classic parkland landscape - an open space dotted with trees which links beautifully into the adjoining South Oxfordshire landscape with its Chiltern dry valleys, woodlands and hedgerows. A detailed landscape analysis is provided (Appendix A of the KEG Landscape and Leisure Paper).
- There will be no benefit to landscape as a third of the tranquil golf course, will be destroyed.
- The development will be densely built, some 3 storeys with small gardens compared to the existing open, well-designed 1-2 storey houses with large verdant gardens. It will be visually dominant especially on Kidmore End Road, and out of keeping with the character of the area.
- Retention of trees are too close to proposed houses; proposed planting is sited so as to risk its future retention.
- There is no proposed effective green link contrary to Policy CA1b.
- The proposal would result in the loss of open space contrary to Policy EN8 and no replacement open space will be created. The proposed areas of open space are fragmented would be of limited benefit and would not provide amenity or recreational value to the wider community and do not match the scale and character of the existing open space.
- The proposed new Public Open Space in SODC comprises only a small part of the existing RGC land and would not be easily accessible by most residents in Emmer Green and is the least accessible part of the RGC site.

- Many residents whose homes back onto the course have gates from their gardens onto the course agreed by the club decades ago and heavily used; now forms a right of way granted by “prescription” (further detail in Appendix B of the Landscape and Leisure Paper)
- Even if the open space cannot be accessed by the public in the short-term, it has strategic value and provides many benefits as an open space.
- There will be loss of a recreational facility with no adequate replacement for the golf course at present and there are no other urban golf courses in Reading Borough.
- RGC is used by members as their “local pub” and by the local community for many different events. Some of these events may be transferrable to the proposed new location but most will not because it is not within walking distance.

SOCIAL ISSUES PAPER

- Increased strain on north Reading’s already overstretched health care services contravening Policy CC9 and Policy OU1.
- The proposed empty building hardly constitutes a community benefit (not fitted out and staffed for GPs) and although there are ongoing discussions with the CCG the concern is that it may be a long time before a much-needed GP practice moves in. This has been misrepresented and should not be considered as a material consideration affecting Policy OU1.
- The applicant has not consulted and the most up-to date statistics have not been used and the data includes ‘empty nesters’ but will realistically have more children per household, therefore the overall numbers would be higher and the impact on local services has been under-estimated.
- Existing schools are already oversubscribed; the applicant’s claim that local schools can accommodate the extra pupils is disingenuous.
- The Council’s 2019 Brownfield Land Register shows 138 sites totalling 134.25 hectares on which many homes could be built.

ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION PAPER

- The site is covered by a TPO and the proposal includes removal of 122 trees, and the proposed replacement trees will not benefit the site and existing and proposed trees will be at risk due to the proximity to the proposed housing; the tree strategy does not comply with Policy EN14.
- Planting trees in South Oxfordshire does not increase the tree cover in Reading.
- Forestry Commission advises that the Council should not consider compensation measures.
- The impact on biodiversity will not be negligible; no effective green link; under-estimates of impact on rare species; insufficient protection for bats; the biodiversity gain is misleading and relies on off-site mitigation - all contrary to Policy EN12.
- The club is a very significant part of the history of the Reading area and should be protected. The benefits of the development do not “*significantly outweigh the asset’s significance*” and it does not comply with Policy EN1 and EN4.

- The significance and extent of the nearby Bronze Age Barrow cemetery is understated and there is no detailed archaeological observation, which does not comply with Policy EN2.

WATER AND DRAINAGE PAPER

- There are significant drainage issues not addressed, the existing drainage infrastructure is not sufficient, and the drainage calculations are not accurate. A Hydrogeological Impact Assessment is required where groundwater may be affected. It does not comply with policies EN7, EN11 and EN18.
- There is no assessment from the EA or Thames Water.

POLLUTION

- The assessment of air quality should be over 2km area as stated in the EIA, it is only 1km.
- Emissions will be felt over a much wider area than the applicant states.
- The applicant uses an incorrect method of measuring NO2 concentrations at the site and in Caversham, where NO2 levels are much higher, it is likely that PM2.5 levels will be much higher also, which is completely ignored. There are false claims regarding CO2 emissions from the predicted extra traffic. All this does not comply with Policy EN15.
- The development does not comply with requirements for CO2 emissions reductions and is therefore, contrary to Policy CC3.
- The noise data does not represent ambient conditions and does not comply with Policy EN17, and the level of noise and vibration will not comply with Policy CC8.

It is noted that further responses from KEG and the applicant were submitted:

10th March Supplementary Objection

30th March Produced by Applicant : *Response to KEG Representations*

19th May Detailed rebuttal of the applicant's document titled "Response to KEG Representations" dated 30th March 2021

26th May 2021 KEG response to the applicant's Technical Note No 5500/TN008 dated 19th March 2021.

26th May "Response to KEG Representations" dated 30th March 2021 by Friends of the Earth

26th May KEG comments on Environmental Concerns submitted to Susanna Bedford by Ross Jarvis (Senior Environmental Health Officer) on 22nd March 2021 and published on the Planning Portal on 19th May 2021

26th May KEG comments on the Transport Development Control report submitted to Susanna Bedford on 29th April 2021 and published on the Planning Portal on 18th May 2021

6th July Individual Topic Papers re Trees; Transport; Land contamination; Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and Compliance Check list.

Reading Friends of the Earth (received 10/2/2021) OBJECTION

- Proposal does not make significant use of on-site renewable energy generation options counter to policy.
- Construction phase emissions and mitigation are ill-defined and insignificant tree-planting is proposed.
- Insulation standards unacceptably low and the scheme should aspire to passive house levels in order to be sustainable.
- On-site renewable energy generation should be increased, incorporating significant numbers of PV panels on suitable roofs. The proposal does not make a significant use of on-site renewable energy generation options.
- Ground-sourced heating should be utilised (nb: geothermal?).
- While it is acknowledged that central government dictates the number of homes Reading must give permission to build; is this better or worse than smaller, different, alternate sites, styles, or making better use of existing housing stock?
- No discussion of the very substantial impact removing trees has in terms of releasing stored embodied carbon (for example between 100-2000 tons of CO₂ are released when these are burned). Replacing like-for-like will take at least several decades to break even in terms of carbon emissions.
- Proposed planting of trees appropriate to wildlife interests of an ASNW may not result in the rapid carbon sequestration required within the time-frame required to meet international climate target timelines, and thus, may not be relevant to the discussion. Furthermore, these species may not be able to survive the changing UK climate.
- Some climate change adaptation measures need to be addressed at an early design stage and built into the construction. Greywater/ rainwater harvesting for reuse within buildings requires substantial underground storage systems, probably best sited under car parking areas and retrofitting is far more expensive and leads to further emissions; rainwater harvesting for use on the land requires open areas to be left between development blocks that can hold a SUDS system in the future without damaging trees; control systems for buildings need to be for heating and cooling and imply systems that can provide both in an energy efficient manner.

Member of Parliament for Reading East - Matt Rhodda OBJECT

- Very concerned about the significant effect on the local environment and it's contributions to wider environmental problems.
- Proposed development would put 500 extra cars on local roads at a time when residents already face severe delays due to existing traffic on routes such as Peppard Road.
- Likely to result in an increase in carbon dioxide emissions from increased local transport movements and congestion.
- Loss of substantial wildlife habitat.

- Impact on residents during construction due to serious noise and other disturbances.
- Site is surplus to requirements due to Reading Borough Council's sufficient housing supply; largely being met by brownfield land.
- It is noted the level of concern within the community is very large.

X) Others

4.23 The applicant has provided a Statement of Community Involvement that sets out that engagement and communication that has been undertaken prior to the submission of the planning application. This included a public engagement event on 11th February 2021 which was publicised by invitation flyers distributed to the 2,300 closest properties,

4.24 Public consultation responses

Site notices were erected at 5 locations surrounding the site on 4th February 2021.

A press notice was published on 11th February 2021 in the Reading Chronicle. Adjoining occupiers were formally consulted by letter, as produced on 5th February 2021.

This consultation period ceased on 18th March 2021.

Within this consultation period the Council logged approximately 3000 responses. 171 in support of the application and 2770 in objection.

Following the submission of /amended additional information (shown on the Councils website as received 27th May 2021) the following formal re consultation was undertaken:

Site notices were erected on 10th June 2021

A press notice was published on 10th June 2021 in the Reading Chronicle.

Adjoining occupiers were formally consulted by letter, as produced on 9th June 2021. This consultation period ceased on 9th July 2021.

Within this consultation period the Council logged 1 anonymous letter in support of the application and 8 responses including KEG in objection.

4.25 Due to the exceptionally large number of comments received a summary of the issues raised through out at both consultation stages is set out at Appendix 1.

Members should note that given the amount and length of objections received, officers have had to succinctly summarise a wide range of individual points on the same general theme, in some cases. Members should also note that:

- There have been comments that were multiple objections from some objectors
- Some objections received were anonymous - these objections have been loaded the Council website so are able to viewed by third parties and have been read however these comments have limited weight when summarised by the case officer
- Similarly, objections without the correct contact details cannot be further contacted by the Local Planning Authority.

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.2 Replacement Minerals Local Plan (RMLP) adopted in 2001
Policy 2

Emerging Joint Central and Eastern Berkshire (JCEB) Mineral and Waste Plan
Policy M2
Policy M4

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019).

The relevant policies are:

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
CC4: Decentralised Energy
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
EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space
EN8: Undesignated Open Space
EN9: Provision of Open Space
EN10: Access to Open Space
EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
EN13: Major Landscape Feature
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
EN15: Air Quality
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
EN17: Noise generating equipment
EN18: Flooding and Drainage

H1: Provision of Housing
H2: Density and Mix
H3: Affordable Housing
H5: Standards for New Housing
H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

RL6: Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses
OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

CA1: SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT IN CAVERSHAM AND EMMER GREEN

CA1b PART OF READING GOLF COURSE, KIDMORE END ROAD

Development for residential and replacement clubhouse, subject to the future provision of golf on the remainder of the Golf Club site, which fulfils an important sports and leisure function for Reading, being secured. On-site facilities should be provided to mitigate impacts on community infrastructure, including for healthcare. On-site public open space will be provided.

Development should:

- *Avoid adverse effects on important trees including those protected by TPO;*
- *Provide a green link across the site from Kidmore End Road to the remainder of the golf course, rich in plant species and habitat opportunities;*
- *Ensure that vehicular access is provided from suitable roads to the area to be retained for golf;*
- *Take measures to mitigate impacts on the highway network, particularly on Kidmore End Road and Tanners Lane;*
- *Include all parking requirements within the site to avoid exacerbating parking issues on existing streets;*
- *Take account of potential archaeological significance; and*
- *Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrades where required.*

Site size: 3.75 ha 90-130 dwellings, community provision including healthcare and replacement clubhouse



5.3 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

- Affordable Housing (March 2021)
- Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

- 5.4 Other relevant documents include:
Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)

Reading Open Space Strategy Update Note (2018)
Reading Open Space Strategy (2007)

The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

National Design Guide

National Design Codes

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (Amended 2015)

Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment

BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A guide to good practice, 2nd edition (2011)

DCLG Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (2015)

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design dated July 2020 (Department for Transport)

Manual For Streets 2007 (Department for Transport)

CD 195 - Designing for cycle traffic (Standards for Highways 2020)

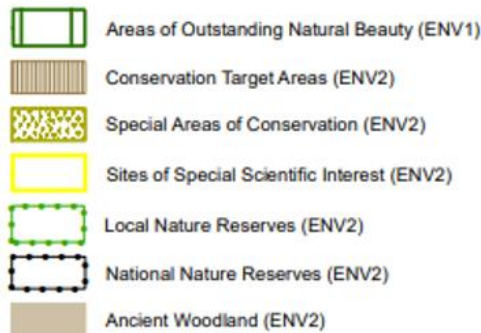
Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan 2020-2030 (LCWIP) (November 2019)

The Reading Climate Change Partnership's (RCCP) Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25 (November 2020)

To set the site in the context of the adjoining land this portion of the Reading Golf Course land ownership contains designations with the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035. As set out in the plan extracts below designations include an Area of Ancient Woodland (known as Cucumber Wood) and Conservation Target Areas. The application site is also set approximately 1km from the edge of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



Extract from South Oxford Local Plan Proposals Map and key



6 APPRAISAL

The main issues considered to be raised by this application for outline planning permission are:

- Principle of development
- Loss of Recreational Facility/Undesignated Open Space/ Provision of Open Space
- Provision of Housing
- Residential Density, Mix and Affordable Housing
- Layout / Scale /Landscaping
- Protected Trees, Ecology and Biodiversity
- Transport Matters
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Pollution / Water Resources and SUDS
- Sustainable Development
- Historic Environment / Areas of Archaeological Significance
- Mineral Deposits
- Community Facilities
- S106 / CIL

6.1 Principle of development

6.1.1 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. In this case the development plan for the area is the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). At a national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) constitutes guidance which the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must have regard to. The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making but does constitute a material consideration in any subsequent determination.

6.1.2 The NPPF paragraph 117 states ‘Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Paragraph 130 also states in relation to ‘Achieving well designed places’ that ‘Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents’.

- 6.1.3 Local plan Policy CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development sets out that *“Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan (including, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise”*.
- 6.1.4 Policy CA1b
As set out in the Policy Section above a portion of the application site includes the area allocated in the Local Plan as CA1b. However, the application site encompasses an area significantly larger than the allocated land and would have the effect of removing any potential for an 18-hole golf course on the remainder of the site. The proposal therefore does not represent the form of development envisaged under Policy CA1b, and officers therefore do not consider that the proposal should be considered as having specific policy support on this basis.
- 6.1.5 In order to consider the development proposals further officers must consider whether it has been adequately demonstrated that the development as set out in Policy CA1b is not able to be delivered. It is noted this is a matter which has been subject to considerable discussion through the Local Plan Inquiry process, and at the time that the Local Plan was examined, it was concluded that there was sufficient potential for delivery of Policy CA1b to justify its inclusion within the Local Plan.
- 6.1.6 The submitted Planning Statement dated January 2021 that accompanies this planning application sets out (section 4) how the position of Reading Golf Club (RGC) has altered since the Local Plan Inquiry. It is stated that RGC is contractually committed to its move to Caversham Heath Golf Club, which has now taken place, and as described above, the ‘reduced golf offer’ on part of the remaining land in South Oxfordshire is now operating as ‘Fairfax Family Golf’. The applicant considers that the development envisaged by the Reading Local Plan, with a limited residential development to secure the golf use on the remainder of the site cannot now realistically be delivered. Therefore, officers considered that this submission should be considered on its own merits and determined based on other relevant policies in the Local Plan and other material considerations.
- 6.2 Loss of Recreational Facility/Undesignated Open Space/ Provision of Open Space
- 6.2.1 Loss of Built Golf Recreational Facilities
In relation to the loss of golf facilities within the application site this must be considered against Policy RL6: ‘Protection of Existing Leisure Facilities and Public Houses’. It should be noted that only the clubhouse facilities are relevant to RL6, as supporting text at 4.6.31 of the Local Plan specifies that this policy deals only with built sports and leisure facilities. This Policy states that the loss of a sport/recreation/ leisure facility will not be permitted unless there is a) no need for this type of facility in this area; or b) the function of the facility would be adequately fulfilled by an existing facility, where that facility would be at least as accessible to the same catchment.
- 6.2.2 The Planning Statement sets out that there is an oversupply of golf courses in the Reading Area and the function of the facility at Reading Golf Club can be provided at Caversham Heath Golf Club (CHGC). The facility at CHGC has been

considered by officers and within the consultation response from Sport England /Golf England. Sport England cite four improvements at CHGC, three of which (improved clubhouse facilities, 18th hole/remodelling and putting green) have now received planning permission from South Oxfordshire District Council. The other, a sixes/academy course, is expected to be subject to a future planning application. This seems to be an inherent part of their support for the development. As the improvements to the clubhouse at CHGC have now received planning permission they can be considered in relation to Criteria b) of Policy RL6.

- 6.2.3 It is considered that criteria b) is adequacy fulfilled by the existing club house facility at CHGC to be upgraded. Concerns are noted in relation to whether Caversham Heath Golf Club is genuinely as accessible to the membership as the current site by all modes of travel (as set out in 4.6.32 of the Local Plan). There is a bus stop in reasonable proximity to Caversham Heath, but this requires using an unmade footpath across a field. The walking routes from Reading itself are on a footpath crossing the golf course from Blagrove Lane, or along the narrow A4074 footway. This compares to the current situation, where the clubhouse is easily accessed from within streets in the town itself. However, the reality of travel to the golf course will be that the vast majority of trips will be by car regardless of location due to the need to bring bulky equipment. Proposed travel plan measures for the clubhouse (promotion of existing walking, cycling and public transport options and reducing single car occupancy) were secured as a condition of South Oxfordshire permission P20/S1619/FUL, which will ensure accessibility by all modes as far as is possible. Therefore, officers consider that compliance with policy RL6 can be demonstrated.

Loss of undesignated open space

Ariel photograph of the site



- 6.2.4 Open space which is not specifically identified in policy EN7 (which does not designate the Reading Golf Club site) is protected by Policy EN8 ‘Undesignated Open Space’. Neither policy EN8 nor the glossary of the Local Plan give an official definition of open space. However, paragraph 4.2.30 clarifies that EN8 is required to protect important recreational and amenity resources wherever possible.
- 6.2.5 In addition, paragraph 4.2.28 (supporting policy EN7) gives further explanation of why open spaces are important, and this indicates how open space is to be interpreted in the context of the Local Plan:
- “Open space policies contribute towards many of the goals of the Council’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2017-2020) by supporting residents to make healthy lifestyle choices and reducing social isolation through public open space. Additionally, these policies contribute to the delivery of many other Council objectives in terms of supporting an urban renaissance, defining the character of a town and place, promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion, health and well-being, climate change adaptation, and the promotion of sustainable development.”*
- 6.2.6 The Open Spaces Strategy adopted March 2007, which helped to underpin the Local Plan, defines open space within table 2.1 as follows:
- “Any unbuilt land within in the boundary of a village, town or city which provides, or has the potential to provide, environmental, social and/or economic benefits to communities, whether direct or indirect.”*
- 6.2.7 Meanwhile, the NPPF last updated on 2019 defines open space in its glossary as follows:
- “All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.”*
- 6.2.8 What is clear from these definitions is that open space is land which performs multiple functions, including sport and recreation, visual amenity, climate change and sustainable development, which can include matters such as biodiversity. Land cannot be included or excluded from the definition and therefore from the application of EN8 on the basis of one factor alone, and EN8 does not differentiate in the protection it gives open spaces that serve different purposes. As stated in both paragraph 4.2.30 and 4.2.31 of the Local Plan, policy EN8 also covers land in public or private ownership.
- 6.2.9 As the majority of the site (other than the clubhouse and car park) is undeveloped land, it is clear that the proposal would result in a loss of undesignated open space, and that policy EN8 therefore applies. The applicants’ Planning Statement on p36 acknowledges that the proposal will result in a loss of undesignated open space.
- 6.2.10 It is worth quantifying the scale of the loss of undesignated open space. The applicant’s Briefing Note of 2nd July 2021 provides the figures on which this can be calculated. There is currently 11.44 ha of undesignated open space on site, the vast majority of the site. Of this, 3.93 ha would be lost to built form. Meanwhile 3.44 ha would be residential gardens. The Briefing Note considers

that residential gardens can be treated as continuing as undesignated open space. However, in officers' view this would be an inappropriate way of considering the matter. Policy EN8 states, 'Development should not result in the loss of or jeopardise use and enjoyment of undesignated open space'. As such, the open space, which currently takes the form of a golf course would be lost to individual residential plots and fenced in; thereby losing the visual amenity aspect of the current space. Additionally, there are extensive permitted development rights for householders to extend, erect outbuildings or to create decking or hardstanding. Unless all of these permitted development rights were to be removed as part of a permission, the continued existence of gardens as undesignated open space could not be guaranteed. Therefore, it is considered that the undesignated open space that would be lost should be treated as 7.37 ha. With the remaining parts of the site (formal and informal open spaces, SuDS etc) retained as undesignated open space. This is therefore a very significant loss of undesignated open space. For context, the Open Spaces Strategy Update Note (2018), prepared to support the Reading Borough Local Plan, calculated the overall net change in open space (both with or without public access) between 2007 and 2017 as being a loss of 19 ha, so this development would result in more than one third of the amount of space being lost on one site that was lost over that ten year period across Reading. Clearly, this is a matter that requires serious consideration.

6.2.11 As the proposal represents a loss of undesignated open space, it therefore needs to be considered against the following criteria as set out in EN8:

“Development may be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that replacement open space, of a similar standard and function, can be provided at an accessible location close by, or that improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space.”

6.2.12 The applicants' view as set out in the Briefing Note of 2nd July 2021 is that the open space proposed to be provided within the application site is sufficient to comply with policy EN8 on its own. However, the applicant additionally proposes that financial contributions be made towards 3G pitch provision in the area and towards the upgrade of Emmer Green Playing Fields play area. Should this not be considered sufficient, the applicant further states within the Briefing Note that a 5 ha area of the remaining golf club land, within the applicant's ownership, but outside the application site, located within South Oxfordshire, be provided as open space. In all cases, the consideration of whether these proposals are sufficient to comply with policy EN8 involves the second part of the part of the criteria outlined above, i.e. that “improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space”, because all of the proposed replacement land proposed is already either designated or undesignated open space in the meaning of the policy. The policy does not specifically state that “remaining open space” needs to be within the red line boundary of the application, and the use of similar wording later in the plan in 8.3.2 refers to the parts of the golf club land outside the CA1b allocation as the “remaining land” indicates that it would be reasonable to include the rest of the golf club site within this definition.

6.2.13 Below, Policy EN8 has been considered in relation to each of the three mitigating proposals offered by the applicant. i.e.

- whether the open space offer within the application site is sufficient in its own right,
- secondly whether it is sufficient in combination with the off-site financial contributions, and
- thirdly whether the whole package including the off-site open space/country park is sufficient.

In doing so, it must be borne in mind that, should benefits proposed through a Section 106 agreement exceed what is required to make the development acceptable, they will fail the legal test in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations of being “necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms”.

6.2.14 In terms of the first consideration, whether the on-site improvements on their own suffice to meet EN8, in officers’ view, in order for open space improvements to clearly outweigh the loss of the open space, those improvements must not ‘result in the loss of or jeopardise use and enjoyment of undesignated open space’. In particular that of EN9 (considered separately), but also in terms of other considerations such as provision of SuDS in line with EN18 and retention of a Green Link in line with EN12. Comments received from Leisure address this point, as set out above section above, and note insufficient public open space on the site without provision of a MUGA or sufficient play provision. Officers are therefore of the view that the overall quantity of open space on site may be sufficient were it only serving to fulfil policy EN9 in terms of provision of open space, albeit that the specific facilities proposed are not and would require off-site mitigation, but it certainly does not go above and beyond the basic expectations for a site of this size that would be required to justify a loss of undesignated open space in line with policy EN8 as set out above.

6.2.15 In terms of the second consideration, the applicant relates to the first mitigation proposal, in that the off-site financial contributions are provided in order to address the fact that the development does not meet the requirements of policy EN8 and EN9 in full on-site. In particular, the development does not provide a MUGA or sufficient play facilities, and the financial contributions directly ensure compliance with EN9, not the loss of undesignated open space under EN8. Therefore, these proposed contributions do not meet policy E8 requirements for any site of this size, and do not therefore justify the loss of undesignated open space.

6.2.16 In terms of the third consideration, securing land outside the Borough as public open space, there are some inconsistencies with the submitted information. The Briefing Note of 2nd July refers to 5 ha, yet the submitted Community Infrastructure Plan shows that the areas provided would include a country park (2.83 ha or 2.91 ha, depending on whether one refers to the map or key), community orchard (1.12 ha) and potential land for allotments (0.41 ha). The total of that provision is around 4.4 ha. The Briefing Note states that these 5 ha provide ‘net benefits to open space available to residents in the borough’. The Cucumber Wood itself, an ancient woodland, would not be made publicly

accessible and would therefore have no change in its status other than that the S106 would include arrangements for its management, and therefore does not represent a net increase in public open space.

- 6.2.17 The EN8 policy test is whether improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the undesignated open space. In this case, this means comparing the granting of public access to 4.4 ha of the existing golf course to the loss of 7.37 ha of undesignated open space. Officers' view is that, in principle, if these measures can be secured, they would be sufficient to outweigh the loss. The site has historically been inaccessible to anyone but members, so the provision of public access to an area of land around 60% of the size of the land to be lost, in close proximity to the development and also accessible from nearby residential streets, does represent a significant improvement of recreational facilities that will benefit a wider area. The Planning Statement is also correct on p40-41 to note that this would help to fill one of the few remaining gaps in access to recreational public open space in the Borough as recognised in the Open Spaces Strategy (2007) and subsequent Update Note to support the Local Plan (2018). The fact that the space would be provided outside the Borough does not mean that it would not primarily serve residents of Reading, and in this case virtually all of the homes within 400 metres of the new country park would be within Reading Borough. As no development to provide car parking is proposed, it would mainly be accessible to those on foot, and would therefore primarily serve Reading Borough residents.
- 6.2.18 It is worth noting that Sport England's representation notes the importance of the country park proposal, and states that this may generate more activity from locals than the golf. This gives further support to the contention that the country park offer is not an optional addition but is fundamental to the assessment of the application, because it is clearly part of the assessment that has led to Sport England support for the proposal. This is relevant because policy EN8 was drafted to comply with (then) paragraph 74 of the 2012 NPPF (now paragraph 97 of the 2019 version), around which Sport England's own guidance is based.
- 6.2.19 The status of allotments shown on the Community Infrastructure Plan are unclear. Whilst they appear on this plan, the Briefing Note of 2nd July (paragraph 11) states that these could be provided in the future if demand existed, but also that a £100K contribution would include the provision of allotments. There are likely to be advantages and disadvantages to allotment creation in this location. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan, drawn up alongside the Local Plan, identifies a need for allotment creation and enhancement, particularly in the north and west of the Borough, and opportunities for such creation are rare. However, allotments are likely to frequently require access by car, and would generate concerns about the impact on narrow local roads within South Oxfordshire. It is not therefore considered that allotments would be essential to outweigh the loss of undesignated open space, and that the inclusion of the earmarked space within the wider public open space rather than as allotments is likely to suffice.
- 6.2.20 For clarity, officers have not included the 9-hole golf course shown on the Community Infrastructure Plan within consideration of compliance with policy

EN8, because, although this is currently operating, there are no proposals forthcoming to secure this provision for the future as part of the planning application, and it cannot therefore be relied upon.

- 6.2.21 In summary therefore, the off-site open space, albeit in South Oxfordshire is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, and if the provision in perpetuity and subsequent maintenance of this facility with public access from the development and other points within Reading could satisfactorily be secured as part of the permission, officers consider that it would be sufficient to comply with the requirements of policy EN8, as it would represent improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space.
- 6.2.22 It would be essential that the 4.4 ha of off-site open space is provided as early as possible to compensate for the loss of open space that will occur immediately, and the applicant suggests this should be provided prior to development commencing, which is agreed. It is essential that any details of the management and maintenance of the country park would be secured through a legal agreement.
- 6.2.23 It falls to be considered whether it has been sufficiently demonstrated that this off-site open space can be delivered.
- 6.2.24 For the avoidance of doubt South Oxfordshire District and Reading Borough Council do not share a joint Local Plan. The first element of deliverability involves whether it would cause conflict with the relevant development plans. The location of the proposed country park falls within an area for which the development plan would consist of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan and Kidmore End Neighbourhood Development Plan. These development plans would be relevant only to any part of the proposal which falls outside Reading Borough, i.e. the proposed off-site open space, not to the site within the red line boundary of this application. Although the proposed use as a country park is not currently considered to represent a development proposal requiring permission, it is still worth considering potential conflict with the relevant development plans in that location in general terms should this change in future.
- 6.2.25 The South Oxfordshire Local Plan (SOLP) was adopted in December 2020, and sets out policies and proposals across the whole District. In terms of specific designations, the Proposals Map identifies only the Cucumber Wood as ancient woodland and the wood and areas to the west and east as a conservation target area, with both designations being dealt with by policy ENV2. As the proposals would not cause loss of or harm to these areas, there would be no conflict with ENV2. In more general terms, the proposals would help to protect and enhance the countryside in line with policy STRAT1 (The Overall Strategy) point ix. Policy CF3 (New Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities) states that new recreation facilities will be encouraged and supported and well related to the settlements they serve, which would be the case here. It also states that:

“Provision for the future long-term maintenance and management of the open space and/or facilities will be sought and must be agreed as part of the planning application.”

- 6.2.26 Subject to securing long-term public access, maintenance and management of the space, there is not therefore considered to be a likely conflict with the SOLP.
- 6.2.27 The Kidmore End Neighbourhood Development Plan (KENDP) is an emerging document, having been published for Pre-Submission consultation stage in November 2020. The Parish Council are currently reviewing the responses received. It is not yet therefore formally part of the Development Plan, but would likely be a material consideration for any proposals within the neighbourhood area. The most relevant of the draft policies is LPLV, the Local Valued Landscape Policy, with the Cucumber Wood area falling within a defined Local Valued Landscape, where development proposals “should only be permitted where they protect and enhance the physical and visual attributes of the character, quality and appearance of this valued landscape”. Whilst it is not considered that the proposed use as a country park represents a development proposal requiring permission, it should in any case serve to protect and potentially enhance this valued landscape and would not therefore conflict with LPLV. It should also help to conserve the setting of the AONB (policy LPCS) and should help to maintain a physical and visual separation between settlements and preserve and enhance the rural look and feel of the roads and lanes between settlements (policy LCQL). Therefore, there is not considered to be a potential conflict with the KENDP.
- 6.2.28 The next aspect of deliverability is in terms of whether it would result in unacceptable transport impacts. No new parking is proposed within the land, and it is therefore expected that access would be generally on foot from surrounding areas. There is a car park on land to the north serving the foot golf facility, but this is within the management of Reading Golf Club and it is considered that use of the car park could be restricted to prevent traffic impacts as a result of the country park. This should not therefore necessarily affect the deliverability of the offer.
- 6.2.29 However, more broadly, there is a lack of certainty about what the proposal actually entails. As set out in paragraphs above there is inconsistency in terms of submitted information about the extent of the site and whether or not allotments are included. The submitted Community Infrastructure Plan shows footpaths extending beyond the northern boundary of the site into South Oxfordshire towards Highdown Hill Road and Kidmore End Road, essential to ensure that the open space is accessible to residents of the proposed development, but which do not extend as far as the off-site open space and do not therefore appear to form part of that proposed offer.
- 6.2.30 It is also considered that, as land falls within South Oxfordshire, South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) would be the enforcing authority in terms of the Section 106 agreement, and would need to be a party to this agreement, and therefore willing to proactively enforce against a breach. Officers have not been provided with any information that confirms SODC’s willingness to be a party to such an agreement or that any substantive discussions have taken place on this matter.
- 6.2.31 The Management Company arrangements are also underdeveloped. According to the applicant’s Dean Wilson note of 5th July 2021, 26% of the share capital

of the Management Company would be transferred to the Council. It is not clear from Leisure responses whether this is an arrangement that would be acceptable to the Council, as, whilst the 75% majority vote requirement means that the Council would essentially hold a veto, it would not necessarily be able to positively influence decisions. The Briefing note states that £100,000 will be offered to manage and maintain woodland planting, allotment provision, open spaces and footpaths and cycleways on land within the Golf Course in South Oxfordshire over 20 years. There is no supporting information to justify that £100,000 is a sufficient sum to manage the open space, or whether funds will be replenished should they fall short during the 20 year period. In addition, there is no justification offered of why the funds cover a 20 year period only; when the land must remain as open space in perpetuity (unless there is a significant intervening event requiring the change in status). This proposal is lacking in key details and therefore the Council is not in a position where it can agree this proposal in principle.

6.2.32 Therefore, whilst the concept of meeting policy EN8 through the proposed off-site open space is considered to be acceptable in this instance, it has not been sufficiently demonstrated that it can be delivered in practice. For this reason, there is a failure to demonstrate compliance with policy EN8.

6.2.33 Provision of Open Space

As reference above Policy EN9 sets out that all new development make provision for appropriate open space on site. This can be achieved through on or off site provision contributions to existing leisure facilities or recreational facilities. On sites of 50 dwellings or more, or for developments where the availability and quality of existing open space has been identified as deficient, new provision will be sought. Development must ensure satisfactory provision of children's play areas and neighbourhood parks (described in the local plan as LEAP + informal space).

6.2.34 This policy also sets out the criteria for new open space which should be in useable parcels of land and not be fragmented; Be safely and easily accessible and not severed by any physical barrier, including a road; Be accessible to the general public and be designed so as to feel that it is part of the public and not private realm; Create a safe environment, appropriately considering lighting and layout to reduce the fear of crime; Provide some informal landscaping for aesthetic, wildlife and recreational purposes; and Link into the Green Network where possible.

6.2.35 The level of open space proposed with the development is set out in the table below (also provided in the proposals section).

Table of Open Space Provision On Site			
	Quantum Guideline (hectares per 1000 population)	Quantum Required Based On 260 Units (2.4 people per unit)	Quantum Provided On Site
Playing Pitches	1.2	0.75ha	0ha
All Outdoor Sports	1.6	1.00ha	0ha
Equipped / Designated Play Area	0.25	0.16ha	0.16ha (plus informal play throughout within parks and gardens)
Other Outdoor Provision (MUGAs and Skateboard Parks)	0.3	0.19ha	0ha
Total Formal Outdoor Space Quantum		0.16ha (Play only) 1.94ha (Sports)	0.16ha (Play only)
Parks and Gardens	0.5	0.31ha	1.05ha
Amenity Green Space	0.6	0.37ha	1.03ha
Natural and Semi-Natural	1.8	1.12ha	1.29ha
Total Informal Outdoor Space Quantum		1.8ha	3.37ha
Total Open Space Quantum		1.96ha (excluding sports)	3.53ha
SuDS (In addition to the above)			0.49ha

FIGURE 3.5B – OPEN SPACE PROVISION ON SITE REFERENCING TO FIELD IN TRUST OPEN SPACE GUIDANCE (FABRIK, MAY 2021, TO REFLECT THE LATEST LAYOUT)

The current layout provides a single LEAP (Local Equipped Area of Play) in the centre of the site, the rest of the open space categorised as informal open space. The proposal is therefore required to provide off site mitigation for the lack of formal play areas / sport facilities on site in order to meet the requirement of EN9. The applicant proposes a contribution of £50,000 towards an upgrade of Emmer Green Playing Fields Play Equipment; and a contribution of £250,000 towards provision of 3G sports pitch provision to be secured by S106. There are also considered to be constraints to the usability of the other areas of public space as set out elsewhere in this report. Therefore, as set out above, the provision of open space within the site and off site mitigation measures are considered required in order for the proposal to comply with Policy EN9.

6.3 Provision of Housing

6.3.1 Policy H1 Provision of Housing sets out the housing target in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036; and that the RBC will work with neighbouring authorities within the Western Berkshire Housing Market Area to ensure this will be met. Due to Reading being a very tightly defined area, new development must be considered on balance, and providing more housing to meet more of the assessed needs is not necessarily positive if it results in a conflict with other local plan policies. The Local Plan has identified a way of dealing with the shortfall identified in Policy H1, in agreement with the other authorities in the Western Berkshire HMA and has a signed Statement of Common Ground dating from October 2017 to that effect.

6.3.2 The applicant has queried the deliverability of some of the land identified to meet the Local Plan housing supply. For example, the planning statement raises uncertainties in delivery of sites like SR2 (Land North of Manor Farm Road) and

discusses the densities that would be required. However, this was known at the time of Local Plan drafting and examination, and this is the reason that allowances for non-implementation are included within the relevant calculations (20% in the case of SR2), so this has all been taken into account already, and does not amount to an argument in favour of the proposal.

- 6.3.3. The most recent Annual Monitoring Report 2019-20 was published in December 2020, and this shows the most recent calculations of expected housing land supply over both the next five years and the entire lifetime of the Local Plan. It shows that there is currently a 6.65 years' supply of housing land. An updated version of the Housing Trajectory is also included that shows, based on most recent calculations, over the lifetime of the plan the number of homes delivered is expected to exceed policy requirements by over 550 homes, which would be enough to absorb the Local Plan shortfall.
- 6.3.4 It is noted the applicant also raises specific Local Plan allocations in the Caversham and Emmer Green section of the Local Plan. In particular, they identify a shortfall in meeting the 'target' of 700 homes in Caversham and Emmer Green however the Local Plan makes very clear that the 700 figure in Caversham and Emmer Green is not to be treated as a target. Paragraph 8.2.3 states that "It is important to note that this is an indication of potential capacity, not a policy target." Additionally, even if it were a target, there would not be a shortfall as explained in the previous paragraph. Therefore, at this time it can be demonstrated that there is not a shortfall in housing provision that would tip the balance and outweigh other important policy considerations, such as the loss of undesignated open space.

6.4 Residential Density, Mix and Affordable Housing

Density

- 6.4.1 Policy H2 'Density and Mix' sets out a number of factors that appropriate density for residential development will be informed by, including the character and mix of uses of the area in which it is located including important landscape areas; the need to achieve high quality design, and the need to minimise environmental impacts. This policy does state that 'Net densities of below 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable'. As set out by the developer the scheme represents a gross density of 21.15dph or a net density of 32.0dph; when removing 3.53ha of Public Open Space, 0.49ha of SUDs and 0.09ha of street planting from calculations. However, a density should not be considered in isolation for, as set out in the following sections of this report, it should be weighed against the context of the site, other policy objectives and the need to achieve high quality design.
- 6.4.2 Policy H2 also seeks that at least 50% of the homes outside centres will be three-bed or larger, this application proposes 63%. It is accepted that this provision in excess of the policy requirement is a material consideration in favour of the development however this has to be weighed very carefully in the planning balance against the landscape constraints; the need for good design and loss of undesignated green space within the site. In the context of this site, where an alternative layout and density could be considered, the proposed number of large family homes is not considered to outweigh the landscape constraints within the site.

6.4.3 The Planning Statement does not include any recognition of the provisions within the final part of policy H2 on self-build homes. This proposal, as it includes more than ten houses, should “consider making appropriate provision for plots as self- or custom-build wherever viable and achievable”. Officers would expect the applicants to consider what provision can be made for self- and custom-build within the development in line with policy H2. Were the recommendation be to approve this outline proposal had the layout plans or Design and Access Statement referred to where these units could be provided a planning condition could be used to require a proportion of self build homes to be included.

6.5 Affordable housing

6.5.1 Policy H3 seeks residential development to make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading. It is noted that the applicant has now offered to provide 35% on-site affordable housing, providing 90 affordable homes. This would be at a tenure split of 50:50 (Affordable Rent / Shared Ownership). The tenure split sought within the 2021 SPG differs seeking a split of at least Affordable rented accommodation at ‘Reading affordable rent’ levels - at least 62%; and Affordable home ownership (shared ownership or another product) - maximum 38%. Therefore subject to appropriate tenure types the provision of affordable housing at 35% of the overall scheme and the provision of larger family affordable homes is a material consideration of the scheme.

6.5.2 Planning Case Law confirms that an increased offer from an applicant that exceeds the policy compliant target does not in itself justify provision of a planning obligation unless it meets the tests set out in Paragraph 56 of the NPPF. Whilst it is considered that these tests can be met in line with other residential led development in the Borough, it should be emphasised that a 30% policy-compliant affordable housing provision is what should be expected from the site; and the additional 5% is not sufficient when weighed against other material considerations of the application, as set out below, to justify the grant of planning permission were other material policy considerations still unsatisfied.

6.6 Layout / Scale / Landscaping

Within the site

6.6.1 Section 12 of the NPPF ‘Achieving well-designed places’, reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high-quality places. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF includes the need for new design to function well and add to the quality of the surrounding area, establish a strong sense of place, and respond to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

6.6.2 NPPF Paragraph 131. sets out that “In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.” The National Planning Policy Framework therefore makes it clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

- 6.6.3 Local Plan Policy CC7 'Design and the Public Realm' sets out the local requirements with regard to design of new development and requires that all developments must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in which it is located. The aspects of design include: layout; urban structure and urban grain; landscape; density and mix; scale: height and massing; and architectural detail and materials.
- 6.6.4 Third party comments have been received which have highlighted paragraph 170 (a) of the NPPF, which states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. However, this also applies to planning policies, and the Local Plan responds to this by identifying the Major Landscape Features in policy EN13, of which the application site does not form part.
- 6.6.5 In addition, the landscape importance of much of the site was considered through the Local Plan when designating part of the site for allocation as CA1b. Landscape importance was not a matter highlighted as affecting the suitability of the CA1b site in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA, November 2017). This statement related only to the CA1b part of the site and the CA1b allocation seeks to retain golf use on the remainder of the land, but states that this is because it fulfils "an important sports and leisure function for Reading" rather than due to a specific landscape significance.
- 6.6.6. However, the golf course has an open verdant sylvan character at present. The submitted Landscape and Visual Impact assessment (LVIA) para 2.1.8 sets out that for site landscape receptor effects at operational stage there will be a moderate adverse effect on site character "considering the removal of private amenity green space" but also moderate beneficial effect on Site character "considering the retention of green space to form open space, considering the replacement tree planting and the implementation of a high quality scheme which reflects local character". However in relation to proposed layout and scale of development, which are to be determined at this stage, Officers consider it important due to the verdant character of the site and its relationship to the undeveloped land to the north that any new development here should be high quality landscape led scheme to make the most of the opportunity to enhance the site and surrounding area.
- 6.6.7 Landscaped areas are proposed within the site and the vegetative species and replacement trees proposed within the them are considered to be acceptable. However, these areas are considered to have been eroded in the submitted layout by the proposed road infrastructure and poor quality communal spaces. The current scheme is considered to have a low quality design of areas of the 'natural and semi natural open space (with informal play)' which are bordered by roads and around back gardens with little surveillance and outlook; for example areas to rear of plots 52-58, plots 161 & 162 or in the isolated enclosed corner locations; for example adjacent to plots 66 & 67. It is also not considered that the opportunity to use the existing green infrastructure to consolidate the green network link within the site has been fully utilised.
- 6.6.8 Therefore in consideration of layout and scale the development fails to create character areas within the site utilizing the relationship of building height to street width/type, and public realm to front gardens. The uniformity of the layout is considered to result in repetitious groupings of buildings throughout the site. This does not provide a significant hierarchy in relation to the built form

and separation distance between linear rows of dwellings from the units sited toward Kidmore End Road and the units sited towards the open land that abuts the northern boundary of the site. This northern boundary is also marred by the section of the main access road that runs adjacent to it, which does not respond positively to the context or character of the open land beyond within South Oxfordshire. The orientation of the individual dwellings with repetitive units shown in all orientations within the site and standard indicative design of the residential units also does not actively promote energy efficient dwellings. There are also incongruous groups of houses; such as these illustrated below, which makes the layout appear poorly designed.



- 6.6.9 As set out above the dwelling mix is considered to be acceptable and the scale and size of the buildings was considered to be appropriate in the context of surrounding development. The majority of the dwellings are 2 storey, and the inclusion of the 2 locations for three storey buildings to accommodate flatted blocks and health centre are not considered to be unacceptable in principle. However, in relation to the health centre building due to proximity of car parking areas there is very limited layoff around the flatted blocks to create meaningful landscaping resulting in a cramped form of development and poor quality public realm.
- 6.6.10 Officers have concluded that the proposed layout and indicative design of dwellings has failed to demonstrated how the development can bring forward a community of high quality buildings and attractive places to make best use of the landscaped character and potential of this site; and would fail to create a neighbourhood with its own identity and sense of place with good quality public realm with green infrastructure and landscaping contrary to Policy CC7 and paragraph 127 of the NPPF.

Wider Area of Landscape

- 6.6.11 Development of the application site would infill the Reading Golf Club land ownership within Reading Borough. The site at present is bounded on 2 sides by residential and community uses but the northern boundary is open to the remainder of the Golf Course land within South Oxfordshire, with the boundary of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty set 1km to the North. The application has been submitted with a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) as required by Policy EN13 that assesses the setting of the development on the AONB. Comments from the Chiltern Conservation Board set out that the application site falls broadly within the wider setting of the AONB and sits next to or just beyond a wider valued landscape, and concludes that there is little impact on the immediate setting of the AONB boundary, as exists.

- 6.6.12 A further representation from third parties highlights the announcement of 24th June 2021 by Natural England that it will explore a boundary extension to the Chilterns AONB. However, the Council is not aware of any further detail at this stage about how the boundary would be extended, and it in itself cannot therefore be used to determine this application. The response from the Chilterns Conservation Board agrees that direct visual effects will be minimal and promotes a sympathetic boundary treatment to the north of the site. It is not therefore considered that there is justification to refuse the application based on it being a valued landscape as set out in paragraph 170 of the NPPF.
- 6.6.13 However, the land directly adjacent to the northern boundary of the application site, where there is no physical boundary at present, is not urbanised in character. Therefore due to the proximity of the proposed main access road parallel to the northern boundary the proposed layout of the site does not allow for meaningful landscaping to ensure integration into the open landscape as it extends towards the Chilterns AONB. Housing development on the edge of Reading is characterised by much softer landscaped edges to the open land within South Oxfordshire. Officers at South Oxfordshire District Council have highlighted the proximity of the main road to the boundary, which also gives rise to potential landscape and ecological issues from light and noise pollution impacting on the open land. Para 180 of the NPPF seeks to limit the impact of light pollution on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes, and nature conservation. The submitted Lighting Assessment acknowledges given the scale and nature of the Proposed Development and its lighting requirements, many new sources of artificial light will be introduced to an area of low district brightness. The development will require street lighting on the spine road and whilst the level of proposed lighting could be controlled to some extent the road as an urban feature in direct proximity to the open landscape beyond is considered to have a detrimental impact on the character of the area.
- 6.6.14 Officers have concluded that the proposed layout, with the road and a number of dwellings located close to or directly adjacent to the boundary of the site, adjoining South Oxfordshire, would fail to respond positively to this local context or maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the adjacent open landscape. The proposal is not considered to be sympathetic to or make best use of the potential of the landscaped character setting for this part of the site contrary to Policy CC7 and para 217 of the NPPF.

6.7 Protected Trees, Ecology and Biodiversity

Trees

- 6.7.1 The site is subject to Area TPO 4/18. It is acknowledged that development of a site such as this will inevitably lead to tree removal. Officers are therefore seeking to ensure that the maximum number of higher grade trees are retained, that these trees can successfully be retained without direct harm or long-term pressure to prune; and that adequate mitigation planting is proposed. The outline proposals require the removal of 117 trees or groups of trees (130 trees in total) to allow the construction of dwellings, parking spaces and associated infrastructure. The application further states that the extensive new planting proposed (134 new trees) provides good mitigation at a better than 1:1 planting ratio. This is a net gain of 4 trees. The natural environment officers also set out that since the production of the report, two trees have failed (the southern Oak

in G294 and one Lime on the site frontage) - both will also require a replacement under the TPO.

- 6.7.2 Due to the presence of clay soil subsidence and the retention of trees was an issue that was sought to be addressed by foundation type and can be controlled by condition.

New hard standing (a proposed footpath) within the root protection area (RPA) of trees 147, 148, 149, 150 & 164 will be constructed to a 'No Dig' specification, which is considered to be acceptable.

- 6.7.3 However Officers remain significantly concerned regarding the relationship between particular dwellings and existing trees, due to the dominance of trees in gardens to some plots, e.g. plots 161-164 and shading pressure on others, e.g. plots 1, 21-24, 49, 78 & 84, both issues for plots 8-15, 59-66. Plots 8-15 includes Limes 102 103 & 315 to the south (hence shading) at current heights of 16, 16 & 19 metres respectively. There are examples within the borough where such close proximity has resulted in regular complaints and pressure to prune or fell.

- 6.7.4 In relation to the replacement tree planting on site a 1:1 ratio does not provide a net gain in tree numbers, and it is considered that the addition of less than 5 trees on a site of this size and nature could be increased. It is also noted that in relation to quantity of tree planting, the LS DAS Add supports the out-of-Borough planting as part of the overall strategy. However there are concerns that these trees are not sited within Reading Brough and long-term they will not remain as 1000 'trees', as with any planting, there will be some losses and over time the woodland would need to be selectively thinned to ensure the even development of the tree canopy.

The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to policy EN14 and objectives of the adopted Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (2021)

Ecology

- 6.7.5 As set out in the in the consultation section above the ecological survey work undertaken to inform the application (as reported in the EIA and Volume 4 Appendix G of the EIA) has in general been undertaken to an appropriate standard with detailed surveys of protected and priority species. Therefore, subject to conditions to minimise any adverse impact on wildlife during construction and to ensure that the development includes wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements, then there is no reason not to approve this application in terms of the impact on protected or priority species.

Biodiversity

- 6.7.6 The further information requested and submitted dated 24th May has been assessed. This consisted of an updated document named "Landscape and Ecological Management Plan & Biodiversity Impact Calculation" that shows the habitat areas that have been included in the calculations post development. The applicant's ecologists has also provided a DEFRA 2 Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculator (BIAC) excel spreadsheet for the scheme.
- 6.7.7 The 24 May document and spreadsheet conclude that the proposals will result in a net loss of Habitat Units [Habitat Units are a factor of habitat type, condition, distinctiveness, size (area), ease of creation etc.] on site but to offset this an area of grassland to the north of the site (in the former golf course) will be

enhanced by managing it so it becomes species rich grassland. Areas of mixed scrub will also be planted in this area (see Figure 8 of the 24 May ecology report).

- 6.7.8 They also conclude that the development will result in a net gain in Hedgerow Units although there is no map showing where the existing hedgerows referred to in their calculator are or how they have reached the conclusion that the hedgerows are in the conditions that they are. An outline of the ecologist's calculations are set out in the consultee section above and advice that this is an inaccurate assessment also set out.
- 6.7.9 Having roughly digitised the extent of tree cover based on the tree survey and aerial photos the Council's Ecologist has calculated that the pre-development baseline is in the region of 67 Habitat Units. As such to deliver a net gain it is likely that a larger amount of off-site habitat enhancements (probably twice as much or more) would need to be provided. However, given that the applicant could use the golf course to the north for this it is quite likely to be achievable.
- 6.7.10 The applicant's recent letter 2nd July at paragraphs 49 and 50 reads:
"49. We have proposed three solutions for the proposed off-site biodiversity provision, either:
• A commensurate financial contribution is paid to RBC via the S106.
or
• It is delivered on land within RBC's control. This approach is as set out in our earlier January 2021 LEMP and BIC submission.
or
• It is delivered on neighbouring land within the Golf Club's control in SODC. The Council's BAP identifies that it is acceptable to provide offset within adjacent authorities, with SODC being one of those named. This approach is as set out in our latest May 2021 LEMP and BIC submission.
50. It is notable that the above net gain calculation does not take into account any biodiversity value gained by the planting of 1,000 trees."
- 6.7.11 In relation to bullet points 1 and 2 above. There have been no formal discussions with the council about where these units would be delivered, and the "January 2021 LEMP and BIC submission" does not give any confidence that these units could be delivered on council owned land. Regarding bullet point 3 it may well be that a net gain in Biodiversity Units can be achieved within the golf course. However, it is likely that significantly more grassland (at least twice as much) than is currently proposed would need to be enhanced to achieve these units.

Policy EN12 states:

"On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible.

Development should:

protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site, incorporating and integrating them into development proposals wherever practicable; and

Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (such as wildlife ponds, bird and bat boxes) wherever practicable.

In exceptional circumstances where the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site, and it is demonstrated that the impacts cannot be: 1) avoided; 2) mitigated or; 3) compensated for on-site; then new development will provide off-site compensation to ensure that there is "no net

loss” of biodiversity. Provision of off-site compensation shall be calculated in accordance with nationally or locally recognised guidance and metrics. It should not replace existing alternative habitats and should be provided prior to development.”

6.7.12 At present as it is shown it is not possible to provide a net gain for biodiversity on site, officers have to consider if there are “exceptional circumstances where the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site and it is demonstrated that the impacts can be avoided, mitigated or compensated for on site then off site compensation is applicable. In this case it is not considered that the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of this substantial area of open space while an alternative layout could provide on site compensation. Therefore the outline proposal is not considered to comply with Policy EN12 and the Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (2021).

6.8 Transport

6.8.1 The comments are set out in detail in the consultee section above and officers are aware that detailed matters were raised by other authorities and third parties.

Proposed Means of Access

6.8.2 In relation to means of access the primary vehicular access serving the residential accommodation will be located on the eastern boundary of the site from Kidmore End Road, in a similar location to where the existing car park access to the Golf Club is located. In terms of design, the layout of the primary access serving the residential accommodation is acceptable and complies with adopted policy.

6.8.3 The secondary access to the health centre and apartments above it is also considered to be acceptable.

6.8.4 A concept layout for an improved bus stop design with shelter and levelled access has been submitted and is a matter that can be dealt with by condition.

6.8.5 Tracking diagrams have been submitted and are considered to be acceptable. A Delivery and Servicing Plan is also required for use of the health centre, but this can be dealt with by condition.

6.8.6 There is no vehicle access to the land to the north of the development site and the internal track will be removed as per the proposed site layout. Land to the north of the development site within South Oxfordshire administrative area will be accessed via Tanners Lane. Therefore, all the traffic associated with the leisure uses to the north of the site will be directed to the road network in South Oxfordshire.

6.8.7 Local Plan Policy CC6 states

“The scale and density of development will be related to its level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities, with the densest and largest scale development taking place in the most accessible locations. Unless it can be demonstrated that the accessibility of a site is to be significantly upgraded, for example, by providing high quality pedestrian routes or providing access to good public transport services, any new

development must be at a scale, density and intensity appropriate to that level of accessibility.”

- 6.8.8 To improve pedestrian facilities in the local area, a raised informal crossing, comprising a flat-top speed hump with a Duratherm herringbone imprint, is proposed on Kidmore End Road, Lyefield Court at its junction with Kidmore End Road, and on Grove Road at its junction with Kidmore End Road. The alternative route avoids the narrowing, taking people to the other side of Kidmore End Road where the footpath is wider.
- 6.8.9 The Institute of Highways and Transportation’s (IHT’s) guidance, Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot (2000) asserts that the pedestrian routes should be designed so that the walking distance along the footpath system to the bus stops should not be more than 400m from the furthest houses (approx. 5 min walk). Whilst it is desirable to provide bus stops within 400m, it is recognized that people are prepared to walk much further. In relation to travel to public transport, the WYG document ‘How far do people Walk?’ identifies greater distances of 800m as acceptable distances to bus services which equates to approx. 10 min walk.
- 6.8.10 The Transport Assessment states that pedestrian and cycle links can be extended from the northern end of the site, connecting to the traffic free cycle route NCN 5 to the north, as shown in Figure 6.1 within the Transport Assessment. These do not form part of this application (redline area) but would provide enhanced accessibility to/from the site for pedestrians and cyclists. The applicant has agreed to the provision of pedestrian and cycle links prior to commencement of development and will accept a planning condition to satisfactorily control this matter to deliver a foot/cycle route from the northern edge of the proposed development to NCN5. Details of the construction of any hard-surfaced pathways should be conditioned to ensure they are suitable for users including pedestrians, cyclists, and disabled users and will be subject to consideration by South Oxfordshire District Council.
- 6.8.11 The proposal on balance is therefore consider to accord with Policy CC6 and TR1 subject to a contribution to secure bus provision.
- 6.8.12 **Internal Layout** : Manual for Streets (MfS) is expected to be used predominantly for the design, construction, adoption and maintenance of new residential streets. Long, straight streets with good forward visibility can lead to higher speeds, therefore, one way working / give-way build outs are indicatively shown on the updated masterplan (Appendix A) as further traffic calming features. The build outs are distanced greater than 70m apart as they will work in conjunction with the meandering street, junctions and driveways/frontage to slow traffic. They have been placed between junctions, and driveways at suitable locations and achieve 20mph MfS forward visibility. Full details will be designed through Reserved Matters which is acceptable to the Highway Authority.
- 6.8.13 **Parking & Cycle Parking** : Policy TR5 of the Local Plan states that 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. It is important that enough parking is provided so that there is not a knock-on effect on the safety and function of the highway through on-street parking.

Car and cycle parking are considered to be acceptable subject to condition and the provision of a car club for a period of 5 years.

6.8.14 **Person Trip Analysis:** The Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) database has been used to calculate the proposed trip rate and subsequent trip generation for the proposed residential development. TRICS survey data is used to analyse individual or selected sets of survey counts to produce trip rate information based on user-defined development scenarios. The results provide an estimate of the likely activity at a development, and it is widely used by both transport planning consultants and local authorities. As set out in the detailed comments above the Highway Authority are satisfied that the vehicle trips identified by the applicant are a robust assessment of the proposed development.

6.8.15 **Highway Impact:** The Highway Authority are aware that residents have identified road works that took place at the time of the traffic counts and have advised that these would have affected the results of the survey undertaken. It is noted that the road works took place between 26th June 2019 and Monday 1st July 2019. However, it has now been clarified by the applicant that the junctions were assessed utilizing the manual classified traffic counts which took place on 25th June 2019 which would be prior to any road works taking place.

As stated above the ATC survey data does not fundamentally change during the assessment period either before or after the installation of the roadworks and the MTC surveys have been assessed against the ATC data and have identified that they are comparable against one another. It should be stated that in some cases the MTC data does represent an increased traffic flow and therefore the assessment of the development is robust.

The Highway Authority therefore have no planning grounds to dispute the survey results undertaken by the applicant as they comply with the DfT standards for traffic surveys.

6.8.16 Detailed assessments of road junctions were undertaken and are considered to be acceptable subject to the required improvement to be secured via S106 Agreement. However a single reason for refusal relates to the impacts of the Peppard Road/ Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road not being mitigated as the applicant would have to do further assessment work to establish that any improvements put forward do mitigate the development prior to any works being specified being include within a S106 Legal agreement. The scheme therefore fails to propose any improvement to this junction to mitigate the impact of the development contrary to Local Plan Policies TR3.

6.8.17 **Off-Site Highway Works** These seek to proposed pedestrian improvements and traffic calming measures. In principle, the proposed pedestrian priority measures are acceptable subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit being undertaken. The works will be secured through the S106 process and a highway agreement will need to be entered into for works undertaken on the public highway.

6.8.18 **Construction** The applicant should be aware that there would be significant transport implications constructing the proposed development within the existing urban area of Reading. One of the key concerns of planning is to ensure that new development does not reduce the quality of the environment for

others, particularly where it would affect residential properties. Therefore, any full application would be conditioned to ensure a Construction Method Statement is submitted and approved before any works commence on-site to regulate the amenity effects of construction. As well as demonstrating a commitment to ensuring the number of HGV movements are managed and controlled, the CMS must demonstrate that appropriate measures will be implemented to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on the road network around the construction site.

6.9 Impact on residential amenity

Existing Residential Properties

- 6.9.1 As set out above the layout and scale of development are for consideration at this stage. The existing properties to be impacted by the proposed built form of the development are the dwellings that adjoin the site. The layout allows predominately back to back relationships with adjoining residential plots and these back to back distances meet a minimum of 20 metres to ensure that adequate levels of privacy are provided within the new development. Due to this relationship between the proposed dwellings and neighbouring properties it is not considered that the development will have an adverse impact on neighbours in terms of loss of light and privacy in accordance with Policy CC8 'Safeguarding amenity'. Harm to outlook from the rear of existing dwellings and increased lighting within the site will be significantly altered but due to the back to back distances created within the site this not considered to cause significant harm to residential amenity to be a reason for refusal of planning permission. It is noted that dwellings on the Kidmore End Road frontage and Lyfield Court do not have a back to back relationship with the proposed development but adequate separation distances are also achieved to these dwellings. The proposed health centre building and other flatted block although up to 3 stories are set with the site, and the scale of these buildings is not considered to have an adverse impact on existing dwellings.

Future residents

- 6.9.2 Policy H5 provides a series of standards which all new build housing should be built to with Policy H10 requiring dwellings to be provided with functional private or communal outdoor space. Policy CC8 also stipulates a number of factors that new residential developments should be considered against. As indicated by the scale of the dwellings and indicative floor layout provided officers are satisfied that the dwellings as specified can achieve the minimum areas for different sizes and types of dwellings, as set out in nationally described space standard, referred to in Policy H5. Amenity space sizes can also be provided in line with Policy H10 for flatted units as the provision of balconies and some communal space is accepted, and the final appearance of the dwellings is to be determined at the reserved matters stage. However, in relation to a number of individual dwellings although the quantum of space is acceptable the presence of retained mature trees in rear gardens is considered to reduce their functionality through over shadowing and could give rise to concerns with safety for future residents contrary to Policy H10.
- 6.9.3 The layout also demonstrates that the relationship of dwellings within the site to each other is satisfactory to ensure that dwellings have adequate privacy, light visual dominance, or harm to outlook. Crime and the fear of crime also have a major impact on quality of life and the wellbeing of a building occupants.

Enabling occupants to feel safe and secure is therefore essential to successful, sustainable communities and is supported by Policy CC7 'Design and the public realm'. Comments from the Crime Prevention Design Advisor have been noted in relation to built structures and in relation to the apartment blocks matters in relation to internal layout can be resolved at a reserved matter stage to adhere to 'Secure by Design' principles.

- 6.9.4 The form and operation of the Heath Care Centre subject conditions in relation to hours of use and any plant required is not considered to cause significant harm to residential amenity of existing and future occupiers. The proposal is considered to satisfactorily accord with Policy EN17 and CC8.
- 6.9.5 The applicant has submitted a Superfast Broadband Strategy Statement. It sets out there are a range of potential options for delivering superfast broadband to the application site at this stage. The Statement has focussed on BT Openreach, Vodafone, Talk Talk and Sky as the best-placed companies to provide this key communications utility to the Site, as they are already active in the Reading area. This is considered acceptable at outline stage.

6.10 Pollution / Water Resources / SUDS

- 6.10.1 Policy EN15 'Air quality' and EN16 'Pollution and Water resources' will only permit development where mitigation measures to ensure that developments do not have an adverse effect on air quality; land, noise and light pollution; and water resources. Detailed comments from the Council's Environmental Health Officers are set out above, which assess the differing impact at construction and then operational phase - once a development is completed. In relation to matters of air quality and it is considered that subject to robust conditions and that the contribution is secured to introduce a smarter signal operating scheme at the Henley Road/Prospect Street/Peppard Road junction with the aim of improving the traffic flow thereby improving Air Quality that this impact can be suitably mitigated.
- 6.10.2 In relation to noise which during the construction and demolition phase will have an adverse impact on the nearest noise sensitive receptors, even with mitigation in place. This has been assessed as a minor to moderate adverse effect with mitigation in place. Therefore it is necessary for the developer to follow Best Practicable Means to minimise the impact during construction & demolition - this can be secured by condition to ensure that the specific measures to be implemented are submitted and approved prior to works commencing within a Construction Method Statement. The applicant would also be expected to submit a S61 (Control of Pollution Act 1974) which will mean that they will have to follow best practice to control the noise and vibration.
- 6.10.3 Officers would also seek that a developer liaise with the adjacent Emmer Green Primary school and residents about issues and particular noisy/ dusty works and seek to offer quiet periods in the day taking into account the school day. These matters can be included with a S61 as set out above.
- 6.10.4 For the operational phase, the assessment indicates that a good internal noise environment can be achieved using appropriate glazing and sound insulation for walls and ventilation which could be conditioned, and further secured at

reserved matters stage in relation to appeared. Acceptable noise level rating for all plant must adhere to can also be controlled by condition.

- 6.10.5 In relation to Contamination officers has considered the details submitted with the application and has recommended that condition that can satisfactorily safeguard the amenity of existing and future occupiers.
- 6.10.6 Policy EN18 considers matters of Flooding and Drainage. In relation to water resources the comments of the Environment Agency and Thames Water are set out in detail above which raise no objection to the proposals and see no further technical studies. Thames water confirm the scale of the proposed development does not materially affect the sewer network and as such they have no objection. Also, as the application indicates that surface water will not be discharged to the public network, they have no objection, subject to approval from the Lead Local Flood Authority as set out below. Thames Water so set out that they have been unable to determine the waste water infrastructure needs of this application but consider that this matter can be dealt with by condition. It is also noted that Thames Water has identified an inability of the existing water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of this development proposal but also consider that this could be dealt with by condition.
- 6.10.7 Third party comments in relation to water and drainage are noted, ground water contamination has been assessed Contamination Risk Assessment February 2019 (Volume 4, Appendix F) and the GeoEnvironmental Assessment produced by IDOM in November 2019 including infiltration testing results and land quality. The application also contains a Flood Risk Assessment and SuDS Strategy (Volume 4, Appendix D).
- 6.10.8 In relation Flooding the application site is located within Flood Zone 1 classified with a Low Probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. It is noted that the surface water run-off from the proposed development will need to be managed; and the SuDS Strategy for the site proposes four infiltration basins proposed to be located in the northern half of the site and the inclusion of permeable paving in appropriate areas.
The comments from the lead Flood Authority as are set out above and confirm that subject to condition the submitted.

The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policies EN15, EN16 & EN18.

6.11 Sustainable Development

- 6.11.1 Local Plan Policy H5 'Standards for New Housing' seeks that all new-build housing is built to high design standards. In particular, new housing should adhere to national prescribed space standards, water efficiency standards more than the Building Regulations, zero carbon homes standards (for major schemes), and provide at least 5% of dwellings as wheelchair user units. Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) and Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that development proposals incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) seeks that developments of more than 20 dwellings should consider the inclusion of combined heat and power plant (CHP) or other form of decentralised energy provision.
- 6.11.2 The Energy and Sustainability Strategy document submitted with this planning application seeks to set out how the proposed development will comply with

current standards for energy use, including the use of renewable energy. The information as submitted includes reference to very limited use of solar and air source heat pumps; and is not considered to provide adequate justification of decentralised energy not being provided. Additionally the amount of solar PV proposed is very low.

- 6.11.3 Clarity is al in relation to the level of carbon reduction sought from the scheme. From examining the proposals provided from the Energy strategy and the matters for consideration, the development was aiming to achieve a 43% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions which meets the minimum policy requirement of - 35% of the 2013 part L levels and the remainder was to be purchased under the Zero Carbon Homes Fund for a value of £454k. The matters for consideration however quotes a reduction of 83% with a much lower saving of 17% (£135k). This matter will be updated at your meeting.
- 6.11.3 The Sustainability Assessment submitted with this application sets out how the proposed Health Centre will meet the requirements of BREEAM “Very Good” standard, in compliance with the relevant SPD.

6.12 Historic Environment / Area of Archaeological Significance

- 6.12.1 Paragraph 129 of the NPPF requires that local planning authorities identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal.
- 6.12.2 Archaeology and Built Heritage have been considered within the submitted Environmental Statement. The Site does not lie within, or bordering, a Conservation Area, and there are no listed buildings within or adjacent to the site. Heritage Assets the wider area including listed buildings and Ancient Woodland have been assessed. Officers consider that there are therefore no likely impacts of the development on the historic settings of any designated Heritage Assets.
- 6.12.3 It noted that objections have been submitted on the basis that the site was originally designed by James Braid; that the club is a very significant part of the history of the Reading area and should be protected. As set out above the site has no national heritage designation; and is not a defined Locally Important Heritage asset and therefore cannot form a reason for refusal.
- 6.12.4 In relation to archaeology the Site has a moderate potential for archaeological deposits of later prehistoric (Bronze Age - Iron Age) and Romano-British date, a moderate potential for deposits of earlier prehistoric date, and a low potential for deposits of medieval and post-medieval date, with the exception of late post-medieval field boundaries for which the potential is high. The proposed works are likely to have a significant impact upon any surviving archaeological deposits within the Site. However as set out by Berkshire Archaeology the potential impacts can be mitigated by a programme of archaeological in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which could be secured by way of condition.

The proposal, subject to condition to mitigate impacts on archaeology are considered to accord with local plan policy EN1 and EN2.

6.13 Mineral Deposits

- 6.13.1 The application site sits on an area which is considered likely to contain deposits of sand and gravel, according to British Geological Survey mapping. Saved policy 2 from the Replacement Minerals Local Plan states that:
- 6.13.2 “The local planning authorities will oppose development proposals which would cause the sterilisation of mineral deposits on the proposed development site, or which would prejudice the future working of minerals on adjacent sites, except where it is demonstrated that:
- (i) the mineral deposit is of no commercial interest, and is unlikely to be so in the future; or
 - (ii) having regard to all relevant planning considerations, there is an overriding case in favour of allowing the proposed development to proceed without the prior extraction of the mineral; or
 - (iii) extraction of the mineral would be subject to such strong environmental or other objection that it would be highly unlikely that it would ever be permitted in any circumstances.”
- 6.13.3 This development would represent a sterilisation of mineral deposits on the site. A Minerals Resource Assessment and further response letter (dated 25/5/21) has been submitted. It is considered by officers that the as the Submission Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (CEBJMWP) is now at Examination stage it has some weight. However, as Policy M2 of the CEBJMWP is similar in this regard to policy 2 of the Replacement Minerals Local Plan (RMLP), the proposal can be considered mainly under the latter.
- 6.13.4 In line with Hampshire Services comments on the preliminary Minerals Resource Assessment, officers do not consider that it has been fully shown that the development complies with criterion i of Policy 2, i.e. that the mineral deposit is of no commercial interest, and is unlikely to be so in the future, but policy 2 only requires that one of the three criteria be met, and this does not therefore lead to conflict with the policy. As the points in relation to criterion iii are general planning matters rather than technical minerals matters need further advice was not required from Hampshire Services.
- 6.13.5 Reading Borough Council Officers are satisfied that the additional information demonstrates that the sterilisation of mineral resources on the site would be acceptable in this instance under Policy 2 of the RMLP, because, in line with criterion iii of that policy, extraction of the mineral would be subject to such strong environmental or other objection that it would be highly unlikely that it would ever be permitted in any circumstances. It is agreed, as set out by the applicant that the nature of the facilities needed to undertake this extraction would be highly unlikely to be acceptable in an area closely hemmed in by residential properties on most sides, as would the amount of HGV movements such extraction would generate on residential roads. Such extraction would also result in the loss of many of the natural features within the site, including the loss of a number of protected trees, many of which would be otherwise retained. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy M2 of the Replacement Minerals Local Plan (RMLP).
- 6.13.6 The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy M2 of the Replacement Minerals Local Plan (RMLP).

6.14 Community Facilities

Proposed Healthcare Facility

6.14.1 The development proposes the erection of 600sqm health care facility on the Kidmore End Road Frontage. As set out above although the Policy CA1b does not apply to the development this policy is an indication that additional development of the scale in the allocation, or greater, is expected to need to be supported by improvements in healthcare provision. The provision of a health centre would deliver new facilities in line with Local Plan Policy OU1 and is supported in principle. However, concerns have been raised in relation to whether the proposed building would meet the requirements of local practices and the Clinical Commissioning Group. No comments have been received at the time of writing. Therefore it is considered that this community facilities it can be treated as a limited community benefit in terms of the planning balance in determining the application. The LPA would need to ensure that fallback position if the facility is not taken up, e.g. a financial contribution to improvements elsewhere in the Emmer Green area, and there would need to be some understanding of how else the facility, or the land on which it sits, would be used. The applicant has offered as part of the S106 package set out the S106 section below however this has not been secured at this time.

6.14.2 Further consideration of education to be updated at your meeting.

6.15 S106 / CIL

6.15.1 In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. Based on the 2021 residential CIL rate of £156.71 per square metre the current broad estimate is £3,820,433. However, under the current scheme to provide onsite affordable housing the applicant could qualify for a reduction to the levy based on the affordable housing floor area being deducted at a later date.

6.15.2 Policy CC9 'Securing Infrastructure' sets out that Proposals for development will not be permitted unless infrastructure, services, resources, amenities or other assets lost or impacted upon as a result of the development or made necessary by the development will be provided through direct provision or financial contributions at the appropriate time

Therefore were Members minded not to agree with the officer recommendation and decide to grant planning permission for the proposed development there are a number of obligations that the applicant would be required to commit to through the completion of a S106 legal agreement. The heads of terms agreed would include:

1. Provision of 35% on-site Affordable Housing at a tenure split to be agreed.
2. Provision of a 600 sqm health centre or a commensurate sum towards off-site provision.
3. A contribution of £100,000 to either be paid into Cucumber Wood Park Management Ltd or secured via separate legal agreement under s.33 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 to manage and maintain

woodland planting, allotment provision, open spaces and footpaths and cycleways on land within the Golf Course in South Oxfordshire over 20 years.

4. A contribution to the Carbon Offset Levy to comply with Policy H5. Sum to be agreed
5. A contribution of £10,000 towards off-site biodiversity planting and ongoing management and maintenance.
6. A contribution of £250,000 towards provision of 3G sports pitch provision, as per Sport England request.
7. A contribution of £50,000 towards upgrade of Emmer Green Playing Fields Play Equipment.
8. A contribution to Employment, Skills and Training of £62,470 (Band 9), based on a construction value of £76.8 million.
9. A contribution of £10,000 to assist funding of a local Car Club provider and provision of two on-site car club spaces.
10. A contribution of £5,000 towards provision of an on-site Cycle Hire scheme, to be located adjacent to the Health Centre.
11. A contribution to Employment, Skills and Training monitoring of £6,134.40
12. A contribution towards S106 monitoring of £5,000
13. A contribution towards RBC Legal Costs of £10,000
14. A contribution towards provision of Public Art of £25,000
15. Off-site highways works and improvements, comprising:
 - Improvements to Kidmore End Road Access, plus new bus shelter and levelled access - drawing number 45675/5510/001A
 - Provision of a secondary access to Kidmore End Road, including informal crossing with tactile paving - drawing number 45675/5510/003.
 - Improvements to the Kidmore End Road / Peppard Road junction - drawing number 45675/5510/006
 - Improvements to the Kidmore End Road / Lyefield Court and Kidmore End Road / Grove Road junction - drawing number 5675/5510/004
 - Upgrading the signal junction at the Peppard Road / Henley Road / Prospect Street junction to MOVA. Exact amount to be agreed during S106 negotiations and once further information from RBCs Network Management team has been provided.

The following are further provisions sought by the LPA as set out by Transport in the main report:

£50,000 towards MOVA and pedestrian cycle improvements at the Peppard Road / Henley Road/ Westfield Road junction

£50,000 a year towards the bus services serving the site for the duration of the build for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 5 years.

6.15.3 Officers can confirm that a planning obligation based on the above heads of terms would be compliant with regulations that state that such obligations may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is—

- (a)necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- (b)directly related to the development; and
- (c)fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

6.16 Equalities Impact

6.16.1 When determining an application for planning permission 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 as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues, and priorities in relation to this 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 proposed development.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the harmful impacts of the proposed development and the failures to meet all relevant policy requirements need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposed development. By reference to the assessment above a number of problems with the development are identified which are contrary to policies in the development plan. These include the loss of a significant area of undesignated open space without securing appropriate mitigation for the loss; that the proposed layout is not considered to provide sense of place with good quality public realm within the site or provide preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the adjacent open landscape within South Oxfordshire.

7.2 There will be other temporary impacts, such as disturbance during the demolition and construction phases for example. However, a number of these matters could be sufficiently mitigated by various measures applied by the applicant and secured by conditions and legal agreement obligations. However as set out above in particular in relation to Policy EN8 satisfactory mitigation measures have not been secured at this time.

- 7.3 This harm needs to be weighed with the benefits of the proposals. In particular, the provision of family homes with an affordable housing offer of 35 %, and a number of other infrastructure improvements as set out above to be secured via a legal agreement. This is a considerable planning benefit when set within the context of a pressing need for housing, and affordable housing, in the Borough.
- 7.4 However, the proposal would result in the loss of a significant amount of undesignated open space and resultant biodiversity where the proposed scheme is not considered to provide a high quality development with green infrastructure and landscaping to respond positively to this local context or maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the adjacent open landscape.
- 7.5 As such, officers have concluded that the conflicts with the development plan are not outweighed by the benefits of the proposal in this instance. Officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. Planning Permission is therefore recommended to be refused for the reasons as stated at the start of this report.

Case Officer: Susanna Bedford

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Golf club public consultation responses

<p><u>Summary of objection issues</u></p>	<p><u>Officer response (if there is no response here, then the issue is covered in the officer Appraisal section of this committee report below).</u></p>
<p>1. Non compliance with adopted local plan Policy CA1B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed development includes twice as many homes and three times the amount of land used as the Local Plan allocation. • Development should be smaller. • Proposed development does not reflect sustainability policies in the Local Plan. • The development would not be required until the ‘long term’ from 2026-2036. It is not required now (application is therefore premature). • Not in any significant way any different to refused application 200713 and has even carried forward errors too (the description of the site, housing numbers involved, for instance) • The area proposed is not in the Reading Borough Council agreed plan for future house building on this scale. If it does go ahead therefore there will be something very fishy going on in the Council (backhanders, etc.). 	<p>Projected delivery dates in the Local Plan are advisory only.</p> <p>The Council disputes any impropriety on this matter. The application is being considered on its individual planning merits.</p>
<p>2. Housing need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does Reading need this new housing? Reading is losing its identity and space. • The development is not required to meet the Borough’s housing targets and therefore exceeds the local plan allocation for part of the site is not a positive material consideration. • The development should provide dwellings for Key Workers • Town centre retail and office space is becoming obsolete and provision of homes should be focused in existing town centre buildings. • Brownfield sites should be considered instead. • Housing density and type do not reflect the local character or the needs in terms of density and mix required in the Local Plan • Too many 4-5 bedroom houses 	<p>Conversion of existing town centre buildings to residential is already a key part of meeting the Borough’s annual housing need.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing will not be affordable • Affordable housing needs to be met with no compromise • No provision for social housing • There is no need for this many homes in Emmer Green. 	
<p>3. Traffic and transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic will increase in the area as a result of the development. • Bus service is inadequate and most people will drive rather than take public transport. • Grove Road will be made more dangerous for pedestrians and drivers, particularly children walking to and from school. • Gravel Hill is closed off and will not support additional vehicles. • Kidmore End Road and Tanners Land will become more hazardous. • Concern over traffic on Thames crossing bridges. Development should not be allowed unless there is a Third Thames crossing • Proposed widening of Kidmore End Road for construction traffic would encroach on the grass verge, limiting space for pedestrians and leaving no space for social distancing/wheelchairs. Or will it be taking land from the play area? • Proposed off site traffic measures are not adequate to mitigate impact of development. Many junctions in Caversham and central Reading are at capacity • Inadequate on-plot parking for proposed properties • Construction traffic will have a detrimental impact on highway safety • Safety concerns for cyclists, especially on Kidmore End Road • Inadequate parking in the wider area leading to more antisocial parking • Concern about emergency services being able to cross from Reading across the river considering the increased traffic. • Query accuracy of traffic modelling using old data. does not agree traffic increase on Kidmore End Road will be negligible. • Park and Ride facility won't be used by residents • Kidmore End Rd/Peppard Road junction safety concerns worsened with additional traffic • Incompatible with Policy TR1 as existing roads are too narrow to accommodate new bus/cycle routes • Policy TR4 not taken into account (cycle routes) 	<p>None is proposed by this application.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access at Kidmore End Road is already very dangerous for cyclists and is made worse by parked cars near the Black Horse and HGVs. • Bottleneck near Emmer Green Park will worsen. • Additional entrance being considered near Highdown Hill will endanger pupils at Highdown school. • There is not enough parking in the area and residents are forced to park along busy roads. • Major facilities require crossing the river (hospital, fire service, police, ambulance, rail station). • Roads have already been narrowed due to installation of cycle lanes. • The access is near landlocked roads • No bus or cycle routes proposed meaning people will have to rely on cars • The development is against traffic policy where Councillors and Officers have publicly stated that the traffic congestion north of the river is unacceptable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many unallocated parking spaces will encourage more cars. • Reducing parking level by 100 spaces will lead to increased parking issues in the area. • The application submits that trip generation characteristics over the day will be similar as for the Golf Club when in fact they are quite different as the Golf Club will be much more steady during the day and outside commuter times • Garages may not be big enough and more parking will be required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked car journeys and people having to take children to distant schools by car, adds to traffic congestion in the area • Too many pinch-points on routes into Reading • Emmer Green is a car-dependent area • Installing another roundabout at the junction of Kidmore End Rd and Peppard Rd will result in 2 roundabouts and a pedestrian crossing within the space of 100 yards, causing danger. • Bus services in Caversham reduced in 2019, Covid and traffic congestion have reduced passenger numbers further • Traffic safety will be compromised due to the increase in domestic cats from the development. 	<p>It is not clear what this means.</p> <p>This application must be considered on its individual merits. There is not an embargo on development due to traffic issues.</p> <p>Garages would need to comply with the Council's standards.</p> <p>Cat ownership is not considered to be a material planning consideration to this planning application.</p>
<p>4. Provision of Infrastructure</p> <p><u>Health</u></p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development will increase pressure on overstretched healthcare facilities • The proposed health care facility may not become operational • Surgery only to be provided as a shell unit. There will be trouble staffing it. • Would the medical centre be built first or last? • Will put strain on local hospitals which are already at capacity. • Already difficult to secure an appointment with the local GPs. Area is struggling after the closure of the Peppard Road and Priory Avenue surgeries. How will surgeries deal with influx of new patients while addressing post-pandemic backlog? 	<p>Were the Committee to resolve to grant permission, a suitable trigger point, related to the construction phasing, would be supplied.</p>
<p><u>Education:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local schools are at capacity/over subscribed. • Build a secondary school on the golf club instead • Class sizes are already too large for good education. 	<p>This is not required on the site by the adopted Local Plan.</p>
<p><u>Other:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before planning approval is given or the Reserved Matters approved, the details of the reserved matters need to be known by the community, especially the community requirements, schools and the affordable housing. • Until there is enough school capacity year after year, until police can investigate every crime, until everybody can get a doctor's appointment inside two weeks, until all the brownfield sites are developed and until RBC's environmental obligations are met, it does not have a moral right to even look at a proposal like this. • Additional strain on policing. • We have seen the consequences of financial awards being given to councils/local authorities before: The Bugs Bottom development where neither school nor health facility was ever realised beyond the drawing on the plans. • Infrastructure to support development is not in place. 	<p>The consideration of this Outline planning application considers the in-principle aspects and sets out what matters are for consideration now and what will be reserved for later approval. The matters listed are for consideration now.</p> <p>The Local Planning Authority cannot put an embargo on development; nor can it stop planning applications being submitted or considered.</p> <p>Not a planning matter.</p> <p>Facilities for other developments were considered appropriate in those instances and such considerations are not relevant to the consideration of this planning application</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local shops are already crowded (particularly with Covid-19 measures such as queuing in place). The proposal should include a shop. Lack of local shop will increase car journeys. 	<p>The adopted local plan allocation CA1b does not include a shop on this site.</p>
<p>5. Impact on the character of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site should be turned into a country park or a community forest. The proposal is not in keeping with the low density character of the area due to the proposed density and inclusion of 3 storey health centre with flats above. House heights should be controlled by condition. Garden sizes are substandard and this is not characteristic of the area. Lack of communal space for the flats could lead to antisocial behaviour. No discernible change in the layout of the housing development, so it should attract similar concerns as the previous application. Does not reflect rural countryside character of the area. Does not reflect village-feel of the area. Golf course is a vital green space which prevents Emmer Green from extending into the Green Belt of South Oxfordshire. Council rejected the similar Gladman application at Emmer Green, so there is no justification for this. Should fully utilise brownfield sites before greenfield sites. Impact on the character of Emmer Green - size of the proposed development is out of proportion to recent local development. Does not want low-density housing in the area. Developer should be encouraged to consider a smaller development with fewer houses. Development considered to be aesthetically displeasing. 	<p>The adopted local plan allocation CA1b does not include this on this site.</p> <p>Communal space for the flats is considered to be suitable.</p> <p>Each planning application must be considered on its individual planning merits.</p> <p>The local plan allocation is relevant. Not clear what this comment refers to.</p>
<p>6. Landscape and open space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The golf course provides a green buffer to the AONB This application has less green space than the last one. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of green space will have detrimental impacts on mental health and exercise. • Existing footpaths and rights of way are valued by local people. • The site is a quiet semi-rural amenity landscape - its topography should be categorised as 'high value' but the supporting documents underestimate the landscape value of the site. • Not clear who will manage the green spaces and therefore who it will be accessible to. • No continuous green space within the development. • The site is defined in the Local Plan as Undesignated Open Space, and although in private ownership this does not devalue its landscape quality which is visual amenity to the large local community. • The density of housing will lead to large scale erosion of the open space. • Policy CA1B states that 'Areas of landscape importance will be preserved, including the edge of the Chilterns AONB'. • The proposed open space within a country park is within South Oxfordshire. • The site owner has made submissions to the SODC Local Plan for this land to be allocated for other development. • Concern for harm to Green Belt • There has to be a northern limit to the built up area; i.e. where it is now. • Golfing reviews describe the present Course as having a pleasant parkland setting. This would be lost. • Areas in the development described as 'amenity' - unclear what this refers to. • The application mentions a large, open, public space, but the large area of 'open space'/country park is in South Oxfordshire and around ½ a mile from the access point to the site off Kidmore End Road. The proposal has also made submissions to SODC to have this 'open space' included in their Local Plan and this shows that the Golf Club has no intention of retaining this land as open space in the long term. • Preference for the park [assume this means the golf course] to become a SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space) • Community should be able to buy land for green space as an asset of community value. 	<p>This does not accord with the adopted local plan allocation CA1b. ACV is separate to the planning consideration. Land ownership is not usually a relevant planning consideration.</p>
<p>7. Impact on trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many trees are protected by TPOs. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancient woodland will be destroyed. • Development should include retention of more of the existing trees. • Proximity of proposed dwellings may cause risk to existing and proposed trees. • Planting of saplings will not compensate for loss of mature tree canopy cover in the short or medium term. • Historic trees will be removed. • Removing trees and replacing them does not correctly mitigate for carbon dioxide capture. • The trees within the site are covered by a Tree Preservation Order, the ‘like-for-like’ replacement is not of benefit to the site. • The planting of 1000 trees in Oxfordshire does not increase tree cover in Reading Borough in line with the RBC Tree Strategy. 	<p>This is a specific term. There are not Ancient Woodlands within the application site.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8. Ecology • The green link required by Policy CA1b is not provided. • Proposal will harm existing habitats. • Development will put pressure on nearby Area of Identified Biodiversity Interest. • Detrimental impact to habitat of bats, birds including kites and badgers. • Thriving House Sparrow populations in the area would be put at risk (a Red List species). • Site offers no Biodiversity net gain. • Concerned that the ecological metrics will obscure the fact that the development will not actually secure an overall biodiversity net gain. • Light levels from the site will have an adverse effect on nocturnal wildlife • Concern for fragmentation of the land into fenced gardens will not allow the same ecosystems • The golf club should be retained and ‘re-wilded’ as in Brighton. 	
<p>9. Water supply and drainage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drainage within the site is poor and flood risk worsening by tree removal has not been assessed. • There will be reduced soak away for rainwater • Application does not address drainage issues in the area. • Increased run-off from new roads and pavements • Local drainage already inadequate resulting in frequent flooding. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary aquifers underground not taken into account. • It is well known that the Golf Club's land is regularly waterlogged and has also suffered plenty of sinkholes • The soil has high clay content which will worsen flooding effects • No risk assessment from the Environment Agency or Thames Water has been provided. 	<p>Not clear what this is referring to, but the application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and a SUDS strategy.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10. Construction impacts • Increase in traffic movements will have a detrimental impact due to noise and vibration. • Visual impact of hoarding around whole site during construction process (stated to be up to 5 years) • Dust pollution impact especially on children • Concern over proximity to Emmer Green Primary for children's safety and noise pollution during school hours • The construction period would be protracted and the approach would take 30 years for the little remaining open space to recover to maturity. • Dust from the construction will negatively impact the health of local pupils and school staff. • Construction will be a health hazard for the elderly and sheltered housing facility. • Questions whether the development [assume this relates to construction] be able to cope with potential Covid regulations. • Construction traffic damage to road surfaces. • HGV vibration impact on cottages in Kidmore End Road. 	<p>This concern would be true of any development site and is not a reason to withhold planning permission</p>
<p>11. Neighbour amenity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 50 existing buildings [dwellings?] have views over the golf course which will be detrimentally affected • For the residents of Lyefield Court and The Conifers (retirement estate) there will be a negative impact on residents here who purchased for the peace and tranquillity of the area. • Existing footpaths and rights of way are well used by local people. • In order to get more taxes, you are prepared to make current residents' lives unbearable. 	<p>No landowner has a right to a view under the Planning Acts. Preservation of a view is not therefore a material planning consideration.</p> <p>Collection of taxes is not a material planning consideration.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the Council can reject an individual’s planning application on grounds of neighbour’s amenity, then how can the major inconvenience of neighbours be overlooked? • Noise will increase. • Negative economic amenity on surrounding residents. 	<p>Each planning application (whether a householder planning application or a large Outline planning application such as this) would need to be suitable on its own planning merits to be recommended for planning permission.</p> <p>Not clear what this refers to, but if this means suppression of land values, this is not a material planning consideration.</p>
<p>12. Air quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality in the area would worsen as a result of the development. • Proposal contradicts the Council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency. • Removing trees contributes to climate change and extinction. • Detrimental impact on air quality in relation to nitrogen dioxide emissions • Removal of mature trees and inadequate planting of new trees will not serve as mitigation for the scheme or provide the same level of CO2 absorption as existing • The site acts a ‘green lung’ for the local area which will be lost if the site is developed. • pollution from demolition will detrimentally affect nearby residents and school children. • The levels of nitrogen dioxide at Prospect Street and Caversham Road, both of which would be adversely affected by increase in traffic from the development, are already at or above the objective/limit values and the impact on the health of those residents will be worsened, e.g. asthma. • Queries compatibility of construction with climate emergency policy. • Pollution levels are already excessive, with the Thames Valley having the highest asthma rates outside of London. 	
<p>13. Impact on leisure facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not consider that golf course is surplus to requirements. • Questions whether golf provision in SODC is a superior offer • Disputes whether Reading Golf Club is in financial difficulties 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The club building with the site is used by the local community as an events venue e.g. hosts local clubs. This function will be lost. • Questions how golf provision can be secured in the future as Caversham Heath is a private club that could also be put up for sale. • Youth activities in the area such as cubs and scouts are oversubscribed. • Informal access to dog-walkers on golf course will not be replaced in anything like an accessible location • Alternative golfing provision proposed is much more distant to the Reading population, contrary to the LP aims. • Policy RL6 not met • Considers that the proposed recreation facilities are likely to be unviable too. • Local social cohesion will be harmed. • There are not activities for families or young people. • They are in fact altering the SODC area to a 9- hole par 3 course & a footgolf area. • Inadequate playground provision in the development. 	<p>Community function noted, but this is secondary to the primary leisure use of the site.</p> <p>Not clear what this objection is referring to.</p>
<p>14. Heritage matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Golf club has been on the site since 1910 so is considered to be significant part of the history of Reading • The archaeology report is not sufficient. • Policies EN1, EN2 and EN4 have not been taken into account 	<p>The golf club is not considered to be a (non-designated) Heritage Asset.</p>
<p>15. Impacts on South Oxfordshire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application site would result in further pressure to develop the adjacent land within South Oxfordshire. • The landscape and open space facilities sought to be provided in South Oxfordshire are not firm commitments and should not be relied on. • Query population numbers generated by the development, consider they are higher and therefore the impact on infrastructure would be worse. • Development in the SODC area does not meet the SODC local plan. • Brochures seen indicate various options which build on this proposal, to then expand housing provision beyond into S Oxon. This application, if approved, would therefore set an undesirable precedent. 	<p>Precedent is not a material planning consideration. Each planning application must be considered on its merits and no planning application should be pre-judged.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many developments are being approved on the border with Reading Borough and this will exacerbate infrastructure issues and worsen traffic. • Developers are pursuing SODC to have adjacent land allocated as well. • Concern for impact on The Chilterns AONB. 	
<p>16. Concerns with the Environmental Statement (statement required under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 of the ES - Alternative sites: clearly no alternative sites have been properly considered. • Dispute ‘beneficial’ effect on contextual land cover (chapter 14 of the ES) • Inaccuracies/concerns with Traffic and Transport Chapter of the ES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • weak methodology (e.g. basing assessments primarily on 18-hour averages of traffic flow; regarding each increment in flow as negligible unless it is the one that actually takes a road over capacity); • basic errors in arithmetic (e.g. a 39% impact on Kidmore End Road when their data shows an increase from 2574 to 4245 units, i.e 65%); and • unrepresentative input data (e.g. their traffic counts were done at a time of roadworks); • questionable assumptions (e.g. basing predictions on 485 cars not allowing for the additional 77 communal parking spaces for flats; assuming that children will walk to Emmer Green school when that school is already at capacity from within catchment and many children will therefore have to be driven to other schools); • only partial consideration of the impacts of other developments. Table 8.12 considers only committed developments within Reading; it excludes other pending applications within Reading, and most importantly, both committed and pending developments in South Oxfordshire which are feeding more and more traffic onto the Peppard Road and the two river crossings into Reading and to Reading Station. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electric construction plant and other such systems to remove the impact of the development: the application is a token gesture at best in terms of credible environmental design. • Inconsistencies in the numbers of housing, traffic in the development in the documents. Likely that these inconsistencies follow through in the assessed data, traffic and transport, ES etc, therefore invalidating the results and credibility of the proposal. • ES Chapter 8 Construction- The Plant and equipment used during the construction phase does not represent the actual levels of plant that will be on site, as the site is a rolling programme of 	

<p>construction, then the stage of works does not align. This is an underestimation of the impacts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working hours (Chapter 5 ES): this is a proposed construction of a housing development; there is no reason that there should be any construction works outside of core hours. There is nothing to be constructed on site that requires extended working hours such as large scale concrete pours or piling. Therefore the various assessments on traffic and transport are not a true representation of what will happen and should be accurately re-assessed. • ES Chapter 8: construction vehicle numbers seem to be artificially restrained and are lower than you would expect for a development and programme of this size. • Questions how HGV movements can be outside of peak hours. • No mention of a construction traffic management plan, it seems to be buried in the CEMP. • Alternative construction vehicle routes do not appear to be practicable as they do not remove the use of sensitive roads and road junctions, e.g the regularly congested junction at Clayfield Copse and Kiln Lane. • The route along Kidmore End Road route is not suitable for HGV traffic with narrow pavements and cars parked for the majority of the day on one side. • Delivery and removal of site based non road legal construction vehicles: these are not accounted for, there seems to be little or no reference to abnormal loads and their access to the site. • ES - what about the cumulative impacts of developments in terms of CO2 emissions? • ES Ch11 - mitigation measures show an uncertain outcome in terms of mitigation and should be using the precautionary principle. • ES ch 13 no detail about the use of renewables.. Language used re: adaptation to climate change is not firm enough. • Does not agree with the conclusions of the visual impact assessment in terms of impacts on night-time character, landscape character, views from adjacent residential properties and roads. Some of the stated impact levels do not make sense. 	<p>A construction method statement could require this, as necessary.</p>
<p>17. Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not a sustainable location for a housing development, given issues accessing it (e.g. traffic congestion). • There are limited facilities in Emmer Green, e.g. shops • Lack of local employment in Caversham will lead to residents travelling across the river for work. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the sustainable recovery from the damage of this development be paid for enforced and monitored. • Construction impacts will adversely and disproportionately affect those working from home • Not a sustainable development. Surely in 2021 we can do better than this? • Mental health issues will increase as a result of noise pollution. • No significant employment growth is planned in S Oxon, meaning that this is an unsustainable site in terms of access to employment . • The application does not go above the legal minimums in the design for environmentally sound development, the development should be targeting carbon negative best practice sustainable. • Houses need to be carbon neutral. • IEA guidance [assume this refers to the EIA Regulations] has been manipulated and devalued thus presenting a minimal impact. The assessment needs to be redone. • Conflict with Agenda 21 for sustainable development. 	
<p>18. Other matters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This second application has been submitted hoping that residents would suffer from objection fatigue. • Many supporters do not appear to be local, but some may gain financially from this proposal. • Rejecting the application now does not preclude development in the future, should the arguments for and against development change. • This application does not differ from withdrawn application 200713. • Thames Valley Business Park should be converted to housing instead. • Permission should be denied until the Government’s planning reforms are published 	<p>Comment noted.</p> <p>Location of respondents to a planning application is not generally relevant, but can be in some cases. Personal financial considerations are not relevant to the planning assessment, however.</p> <p>Correct, as each application will be considered in the policy and material considerations context at the time.</p> <p>Suggestion noted, but not relevant to the consideration of this planning application and TVBP is not within the Borough.</p> <p>There cannot be an embargo on deciding planning applications pending changes in Government policy; planning policy is changing all the time.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term monetary gain for a few people will have negative impact on the area forever. • Against UN’s biological diversity report. • Trust between local people and the Council was lost during the Bugs Bottom development • Loss of income or a vacant site does not justify this development • Asks where young people will spend their time. • Reading BC needs to bar the golf club from submitting any plans for several years. • No public consultation was undertaken prior to submission of the second planning application • Concern that RGC appear to be taking a creeping approach to development which could set a precedent and could ultimately lead to the permanent loss of green space in the area. • Golf Club members were advised their objections could lead to expulsion from the Golf Club. • The Golf Club should have managed their membership better in order to allow them to continue operating. • no evidence of consultation with either SODC or Kidmore End Parish [Council?] about the proposals for the open space, country park, tree planting and allotments that the applicant is asserting as fact. • The land is privately owned and will not be simply given to the local community, which may result in it being left to become a dumping ground for fly-tippers or other anti-social behaviour • Concerns around increased anti-social behaviour and crime on the new development. • Proper consultation not possible during pandemic • Young people will be disproportionately affected • No benefit to the local area or Peppard Wards • The Council is just trying to generate more Council Tax. 	<p>Concern noted, but not a material planning consideration.</p> <p>Ecological considerations have been assessed against National and Local policy.</p> <p>Comment noted. Presumably refers to comment in Infrastructure section above, response is the same. Correct, all relevant considerations must be taken into account.</p> <p>The Local Planning Authority cannot prevent planning applications from being submitted.</p> <p>It is correct that this was contrary to both National and Borough adopted policy.</p> <p>Concern noted, but precedent is not a planning matter.</p> <p>Not a planning matter.</p> <p>Suki is this a good point?</p>
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Table 3: Content of Comment SUPPORT

Topics for Support : COMMON	Other
<p>Housing Need This plan provides much needed additional housing in Emmer Green, including desperately needed Affordable Housing.</p> <p>We need more new housing as a priority, this stimulates many add on benefits to other trades and creates jobs.we must give others a chance to set up homes for their futures and family dreams. Development and expansion are our commitment towards future generations and a healthy economy.</p> <p>Could not afford to buy in the area so had to purchase elsewhere however if they build these properties then it will give me a chance to move back.</p> <p>Community Benefits: The application will be beneficial to the local community.</p> <p>New Medical Centre - much needed</p> <p>They have my support 100% they are building a state off the art Golf Club at Cav heath which will encourage Children more to play golf and exercise</p> <p>The proposal is considered, well thought out and beneficial to many (including my own close family) who live in the local area. I fully support the planning application, and know that many that have/are complaining are only considering their own financial position, and has nothing to do with 'community' common sense.</p> <p>Public Open Space</p>	

Much needed public space for leisure

The additional green spaces the club is proposing it would be a nice place to live.

The course is not open to non members so I don't see where they are losing green spaces.

The world needs homes and houses much more than we need golf courses - I would be in favour of building on many more golf courses as golf is a dying game whereas houses are needed now more than ever.

Design

The development has been carefully planned with expert advice and will bring a development of homes that will be very much in keeping with the area.

Financial Benefits:

the financial benefits to the local shops pubs and restaurants. I think the positives outweigh the negative.

The sale of the land and using the proceeds of the sale to relocate Reading Golf Course to Caversham Heath is vital for the future of Reading GC. Without this sale the club probably would not have existed in 5 to 10 yrs.

Living close to the course I believe the amenities will in enhance the area

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND REGULATORY SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21st July 2021

Ward: Southcote

App No.: 210644/REG3 & 210745/LBC

Address: Prospect Park, Liebenrood Road, Reading

Proposals: **210644/REG3** - New playground with reinstatement of existing playground back to informal parkland

210745/LBC - Listed Building Consent for new playground with reinstatement of existing playground back to informal parkland at Prospect Park a Grade II Registered Park and Garden

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Deadline: 7th July 2021 (210745/LBC) and 30th July 2021 (210644/REG3) and an extension of time has been agreed to 30th July 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT subject to the following conditions and informatives

210644/REG3

Conditions to include:

- 1) TL1 - standard time limit 3 yrs.
- 2) AP1 - Approved plans.
- 3) Details of the play equipment and materials (to be submitted)
- 4) No external lighting
- 5) Arboricultural Method Statement to be submitted (to include the existing and new sites)

Informatives to include:

- 1) IF1 - Positive & Proactive
- 2) IF2 - Pre-commencement conditions
- 3) IF5 - Terms and Conditions
- 4) IF6 - Building Control
- 5) IF7 - Complaints about construction
- 6) I11 - CIL not liable
- 7) Associated Listed Building Consent

210745/LBC

Conditions to include:

- 1) LB1 - Time Limit Listed Building (works)
- 2) LB2 - Approved Plans
- 3) Details of play equipment and materials (to be submitted)

Informatives to include:

- 1) IF1 - Positive and Proactive
- 2) IF2 - Pre-commencement conditions
- 3) IF5 - Terms and Conditions
- 4) Associated Planning Permission

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is within Prospect Park which is a Grade II 19th century Registered Park and Garden which forms the setting of the Grade II listed late 18th century Prospect House (now Mansion House). Prospect Park is located to the west of Reading between Tilehurst Road, Liebenrood Road, Bath Road and Honey End Lane. The park comprises a bowls green, grass sports pitches, tennis courts, multi-use games/5 a side courts, a children's play area, a wooded area and informal park land. An 85 space car park is located off the main vehicle access from Liebenrood Road with the Mansion House further up the drive.
- 1.2 The current children's play area measures 2,500sqm and is shown on the photograph below. In 2019 a healthy mature Oak tree fell just outside the area due to underground springs eroding the soil underneath. The junior and toddler play equipment is also at the end of its viable use and the safety surface is a mixture of sand and mulch. The current children's playground offers limited access both to the area and equipment for children with disabilities.



2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 During the course of the application the location of the proposed playground has changed following more detailed tree investigations. Whilst the location is in the same general area it has been moved further north which is now outside the canopy of existing trees and a safer distance from the main driveway. Both the original and amended locations are shown below.

Original Location of Proposed Playground



Amended Location of Proposed Playground



- 2.2 The proposal is for the relocation of the existing children’s playground to a new site to the northeast of the pavilion. The proposed playground will have the same floor area as the existing 2,500sqm. Other locations in the park were considered for the playground however these have been discounted due to various disadvantages. The chosen site has good access for people with mobility issues and this part of the site does not suffer from underground springs or pooling water and there are no tree related problems or encroachment onto existing areas used for football. The existing children’s playground will be reinstated to informal open space.

- 2.3 The new playground will be enclosed by a 1.2m high green bowtop metal safety fence and be laid out with a safety surface and new play equipment. The proposed play area will be connected by two 1.5m wide tarmac paths from the existing eastern and southern paths. Limited details of the proposed play equipment have been provided as the final design and installation will depend on the outcome of a tender process. However, an indicative plan has been provided to show how the play area could be laid out and details of the types of equipment that may be incorporated are shown at the end of this report. The emphasis will be on a design that is accessible to children of all abilities.

3. SUBMITTED PLANS AND DOCUMENTS:

The applicant submitted the following information, received on 26th April 2021:

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Heritage Statement
Planning Statement
Arboricultural Impact Assessment
Location Plan
Block Plan

The applicant submitted the following information, received on 28th June 2021:

Planning Statement Addendum

The applicant submitted the following information, received on 1st July 2021:

Arboricultural Impact Assessment (including Drawing No: 03596P_TCP_01 - Tree Constraints Plan; Drawing No: 03596P_TCP_02 - Tree Constraints Plan; Drawing No: 03596P_TCP_03 - Tree Constraints Plan; Drawing No: 03596P_TCP_04 - Tree Constraints Plan; Drawing No: 03596P_TCP_05 - Tree Constraints Plan; Drawing No: 03596P_TCP_06 - Tree Constraints Plan; Drawing No: 03596P_TPP_01 - Tree Protection Plan; and Drawing No: 03596P_TPP_02 - Tree Protection Plan)

4. PLANNING HISTORY

There is numerous planning history for Prospect Park however the most recent is as follows (not including applications for the Mansion House):

06/00822/REG3 (Civica Ref: 060758) - Conversion of disused tennis courts into floodlit all-weather multi-use games area with 3m high fencing. Floodlighting to new games area and existing tennis courts. Permitted 02/10/2006.

07/00166/REG3 (Civica Ref: 070361) - Demolition of existing public toilet and new toilet to be erected in another location. Permitted 24/05/2007.

09/00577/NMA (Civica Ref: 090271) - Retrospective Minor Amendment to planning consent 07/00166/REG3 for demolition of existing toilet to be erected in another location. Agree 28/08/2009.

210647/REG3 & 210746/LBC - Provision of a play service venue at the existing park pavilion, converting a disused internal garage into an indoor low ropes activity course, providing an outdoor mini-golf zone, an outdoor

enclosed education and learning zone, with a small community cafe to compliment the activities. Pending consideration.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Statutory

Historic England

Do not consider it necessary for the application to be notified to Historic England.

The Gardens Trust (formerly known as Garden History Society) & Berkshire Gardens Trust

Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust (GT) in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to proposed development affecting sites listed by Historic England (HE) on their Register of Parks and Gardens. Prospect Park is a Grade II 19th century Registered Park and Garden which forms the setting of the Grade II listed late 18th century Prospect House (now Mansion House). The Berkshire Gardens Trust (BGT) is a member organisation of the GT and works in partnership with it in respect of the protection and conservation of historic sites and is authorised by the GT to respond on GT's behalf in respect of such consultations within Berkshire.¹

One of the key objectives of the Berkshire Gardens Trust (BGT) is to help conserve, protect and enhance historic designed landscapes within Berkshire. Our activities include research into Berkshire's historic parks and gardens and responding to planning applications which affect these important green lungs. As we stated previously in our comments on the pre-application submitted on 22nd October 2020, one of the key activities of the Berkshire Gardens Trust (BGT) is to help conserve, protect and enhance designed landscapes within Berkshire. Prospect Park is an important part of the history of Reading's parks and the richness of Reading's history in particular the environment of West Reading.

Having now considered the formal planning application, we note in particular that Paragraphs 2.1.22 and 5.2.3/4/5 all emphasise that the main entrance has over time become that from Liebenroad Road to the east, as well as the path from the SW corner up from Bath Road cutting across at an angle where there was historically no path. In addition we acknowledge the point made in Paragraphs 5.2.6 and 5.2.7 and especially in the concluding Section 6, that the proposal effectively clears up and reinstates something more akin to the original entrance area from the north whereas the path coming from Tilehurst Road is dominated currently by the playground area. However, while BGT understands why the Council have decided to relocate and update the playground and how this might work for the park as a whole, we reiterate that the proposed playground site is on a major contemporary and historic contemporary approach through open parkland to the Mansion and that every effort should be made to minimize the impact of these changes on the parkland setting and views of this historic Park.

Therefore, while we welcome the ‘freeing up’ of - and improvements to - the northern entrance, we have some reservations about references within the document to the “municipal feel” of this part of the park and are concerned about this being reinforced by the proposals. As the proposed relocation of the playground and other proposals associated with the pavilion offer opportunities to improve this part of the historic park, we suggest strongly that the Council needs to ensure that the proposed playground and pavilion works include appropriate enhancements to surroundings of the retained playing courts, car park and pavilion areas, as well as the main pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfare in this area.

Attention also needs to be paid to the relationship between open parkland and these areas of more active recreation and steps taken to mitigate the impact of these changes on views across the Park with the inevitable loss of the semi-mature trees in this area which are wholly in keeping with the parkland character, have a long life expectancy and help to mitigate the intrusion of the nearby roads and housing. For example, provision of a better off-road, parallel and smoother green path for pedestrians should be introduced alongside the playing courts, with a long overdue re-surfacing of the route down from the Mansion and also the car-park area by the pavilion. Such improvements, alongside consideration of judicious future tree planting will hopefully reduce the potential safety and unsightly hazards of car parking up on the verge and people seeking a more level terrain than the undulating, rough ground to walk along. Such measures would also help enhance the Grade II landscape surrounding the main surviving routes to and from the Mansion.

5.2 Non-statutory

Reading Borough Council Conservation & Urban Design Officer (updated comments following the amended location)

The works are considered neutral and comply with the policies and planning constraints. The scheme is appropriate and supported, subject to a standard materials condition.

A Heritage Statement has been prepared by Avalon Planning and Heritage, and the comments are included below.

Section 6 - Summary and conclusion

6.1.1 This planning application is for works for a new children’s playground within Prospect Park in Reading, Berkshire. Prospect Park is a Grade II Registered historic park. The proposed scheme has the potential to affect the heritage interests of the park as well as the setting of the Grade II Listed Building Mansion House, which lies within the park c. 350m to the west of the application site.

6.1.2 The works will re-locate children’s play facilities from their existing location, close to the north entrance to the park, to a location within the application site. The site for new facilities has been chosen following a selection process undertaken by Reading Borough Council.

6.1.3 Prospect Park and Mansion House derive considerable heritage significance from the designed views across the park to the south. The routes into and across the park from the north and east contribute to this significance in that they have been routed around and away from the

sweeping views from Mansion House. Since the early 20th century the Prospect Park has been a public park. The path from the east entrance on Liebenrood Road has been modernised and is flanked by modern park facilities. It is predicted that the proposal to move the children's playground will have a neutral effect of the significance of the park.

6.1.4 It is considered, therefore, that the proposals will preserve the heritage significance of Prospect Park and Mansion House and that the works comply with statutory, national and local policy requirements.

Comments were also received from the Berkshire Garden Trust (04.06.2021):

"The proposed relocation of the playground and other proposals associated with the pavilion offer opportunities to improve this part of the historic park, we suggest strongly that the Council needs to ensure that the proposed playground and pavilion works include appropriate enhancements to surroundings of the retained playing courts, car park and pavilion areas, as well as the main pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfare in this area."

Conclusion

The site was inspected at the beginning of May 2021 and discussed with members of Reading Parks Team. It was recommended that a heritage statement be prepared by an independent consultant and the findings of this report are included in this memo. While the Berkshire Gardens Trust and Avalon mention green screening, the practicality of this was discussed with the Parks project manager and because the play area needs to be seen for safety reasons, this is not a realistic option. To ameliorate the impact of the relocated playground, on the significant views from the historic house the new playground has been located to the east and down the hill from the house.

A Planning Statement Addendum (June 2021), has been submitted. Prospect Park New Children's Playground Relocation. My original comments requested a standard materials condition. It is important that the new playground compliments and is an enhancement of the historic park. To this extent, natural timber and muted colours are preferred.

Generally, there are no objections to the proposal, as the play equipment will need to be upgraded to meet current needs. But examples of proposed materials need to be seen, to ensure the final installation is enhancement to the listed park.

Development Control Transport

No objection as this would be like for like given the existing playground is to be reinstated.

Natural Environment Trees

Following initial comments advising a more detailed Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) was required the location of the proposed playground was amended and a new AIA submitted on 1st July 2021. Updated Natural Environment Trees comments state:

I note the slightly relocated location for the proposed play area with indicative plan of play areas within it also shown.

In relation to the AIA:

5.4.1 states: *'The proposal requires no demolition works. In the event existing equipment will be moved to the new area or removed from the existing play area we should be advised to provide detail on tree protection measures to allow removal without compromising trees in this area'*

As stated in my previous memo, the description of the development includes *'reinstatement of existing playground back to informal parkland'*, which will of course include removal of existing equipment and fencing, hence I specifically stated that this element should be included in the AIA, however, it is not which is therefore disappointing.

However, the AIA demonstrated the acceptability of the proposed new play area and the tree protection measures for removal of the existing can and should be dealt with within an Arboricultural Method Statement covering the existing and new sites - this can be secured by condition.

The report assumes that no services are required hence this is not covered. If lighting is proposed, it should be secured via condition to ensure any tree or ecology aspects are covered.

In conclusion, I have no objections to the proposals subject to condition L7 (Arboricultural Method Statement).

Ecology

The application site is an area of grassland adjacent to Prospect Park Pavilion where it is proposed to demolish the existing play area and reinstate it closer to the pavilion and parking area.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP, March 2021) was undertaken to the appropriate standard and indicated the works are unlikely to affect protected species or priority habitats.

However, any increase of lighting through the proposed relocation of the playground may have an impact on bat roosts or a significant impact on bat foraging and commuting. Lighting should therefore be avoided, but if essential, the lighting should be designed to avoid impacts on bats and other nocturnal wildlife. As such, subject to a condition, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds. *Officer Note - no lighting is proposed and a condition restricting lighting is recommended.*

Environmental Protection

No comments to make.

Reading Borough Council Leisure

No objections.

Berkshire Archaeology

No comments at the time of writing.

5.3 Publicity

Notification letters were sent to 24-62 (e) Liebenrood Road. One letter has been received in favour of the new playground and the reinstatement of the existing playground back to informal parkland but raising concerns about whether there is sufficient parking being available within the park grounds, matters of congestion and road safety along Liebenrood Road.

Amended plans letters were sent to all neighbours on 1st July 2021 giving them until 15th July 2021 to respond to the amendments to the location and shape of the proposed playground. An update will be provided if any comments are received.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING 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”.

6.1.1 The development plan for this Local Planning Authority is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets
EN6: New Development in a Historic Environment
EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space
EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Tree Strategy (March 2021)

7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Principle of development
- Design and impact on the setting of the historic park and garden
- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Traffic generation and parking
- Natural Environment
- Other Matters

Principle of Development

- 7.1 The NNPF states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development with three overarching objectives; an economic objective; a social objective and an environmental objective. The social objective is to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring (amongst other things) that accessible services and open spaces reflect current and future needs and support communities health, social and cultural well-being.
- 7.1.1 Policy OU1 of the Local Plan 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”. Policy CC7 states development will be assessed to ensure “that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to.....meeting a wide range of needs”.
- 7.1.2 Policy CC7 continues that “development will also be assessed to ensure that it protects and enhances the historic environment and provides suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily”.
- 7.1.3 The proposal is to relocate the existing playground to a new location within the park with improved access and equipment suitable for children of all abilities along with the reinstatement of the existing playground back into informal open space. The principle of development is therefore acceptable however as Prospect Park is a Grade II 19th century Registered Park and Garden any development needs to be considered against its impact on this heritage asset.

Design and impact on the setting of the historic garden

- 7.2 As mentioned earlier in the report it is not possible to confirm the exact play equipment that would be installed in the new playground as the scheme will be offered for tender to specialist playground supplier companies with only one supplier selected. However, emphasis will be on a design that is accessible to children of all abilities. Because of the tender process the applicant is only able to provide details of the location, activity zones within the space, maximum height of the central play unit (9m) and examples of typical designs (shown at the end of this report). A 1.2m high safety fence around the site is also proposed. As the proposal is set within the grounds of the existing park, the height and type of the equipment is unlikely to be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and Officers are therefore satisfied that exact details of the proposed play equipment are not required to determine the application. However, a condition has been recommended requiring details of the proposed equipment to be submitted and approved in writing once the final design has been agreed.
- 7.2.1 However, Prospect Park is a Grade II 19th Century Registered Park and

Garden and the impact of the proposed playground needs to be considered against policies EN1 and EN4 of the Local Plan. EN1 states that “*historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings will be protected and where possible enhanced*”. EN1 continues “*applications which affect Historic Parks and Gardens will safeguard features which form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park or garden. Development will not detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance features or setting of the park or garden, key views out of the park, or prejudice its future restoration*”.

7.2.2 Paragraph 192 of the NPPF states in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

7.2.3 The NPPF requires the Local Planning Authority to give great weight to an asset’s conservation and any harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

7.2.4 The existing playground will be reinstated as informal open space and this is welcome and as stated in paragraph 5.2.3 of the submitted Heritage Statement “the scheme will open up the north entrance [*from Tilehurst Road*] and better reveal the park from the north”. Berkshire Gardens Trust are in agreement with this.

7.2.5 Berkshire Gardens Trust advise that every effort should be made to minimize the impact of the changes on the parkland setting and views of this historic park. Reservations were raised about references in the Heritage Statement to this section of the park having a ‘municipal feel’ and there are concerns about this being reinforced by the proposal (along with the proposed development at the pavilion which there is a planning application pending). Berkshire Gardens Trust suggested that appropriate enhancements to this section of the park be considered. It is not clear from the comments received by the Berkshire Gardens Trust whether they are not objecting to the proposal subject to securing enhancements and if enhancements are not forthcoming as part of the application whether an objection would be raised. The Berkshire Gardens Trust have been reconsulted on the amended location of the proposed playground and asked to clarify their position. An update will be provided should further comments be received.

7.2.6 Notwithstanding the comments from the Berkshire Gardens Trust in regard to enhancements to this area of the park it is recognised that the proposed playground will result in an intensification of public facilities to the east of the park. The submitted Heritage Statement highlights that “Prospect Park and Mansion House derive considerable heritage significance from the designed views across the park to the south”. The location of the proposed playground is to the east and also not far from the existing playground. As such the proposed playground to the east of the park is considered to

preserve the heritage significance and any harm from the proposal has been carefully weighed against the public benefits of the scheme by providing a safe and accessible playground for children of all abilities which the existing playground does not. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with policy and guidance and is acceptable.

Impact on neighbouring properties

7.3 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:

- o Privacy and overlooking;
- o Access to sunlight and daylight;
- o Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- o Harm to outlook;
- o Noise and disturbance;
- o Artificial lighting;
- o Vibration;
- o Dust and fumes;
- o Smell;
- o Crime and safety; or
- o Wind

7.3.1 The relocation of the proposed playground will move the play area further away from residential properties than the current location and although there will be a change in outlook from properties facing the park on Liebenrood Road the proposed playground will be over 100m away. As such the proposal is not considered to be visually dominant or overbearing. There is noise associated with any playground but the proposal involves the relocation of the existing playground within an existing park environment (and further away from residential properties) and it is therefore not considered harmful to neighbouring properties in terms of noise and disturbance. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of its impact on neighbouring properties and is in accordance with Policy CC8.

Traffic generation and parking

7.4 The proposal is for the relocation of the existing playground and therefore no objection has been received from the Council's Transport section given the existing playground will be reinstated to informal open space. A comment has been received with regards to whether there is sufficient parking available within the park grounds, matters of congestion and road safety along Liebenrood Road however as the proposal only relates to the relocation of the playground, the wider problems that may be associated with other uses within the park cannot be addressed within this application.

Natural Environment

7.5 The amended Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has demonstrated the acceptability of the proposed new play area in the amended location however as it does not cover tree protection measures for the removal of the existing play area. A condition is recommended to secure these details. Two trees identified for removal in the AIA will be replaced.

- 7.6 Comments from the Council's Ecologist and Natural Environment Trees team have requested details of any external lighting however it has been confirmed by the applicant that no external lighting is proposed. To ensure that no lighting is installed a condition is recommended to restrict external lighting.

OTHER MATTERS

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.7 As no internal floor area is proposed the proposal does not trigger the CIL limits and will not be CIL liable.

Equalities Impact

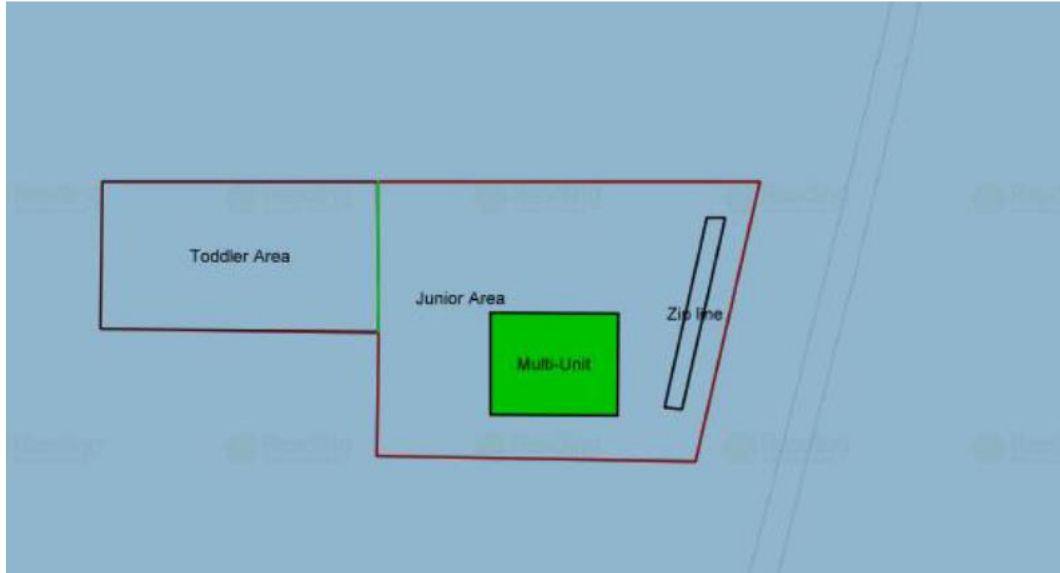
- 7.8 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this 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 proposed development.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 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.

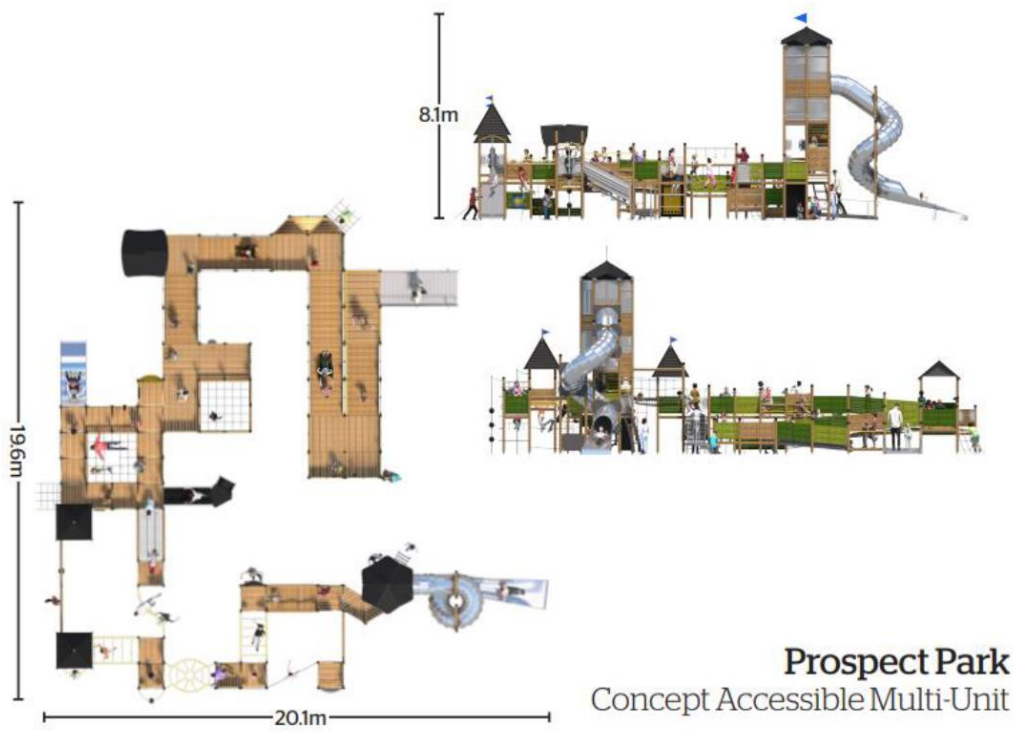
Case Officer: Claire Ringwood

Indicative Floor Plan For New Play Area



Examples of Accessible Multi-Units







Example of proposed 1.2m high fencing



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 21st July 2021
ITEM NO.

Ward: Tilehurst

App No.: 210806/HOU

Address: 47 Beverley Road, Tilehurst

Proposal: Single storey rear extension with internal alterations to add WC

Applicant: Mr. Martin Collier

Date validated: 19th May 2021

Extended Deadline: 23rd July 2021

26 week Planning Guarantee: 17th November 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives.

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

- 1) TL1 - 3 yrs
- 2) AP1 - Approved Plans
- 3) M3 - Materials to match

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

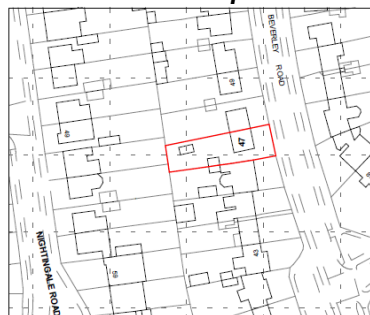
- 1) IF5 - Terms and Conditions
- 2) IF6 - Building Regulations
- 3) IF7 - Complaints about Construction
- 4) IF8 - Encroachment
- 5) IF1 - Positive & Proactive.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site is located on the western side of Beverley Road within a residential area of Tilehurst. It is a two storey semi-detached house as built with a good-sized rear garden. The boundary fence to no. 48 is 2m in height. There is a cherry tree (not protected) 10.4 m from the rear of the house within the garden of no. 48, and adjacent to the boundary with the application site.

1.2 The site is not listed, nor in a Conservation Area.

Location plan

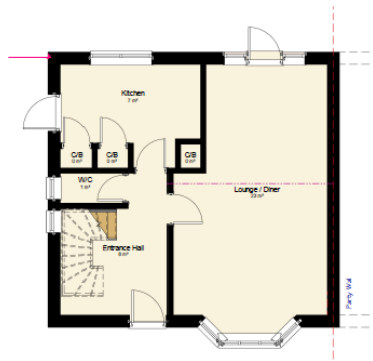


1.3 The applicant is an employee of Reading Borough Council within the Legal team, and therefore, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, the application is referred to the Committee.

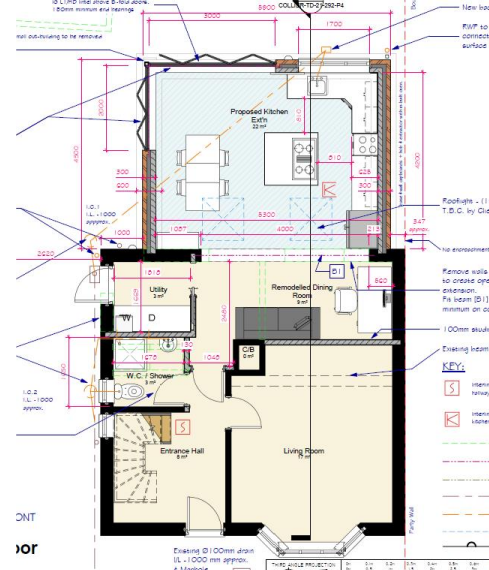
2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The amended proposal is for a flat roof single storey rear extension of 5.9 metres wide, by 4.5m deep and a maximum height of 2.9m with two roof lights. There would be internal reconfiguration of the dwelling to create a utility, wc/shower and reconfigured dining area (shown as a study area), and the extension would create a new kitchen/ diner.
- 2.2 The proposed materials would be to match existing, i.e. facing brickwork, interlocking concrete tiles, white UPVC, and plastic guttering.

Existing ground floor plan



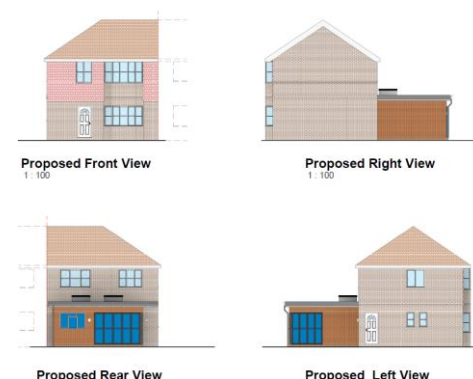
Proposed ground floor plan



Existing Elevations



Proposed Elevations



- 2.3 The Planning Officer sent emails to the agent on 30th May 2021, 14th June 2021, and 2nd July 2021, which resulted in amendments to the scheme and further information as follows:
- Reduction in the maximum height from 4.2m to 2.9m
 - Set further from the shared boundary with no. 48
 - Change to the roof form from mono-pitched to flat
 - Neighbour's tree plotted and Root Protection Area (RPA) shown

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 2.4 CIL is not chargeable on an extension of the proposed scale.

Plans and Supporting Documents

2.5 The following plans and supporting documents (included amended) have been assessed as received 19th May 2021 (unless otherwise stated):

- Location & Site Plan - Drawing no: COLLIER-TD-21-292-P1 Rev 1A, received 18th June 2021
- Existing Elevations - Drawing no: COLLIER-TD-21-292-E1
- Existing Ground Plan - Drawing no: COLLIER-TD-21-292-E2
- Proposed Elevations - Drawing no: COLLIER-TD-21-292-P2 Rev 2, received 8th July 2021
- Proposed Ground Floor - Drawing no: COLLIER-TD-21-292-P3 Rev 2, received 8th July 2021
- Section 1 - Drawing no: COLLIER-TD-21-292-P4 Rev 2, received 8th July 2021

Other Documents:

- Letter from Teknidraft Designs (agent) dated and received 18th June 2021

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

None

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory

4.1 No statutory consultations were required given the nature of the application.

(ii) Non-statutory

4.2 None undertaken.

(iii) Public/ local consultation and comments received

4.3 Nos. 46 and 48 Beverley Road and 51 and 53 Elmstone Drive were consulted, and one objection was received from 48 Beverley Road as follows (based on the originally submitted plans):

- We are concerned about the pitch of the roof on the proposed extension. During the winter months, when the sun is much lower, the height of the pitch will mean that a significant amount of light will be blocked from our downstairs lounge.
- We are concerned that there may be a roof lantern/window in the roof of the extension. We will be able to see directly into the proposed extension from our bedroom window.
- We are concerned that the extension will increase the noise levels from the property particularly during unsociable hours and would like to be assured that appropriate sound proofing measures are being installed.
- We have a number of beautiful shrubs/trees near to the proposed extension. We would like assurance that these will not be damaged in any way.
- We would like assurance that the wall of the extension, that becomes our boundary, is maintained appropriately.

Planning Officer note: This is not material to the planning decision.

4.4 A site notice was displayed from 24th June 2021 and the expiry will be 15th July 2021. An officer recommendation has been possible, because the 21-

day consultation period identified on the neighbour consultation letters has expired. Should any further comments be received following the expiry of the site notice these will be reported in an update

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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

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

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan - November 2019

Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

Policy H9: House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

Policy H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

Policy EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

Policy EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

- Design Guide to House Extensions (RBC, 2021)

6.0 APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues to be considered are:

- (i) Principle
- (ii) Design
- (iii) Residential Amenity
- (iv) Other Matters

(i) Principle

6.2 Policy CC1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) requires a positive approach to development proposals that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which lies at the heart of the National Policy Framework (para. 11 NPPF). It goes on to state that *“Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development planwill be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.....”*

6.3 Paragraph 4.4.74 of the RBLP recognises the contribution that house extensions provide particularly in a dense urban area such as Reading. The principle of the proposed scheme is acceptable subject to meeting the specifics of relevant policies on design and amenity as addressed below.

(ii) Design

6.4 RBLP Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm, requires all development to be of a *“high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.”*

6.5 Specific to the consideration of house extensions is Policy H9, which states:

“An extension to a house or other householder development will be acceptable where it:

- Respects the character and appearance of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design;*
- Respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and appearance of the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and any important existing building line;*
- Does not present an overbearing impact on neighbours or a large blank façade to public areas;*
- Does not result in a loss of biodiversity within gardens. In addition to the above, ancillary accommodation, such as granny annexes, will be acceptable where it would not be capable of operating as a separate dwelling which could be let or sold separately.”*

6.6 The amended scheme would be of an appropriate scale to the host dwelling with a sympathetic design and materials, which would not be overbearing on adjoining neighbours. The depth of the extension at 4.5m would be slightly greater than the Councils’ house extensions guidance of 4m, but the overall height and setting off the boundary are considered to make the scheme acceptable and it would accord with Policy CC7 and H9

(iii) Amenity

6.7 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) states that development should not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

6.8 The proposal would provide a modest single storey rear extension to an existing residential property, which would provide enhanced space for the occupants and therefore improve their amenity.

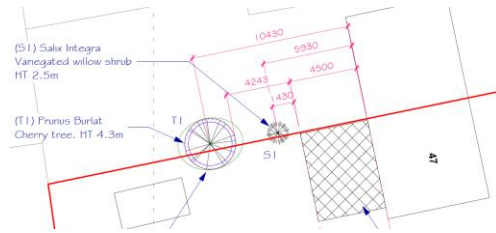
6.9 The overall proposal has been amended during the application period and it is considered that the height, depth and setting off the boundary, minimise any impact on no. 48 and that there would not be a significant detrimental effect on the daylight and sunlight to the nearest habitable room of no. 48. It is not considered that there be a significant loss of privacy arising from the proposed skylights.

6.10 The proposed extension would be ca 3.4m from no. 46 and officers have no concern over the proposal affecting their amenity.

6.11 A significant garden would be retained in accordance with Policy H10.

Other matters

6.12 Following the receipt of an objection from no. 48 Beverley Road regarding the impact on trees and shrubs within their garden the officer requested further detail from the applicant. The tree in the neighbour’s garden is not a protected tree and is over 10m from the rear of the properties (to the left hand side of the image below). The applicant provided further information plotting the tree and shrubs and showing the root protection area of the tree. These details demonstrate that the proposed extension would have no impact on the tree or the shrubs.



6.65 No trees or biodiversity features would be affected by the proposal and therefore, the scheme is considered to comply with relevant policies CC7, H9, EN12 and EN14.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.95 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, gender, and 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 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 to arrive at a supportable scheme. It is therefore, recommended for approval subject to conditions and informatives.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah