

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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31 August 2021

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NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 8 SEPTEMBER 2021

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 8 September 2021 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU (a limited number of socially-distanced seats will be available to the press and public). The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

| AGENDA | ACTION | WARDS AFFECTED | PAGE NO |
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| <u>KEY TO CODING</u> | | | |
| 1. MINUTES | - | | 9 - 20 |
| 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST | - | | |
| 3. QUESTIONS | - | | |
| 4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS | Decision | | 21 - 24 |
| 5. PLANNING APPEALS | Information | | 25 - 32 |
| 6. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL | Information | | 33 - 38 |

PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

| | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|----------|-------|---------|
| 7. | 201650/FUL - 111A WATLINGTON STREET | Decision | ABBEY | 39 - 66 |
|----|-------------------------------------|----------|-------|---------|

Proposal

Part demolition of existing industrial building and erection of a three storey end of terrace building of 6 flats (C3 use) (amended description)

Recommendation

Permitted subject to Legal Agreement

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|-----|--|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 8. | 211010/REG3 - LAND TO THE WEST OF, ABATTOIRS ROAD | Decision | ABBEY | 67 - 88 |
| | <p>Proposal Retrospective application for the erection of 40no. sleeping units and 3no. support units for rough sleepers, to be used temporarily for a period of 5 years.</p> <p>Recommendation Application Permitted</p> | | | |
| 9. | 210904/REG3 - 35 BRAMSHAW ROAD, TILEHURST | Decision | KENTWOOD | 89 - 98 |
| | <p>Proposal Works consist of property improvements and upgrades of Thermal efficiency measures to dwellings detailed below. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Phase 1 addresses to include:- 35, 37, 39, 41, 43 Bramshaw Road RG30 6AT 69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AS 377 & 379 Norcot Road, RG30 6AB. Works will see the existing render overclad with a new external wall insulation system, replacement of new triple glazed windows, minor roof adaptations and associated works (Part Retrospective) (Amended Description).</p> <p>Recommendation Application Permitted</p> | | | |
| 10. | 201070/ADV - ROSE KILN LANE | Decision | MINSTER | 99 - 114 |
| | <p>Proposal LED Screen hoardings, supported by hollow steel posts</p> <p>Recommendation Application Refused</p> | | | |
| 11. | 210647/REG3 & 210746/LBC - PROSPECT PARK, LIEBENROOD ROAD | Decision | SOUTHCOTE | 115 - 132 |
| | <p>Proposal (210647) 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 cafe to compliment the activities</p> <p>Recommendation Application Permitted</p> <p>Proposal (210746) Listed Building</p> | | | |
| 12. | 210994/HOU - 82 ALBERT ROAD | Decision | THAMES | 133 - 142 |
| | <p>Proposal Single storey rear extension and new Velux Cabrio windows to rear elevation of loft floor.</p> <p>Recommendation Application Permitted</p> | | | |

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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 and
J Williams

In remote attendance (non-voting): Councillor Duveen

Apologies: Councillor R Williams

RESOLVED ITEMS

17. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Emberson declared an interest in Item 34 (210549/REG3 & 210550/ADV - Wensley Road) as she was the Lead Councillor for Housing.

Councillor Carnell declared an interest in Item 36 (210018/FUL - Reading Golf Club) as his nephew was a member of Reading Golf Club.

Councillor Rowland declared an interest in Item 37 (210644/REG3 & 210745/LBC - Prospect Park) as she was the Lead Councillor for Culture, Heritage & Recreation.

Councillor Stanford-Beale declared an interest in Item 37 (210644/REG3 & 210745/LBC - Prospect Park) as she had been involved in the Playground Design Group.

19. QUESTIONS

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

Planning Website Technical Problems

When a new planning application is loaded to the Council's planning website, residents are invited to submit comments, in support or objection, and these are usually displayed for other residents to view, read, and consider when making their own comments. These are published online so that local residents can see what others are saying and submit their own thoughts. They also give residents the assurance that their views are being seen and heard in the planning process.

Back in March residents contacted me to say that they couldn't see their responses to important planning applications loaded online. I contacted the Council and was quickly told that it was a technical issue that would be easily resolved. Since then I've been told

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 21 JULY 2021

that the problem is more complicated, and planning applications are still waiting for many comments to be loaded and viewed on the Council's website.

Can the Chair please tell us how many applications have been affected by this issue, what has been done so far to resolve the problem, and when residents' comments will again appear on the planning portal?

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

Many seeking to comment on planning applications do so using the Council's website in response to letters or notices seen inviting comments, in support or objection.

These comments are then usually made available for other residents and the applicant to view, read, and consider on the website.

However, this does not happen instantly unlike when putting a comment on to Facebook or Twitter. When submitting comments residents are told in acknowledgement:

"Thank you for your comments. They will be registered and passed on to the case officer who will take them into account when a decision is made on this proposal. However, because of the large number of comments we receive, planning officers will not normally reply to the points raised".

The registration process normally involves:

- verifying that the comments relate to the correct application reference
- checking that the correspondent has not provided information about themselves or the applicant that would mean the Council would breach data protection guidelines if we were to publish them - there is case law on this
- checking the comments do not contain offensive or slanderous content
- redacting comments provided to remove any signatures or other personal data - such as email addresses

The planning technical support team try to carry out all the relevant checks and redactions so that they can be loaded up for public viewing normally within 2 days. However, can take longer when staff are on leave or when there are significant volumes of comments being submitted, such as with the Reading Golf Club application being presented tonight, which required officers to process the 3,000 or so comments received.

In addition to this work, with the change to IT provider there is a problem with the necessary software that loads up comments. The work around is to convert all comments to pdf format but this takes more time. As for how many applications have been affected by this issue, Officers have checked and it is believed to have been around 150.

IT services are working on solving the problem but it will need the system to be upgraded. In the meantime, all new documents and comments are being converted and uploaded as PDFs.

Officers are concentrating on doing this with new and current applications as comments come in and are leaving the processing of comments on older applications until the issue

is resolved unless they receive a specific request in which case the comments can be converted and re-uploaded directly.

The Planning Manager is also looking to change the acknowledgement message to manage expectations by stating that submitted comments may not be viewable for a number of working days but to be reassured that the comments will be seen by the case officer and will be taken into consideration.

20. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS

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

At the meeting consideration of application 201070/ADV - Land at Rose Kiln Lane was deferred for a site visit (see Minute 33 below).

Resolved -

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

201070/ADV - LAND AT ROSE KILN LANE
LED Screen hoardings, supported by hollow steel posts.

21. PLANNING APPEALS

(i) New Appeals

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

(ii) Appeals Recently Determined

There had been no decisions made by the Secretary of State, or by an Inspector appointed for the purpose.

(iii) Reports on Appeal Decisions

There were no appeal decision reports submitted.

Resolved - That the new appeal, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted.

22. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details in Table 1 of ten prior approval applications received, and in Table 2 of fifteen applications for prior approval decided, between 10 June and 8 July 2021.

Further to Minute 5 of the meeting held on 2 June 2021, Councillor Page noted that the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee, to which the Council had submitted its response to the consultation on changes to Permitted Development Rights, would be publishing its report on 22 July 2021 and requested a report to a future Planning Applications Committee on the recommendations in the Select Committee report.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That a report be submitted to a future meeting on the recommendations in the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee report on Permitted Development Rights.

23. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE - QUARTER 1 (APRIL - JUNE) 2021/2022

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on how the Planning Service had performed over the first quarter of 2021/22 in terms of meeting government set targets for dealing with planning applications and success at planning appeals. Details of the types of applications handled and appeal decisions for Quarter 1 (the period 1 April - 30 June 2021) were provided with comparison data from the previous year.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

24. STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT OFF HENLEY ROAD, CAVERSHAM

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report asking the Committee to agree a street name for a development site off Henley Road, Caversham. A plan of the site was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

A list of suggested appropriate street names was set out in the report and the report stated that, if none of the proposed names were considered suitable, the Committee should select an alternative from the Approved Street Names List which was attached to the report at Appendix 2. An updated version of the Approved Street Names List had been circulated to the members of the Committee prior to the meeting.

Resolved - That the name Willow View be used for the road.

25. STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT TO THE REAR OF HIGHGROVE STREET

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report asking the Committee to agree a street name for a development to the rear of 107-125 Highgrove Street. A plan of the site was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report set out two suggested appropriate street names that had been consulted on with Ward Councillors and the report stated that, if none of the proposed names were considered suitable, the Committee should select an alternative from the Approved Street Names List which was attached to the report at Appendix 2. An updated version of the Approved Street Names List had been circulated to the members of the Committee prior to the meeting.

Resolved - That the name Highgrove Mews be used for the road.

26. 210163/FUL & 210164LBC - BRISTOL & WEST ARCADE, MARKET PLACE

210163/FUL - 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 and public house (sui generis use) at ground and basement floors (amended description).

210164/LBC - 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.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above applications. An update report was tabled at the meeting which provided additional information, including an amendment to the description of 210163, proposed amendments to the heads of terms in the S106 agreement for 210163 regarding affordable housing and High Street Heritage Action Zone contributions, and information on essential repair works carried out so far to the Market Place listed building.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Objector Evelyn Williams and Nick de Lotbiniere, the applicant's agent, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant full planning permission for application 210163/FUL, subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement by 31 August 2021 (unless a later date be agreed by the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the original report, with the amendments set out in the update report, and an amendment to Head of Term 5 to require that the trigger for completion of

the essential works to the listed buildings at 27-32 Market Place was not linked with first occupation of the hotel but could come forward as soon as possible in order to bring the buildings back into an acceptable condition and use, with the trigger informed by the provision of the build programme;

- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the original report, with an additional informative as set out below;
- (4) That the condition regarding submission and approval of details of the additional entrance column to the Friar Street frontage be approved in consultation with Ward Councillors;
- (5) That Listed Building Consent for application 210164/LBC be granted subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the original report.

27. 210349/FUL - 115 CHATHAM STREET

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.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which confirmed that a bat survey and assessment had been received and there was no objection from Council Ecology officers to the application subject to inclusion of some proposed additional conditions set out in the report; the update report also gave an update on transport matters, set out the full text of an objection summarised in the original report and proposed amendments to the S106 heads of terms.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant full planning permission for application 210349/FUL, subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement by 18 August 2021 (unless a later date be agreed by the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the original report, with the amendments set out in the update report, as well as further amendments to the Heads of Terms as necessary, in consultation with transport officers and Ward Councillors, to ensure that the developer was required to fund provision of the car club, the vehicle and the bay for the period required;

- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Deputy Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the original report, with the additional conditions set out in the update report.

28. 210007/FUL - 124-128 CARDIFF ROAD

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.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. A verbal update was given at the meeting stating that the Environment Agency had formally confirmed they had no objections to the application subject to the appropriate proposed conditions.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved - That planning permission for application 210007/FUL be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended.

29. 210583/FUL - 75 LOVEROCK ROAD

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

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved - That planning permission for application 210583/FUL be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the report.

30. 210471/LBC - CAVERSHAM COURT ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE, CHURCH ROAD

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

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved - That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, listed building consent 210471 be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended.

31. 201141/FUL - 65 NORTHCOURT AVENUE

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

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

Comments and objections were received and considered.

The report stated that the home's visiting policy was by appointment only and visits would be on a staggered basis which would control the demand for parking spaces. Officers confirmed that the current system had been introduced to manage access during the Covid-19 pandemic but had the effect of controlling the demand for parking spaces on site. The report recommended that, to ensure that the applicant continued to manage the on-site parking spaces, a Car Parking Management Plan should be required to be submitted by planning condition to ensure that there was no additional overspill onto the surrounding roads arising from the additional rooms.

The Committee expressed concern about the effect of the home's visiting policy on relatives' freedom to visit the residents but also sought reassurance on the potential impact caused by parking in roads around the home if the Car Park Management Plan was not followed and requested that further discussions be held with the applicant, Ward Councillors and transport officers on this matter to agree appropriate solutions within the Car Parking Management Plan.

Resolved -

- (1) That planning permission for application 201141/FUL be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the report, with the wording of the Car Parking Management Plan condition to be agreed in consultation with Ward Councillors;
- (2) That the Car Parking Management Plan be agreed in consultation with Ward Councillors.

32. 201070/ADV - LAND AT ROSE KILN LANE

LED Screen hoardings, supported by hollow steel posts.

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

Resolved - That consideration of application 2010/70/ADV be deferred for a site visit.

33. 210549/FUL & 210550/ADV - WENSLEY COURT (NO. 193), IRVING COURT (NO.203) AND RIVERSLEY COURT (NO. 205), WENSLEY ROAD

210549/REG3 - 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.

210550/ADV - 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.

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

Comments and an objection were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, planning permission 210549/REG3 be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended;
- (2) That advertisement consent 210550/ADV be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended.

(Councillor Emberson declared an interest in the above application. Nature of interest: Councillor Emberson was the Lead Councillor for Housing. She addressed the meeting on the application but abstained in the decision.)

34. 201197/LBC - 5 THE BROOKMILL

Replacement of windows.

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved - That planning permission for application 201197/FUL be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the report.

35. 210018/OUT - 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.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which corrected some errors in the original report, gave details of further comments received, gave further information on sustainability, healthcare, education and Section 106/CIL and amended Reason for Refusal 1 regarding loss of Undesignated Open Space and added an extra Reason for Refusal 6 regarding measures to adapt to climate change, decentralised energy provision and zero carbon homes.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Objectors Clare Grashoff, Helen Lambert and Steve Harcourt, supporters Richard Stainthorp and Stephen Lee and the applicant's agent Jonathan Walton attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

Resolved - That application 210018/FUL be refused for the reasons set out in the original report, with the amendments and additional reason as set out in the update report.

(Councillor Carnell declared an interest in the above application. Nature of interest: Councillor Carnell's nephew was a member of Reading Golf Club.)

36. 210644/REG3 & 210745/LBC - PROSPECT PARK, LIEBENROOD ROAD

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.

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above applications. An update report was tabled at the meeting which gave details of further information received from Berkshire Archaeology and Berkshire Gardens Trust and information about the existing playground area.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, planning permission 210644/REG3 be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended;

- (2) That listed building consent 210745/LBC be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended, with the materials condition amended to require details of the installation of the play equipment to be submitted alongside the materials to ensure that there was no significant excavation, and the landscaping condition amended to require the two replacement trees to be located close to the playground to provide future shade.

(Councillors Rowland and Stanford-Beale declared interests in the above application. Nature of interests: Councillor Rowland was the Lead Councillor for Culture, Heritage & Recreation. She addressed the meeting on the application but abstained in the decision; Councillor Stanford-Beale had been involved in the Playground Design Group. She addressed the meeting on the application but abstained in the decision.)

37. 210806/HOU - 47 BEVERLEY ROAD, TILEHURST

Single storey rear extension with internal alterations to add WC.

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved - That planning permission for application 210806/HOU be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the report.

38. 210879/REG3 - 134 OXFORD ROAD

Install artwork on existing metal railings on a vacant site to the West of 134 Oxford Road

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved - That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, planning permission 210879/REG3 be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 10.15 pm)

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

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| TO: | PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE | | |
| Date: | 8 SEPTEMBER 2021 | | |
| TITLE: | POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS | | |
| SERVICE: | PLANNING | WARDS: | BOROUGH WIDE |
| AUTHOR: | Julie Williams | TEL: | 0118 9372461 |
| JOB TITLE: | Acting Planning Manager | E-MAIL: | Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk |

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To identify those sites where, due to the sensitive or important nature of the proposals, Councillors are advised that a Site Visit would be appropriate before the matter is presented at Committee and to confirm how the visit will be arranged. A list of potential sites is appended to this report with an officer note added to say if recommended for a site visit or not.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note this report and confirm if the site or sites indicated on the appended list are to be visited by Councillors.
- 2.2 Confirm if there are any other sites Councillors consider necessary to visit before reaching a decision on an application.
- 2.3 Confirm how the site(s) agreed should be visited will be carried out - accompanied by officers or unaccompanied.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Appended to this report is a list of applications received that may be presented to Committee for a decision in due course. Officers will normally indicate if a site would benefit from being visited to inform your decision making or Councillors may request that a site is visited.
- 3.2 A site visit is only likely to be necessary if the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans and any supporting material or if there is a good reason why the comments of the applicant and objectors cannot be expressed adequately in writing; or, the proposal is particularly contentious.
- 3.3 It is possible that these difficulties will arise at Committee during consideration of an application, in which case it is appropriate for Councillors to seek a deferral to allow a visit to be carried out to assist in reaching the correct decision.

- 3.4 Accompanied site visits consist of an arranged inspection by a viewing Committee, with officers in attendance and by arrangement with the applicant or their agent. Applicants and objectors however will have no right to speak but may observe the process and answer questions when asked. The visit is an information gathering opportunity and not a decision making forum.
- 3.5 Unaccompanied site visits can take place where the site is easily viewable from public areas and allows Councillors to visit the site when convenient to them. In these instances, the case officer will provide a briefing note on the application and the main issues to be considered by Councillors when visiting the site.
- 3.6 There may also be occasions where officers or Councillors request a post completion site visit in order to review the quality or impact of a particular development.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 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

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 5.1 Statutory neighbour consultation takes place on planning applications.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None arising from this report.

8. 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. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The cost of site visits is met through the normal planning service budget and Councillor costs.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reading Borough Council Planning Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX 1

Potential Site Visit List:

Application reference: 210582

Application type: Full Planning Approval

Site address: 18 Parkside Road, Reading, RG30 2DB

Proposal: Demolition of detached house and annex and the erection of 13 dwellings, with undercroft parking, landscaping and bin stores.

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

Ward: Norcot

Application reference: 211127

Application type: Regulation 3 Planning Approval

Site address: Ranikhet Primary School, Spey Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4ED

Proposal: Complete redevelopment of Ranikhet Academy Primary School, comprising construction of a new two form entry, two storey school building, new Multi Use Games Area, Car Parking, playground areas and other landscaped features along with the demolitions of all existing school buildings

Reason for Committee item: RBC application

Ward: Peppard

Application reference: 210975

Application type: Full Planning Approval

Site address: 205-213 And Land To The Rear Of, 215-219 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 6LJ

Proposal: Demolition of no.s 205 to 213 Henley Road and rear gardens of no.s 205-219 Henley Road and erection of 2 retirement living apartment blocks (C3 use) comprising a mixture of 60no. 1 & 2 bedrooms with several communal spaces such as lounges, terraces, external gardens and associated access from the adjacent development on Henley Road, car parking and landscaping

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

Ward: Southcote

Application reference: 211321

Application type: Regulation 3 Planning Approval

Site address: 6 Circuit Lane, Reading, RG30 3HA

Proposal: Ground floor extension to house.

Reason for Committee item: RBC application

Agenda Item 5

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

| | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| TO: | PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE | | |
| DATE: | 8 SEPTEMBER 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 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

Appeals Lodged:

WARD: NORCOT
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/D/21/3271422
CASE NO: 201720
ADDRESS: 4 Tofrek Terrace
PROPOSAL: Variation of condition 3 (approved plans) of planning permission 200982/HOU, dated 21/10/20 (for a part one, part two storey rear extension), namely to allow an increased depth of 0.5m at the ground floor and 1.5m at the first floor
CASE OFFICER: Tom Hughes
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: HOUSEHOLDER
APPEAL LODGED: 05.08.2021

WARD: KATESGROVE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3277248
CASE NO: 201221
ADDRESS: "The Faculty", 23-27 London Road, Reading
PROPOSAL: Change of use of The Faculty from 16 serviced apartments (Use Class C1) to 15 residential flats (Use Class C3).
CASE OFFICER: Claire Ringwood
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 13.08.2021

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

WARD: KATESGROVE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/X/20/3262741
CASE NO: 201259
ADDRESS: "New Century Place", East Street
PROPOSAL: Certificate of Lawfulness for Existing 135 self-contained studio apartments in Class C3 dwellinghouse use.
CASE OFFICER: Richard Eatough
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Allowed
DATE DETERMINED: 26.07.21

WARD: REDLANDS
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/C/20/3262510
CASE NO: 041115
ADDRESS: 34 Eldon Terrace
PROPOSAL: An appeal against an enforcement notice issued by Reading Borough Council for alleged breach of planning control.
CASE OFFICER: Richard Eatough
METHOD: Virtual Hearing

DECISION: Enforcement notice upheld
DATE DETERMINED: 26.07.21

WARD: KENTWOOD
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/X/21/3270720
CASE NO: 191318
ADDRESS: "The Kiln", 16a Romany Lane
PROPOSAL: Existing use as a self contained studio (C3 use)
CASE OFFICER: Connie Davis
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: DISMISSED
DATE DETERMINED: 26.08.2021

APPENDIX 3

Address Index of Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

- 34 Eldon Terrace
- The Kiln, 16a Romany Lane

Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions attached.

Appeal Decision Report

Ward: Redlands

Appeal Nos.: APPEE0345/C/20/3262510, 3262511, 3262512

Site: 34 Eldon Terrace, Reading

Planning refs: 041115, 160720, 171772 (APP/E0345/W/18/3208163), 200688

Proposal: Unauthorised change of use of basement to two flats

Decision level: Delegated

Method: Informal hearing (virtual) held on 29 June 2021

Decision: All three appeals dismissed and the Notices upheld, subject to the corrections and variations described.

Date Determined: 26 July 2021

Inspector: Simon Hand MA

SUMMARY OF DECISION:

Appeal A: Enforcement Notice corrected, so it relates to the failure to supply the landscaping scheme which was required by Condition 11 of planning permission 04/00344/FUL, new ref. 041115), ie. it becomes a Breach of Condition Notice rather than an Enforcement Notice. Further, five requirements of the Notice were deleted and two were varied.

Appeal B: This Enforcement Notice largely related to the internal changes which had unlawfully been carried out and contained a long list of requirements. The Notice was varied, deleting various requirements and altering others.

Appeal C: This is a Breach of Condition Notice related to an original condition on the 2004 planning permission which required the basement to remain as ancillary storage. The wording of this Notice was altered slightly by the Inspector so that it aligned with the full wording of the original planning condition, otherwise the Notice was upheld.

Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services Comment

Planning permission was granted in 2004 for various conversions/buildings on the land at 34 Eldon Terrace/79 London Road, for residential use. The basement to this building was permitted to be ancillary domestic storage for the flats, as was shown on the approved plans and set within a controlling condition. Approval in 2016 included an acceptable external landscaping layout. The allegation was that the basement had been converted, without planning permission into 2x one-bedroom flats. These suffer from poor natural light and outlook. The external landscaping provided is poor quality. There had previously been applications for planning permission refused (refs. 171772 and 200688) and an appeal dismissed (ref. APP/E0345/W/18/3208163). Given the complicated planning history, officers considered that three separate Enforcement Notices should be issued against the works/use. Subsequently, three separate appeals against these Notices were lodged.

These Notices were complicated to draft and whilst the Inspector disagreed on the precise wording of them and detailed requirements, he agreed that the development was harmful in planning terms and that each of the Notices was substantively correct and clear in what they were attempting to achieve and did not agree with the Appellant's claims that the Notices were imprecise or requirements unnecessary. In correcting/varying the Notices, he upheld all three.

Regarding Notice A, the Inspector considered that it should refer to a breach of condition(s) and some of the requirements of the Notice were judged to be excessive. Officers are somewhat disappointed that the wording of the Notice, as now revised, allows the retention of the large rear lightwell/sunken patio areas and the patio access doors at basement level, as this has failed to provide the rear amenity area for the

development. However, the external amenity area will still be vastly improved by the removal of the tarmac area and laying of paving, provision of landscaping and provision of improved cycle and bin stores, which will preserve and enhance views into this part of the Eldon Square Conservation Area.

Regarding Notice B, whilst the Inspector agreed with the Council generally as to the need for multiple areas of reversion to be undertaken, he found that some of the requirements were either excessive or imprecise and he deleted or amended them as he saw fit, but he described this simply as a 'tidying up of the notice'.

Regarding Notice C, the Inspector was satisfied that the condition for the basement to be in ancillary (residential) use was ongoing/restrictive - ie. it continues to apply - and that by changing the use of the basement area to flats, there was a clear breach of planning control.

The Inspector also agreed with the Local Planning Authority's reasoning for the time period for compliance of ten months for all three Notices not being extended. The ten month period will now start from the date of the appeal decision above and compliance will therefore be required by 26 May 2022. Officers are mindful that the dismissal of these appeals will mean serious implications for many parties involved in this development and in particular, the occupants of the basement flats themselves. In one instance, the occupant is also believed to be the flat owner. Officers have written to all affected parties to advise that they should seek their own legal and/or housing advice. But the Inspector was satisfied, hearing the evidence from both sides, that the ten month period is a reasonable time to find somewhere else to live, if only to rent in the short term.

The overall conclusion on the planning merits was that the Inspector was unconvinced by the Appellant's arguments that the flats met the BRE guidance for adequate light levels and this was the over-riding consideration in the dismissal of these appeals. In summary, officers are very satisfied with the outcome on these appeals, which upholds the Local Plan's policies for retaining adequate light and outlook within (basement) dwellings and in particular Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).

Site Plan:



Ward: Kentwood

Appeal No: APP/E0345/X/21/3270720

Planning Ref: 191318/CLE

Site: The Kiln, 16a Romany Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AP

Proposal: Existing use as a self contained studio (C3 use)

Decision level: Appeal

Method: Written representations

Decision: Appeal dismissed

Date Determined: 13th August 2021

Inspector: Paul T Hocking

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The case concerns a self-contained outbuilding with the address of '16A Romany Lane', within the rear curtilage of 16 Romany Lane. The surrounding area is residential mainly comprised of semi-detached dwellings. On the location plan appended to the report the outbuilding is depicted in yellow while the other properties owned by the appellant are shown edged in blue.

1.2 A Certificate of Lawfulness for existing use of the outbuilding as a self-contained dwelling was applied for in August 2019. In order for the certificate to be granted, evidence had to be provided to demonstrate that the outbuilding had been in continuous use as a self-contained studio dwelling for a period of 4 years. If granted, the use would then have been immune to enforcement action by the Local Planning Authority.

1.3 The application was refused in November 2020 due to a lack of precise and unambiguous evidence being provided to demonstrate the continuous operation of the use over the relevant 4 year time period.

1.4 The reason for refusal was:

The applicant has provided contradictory and insufficient evidence or other information that does not demonstrate to the Local Planning Authority that the use of the self-contained studio (C3 use) has been ongoing for continuously for at least four years. It follows that there is no justification to grant the certificate of lawfulness applied for by the applicant.

2 SUMMARY OF DECISION

2.1 The appeal was dismissed with the Inspector concluding that, whilst the Council did not have their own evidence to directly contradict the appellant's case, the evidence provided by the appellant was not sufficiently precise or unambiguous to convince the Inspector of the continuity of the use.

2.2 The appellant's primary form of evidence to support their case were three sworn statutory declarations provided by a tenant of the outbuilding, the applicant and a letting agent. Officers highlighted the inconsistencies in the floor plans provided as part of the sworn documents when compared to the real-life configuration of the site witnessed as part of a site visit. The Inspector agreed with the Local Planning Authority that the inconsistencies between the two were not immaterial in the decision (as the appellant suggested), as it demonstrated inconsistency and a lack of precision within the submission. Furthermore, the Inspector noted that the three sworn statutory declarations were not precise in their content, such as by providing clear dates as to when the tenant resided in the building. Lastly, the Inspector independently commented on the fact the three statutory declarations were sworn and dated at the same time which could have led to 'very close and convenient corroboration' (quote from the Inspector).

3 Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services Comment

3.1 Both planning and legal Officers welcome the appeal decision which gives a greater understanding of the weight Inspectors place on different forms of evidence, and the level of scrutiny required by the Local Planning Authority when considering CLE applications. It also highlighted the importance of carrying out site visits for this application type. Planning, Legal and Enforcement Officers are now discussing the future of the unauthorised development.

Case Officer: Connie Davis

Location Plan



REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

| | | | |
|------------|---|---------|--|
| TO: | PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE | | |
| DATE: | 8 SEPTEMBER 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 £1,775,189.

(Office Prior Approvals - £1,637,564: Householder Prior Approvals - £83,312: 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 - £135507: Householder Prior Approvals - £440

- 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 8th July 2021 to 24th August 2021

| Type: | How many received since last report: | Loss in possible fee income: |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Householder Prior Approvals | 4 | £440 |
| Office Prior Approvals | 13 | £135507 |
| 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 | 3 | n/a |
| Dwellings on detached block of flats | 0 | 0 |
| Householder Additional Storey | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 20 | £135947 |

Table 2 - Applications decided since 8th July 2021 to 24th August 2021

| Type: | Approved | Refused | Not Required | Withdrawn | Non Determination |
|--|----------|----------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Householder Prior Approvals | 1 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Office Prior Approvals | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 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 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 2 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 |

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 8th September 2021

Ward: Abbey

Application No.: 201650/FUL

Address: 111A Watlington Street

Proposal: Part demolition of existing industrial building and erection of a three-storey end of terrace building of 6 flats (C3 use) (amended description)

Date valid: 30th November 2020

Target Decision Date: 25th January 2021

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services (HPDRS) to i) **GRANT** full planning permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of a s106 legal agreement or ii) Refuse full planning permission if the legal agreement is not completed by 31st October 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 is to include the following heads of terms:

1. Policy Compliant Affordable Housing Contribution (amount to be confirmed prior to committee meeting)
2. Provision and implementation of a refuse disposal management plan for collection of waste by private contractor

Conditions:

1. Time limit - standard three years for implementation
2. In accordance with the approved Plans
3. Pre-commencement submission and approval of materials and scheme for retention re-use of southern flank wall of existing building
4. Pre-commencement submission and approval of cycle parking details
5. Pre-commencement submission and approval of Construction Management Plan (including measures for control of noise and dust)
6. Pre-commencement submission and approval - Contaminated Land 1: site characterisation report
7. Contaminated Land 2: remediation scheme
8. Contaminated Land 3: implementation of remediation scheme
9. Contaminated Land 4: reporting any unexpected contamination
10. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a noise assessment and mitigation scheme
11. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a habitat enhancement scheme
12. Pre-commencement submission and approval of details of hard and soft landscaping
13. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a design stage SAP assessment
14. Pre-occupation submission and approval of an as built SAP assessment
15. Pre-occupation implementation of hit and miss panelling to first and second floor rear windows
16. Pre-occupation provision of bin store details (pest control)
17. Pre-occupation notification of addresses - no access to parking permits
18. No access to parking permits

19. Control of construction hours (0800-1800 Mon-Fri, 0900-1300 Sat & not on Sundays or Bank Holidays)
20. No burning of waste on site
21. No fixing or installing of miscellaneous item to the external faces or roof of any building without the prior approval from the LPA
22. Pre-occupation provision of obscure glazing and hit and miss panel screening to windows

Informatives:

1. Positive and proactive requirement
2. S.106 applies
3. CIL
4. Terms and conditions
5. Pre-commencement conditions as seen and agreed by the applicant
6. Works affecting the Highway
7. Fee for conditions discharge
8. Building Regulations - noise between residential units
9. No entitlement to parking permits

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site contains a vacant part brick part timber clad two storey light Victorian era industrial building which is attached to an end of terrace property located on the east side of Watlington Street. Records indicate that historically the building was occupied as a builder's merchants (from mid-1800's to early 1900's). The most recent known use of the building to Officers is as a glass merchants in the 1970's.
- 1.2 The site is located within the Eldon Square Conservation Area and adjacent to the south of the building is a Grade II listed building (71-73 Queens Road). The application building, as per the majority of buildings within this conservation area, is also a building of townscape merit as designated by the Eldon Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2007). Buildings identified as having "townscape merit" vary in appearance, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered 19th century buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a positive contribution to the special interest of a conservation area.



Photograph of existing building viewed from Watlington Street



Photograph of existing building viewed from rear from adjacent car park

- 1.3 Watlington Street is a predominantly residential road containing terraced properties. The majority are two storeys with basements however, there are also a number of three storey dwellings within the terraces. There are also retail units to the ground floor of some of the properties, two churches within the road as well as a petrol station. The adjacent Grade II listed building at no. 71-73 Queens Road is an NHS/healthcare building. The site is also located within an air quality management area.



2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 07-01073-FUL - Change of use of ground floor from retail unit (A1 use) to a two-bedroom residential flat incorporating alterations and refurbishment, and alterations to existing first floor flat to provide additional bedroom. 111a Watlington Street: change of use from an office and commercial unit (B1 use) to one two-bedroom and two one-bed room residential flats, incorporating demolition of lean-to part on east elevation to create an amenity area, and alterations and refurbishment of existing building - Granted.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the part demolition of the existing part timber part brick industrial building and erection of a three-storey end of terrace building of 6 flats (C3 use).
- 3.2 The proposed replacement building would be finished in red brick at ground and first floor level whilst the second floor of accommodation would be finished in slate panels. Doors would be timber whilst windows would be grey aluminium. A basement level of accommodation is also proposed which would create two x 2-bedroom duplex flats across ground and basement floor level served by front and rear lightwells. Four x 1-bedroom flats are proposed at first and second floor level. The first and second floor unit's location to the front of the building would be served by enclosed balcony areas.
- 3.3 The duplex unit to the front of the building would be accessed via a ground floor level door from Watlington Street whilst the other units would be accessed from an existing entrance gate to the rear of the southern elevation of the building accessed via an existing pathway along the northern boundary of the adjacent car parking serving no. 71-73 London Street. Cycle and bin storage would be located within a small courtyard area to the rear of the building.

3.4 Amended plans have been submitted during the course of the application which make the following changes to the development:

- Retention of southern boundary wall (that to the boundary with Melrose House no. 71-73 London Road)
- Part retention of the southern flank wall of the existing building which would be incorporated within the new development
- Amended roof form to the new building with a pitched rather than flat roof now proposed to the Watlington Street frontage to reflect the pitch of the rest of the existing terrace
- Reduced window proportions to front and side elevations
- Removal of rear balconies
- Removal of ground floor level side facing windows to the south flank elevation



Proposed visual of development viewed from Watlington Street



Proposed visual of development viewed from rear from adjacent car park/Prince's Street

- 3.5 The Applicant sought detailed pre-application advice from Officer's including advice from the Local Planning Authority's Design Review Panel prior to submission of the application.
- 3.6 The application has been called to PAC by Councillor Page given the sensitive nature of the site and its location within the Eldon Square Conservation Area.

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Environmental Protection

- 4.1 No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a noise assessment and mitigation scheme, contamination land assessment and remediation scheme, construction method statement including details of noise and dust controls, vermin control measures for the bin store, adherence to standard construction working hours and to ensure no waste is burned on site.

RBC Transport

- 4.2 No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement and cycle store details, provision of the proposed bin store and a s106 obligation to secure private bin refuse collection arrangements for the site.

RBC Natural Environment Trees

- 4.3 No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a hard and soft landscaping scheme.

RBC Ecological Consultant

- 4.4 No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission of a scheme for the installation of four swift boxes within the proposed development.

RBC Conservation and Urban Design

- 4.5 No objections following submission of amended plans incorporating the original brick southern elevation wall and brick boundary wall within the development and addition of front roof pitch to the proposed building. Conditions recommended to secure exact details of proposed materials and a scheme for retention-and re-use of the brick southern elevation wall.

Berkshire Archaeology

- 4.6 No objection, the potential for survival or archaeological remains at the site is low.

Public Consultation

- 4.7 Melrose House East and West 71-73 London Rd, no.s 30 to 36 Princes Street (evens), no.s 105 to 111 Watlington Street (odds) and Princes House 73A London Road were notified of the application and submission of amended plans by letter. A site notice was also displayed at the application site.

- 4.8 Three letters of objection have been received raising the following matters:

- Design is out of keeping with the street and conservation area
- Access to the flats via the adjacent car park will negatively impact on the NHS/healthcare building at no.s 71-73 London Road to whom the car parking relates
- Overlooking/loss of privacy from the first and second floor side facing windows to the southern flank elevation of the building
- The position of the first and second floor windows would also prejudice future development of the car park at no.s 71-73 London Road and their position would not meet building regulations requirements
- Dispute that the applicant has legal rights (right of way) to use the existing access gate to the south elevation as the main entrance to the flats which requires access over the neighbouring properties land (via car park)

- 4.9 The Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) have also commented on the application and amended plans and object for the following reasons:

- Prefer that the building would continue in its current light industrial use or if there is to be a residential use this should be a conversion only
- Should demolition of the building be approved as many of the existing bricks as possible should be re-used within the new development
- Demolition and replacement of the building would destroy the heritage of the building comprised by its use, footprint configuration, materials and features to the detriment of the conservation area
- The boxy form of the rear unbalances the building
- The proposal is an overdevelopment of the site
- Concerned about the amenity of future occupiers

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'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

5.2 Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

5.3 Reading Local Plan 2019

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

EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

EN4: LOCALLY IMPORTANT HERITAGE ASSETS

EN9: PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE

EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK

EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND

EN15: AIR QUALITY

EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES

EM3: LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND

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

5.4 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's)

Supplementary Planning Document: Affordable Housing (2013)

Supplementary Planning Document: S106 Planning Obligations (2014)

Supplementary Planning Document: Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Supplementary Planning Document: Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

5.5 Other

Eldon Square Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)

6. **APPRAISAL**

The main issues raised by this planning application are as follows:

- Principle
- Design, Character and Heritage
- Unit Mix and Affordable Housing
- Amenity of Surrounding Occupiers
- Standard of Residential Accommodation
- Sustainability
- Transport
- Natural Environment

Principle

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) and seeks that all housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The accessibility of the site, located just outside the Reading Central Area as defined by the Reading Local Plan (2019), is considered acceptable for the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC6 (Accessibility and Intensity of Development) whilst the provision of new housing would align with the broad objectives of Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) in assisting in meeting the annual housing targets.
- 6.2 The loss of the existing light industrial use of the building must also be considered. The site is not located within a Core Employment Area and Policy EM3 (Loss of Employment Land) states that in such locations loss of employment land must be considered against a number of criteria including the accessibility of the site, viable continued use or redevelopment for employment uses, availability of similar accommodation elsewhere and is an employment use appropriate for the location.
- 6.3 The building has been vacant for a significant length of time. The Applicant advises that the building has been on the rental market for light industrial uses for over three years without being let. The building is not in an optimum location of access to the strategic road network with existing out of town centre employment sites within the Borough being more conveniently located. The site is also located within a predominantly residential area where a light industrial use could result in harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers and potentially the character of the conservation area. Officers do not object to the proposed loss of employment land in this location which is considered to be acceptable in the context of Policy EM3.
- 6.4 The broad principle of the proposal for residential development is therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with CC6, H1 and EM3. The details of the proposed development are now considered within the rest of this report.

Design, Character and Heritage Matters

- 6.5 Policy CC7 aims to preserve or enhance the character of the area in which a development is proposed in terms of layout, landscape, density, scale, height, massing, architectural detail and materials. 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. Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) seeks that development proposals preserve and enhance the special character of conservation areas.

- 6.6 Policy EN4 (Locally Important Heritage Assets) sets out that development proposals that affect locally important heritage assets will demonstrate that the development conserves architectural or historical significance of the asset, including the appearance, character and setting. The policy goes on to state that planning permission may be granted in cases where a proposal could result in harm to or loss of a locally important heritage asset only where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development significantly outweigh the asset's significance. Where it is accepted by the LPA that retention is not important recording of the heritage asset should be undertaken and submitted alongside development proposals. Replacement buildings should draw upon heritage elements of the previous design, incorporating historic qualities that made the previous building significant, which may include appearance, scale and architectural quality.
- 6.7 A detailed heritage statement has been submitted with the application which considers both the partial loss of building of townscape merit, the impact of the proposals of the significance of the Eldon Square Conservation Area and also the impact of the proposals on the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed building at no.s 71-73 London Road.
- 6.8 It should be noted that when the application was initially submitted the proposals sought to completely demolish and replace the existing building, including the southern boundary brick wall with the adjacent car park serving no.s 71-73 London Road. Following discussions with Officers, including the Council's Conservation and Urban Design Officer (CUDO), amended plans have been submitted which now seek to retain the entirety of the southern boundary brick wall as well as the partial retention of the southern flank elevation brick wall of the building.

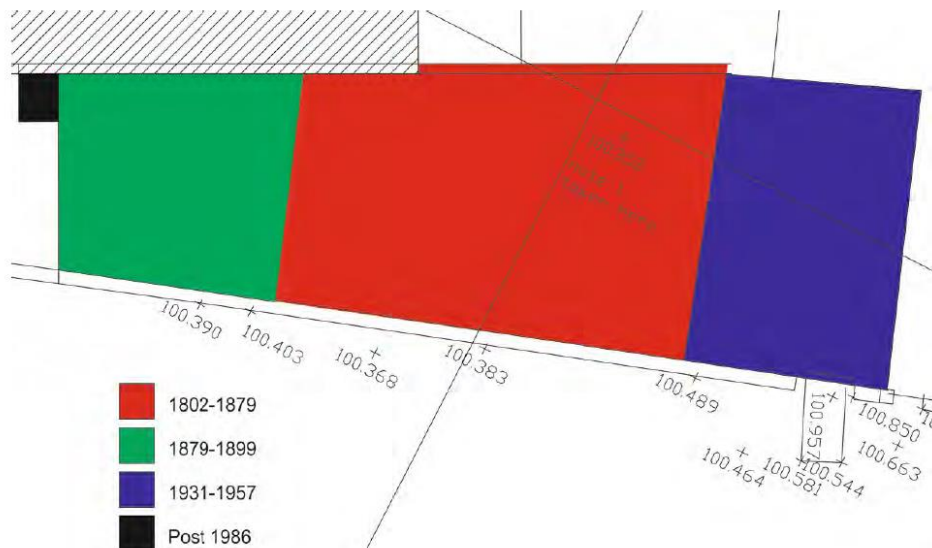


Visuals of development as initially proposed



Visuals of development as shown on the submitted amended plans

- 6.9 Other changes secured include introduction of a pitch roof to the front of the building to reflect the pitch of the rest of the terrace, removal of exposed front balconies and all rear balconies and reduction in size of all fenestration generally.
- 6.10 Considering first the loss/partial loss of the building of townscape merit the submitted heritage assessment shows that the building has been subject to a variety of alterations and additions over its history which is evident in the form of the building today with the presence of a number of utilitarian additions and replacement features including timber cladding section to the front upper floor of the building, rear extension which projects above the main roof form, modern front WC extension and also the presence of white PVC windows. The remaining original part of the building is considered to be the central red brick part of the building highlight in red on the plan below. It is this part of the building that is considered to contribute to the building's historic significance.



Plan showing estimated dates of the built form of the building as existing



Front elevation of existing building

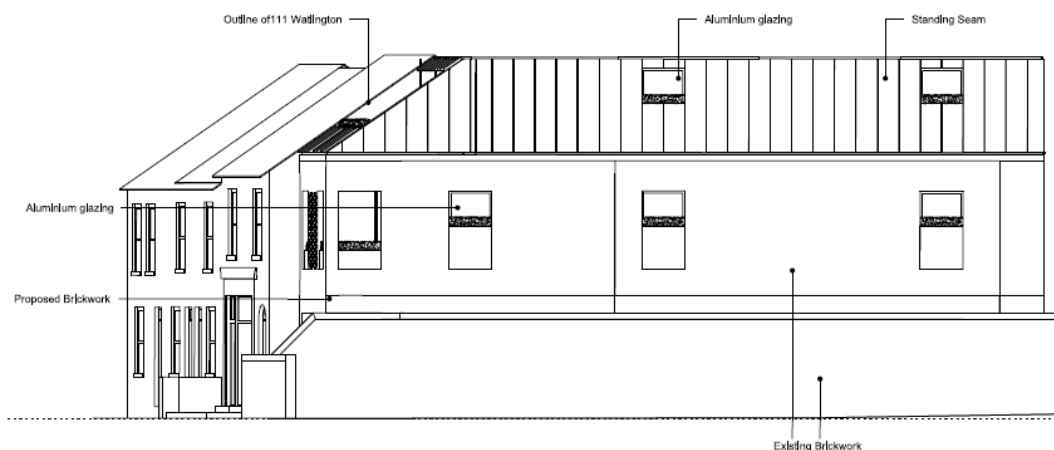


Southern flank elevation of existing building

- 6.11 Whilst acknowledging that the definition of a building of townscape merit is one that is considered to contribute positively to the character of the conservation area, Officers view is that the current building, as a result of the presence of a number of more modern additions/alterations, has a limited contribution to character of the conservation area. Certain features of the building such as the white PVC windows, modern WC extension and area of timber cladding which are prominent in views of the primary front elevation of the building from Watlington Street are, due to their utilitarian appearance, considered to be negative contributors to the conservation area and to detract from the building's significance. The buildings long term vacancy is also considered to detract from its significance and general contribution to the surrounding area.
- 6.12 Notwithstanding the above, key to any justification for loss/partial loss of the existing building is its replacement with a building of appropriate scale, form and high-quality design.
- 6.13 As referred to above the amended plans which have been submitted now seek to incorporate the original red brick southern flank elevation wall of the building within the development. The applicant has indicated that due to the age of this part of the building it may have to be rebuilt in order to be suitable for a modern residential development but that if this is required this would be carried out using the existing brickwork where appropriate. Details of the re-use of the existing brickwork to this elevation would be secured by way of suitably worded condition. Incorporation of this part of the existing building

within the development is welcomed given that this is the part of the building most visible from the surrounding area and which is considered to contribute most to its significance. The amended proposals also include retention of the prominent red brick boundary wall which runs along the boundary with the southern boundary of the site with the adjacent car park. Officers consider that retention of this feature is also positive and provides an appropriate and characterful setting to the building when viewed from the junction of Watlington Street and London Road.

- 6.14 Together with incorporation of the original features of the building referred to above Officers consider that the proposed replacement building as a whole is of appropriate scale and is of suitable high-quality design. In terms of scale and massing the roof height of the building would reflect that of the adjoined mid terrace building at no.111 Watlington Street whilst the pitch to the front roof would be reflective of the roof pitches of the rest of this part of the terrace. The footprint of the proposed building would retain the set back of the front elevation from the adjoined building creating a degree of subservience to the rest of the terrace. Whilst to the rear the footprint of the building would be reduced and pulled away from its current very close proximity to the rear of no. 36 Prince's Street. There is no objection to formation of a basement level of accommodation with basements being found to properties elsewhere within Watlington Street.



Proposed southern elevation view along Watlington Street

- 6.15 The proposed materials (red brick and slate) with retention/re-use of the existing red brick to much of the southern elevation and slates to the second floor and roof of the building are considered to be appropriate and high quality. Two enclosed balconies are proposed at first and second floor level to the front elevation of the building. At first floor level this terrace area would be set behind a patterned brick façade with two openings reflecting the proportions of first floor windows to the rest of the terrace and second floor (roof level) this be in the form of a recessed balcony within the front roof pitch. Whilst balconies are a common feature of the wider area, they are not common to Watlington Street. However, the enclosed nature of the two balcony areas proposed is such that they are considered to appear suitably discreet and to integrate satisfactorily with the street-scene. Small intrusions into the southern flank elevation would be required to provide small high-level windows to the flats. Given the minimal nature of intrusion required the Conservation and Urban Design Officer is satisfied that this would still facilitate retention/re-use of the majority of the existing red brick flank elevation of the existing building.

- 6.16 Planning permission was granted in 2007 (ref. 07-01073-FUL) for conversion and minor alteration of the existing building for residential use but this permission was never implemented. The applicant advises that this scheme was not brought forward at the time due to the structure of the existing building and challenges of meeting building regulation requirements for residential accommodation which would have required rebuilding of much of the building to be achieved.
- 6.17 In terms of landscaping the existing site does not contain any trees or vegetation. Given the constrained nature of the site provision of landscaping within the development is challenging. The proposals include small areas of planting to the front and within the rear courtyard whilst planters are proposed to the front balconies at first and second floor level as well as window boxes to all windows within the development. Provision of a green wall was considered by the Applicant and Officers however, the feasible location for this would have been the southern elevation where Officers have sought to retain the existing original brickwork of the building and as such provision of a green wall which would obscure the retained/re-used brickwork was not considered appropriate. In overall terms the Natural Environment Officer is satisfied that the proposals would represent an overall enhancement and net gain in terms of greening on the site and within the conservation area. Details of landscaping and proposed planting would be secured by way of condition.
- 6.18 In terms of impact on the surrounding Eldon Square Conservation Area views of the building are primarily obtained from the south from the adjacent car park serving no.s 71-73 London Road, the junction of Watlington Street and London Road and views from the rear across the car park from Prince's Street. The Eldon Square Conservation Area Appraisal outlines that features which contribute to the special character of this part of the conservation area include two grade II listed churches, Grade II star listed Watlington House, variety of terraced houses, typical 19th century street patterns, historic stone kerbs and gully's and roofscapes of brick chimneys and pots. Features identified as negative contributors to this part of the conservation area include the modern petrol station (opposite the application site), car parking to front of properties, loss of original windows, doors, slate roofs and boundary walls, wheelie bins on the pavements and boarded up shops.
- 6.19 The site has been vacant for a long time and a proposal to bring the site back into a viable use is considered of benefit to the conservation area. Whilst the design of the building is more contemporary than the existing building, Officer's consider that this is an overall enhancement compared to the appearance of the existing building and that the proposals strike the appropriate balance between retaining some original elements of the original building (including boundary wall) and providing a new building of suitable design quality that would contribute positively to the character of the surrounding area and conservation area.
- 6.20 The southern boundary of the application site is shared with the car park of no.s 71-73 London Road which is a four storey Georgian white stucco grade II listed building currently in use as an NHS healthcare building/office. The scale, massing and footprint of the proposed development are generally reflective of the existing building and rest of the terrace and together with the part retention of the existing south flank elevation wall, retention of the southern brick boundary wall and use of appropriate new materials it is not considered that the proposals would adversely impact on the adjacent listed building. The siting of the proposals would not change views of the listed building from the

surrounding area and the setting of the listed building is considered to be preserved.

- 6.21 Overall it is considered that the proposals are of suitable design quality and would contribute positively to the character of the surrounding area, setting of adjacent listed building and conservation area and preserve their settings. It is considered that the proposals would represent an enhancement to the area when compared to the existing building and as such the partial loss of the existing building of townscape merit is, in this instance, considered to have been justified.
- 6.22 The proposals are considered to accord with policies CC7, EN1, EN3 and EN4.

Unit Mix and Affordable Housing

- 6.23 Policy H2 (Density and Mix) states that development proposals should provide an appropriate mix of units based on the character and mix of units found in the surrounding area. Watlington Street contains a variety of residential properties including single dwellings and flats. The proposed mix of 2 x two-bedroom units and 4 x one-bedroom units is considered to be appropriate for the site's location just outside the defined Reading Central Area.
- 6.24 Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) states that development proposals of between five and nine dwellings should provide an affordable housing contribution to enable the equivalent of 20% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere within the Borough. In accordance with the adopted Affordable Housing SPD this equates to a contribution equivalent to 10% of the Gross Development Value of the scheme. The Applicant has agreed to the principle of this contribution to be secured by way of a section 106 legal agreement. Officers await submission of valuations of the development for review and details of the affordable housing contribution to be secured will be provided by way of an update report.

Amenity of Surrounding Occupiers

- 6.25 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to protect the amenity of existing surrounding occupiers. Policy EN15 (Air Quality) and Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect surrounding occupiers from the impact of pollution.
- 6.26 The rear of the existing building is located very close (2m) from the rear of no. 36 Prince's Street, a residential dwelling. Both the existing building and no. 36 have first floor rear windows which face each other at this close proximity. The existing building has a full width bank of windows whilst no. 36 incorporates two first floor rear facing windows. The proposed development would reduce the footprint of the development to the rear and pull the building away from the rear of no. 36, increasing the separation to 6m and significantly improving the rear outlook, privacy and amenities of the neighbouring dwelling.
- 6.27 Whilst the proposed development would incorporate single rear facing windows at first and second floor level the windows have been positioned close to the southern elevation side of the rear elevation which is opposite a rear facing obscurely glazed window of no. 36 and would also incorporate hit and miss brick panelling to the part of the window to provide further screening. The position of the proposed first and second floor windows is such that the

relationship with the second window to the rear of no.36 which is clear glazed would be at an oblique angle. Whilst the relationship of the development with the rear windows of no.36 is very close Officers are satisfied that the position of the proposed windows together with the proposed hit and miss screening would be such that incidences of overlooking would be suitably mitigated and that in overall terms the proposals would result in an improvement to the residential amenity of no. 36.

- 6.28 The existing building also contains a bank of five side facing windows on the north flank elevation of the building facing along the rear gardens of the adjoined terrace of buildings. The closest boundary of the adjoined property, no. 111 Watlington Street is located 3.5m from the north flank elevation. The proposals seek to replace these windows with single side facing bedroom windows , at first floor and second. Again, whilst this is a close relationship the single first and second floor level windows would look over the rear of the adjacent gardens and in overall terms is considered to result in an improvement above the existing situation in terms of overlooking.
- 6.29 The south flank elevation of the building is located directly on the boundary with the car park servicing the NHS building at no. 71-73 London Road and does not incorporate side facing windows other than large roof lights to the side facing roof slope. The proposed development would retain the position of the south flank elevation on the boundary. No windows are proposed at ground floor level to this elevation and whilst windows are proposed at first and second floor level these are high level windows only such that the proposals are not considered to result in an overlooking or loss of privacy to the adjacent site which has a car parking at its closet point with the building at no. 71-73 located 13.5m away from the boundary. The occupier of the adjacent NHS building has objected due to loss of privacy for patients but given the separation and that high-level windows only are proposed to the facing elevation of the development officers are satisfied that no undue overlooking or loss of privacy would occur.
- 6.30 First and second floor rear facing staircase windows are also proposed which would be secured as obscurely glazed by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 6.31 The proposed development has a reduced foot print compared to the existing building and the height of the building would also be reflective of the existing building. Whilst the proposed building has a bulkier roof form than the existing building this is not considered to appear out of scale with surrounding building and the proposals would result in any undue significant overbearing impacts to surrounding properties above that of the existing structure.
- 6.32 In terms of any potential noise and disturbance impacts it is considered that the proposed development of six flats would very likely result in an improved situation for surrounding occupiers as opposed to the potential re-use of the site for the current lawful light industrial use.
- 6.33 In terms of the amenity of surrounding occupiers the proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC8, EN15 and EN16.

Standard of Accommodation for Future Occupiers

- 6.34 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to protect the amenity of future occupiers. Policy EN15 (Air Quality) and Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect future occupiers from the impacts of pollution.

Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) sets out the standard to which all new build housing should be built. In particular new housing outside of the defined Reading Central Area should adhere to national prescribed space standards. Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) seeks that residential developments are provided with adequate private or communal outdoor amenity space.

- 6.35 Five of the six proposed flats would exceed the nationally prescribed space standards. One of the first-floor flats would measure 35m² which is 2m² below the standard. Officers view is that this unit is very marginally below the standard and that the proposed unit is still of a size that would provide for an adequate standard of accommodation for future occupiers. A number of the other units would significantly exceed the space standards and in overall terms the unit sizes within the development are considered to be acceptable. The site is also located just outside the Reading Central Area where Policy H5 sets out that the space standards are not applicable. All the proposed flats are considered to be served by suitable daylighting and outlook. The duplex units across ground and basement floor would be served by large front and rear lightwells providing a good degree of daylighting to the basement floor of the development.
- 6.36 Policy H10 requires that residential development is served by the adequate private or communal amenity space that is reflective of the provision and character of such spaces in the surrounding area. Two of the units within the development would be served by good sized enclosed private terrace areas. The other units within the development would not have access to private amenity space. A small communal courtyard area is also proposed to the rear of the site, but this primarily serves as a cycle and bin store area and access point to the flats on the upper floors of the development. Policy H10 acknowledges that flats located close to the town centre may not be able to provide dedicated amenity space and given the site's central location close to public recreation and leisure facilities Officers are satisfied that the development as a whole provide adequate amenity space provision.
- 6.37 The proposed duplex unit to the front of the building would be accessed via a ground floor level door from Watlington Street whilst the other units would be accessed from an existing entrance gate to the building towards the rear of the southern elevation of the building. This entrance gate is accessed from the adjacent site of no. 71-73 London Street via an existing pathway along the northern boundary of the car park serving the adjacent building. There is an existing and established access point to the building and the Applicant advises that they have a lawful right of way to this access.
- 6.38 In terms of noise impacts the development is located close to the busy London Road. Environmental Protection Officers recommend conditions are attached to any planning permission to secure submission and approval of a noise assessment and mitigation scheme prior to commencement of development to ensure an appropriate glazing specification and mechanical ventilation scheme are secured. An air quality assessment has been submitted with the application and Environmental Protection Officers are satisfied that this demonstrates that future occupiers of the development would not be subject to unacceptable air quality. The assessment also considers the impact of the proposed development on local air quality and notes that as a car free development the proposals would not adversely contribute to air quality as a result of increased emissions. A condition is also recommended to secure details of vermin and pest control measures for the proposed rear bin store.

- 6.39 The site has formerly been occupied under an industrial use and therefore Environmental Protection Officer recommend conditions are attached to secure submission and approval of a contaminated land assessment and remediation scheme prior to commencement of development.
- 6.40 Conditions are also recommended to secure a construction method statement including noise and dust control measures and adherence to the Council's standard working hours for construction activities.
- 6.41 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies H5, H10, EN15, EN16 and CC8.

Sustainability

- 6.42 Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy H5 (Standard for New Housing) seeks that all new housing development achieves a 19% improvement above the dwelling emission rate as described in building regulations and that development is built to achieve the higher water efficiency standard as described in building regulations. Adherence of the development to these standards would be secured by way of conditions. Other sustainability measures incorporated within the development include a net increase in greening and landscaping across the site, use of high quality and energy efficient materials, re-use of existing brick-work and provision of a car free development.
- 6.43 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC3 and H5.

Transport

- 6.44 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.
- 6.45 The site is located within walking/cycling distance of the town centre and local services. A frequent service of public transport is available along London Road and Queens Road which provides a good frequency of services.
- 6.46 The development is located at the south end of Watlington Street, which is a residential road with a mix of parking restrictions and limited waiting and parking occurring on both sides of the carriageway. The development is proposed as car free. Given the site location and the extensive on street restrictions present in the area, which includes the operation of the Council's Residents Parking Permit Scheme, a car free development is considered to be acceptable. In accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2011 the proposed development would generate additional parking but given the existing high levels of on-street parking in the surrounding area, there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the flats will not be issued with resident or visitor parking permits. This will be covered by way of appropriate condition.
- 6.47 In accordance with the SPD the development is required to provide one cycle parking space per flat. A covered cycle store for six cycles is shown to the rear

courtyard area of the site which is considered to be acceptable. A condition is recommended to secure details of the type of cycle stand proposed and secure nature of the store.

- 6.48 A secure bin store is also proposed within the rear courtyard of the site. It is proposed to secure private bin collection for the development by way of section 106 agreement so that refuse collectors enter the site and take the waste directly from the store. This is required to prevent bins for the six flats being left on the pavement to either Watlington Street or Princes Street and causing additional street clutter within the Conservation Area and to prevent residents from having to drag bins across neighbouring land to be collected from the surrounding roads.
- 6.49 Given the location of the site close to the town centre and busy roads a condition is recommended to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement prior to the commencement of any development on site.
- 6.50 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5.

Natural Environment

- 6.51 Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) requires development to retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity or geological interest found within the application site into their schemes.
- 6.52 A bat survey has been submitted with the application which has been reviewed by the Council's Ecology Adviser who is satisfied that this demonstrates that the building is unlikely to host roosting bats and the proposed development would not result in harm to protected species. A condition is recommended to secure details of four swift brick to be installed within the development such that the proposals would result in a net gain in biodiversity on the site.
- 6.53 The proposals are considered to accord with Policy EN12.

Other

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.54 The proposed development has a gross internal area of 384m² which equates to a potential levy of sixty thousand one hundred and seventy-six pounds (£60,170). If the Applicant can demonstrate that any part of the building has been in its lawful use for a continuous period of six months within the last three years then the payable levy may be reduced.

Equalities Impact

- 6.55 When determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the 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 and the recommendation is to grant full planning permission subject to the conditions and legal agreement heads of terms set out in the recommendation box at the top of this report.

Drawings and Documents Considered Submitted:

WSR-GA-1201 Rev E - Proposed First Floor Plan
WSR-GA-1202 Rev E - Proposed Second Floor Plan
WSR-GA-4001 Rev B - Proposed Elevations
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 20th August 2021

WSR-GA-4000 Rev E - Proposed Elevations
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 28th July 2021

WSR-GA-1021 Rev B - Proposed Site Plan
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 26th May 2021

WSR-GA-1010 Rev C - Proposed Location Plan
Received by the Location Planning Authority on 25th May 2021

WSR-GA-1199 Rev E - Proposed Basement Floor Plan
WSR-GA-1200 Rev E - Proposed Ground Floor Plan
WSR-GA-1202 Rev D - Proposed Roof Plan
WSR-GA-4002 Rev B - Proposed Section
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 24th May 2021

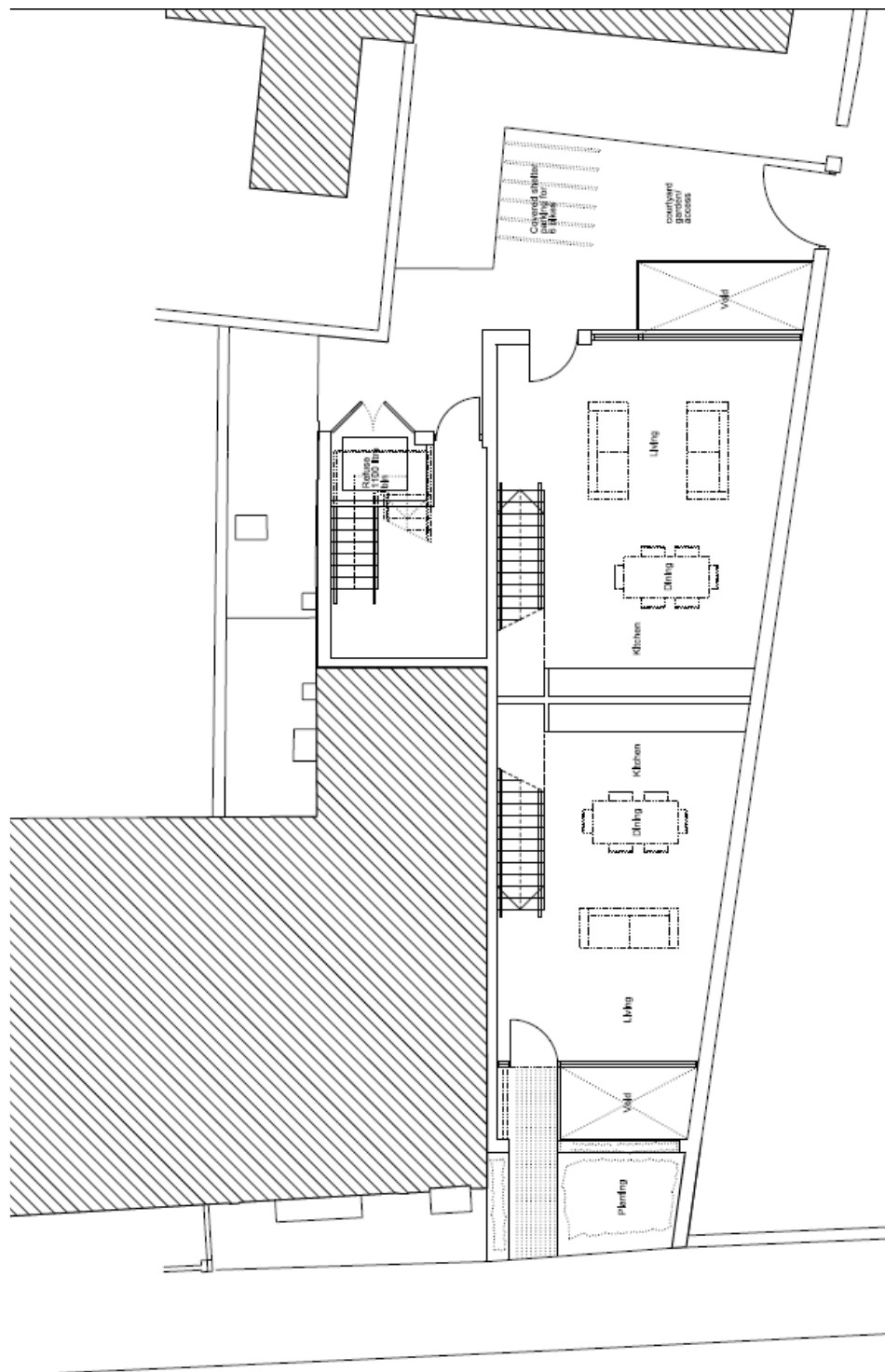
The Historic Environment Consultancy Heritage Statement ref. 2020/1558
Version 1 (dated 12th November 2020)
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 23rd November 2020

Case Officer: Matt Burns

Plans and Drawings:

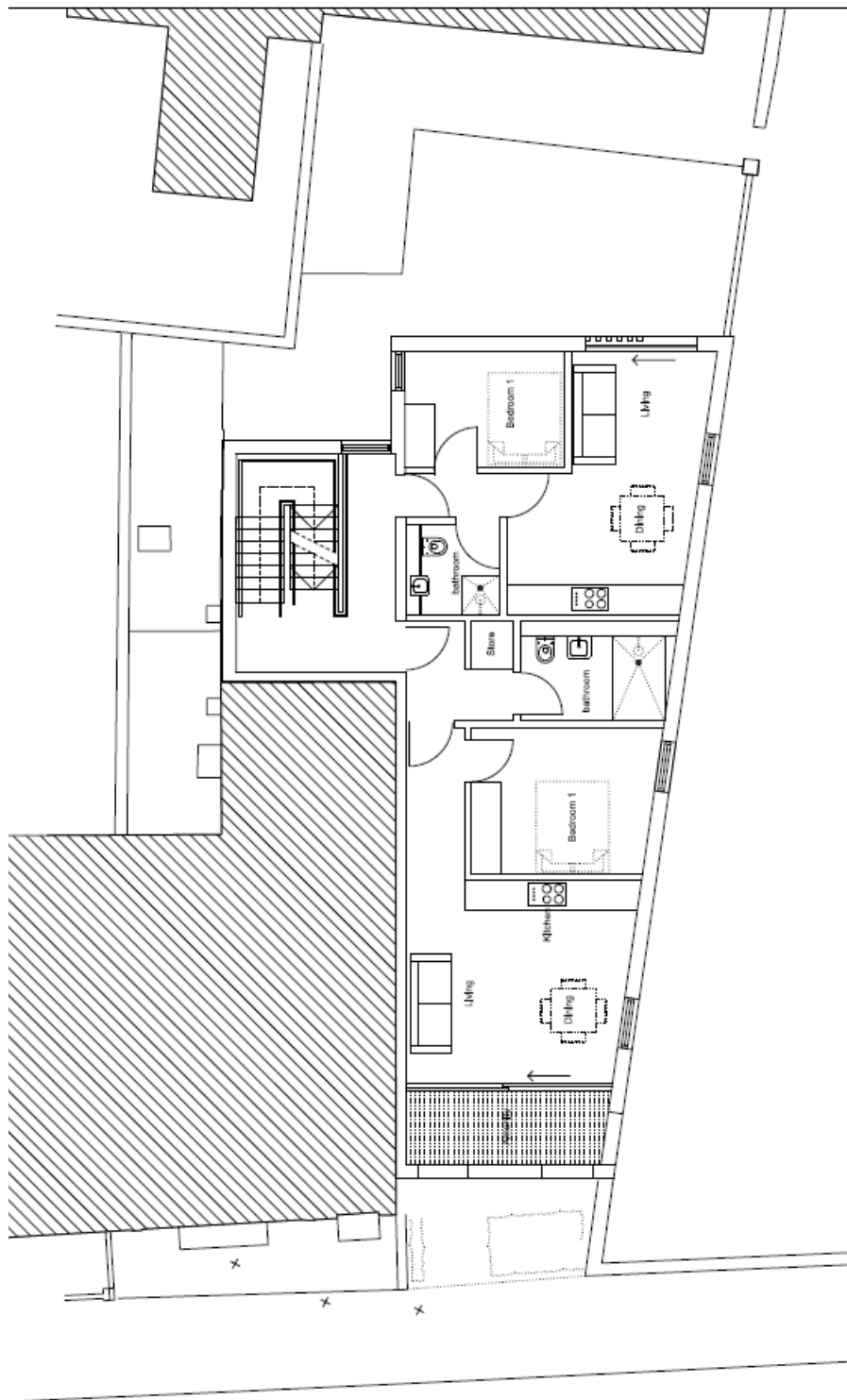


Proposed Site Plan



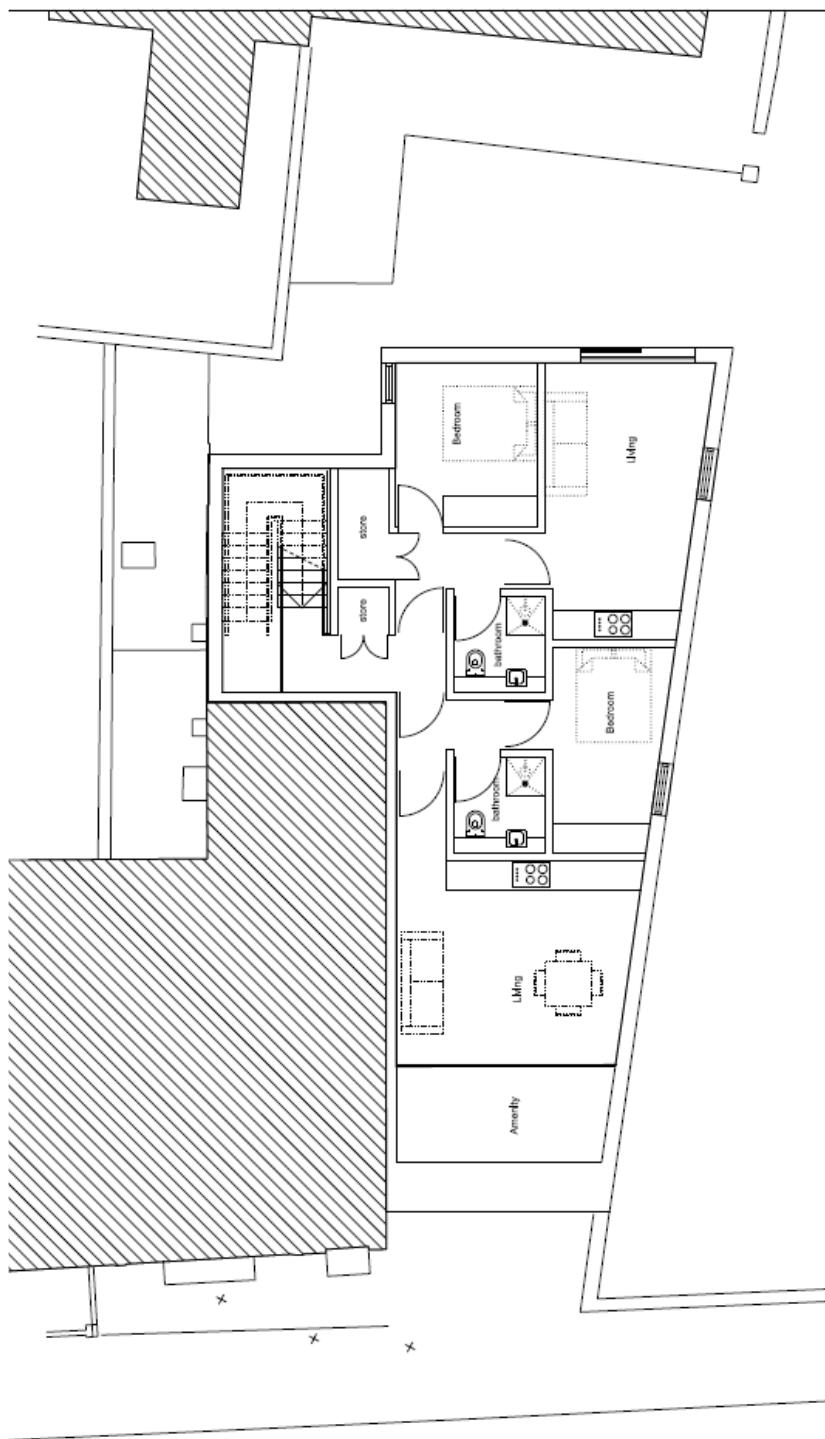
WATLINGTON STREET

Proposed Ground Floor Plan



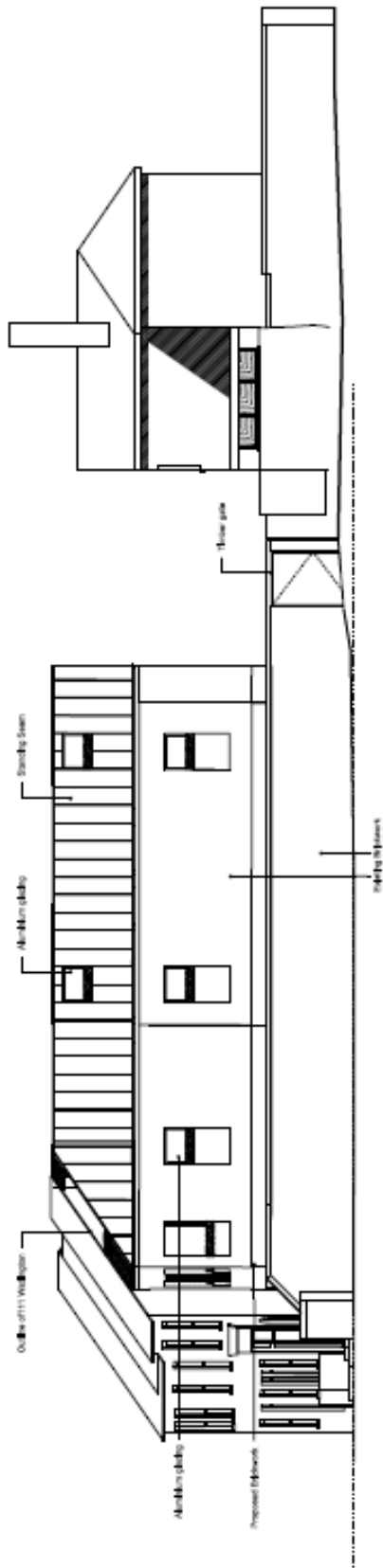
WATLINGTON STREET

Proposed First Floor Plan

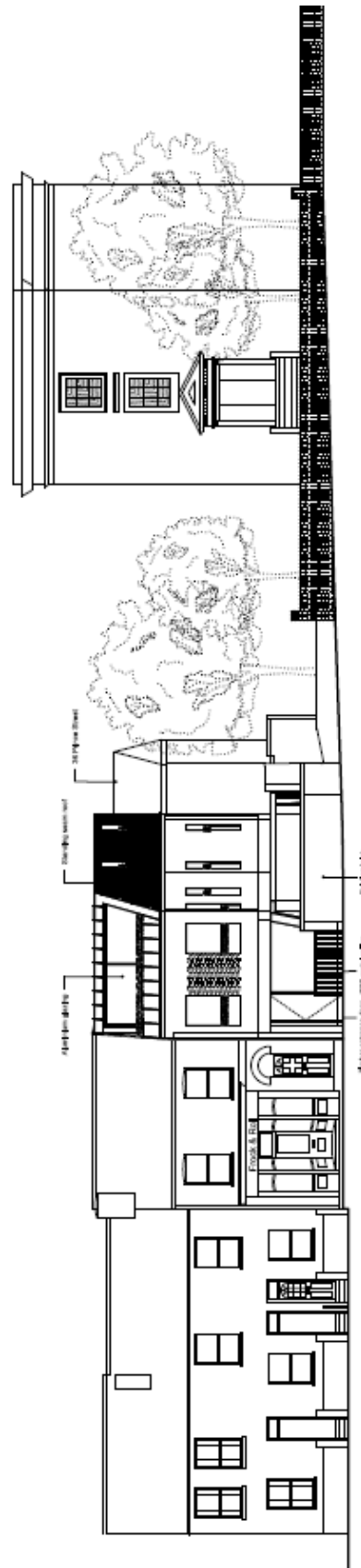


WATLINGTON STREET

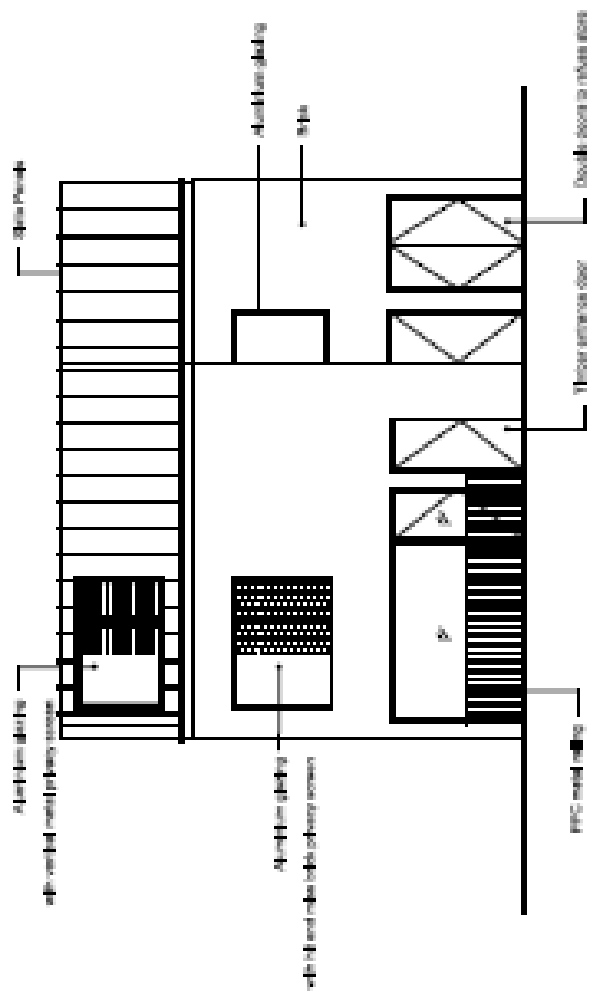
Proposed Second Floor Plan



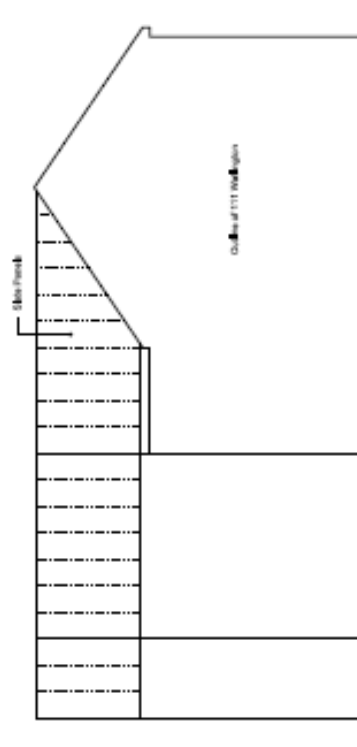
Proposed South Elevation



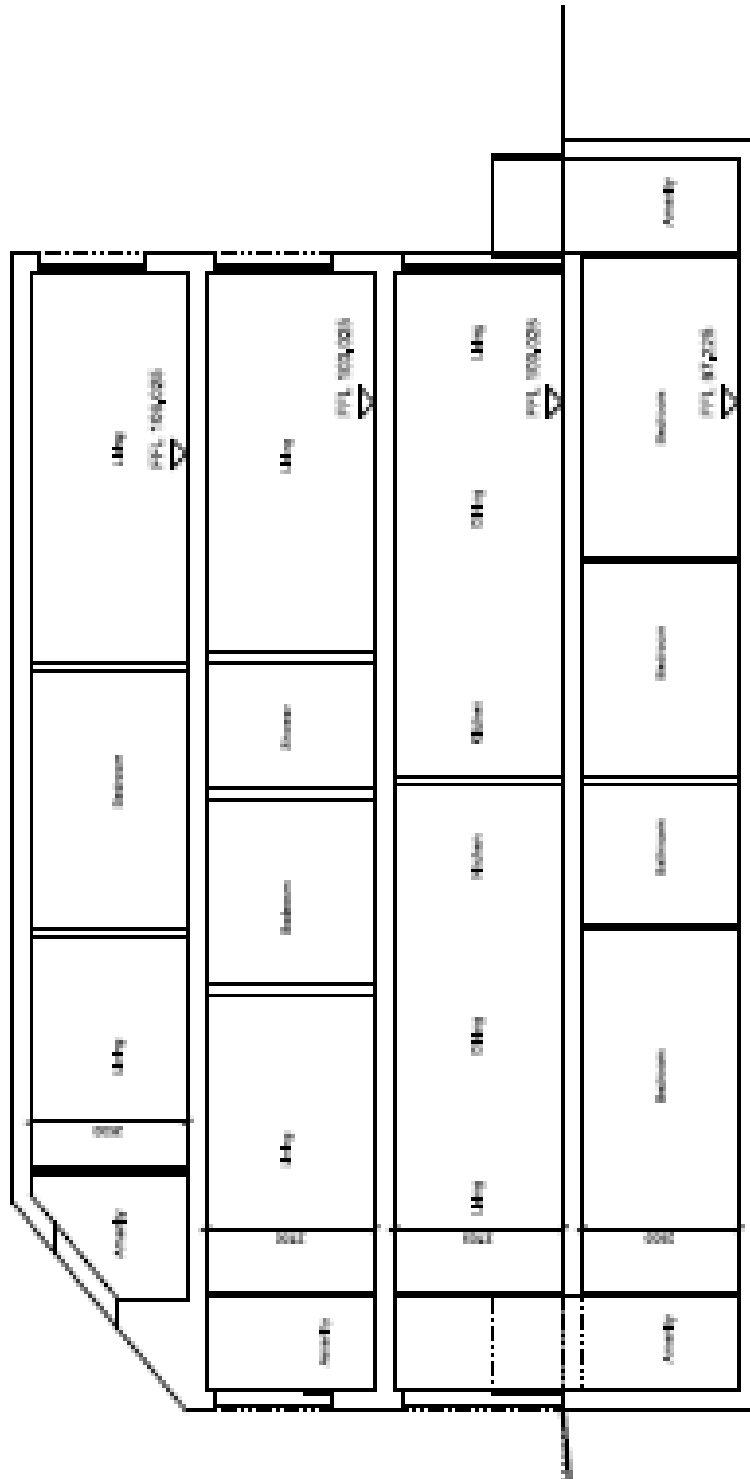
Proposed West (Front) Elevation



Proposed East (Rear) Elevation



Proposed North Elevation



Proposed Section



Proposed Visual - View from Watlington Street (Front)



Proposed Visual - View from Rear (Princes Street)

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 8th September 2021

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 211010

Address: Land to the west of Abattoirs Road

Proposal: Part Retrospective application for the erection of 40 no. sleeping units and 3no. support units for rough sleepers, to be used temporarily for a period of 5 years.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Deadline: 14/9/2021

Planning Guarantee 26 week target: 18/1/2022

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

- 1) TL1 - 3 yrs
- 2) Temporary permission - five years
- 3) Use approved is as temporary homeless shelter accommodation only
- 4) AP1 - Approved Plans
- 5) M1 - Materials as submitted
- 6) Landscaping scheme to include large plants in planters to be submitted, approved and implemented prior to occupation
- 7) L3 - Boundary Treatment - as shown and retained
- 8) Details of lights to be submitted and approved prior to occupation
- 9) DC1 - Vehicle Parking as specified prior to occupation
- 10) DC3 - Vehicle Access as specified prior to occupation
- 11) DC7 - Cycle Parking as specified prior to occupation
- 12) Refuse and Recycling as specified prior to occupation
- 13) Secure access system and CCTV to be provided prior to occupation and retained with 24-hour on-site monitoring

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

- 1) IF5 - Terms and Conditions
- 2) IF6 - Building Regulations
- 3) I11 - CIL
- 4) IF3 - Highways
- 5) IF8 - Encroachment
- 6) IF1 - Positive & Proactive.
- 7) Network Rail advice

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The site is a brownfield site partially bounded to the north by the railway line and partially by 59a Caversham Road (believed to be short term residential use), to the east by the A329 Caversham Road, to the south by a mixture of industrial and residential buildings and to the west by a large area of hardstanding associated with the Cattle Market buildings and appears to be being used informally for vehicle storage and parking. The application site is owned by the Council.
- 1.2 It has an abandoned character with scrubby vegetation recolonising the area through cracks in the hardstanding. Boundaries to neighbouring sites comprise a mix of palisade fencing, brick walls and corrugated metal structures.
- 1.3 There are a mix of scale of buildings with the buildings to the west associated with the Cattle Market being predominantly low rise in nature of one and two storeys and those to the east comprising several multi-storey buildings. The railway tracks are at an elevated position above the ground level of the application site.
- 1.4 The site is identified as potentially contaminated land, within an Air Quality Management Area and is part of the Cattle Market area allocated under Policy CR12a within the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) 'West Side Major Opportunity Area'. It is within Flood Risk Zone 2.
- 1.5 In March 2020, as part of the Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was announced that local authorities should house all rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping so that they could socially distance effectively and self-isolate if they needed to do so. As a result of the national 'Everyone in' response, over 260 people in Reading Borough, who were rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping, were accommodated in B&B/hotel accommodation in Reading during the course of the pandemic. This created a significant pressure on the Council's resources and solutions were required to move people on to alternative accommodation.
- 1.6 A range of 'move on' options were utilised and in order to meet the needs of a large number of the client group, with more complex needs, The Council's Housing Department proposed a temporary development of 40 units of modular accommodation with intensive support on site at this site. The authority, to spend Housing Revenue account monies to progress the development, was provided by Policy Committee on 3rd August 2020.
- 1.7 The original timeline for delivery was August to October 2020. Crown Commercial Service, the public procurement arm of Government, offered assistance in procuring the modular housing solution both in terms of drawing up a specification and drawing from their

established frameworks for supply and construction to help reduce costs. Tenders were sent out in August 2020, but a contractor was not appointed until November 2020 and the contract was not agreed until January 2021.

- 1.8 Legal issues and the arrival of travellers on site significantly hindered the availability of the site. The manufacturer suffered delays in the production of the units, which are all manufactured offsite, so although a significant number of the units are already on site the development is not likely to be completed until early September 2021.
- 1.9 The application is referred to committee as it is a Council own development (Regulation 3), as well as being a 'major' development.

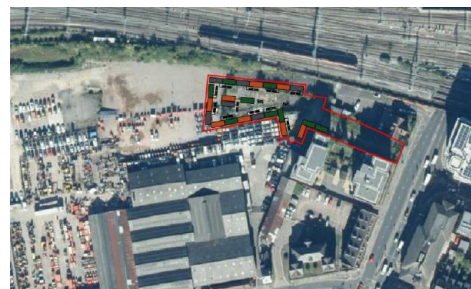
Location Plan



2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal is for:

- A total of 40 accommodation pods (2 in height), each comprising single person studio accommodation and a bathroom
- 2 site welfare office pods - 45.8sqm GIA
- Laundry & Switch Room (electric distribution point) - 22sqm GIA
- New pedestrian gate onto Caversham Road
- 4 no. staff car parking spaces
- Bin storage, cycle storage and landscaping
- 6 staff



2.2 Submitted plans and documentation received 18th June 2021 unless otherwise stated (including amended details) are as follows:

- Site Location Plan - Drawing no: 201123-101.01
- Site Block Plan - Drawing no: 201123-102.03
- Site Layout - Drawing no: 201123-114.03
- Site Elevations A, B & C - Drawing no: 201123-015.01
- Site Elevations D, E, F, G & H - Drawing no: 201123-016.01
- Site Elevations J, K, L & M - Drawing no: 201123-017.02
- Layouts and Elevations: Unit Types A&B - Drawing no: 201123-110.01
- Layouts and Elevations: Unit Types C&D - Drawing no: 201123-111.01
- Layouts and Elevations: Laundry - Drawing no: 201123-113.02
- Layouts and Elevations: Offices - Drawing no: 201123-112.01
- Exterior Lighting - Drawing no: ASD-DN-MR-0920-003 Sheet 1 of 1 Rev R01, received 20th July 2021
- Exploratory Hole Plan - Drawing no: 20260-PW-AG-00-XX-DR-G-1001 Rev P01, received 20th July 2021
- Foundation Plan and Details Two Storey Sleeper Pods - Drawing no: 20260 - PWA-00-XX-DR-S-1001 Rev P01, received 20th July 2021

Other Documents:

- Design and Access Statement, dated 18th March 2021, prepared by Williams Architects, Document ref: 211123-130.01

2.3 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. As the proposal is for temporary buildings there is an exemption from CIL liability.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

171315/FUL: Demolition of existing out buildings on site and the provision of a new public car park with access acquired from Abattoirs Road, with egress onto Great Knollys Street Land off Abattoirs Road, Reading - 'Disposed Of' 2/8/2018

191384/REG3 - Demolition of existing outbuildings and the provision of a new public car park with access required from Abattoirs Road with egress on to Great Knollys Street, Reading - Pending

4 CONSULTATIONS

Statutory

Network Rail

- 4.1 No objection. Lighting - Any lighting associated with the development (including vehicle lights) must not interfere with the sighting of signalling apparatus and/or train drivers' vision on approaching trains. The location and colour of lights must not give rise to the potential for confusion with the signalling arrangements on the railway. Following occupation of the development, if within three months Network Rail or a Train Operating Company has identified that lighting from the development is interfering with driver's vision, signal sighting, alteration/mitigation will be required to remove the conflict at the applicant's expense.
- 4.2 Drainage - Soakaways / attenuation ponds / septic tanks etc, as a means of storm/surface water disposal must not be constructed near/within 5 metres of Network Rail's boundary or at any point which could adversely affect the stability of Network Rail's property/infrastructure. Storm/surface water must not be discharged onto Network Rail's property or into Network Rail's culverts or drains. Network Rail's drainage system(s) are not to be compromised by any work(s). Suitable drainage or other works must be provided and maintained by the Developer to prevent surface water flows or run-off onto Network Rail's property / infrastructure. Ground levels - if altered, to be such that water flows away from the railway. Drainage is not to show up on Buried service checks.

Non-statutory

Environmental Health

- 4.3 Officers are awaiting comments at the time of writing. This will be reported in an update report.

Natural Environment (tree officer)

- 4.4 The site is within a low canopy cover ward (Abbey with reference to the adopted Tree Strategy) and within the AQMA - as such, sufficient greening of any development is more important. Whilst I appreciate the temporary nature of the use, greening can still be incorporated to both meet policy requirements, aims of our Tree Strategy and to make the site more pleasant for users. The use of planters would enable any trees or shrubs within these to be re-used by the Council after use of the land ceases too.
- 4.5 Landscape principles should be established prior to a decision. The site would benefit from planting / green screening on the Caversham Rd /IDR frontage to help filter pollution. The type of tree planting in planters could include dwarf fruit tree varieties which would provide, wildlife value, softening of the site and fruit for the users. Planters

will have to be of a sufficient size - details of which could be secured via condition.

- 4.6 Given that the site is already being set up, it would seem reasonable to see if the full details could be resolved prior to a decision to avoid a pre-occupation condition.

Thames Valley Police - Crime Prevention Design Adviser (Berks)

- 4.7 Awaiting comments at time of writing. Any response received will be reported in an update report.

RBC Transport Strategy

- 4.8 The site in question has no existing planning use and therefore there are no vehicle trips associated with the application site, the principle of this was agreed as part of previous applications on the site. The proposal will increase vehicle movements to and from the site and therefore it must be established that the access illustrated is sufficient. This application is for the same site where the extended RBC car park is proposed to be located and I note this application is still undetermined. Therefore, details of how the two sites could co-exist need to be provided and the new vehicle access to the site assessed and visibility splays provided. I am happy that speeds would be low and as such visibility should be provided at 2m x 25m in either direction.

It is also noted that no cycle parking has been provided, irrespective of the demographic cycle parking should still be provided at a ratio of 0.5 spaces per unit. The agent has confirmed that A small shed will be provided adjacent to the management suite for secure bicycle storage. Details of this need to be provided.

It will also need to be clarified how refuse will be collected, it is noted that the refuse store is located half way into the site which would assume that a refuse vehicle would travel along Abattoirs Road. If this is the case then a dedicated on site turning facility will be required. It should also be noted that a refuse vehicle will need to get to within 10m of where refuse is to be collected from.

In addition, and to be consistent with other applications for this site the applicant should implement a no right turn ban at the junction of Abattoirs Road and Caversham Road as the proposal increases vehicle movements to and from the site. Other applications have been required to undertake this prior to commencement of the use on the site however as this proposal is already partially in operation I would suggest that they implement this within 2 months of permission being granted given the statutory processes have already commenced in relation to the car park. I recommend a condition is used.

Public consultation

- 4.9 The following addresses were consulted by letter: Arches Club, Abattoirs Road; Flats 1 & 2 59A Caversham Road; Flats 1-32 Malcolm Place, Caversham Rd; Flats 1-30 Jeffrey Place, Caversham Road; 1-29 Regent Court, Caversham Road; Reading Cattle Market, Great Knollys Street; Reading Auction Market, Great Knollys Street; Cattle Market Café, Great Knollys Street; and 18 Great Knollys Street.
- 4.10 3 objections were received. Full neighbour consultation comments are available to view on the Council's website. The following is a summary of the key issues raised:

- Built without prior planning permission; not informed of the intent to use the land for this purpose prior to the units being erected.
- Major concerns about the security of property and the increased likelihood of anti-social behaviour
- Already a significant issue with bicycle theft and attempted theft as well as unwanted intruders into the neighbouring residential block (previous rough sleepers in the hallways). This wall gives direct access to the internal areas of the block of flats and totally undermines the locked front door!
- What safety and security measures are being put in place to protect neighbours and property?
- There are already existing container sleeping units built on the same sites building additional 40 units will create an over concentration of homeless unit in the area. This is done without further supporting amenities in the area, and the council is making a decision without a detailed plan for hosting a high density homeless pods site.

Planning Officer comment: It appears that the objector has misunderstood the proposal which is not for a further 40 units but is seeking permission for just 40 pods - including those already on site.

- Since the temporary container sleeping units were built I have observed increasing amounts of trespassing to our property area and people going through our rubbish in the middle of nights and left rubbish on the ground in our residential area. this has created health & safety issue for the local residents of Regent Court.
- As Regent Court is a listed building, accumulation of rubbish in the area and building of sleeper pods nearby may impact the appearance and character of a listed building.

- The area is next to the railway line and surrounded by a commercial area. The dirty and noisy living conditions would not be suitable and respectable.
- Concentrating all homeless in one area will hamper the effort for integrating them into the wider community.

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) (2021) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”. The relevant sections of the NPPF are:
- 5.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

National Policy

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

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

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

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change

Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

Policy CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

Policy CC9: Securing Infrastructure

Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Policy EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Policy EN15: Air Quality

Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

Policy EN18: Flooding and Drainage

Policy H6: Accommodation for Vulnerable People

Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Policy TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Policy CR2: Design in Central Reading
Policy CR12: West Side Major Opportunity Area

- 5.4 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are:
- Employment, Skills and Training (April 2013)
 - Sustainable Design and Construction (December 2019)
 - Revised Parking Standards and Design (October 2011)
 - Planning Obligations Under Section 106 (April 2015)
- 5.5 Other Documents:
- Sequential and Exception Test of Sites in the Submission Draft Local Plan (March 2018, RBC)
 - Reading's Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2020 - 2025
 - Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 - 2024, RBC
 - Housing Strategy for Reading 2020- 2025, RBC
 - Reading Borough Council Policy Committee Report 3rd August 2020

6 APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Principle of Development
 - Design
 - Residential Amenity
 - Transport
 - Landscaping
 - Sustainability
 - Environmental Matters
 - Equalities impact
 - Other Matters
- 6.1 Residents have raised issues that work has commenced on site prior to planning permission being sought and granted. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2020 introduced part 12A which states that emergency development by a local authority or health service body is permitted development if that is:
- A. Development by or on behalf of a local authority(3) or health service body on land owned, leased, occupied or maintained by it for the purposes of–
- (a)preventing an emergency;
- (b)reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of an emergency;
- or
- (c)taking other action in connection with an emergency.
- 6.2 This, therefore, allowed for works to commence to provide emergency move on accommodation for those rough sleepers housed

in B&Bs during the pandemic, without first applying for planning permission. This was as long as permission was sought and secured by 31st December 2021. As at 11th August 21 pods had been installed. The remaining pods are due to be delivered by the end of the first week in September.

Principle of Development

- 6.3 The NPPF states (para. 10) that *“at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development”* and at para. 11 that for decision-taking this means: *“approving development proposals that accord with an up -to-date development plan without delay;”*. The overarching objectives are economic, social and environmental. *The proposal would contribute towards supporting “strong, vibrant and healthy communities...”* and through the provision of move-on accommodation and on-site support, would support health and social well-being.
- 6.4 The proposal meets the Council’s Corporate Plan priority of safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable. In addition, it contributes to the Council’s strategic aims of promoting equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment. The proposal also accords with the aims and priorities set out within the Council’s Housing Strategy, Preventing Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 6.5 Policy H6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) relates to accommodation for vulnerable people and states that *“(i).....Other specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will address the identified needs, which are primarily for accommodation that enables occupants to live as independently as possible....ii) Development for specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will fulfil the following criteria: • Developments will, where possible, locate accommodation close to.... relevant community facilities.....; • Development will incorporate areas of green space, which are particularly important for many groups of vulnerable people....iv) Affordable specialist housing for vulnerable people that meets the needs of the most up to date Housing Strategy may count towards affordable housing provision in line with policy H3.”*
- 6.6 The temporary proposal would provide accommodation for vulnerable people with a specialist service, commissioned to provide relevant on-site support, akin to a C2 use class, which includes residential institutions where a level of care is provided. The site is part of the allocation under Policy CR12a as follows:

CR12a, CATTLE MARKET: This site will be developed for a mix of edge-of-centre retail uses, and residential development, along with public car parking. The retail may include bulky goods, but should not include a significant element of non-bulky comparison goods retail. It must be designed to reflect the urban grid layout and built form of the centre and a single storey retail warehouse will not be

permitted. Development should take account of mitigation required as a result of a Flood Risk Assessment. Site size: 2.46 ha Indicative potential: 330-490 dwellings, 10,000-15,000 sq m net gain of retail.

- 6.7 Whilst the proposal would not provide the permanent housing sought by the allocation, it would contribute to addressing more complex and immediate needs by providing safe accommodation for rough sleepers and on-site welfare support on a temporary basis, which would accord with Policy H6. This is a relatively unique opportunity to deliver a valuable scheme as a meanwhile/ temporary use on an underused piece of land in central Reading. It is also relevant that there has been no alternative proposal, which meets the allocation requirements, which has come forward for this site in over 20 years.
- 6.8 In conclusion, the principle of the use of the site as proposed on a temporary basis is considered acceptable. It would provide a form of affordable accommodation for vulnerable people in accordance with Policies H6 and H3, which weighs in favour over fulfilling the aims of the site allocation in this case. It would also provide employment benefits in the short term for the support staff for the site. The report goes on to consider the proposal against other relevant policies.

Design

- 6.9 The NPPF (Para 126) sets out that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 6.10 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.*”
- 6.11 The proposal includes pods at two storeys, mostly arranged around the perimeter of the site. They will have a utilitarian and basic appearance, although they will be colourful. They will sit comfortably within the surrounding context and their scale at 5.7m in height is acceptable. The layout maximises the use of this irregular shaped site, and the appearance will be softened by some planting in above ground pots and amenity space. The site will also include bin storage and parking.
- 6.12 Officers accept that the scheme will not meet the requirements of Policy CC7 in terms of high-quality design, but this has been weighed against the nature of this temporary development, which will meet a specific and specialist accommodation need, which is considered to make this scheme acceptable in this instance.
- 6.13 The site benefits from being in a highly accessible location with the necessary local infrastructure already in place. The existing vehicular access point on the northern side, from Abattoirs Road, will

be retained and a new pedestrian access point will be installed on the Caversham Road frontage.



- 6.14 In terms of achieving a design which is safe and accessible the proposal includes secure palisade fencing of 2m high around the site and access-controlled entrances and 24hr on site supervision.
- 6.15 The development of the site for the temporary pods, with some landscaping and on-site amenity, will provide improvements to the appearance of the site, and although not wholly in accordance with policy CC7, this is considered on balance to be suitable given the positive social benefits of the proposal.

Residential Amenity

- 6.16 Policy CC8 requires development to not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of: Privacy and overlooking; Access to sunlight and daylight; Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; Harm to outlook; Noise and disturbance; Artificial lighting; Vibration; Dust and fumes; Smell; Crime and safety. The nearest residential properties to the proposal are adjacent to the boundary with the site at Jeffery Place and Malcolm Place.
- 6.17 Policy EN16 states that *“proposals for development that are sensitive to the effects of noise or light pollution will only be permitted in areas where they will not be subject to high levels of such pollution, unless adequate mitigation measures are provided to minimise the impact of such pollution”*.
- 6.18 The pods themselves will be orientated such that there will be no overlooking, no overbearing effects, or loss of daylight/ sunlight of adjacent properties.
- 6.19 Issues have been raised through consultation with respect to crime and safety. The site will be bounded by 2m high palisade fencing and the entrances will be controlled through a door entry system, with CCTV, to prevent access to anyone other than those who will live or work there or who are required for providing services, e.g doctors. The site will be subject to 24/7 on-site support from the homeless charity, St. Mungo's, who will provide staff for individual support for

the residents of the site, which will take place within the offices, and staff for building services and incident response.

- 6.20 Each of the units will be externally lit for safe access to the units and there will be additional lighting to the site entrances and around communal areas. A condition is attached requiring the submission of the final lighting details and implementation prior to occupation.
- 6.21 For the occupants of the site, each of the pods will have a window to provide sufficient levels of daylight/ sunlight.
- 6.22 The windows and doors of the pods will be double glazed and will be located facing inwards and away from the railway to mitigate the impact of noise from that source.
- 6.23 In terms of amenity space there will be communal courtyard areas in front and around the pods as well as seating and a grassed area.
- 6.24 With the conditions proposed, the scheme is considered not to cause undue harm through noise disturbance or security concerns to the future occupants and nearby residents and is considered to provide an acceptable standard of temporary accommodation to the users. The proposal will not fully accord with relevant amenity policies, but it is considered it will provide sufficient measures when balanced against the benefits of the provision of a temporary scheme of this nature.

Transport

- 6.25 The Application Site is in a very sustainable location within walking distance of the centre of Reading. There is a pedestrian point across Caversham Road very close to the site and access to public transport.
- 6.26 The proposal will retain access points for vehicles and pedestrians from Abattoirs Road and Caversham Road respectively and will include 4 no. car parking spaces for staff and covered cycle storage. The only vehicles visiting the site will be staff and support services and subject to clarification on traffic circulation, trip generation and suitable safety measures, it is likely that these could only turn left from the site onto Caversham Road. Bin storage is proposed as an open fronted, covered canopy structure and will be sited to enable easy proximity/ access for refuse vehicles. Transport comments have been provided (see consultation section of this report) and some questions remain. These will be addressed in an update report.
- 6.27 However, there was no in principle objection on transport grounds and therefore subject to the details sought being provided the requirements of the relevant policy TR5 will be met.

Landscaping

- 6.28 Policy H6 states that development will incorporate areas of green space, which are particularly important for many groups of

vulnerable people. Policy CC7 requires developments to include appropriate landscaping and EN14 requires new development to make provision for tree planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage and in areas such as this which have low tree coverage and are within Air Quality Management Areas EN15.

- 6.29 This proposal is for an emergency welfare accommodation project and bearing in mind the temporary (five year) nature of the accommodation, a landscaping solution which is appropriate needs to be considered.
- 6.30 The site is a relatively constrained urban site with no existing meaningful landscaping. The proposal will focus the siting of the pods adjacent to the site boundaries. The proposal will include some planting within above ground planters within the site, between the pods, and to boundaries. A condition is included for the submission and approval of a satisfactory detailed landscaping plan for implementation prior to occupation.
- 6.31 It will also involve the removal of scrub, particularly at the Caversham Road frontage. This will contribute to improving the appearance of the site.

Sustainability

- 6.32 Adopted Local Plan Policy CC2 requires new development to reduce the consumption of resources and materials and states that *“All minor non-residential developments is required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM ‘Very Good’ standard as a minimum;..... Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.”*
- 6.33 Policy CC3 requires that all developments demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. Policy CC5 requires minimisation of waste during construction and the life of the development.
- 6.34 As a temporary scheme of this unique type of development it will not be possible to meet BREEAM standards. However, the proposals do offer a range of measures as follows contributing towards policy requirements:
- The pods have been manufactured off-site using modern methods of construction to minimise waste and maximise efficiencies of the build process.
 - The units are well insulated using high performance rigid insulation boards lining the walls, roof and floor and windows are double glazed both for thermal and acoustic reasons.
 - They will be heated via electric panel heaters and hot water will be provided through an instantaneous electric water

heater ensuring no heat loss on the hot water system through stored water.

- LED lighting will be used both internally and externally. Other appliances installed in the pods will be low energy.

- 6.35 Although temporary in nature they are robustly manufactured, and they could be re-used.

Environmental matters

- 6.36 **Air Quality:** Policy EN15 requires developments to “*have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality*”. The pods are sited well back from Caversham Road and set away from the railway line and the direct impacts of poor air quality will therefore be minimised. The units are temporary and as an allocated site for housing it has been assessed as suitable for accommodation.
- 6.37 **Contaminated land:** Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources states that “*Development will only be permitted on land affected by contamination where it is demonstrated that the contamination and land gas can be satisfactorily managed or remediated so that it is suitable for the proposed end use and will not impact on the groundwater environment, human health, buildings and the wider environment, during demolition and construction phases as well as during the future use of the site.*” Some sampling of the ground conditions was undertaken in February 2021 and this showed no contaminated material. Excavations have been kept to a minimum and generally to nominal depths of 300mm to 450mm and limited to installing foundation pads to each corner of the pods and for connections to required existing services. These excavations have not revealed any contaminated material or evidence of contaminated ground. No excavated material has been removed from the site during the works. Any comments received from Environmental Protection will be reported in an update.
- 6.38 **Flood Risk:** The site is in Flood Risk 2. It is part of an allocated site for residential and commercial uses and has therefore passed the sequential test. The proposed use is defined under the ‘more vulnerable’ classification of use for which flood risk standing advice is to be followed. Under the NPPG¹ it states that all vulnerable developments should follow the advice for: surface water management, access and evacuation and floor levels. There will be a permeable top surface across the whole site and the pods utilise eaves drop for rainwater fall to the blank elevation sides to manage surface water on site. There will be an emergency evacuation plan in place for staff and residents. It is considered that there will be no worsening of surface water run off as the pods will be located on areas which are existing hard surfacing, and existing drainage will be

¹ Preparing A Flood Risk Assessment: Standing Advice, February 2021 (NPPG)

utilised. The ground floor pods will have an internal floor level above estimated flood levels.

Equalities Impact

- 6.39 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.
- 6.40 In developing of the scheme it was agreed that ambulant disabled and disabled persons requiring such accommodation will continue to be housed within more accessible hotel accommodation as is currently the case.

Other Matters

- 6.41 **S106:** There are no obligations which are required for the site to accord with Policy CC9.
- 6.42 ***Impact on Listed Building:*** An objector has raised concern over the impact of litter and the pods themselves on the appearance and character of the listed Regent Court.
- 6.43 Regent Court is sited ca 30m from the closest point to the site and its current setting is overwhelmingly dominated by the existing flats of Jeffery Court and Malcolm Court. As the pods are sited alongside and behind Jeffrey Court are only 2 storeys in height it is not considered that would be any detrimental effect with respect to the setting and the character and appearance of the listed buildings.
- 6.44 With respect to litter, there are currently no occupants of the site, and as a construction site should be left secure at the end of each day. During the operation of the site there will be sufficient bin storage and refuse will be collected regularly on-site by a refuse vehicle. The process of developing the site for a temporary use, which will have 24/7 on-site supervision, should minimise any likelihood of litter from the site being dumped in other locations.

CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal is for much needed temporary move-on accommodation for vulnerable homeless people with on-site welfare support. Although the scheme does not wholly meet some of the adopted planning policy requirements it is considered that delivering a proposal which meets an exceptional issue and for which there is an overriding public need, outweighs meeting normal policy requirements in this instance. Indeed, it responds very positively to

a number of Council priorities with respect to addressing homelessness and rough sleeping.

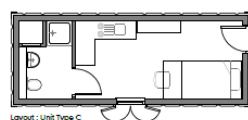
- 7.2 Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant on this scheme and overall officers consider this to be a supportable scheme, which accords with relevant national and local policy. The planning application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

APPENDIX 1: Plans

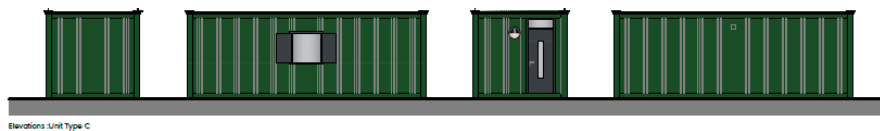
Floor Plans & Elevations



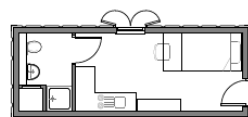


Layout : Unit Type C

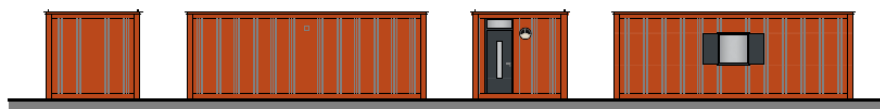
- Unit colours
- Colour 1 : RAL 2001 red-orange
 - Colour 2 : RAL 7024 graphite grey
 - Colour 3 : RAL 6035 pearl-green



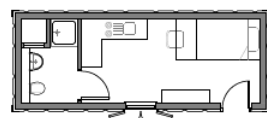
Elevations : Unit Type C



Layout : Unit Type D

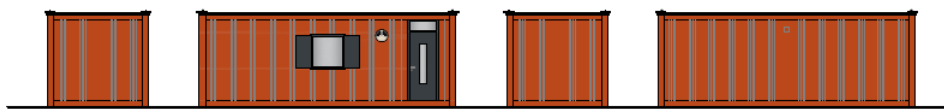


Elevations : Unit Type D

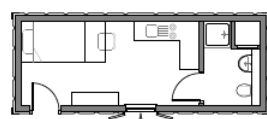


Layout : Unit Type A

- Unit colours
- Colour 1 : RAL 2001 red-orange
 - Colour 2 : RAL 7024 graphite grey
 - Colour 3 : RAL 6035 pearl-green



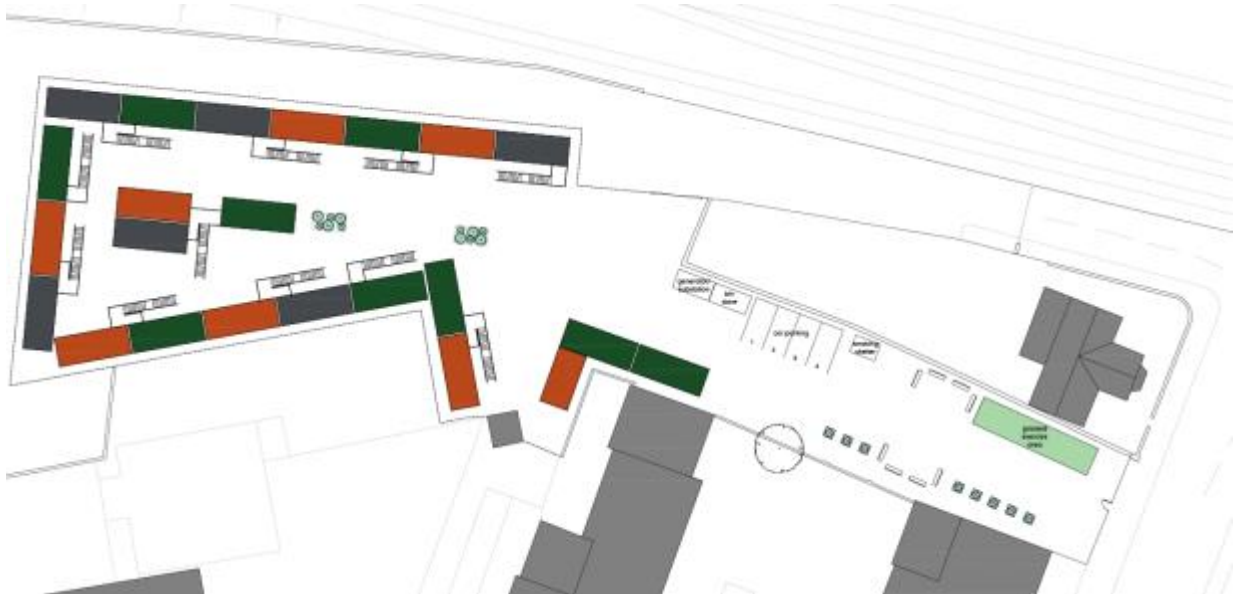
Elevations : Unit Type A



Layout : Unit Type B



Elevations : Unit Type B



Site Plan



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 08 SEPTEMBER 2021

Ward: Kentwood

App No: 210904/REG

Address: 35 Bramshaw Road, Reading, RG30 6AT

Proposal: Works consist of property improvements and upgrades of Thermal efficiency measures to dwellings detailed below. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Phase 1 addresses to include:- 35, 37, 39, 41, 43 Bramshaw Road RG30 6AT 69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AS 377 & 379 Norcot Road, RG30 6AB. Works will see the existing render overlaid with a new external wall insulation system, replacement of new triple glazed windows, minor roof adaptations and associated works (Part Retrospective) (Amended Description).

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Date validated: 28/04/2021

Target Date: 19/08/2021

Extended target date: 10/09/2021

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives

Conditions to include

1. Approved plans
2. Materials - as specified

Informatives to include:

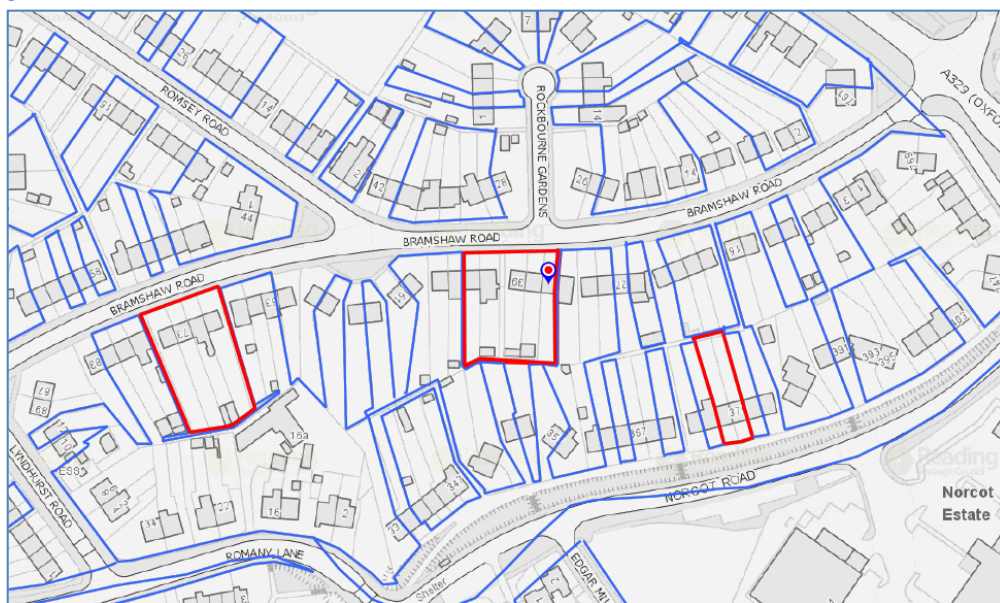
1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The proposed works are exterior alterations and repair works to terraced houses along Bramshaw Road and Norcot Road, Tilehurst. All properties are located on the Old Norcot Estate, which has a mix of similarly designed terraced rows and semi-detached residential dwellings, constructed in the mid-1920s.
- 1.2 The houses are built using a mixture of brick and block with a narrow cavity. The external walls have a traditional cement mortar and pebble dash render. The main roofs are pitched with a double roman style tile. Windows and rear doors are double glazed uPVC.
- 1.3 The properties identified within this application are failing or near the end of their practical life expectancy. This project seeks to improve the thermal efficiency of the properties as well as perform replacement works. The external wall insulation (EWI) system proposed is a key component of this project and aims to improve thermal efficiency through conserving fuel and power, enabling Reading Borough Council to work towards a Zero Carbon target by 2030.

- 1.4 At the time of writing this report, the works proposed within this application are near completion, subject to the renewal of the front timber doors. Therefore, retrospective planning permission is sought for the works as outlined within this planning application. The application is referred to Committee owing to it being for works to Council owned (Regulation 3) property.

Site Location Plan



NOTE: The three areas outlined in red on the above plan are where the groups of houses, which are the subject of this planning application, are located. The multiple blue lines in the area indicate the extent of Council ownerships in the area.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The development proposes alterations to 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road, and 377 & 379 Norcot Road. The applicant believed that the nature of the works being carried out, being mainly repairs and refurbishment, meant that planning permission was not needed and so has pressed on with the project.

The following works are confirmed by the planning case officer to be within the criteria for being permitted development:

- Installation of triple glazed uPVC windows
- Renewal of flat roof coverings
- Structural repairs (External)
- Renewal of pitched roof tiles

- 2.2 However, the following works have been confirmed to require planning permission to be granted:

- External Wall Insulation (EWI) Systems
- Extension of roof overhangs to gable ends or dormer style roofs to allow for EWI to be fitted under new soffit.

- 2.3 The applicant submitted this part retrospective planning application as soon as this advice was given to obtain the appropriate permission.

3. PLANS AND DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED:

The following plans and documents were submitted on 2nd June 2021:

- Elevations - PM/01-37 b
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-37 b
- Retained Window and Sill - EWI System with Uninsulated Reveal and PPC Aluminium Oversill - W-RET-P-002A
- Overhanging Eaves - Ventilated Soffit Board - RFS002A
- Norcot Estate Improvements - Planning Statement
- PermaRock Silicone^{Ultra} K Finish Specification Document
- PermaRock External Wall Insulation Systems Care & Maintenance Advice Document
- Location Plan
- Mineral Fibre External Wall Insulation System Specification Sheet

The following plans were submitted on 14th June 2021:

- Site Plan (69-75 Bramshaw Road) - PM/69-75 Rev 1
- Site Plan (377 & 379 Norcot Road) - PM/377/379 Rev 1
- Site Plan (35-43 Bramshaw Road) - PM/35-43 Rev 1

The following amended plan was submitted on 24th June 2021:

- Location Plan (also demonstrating other Council owned properties)

Received on 24/06/2021

The following amended plan was submitted on 25th June 2021:

- Location Plan (also demonstrating other Council owned properties)

Received on 25/06/2021

4. PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant to this application.

5. CONSULTATIONS

Public consultation

5.1 The following neighbouring owners and occupiers were consulted by letter:

17 Bramshaw Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AT
19 Bramshaw Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AT
21 Bramshaw Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AT
33 Bramshaw Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AT
45 Bramshaw Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AT
67 Bramshaw Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AS
77 Bramshaw Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AS
349 Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AB
351 Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AB
353 Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AB
355 Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AB
357 Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AB
359 Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AB
375 Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AB
381 Norcot Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AB
The Kiln, 16A Romany Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AP
22 Romany Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AP
24 Romany Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AP

26 Romany Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AP
28 Romany Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AP
Reading Borough Council, Sustainability Team

A site notice was sent to the applicant on 25th June 2021 and received on 25th June 2021. No responses have been received at the time of writing.

Internal Consultations

- 5.2 A response from the RBC Sustainability Team was received on 14th July 2021 confirming their involvement in the project.

Officer Comment: As the RBC Sustainability Team have confirmed that they are involved in the project, it can be assumed that they support the proposed works.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 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) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

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

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction
CC3 Adaption to Climate Change
CC7 Design and the Public Realm
CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
H9 House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (Adopted March 2021)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (Adopted December 2019)

7. APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Principle of Development
- ii) Design
- iii) Safeguarding Amenity

i) Principle of Development

- 7.2 The proposed works seek to refurbish and improve the thermal performance of these properties for the benefit of the occupiers. As mentioned above some of the changes fall within the definition of 'development' (section 55 of the Town & Country Planning Act) as building operations (section 55 (1A)

(d), also bearing in mind 55 (2) a(ii) and the change in appearance of the existing material beneath).

- 7.3 The proposed finished insulation system would have a depth of 115mm from the existing cement render. This will alter the character and appearance of the buildings beyond simply a change in render colour. The depth of the proposed render has the potential to alter the external appearance of window openings, doorframes, and result in the loss of eaves.
- 7.4 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that “plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”. For decision making, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 7.5 As referred to in the Planning Statement submitted for this application, Reading Borough Council is committed to working towards achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030. As per paragraph 4.7 of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019), heat loss can be prevented by applying high levels of insulation to the roof, walls and floors. Heat loss from windows can be further reduced through double or triple glazing. The works proposed by this application aim to maximise energy efficiency by reducing heat loss from the building envelope. Therefore, the proposed development aligns with the principles of policy CC3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, which seeks existing development to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change through building improvements.

ii) Design

- 7.6 The properties subject to this application are two storey terraced rows of houses. The appearance of these properties previously was the same as others in the area being pebble-dash render, brown roof tiles, PVC windows, and brick porch arches.
- 7.7 The external wall insulation has been selected to improve energy efficiency at the respective properties. The colour of the render finish is different from the predominantly pebble-dash render character of the surrounding area, however it is considered that the new render coating and natural white colour selected is not harmful to the appearance of the application properties or the surrounding area. (See photographs of before and after below).
- 7.8 The render and finish at the depth that has been proposed/implemented has altered the appearance of openings and eaves to the affected properties, resulting in extended eaves and deep window reveals when compared to unaltered neighbouring properties. The adapted roofline is not considered a significant change or harmful to the character and appearance of the proposal sites or the surrounding area.
- 7.9 The proposed replacement of the existing uPVC windows with triple glazed uPVC windows are considered like for like, whilst again positively improving energy efficiency to these dwellings. The roof adaptations proposed are for the eaves to be extended to accommodate the depth of the render.
- 7.10 It is noted that there is a loss in the detailing of some of the properties (see Appendix 1); these include the loss of red brick archways, along with a

change from red brick to render at ground floor level to 69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road. The loss of such features is not considered harmful in this instance due to the inherent benefits of the proposed works and varying character of the surrounding area.

- 7.11 With regards to the long-term care and maintenance of the external wall insulation; information has been provided detailing procedures for ongoing inspections and maintenance. This includes instructions for cleaning the render, as well as attaching fixtures and fittings to the render.
- 7.12 Overall, in terms of the appearance of the refurbished and altered properties along Bramshaw Road and Norcot Road the changes are considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policies CC7 and H9.

iii) Safeguarding Amenity

- 7.13 The proposed works are not considered to harm the living conditions of neighbours within the surrounding area. This is largely due to the nature and scale of the works proposed. The works are not considered to harm the outlook from neighbouring properties, appear visually dominant or harmful when assessed against the criteria listed under policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.
- 7.14 The development is considered to result in a betterment for existing and future occupiers at the dwellings subject to the works proposed within this application. It is noted that reveals of windows at the proposal sites are deeper as a result of the external wall insulation, however, the additional depth is not considered to result in a harmful loss of light or harm to outlook for occupiers.
- 7.15 Therefore, the proposed works are considered in accordance with policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

8. Equality

- 8.1 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.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In addition to being in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3, CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, the development is considered to suitably improve the thermal efficiency of the respective Council owned properties, whilst not harming the character and appearance of the properties or the area. It can be concluded that the inherent benefits of the proposal by improving energy efficiency at these properties, as part of the Council's commitment to its Climate Emergency declaration, is considered to weigh heavily in favour of this development.

Case Officer: David Brett

Appendix 1: Before and after photos compiled by Case Officer.



**69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road
Google Streeview image from July
2019**



**69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road
Site Photo taken on 18/08/2021**



**73, 75 Bramshaw Road
Google Streeview image from July 2019**



**73, 75 Bramshaw Road
Site Photo taken on 18/08/2021**



**69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road
Google Streeview image from July 2019**



**69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road
Site Photo taken on 18/08/2021**



35, 37, 39, 41, 43 Bramshaw Road
Google Streetview image from October
2020



35, 37, 39, 41, 43 Bramshaw Road
Site Photo taken on 18/08/2021



35, 37, 39 Bramshaw Road
Google Streetview image from October
2020



35, 37, 39 Bramshaw Road
Site Photo taken on 18/08/2021



377 & 379 Norcot Road
Google Streetview image from October
2020

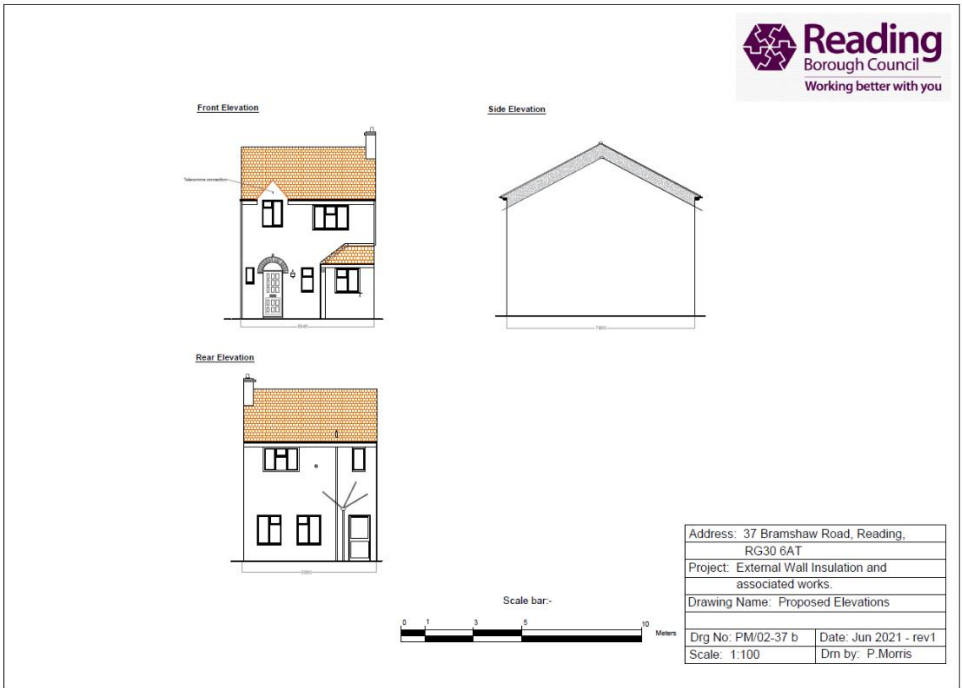


377 & 379 Norcot Road
Site Photo taken on 18/08/2021

Appendix 2: Plans



Existing Elevations



Proposed Elevations

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 8th September 2021

Ward: Minster

Application No.: 201070/ADV

Address: Land at Rose Kiln Lane, Reading

Proposals: LED Screen hoardings, supported by hollow steel posts

Application target decision date: Originally 21/09/2020 - Extended to 10/09/2021

RECOMMENDATION

As per 21st July 2021 committee report (Appendix A).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application was deferred at the 21st July 2021 Planning Applications Committee to enable Councillors to undertake an unaccompanied site visit.

Appendices

Appendix A - Officer report to 21st July 2021 Planning Applications Committee.

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

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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: 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:

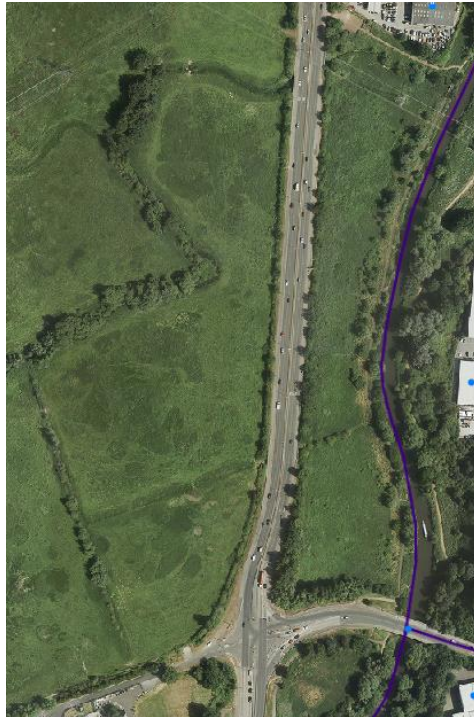
1. Due to the scale, design and prominent location the proposed LED advertisement would appear as an unattractive and prominent structure in stark contrast to the muted backdrop within which it would be positioned. This is considered harmful to visual amenity, detracting from the open character and semi-rural 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



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).

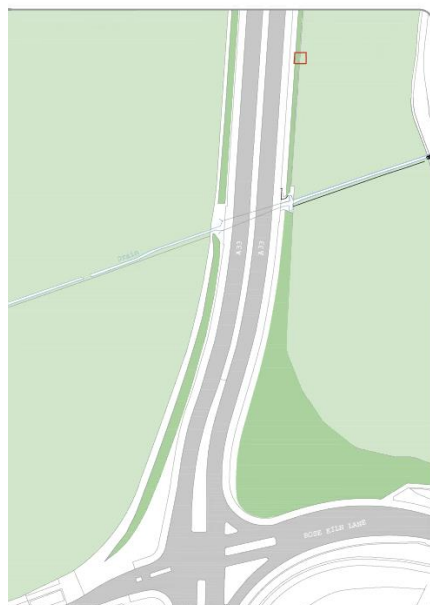
171582 (Land at A33 Relief Road) - 48 sheet digital advertising board. Advertisement Refused and Dismissed at Appeal 5/07/18.

- 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.

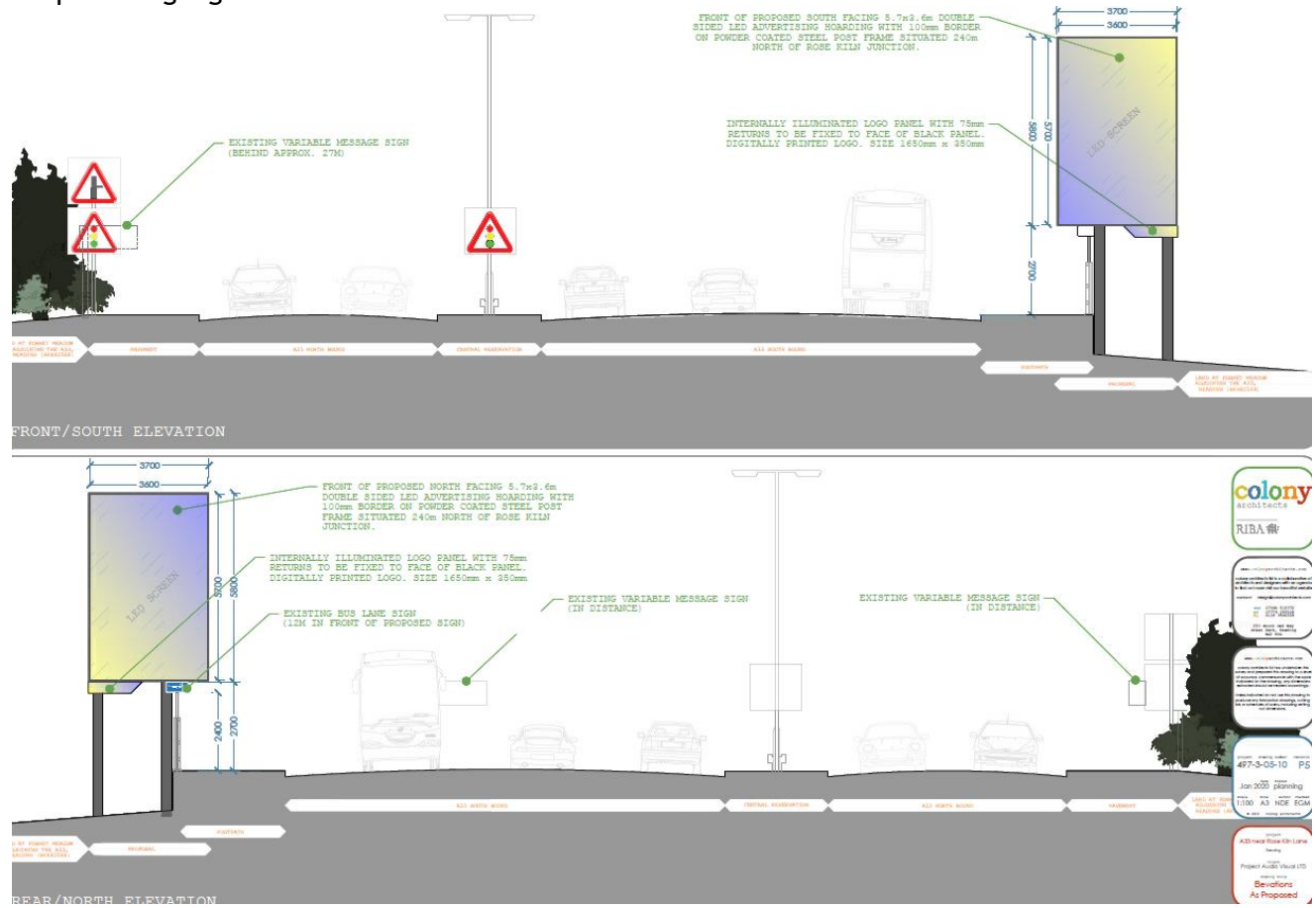
Case Officer: Miss Ethne Humphreys

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)



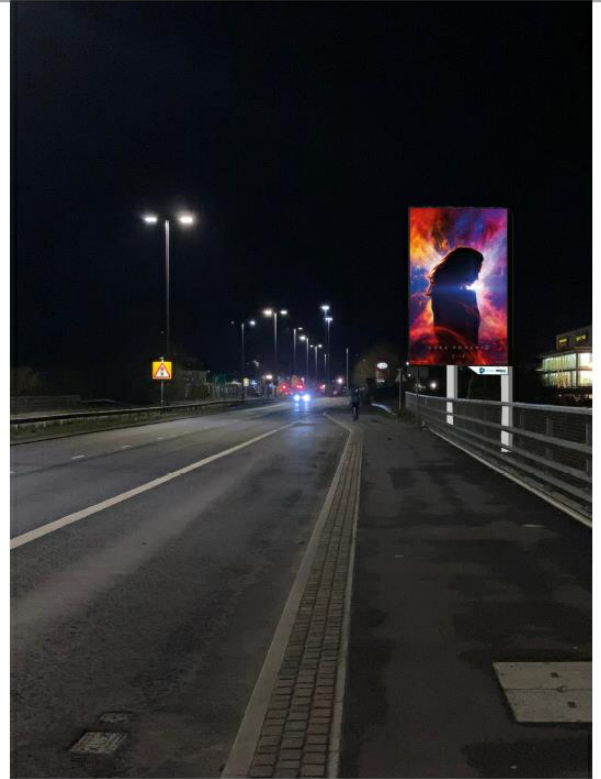
Proposed Visual - Nighttime

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)



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 8th September 2021

Ward: Southcote

App No.: 210647/REG3 & 210746/LBC

Address: Prospect Park, Liebenrood Road, Reading

Proposals: 210647/REG3 - 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.

210746/LBC - Listed Building Consent for 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.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Deadline: 21st July 2021 (210647/REG3) and 7th July 2021 (210746/LBC) and an extension of time has been agreed to 30th September 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

210647/REG3

Conditions to include:

- 1) TL1 - standard time limit 3 yrs.
- 2) AP1 - Approved plans.
- 3) Details of the play equipment and materials (pre-commencement)
- 4) Details of the fencing designed to incorporate planting to soften appearance (pre-commencement)
- 5) Zebra crossing improvements (pre-occupation)
- 6) No external lighting
- 7) Vegetation clearance to avoid bird nesting season (March-August)
- 8) Hours of demolition/construction works (compliance)
- 9) No burning of materials or green waste on site (compliance)
- 10) AMS and TPP (pre-commencement)
- 11) Landscaping scheme (pre-commencement)
- 12) Scheme for replacement tree planting elsewhere in the Borough to include timetable for provision (prior to first use)

Informatives to include:

1. IF1 - Positive & Proactive
2. IF2 - Pre-commencement conditions seen and agreed by applicant
3. IF5 - Terms and Conditions
4. IF6 - Building Control
5. IF7 - Complaints about construction
6. I11 - CIL not liable
7. S106

8. Separate Advertisement Consent
9. Associated Listed Building Consent

210746/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)
4. Details of fencing (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 lying 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, pavilion, 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 Mansion House and its car park further up the drive.
- 1.2 The pavilion itself currently provides football changing rooms, showers and toilets, the play services offices, staff room/toilet and integrated works garage and storage room.
- 1.3 To the front of the pavilion is a courtyard and shrubbery area and to the rear a works yard and storage containers with access from the car park.
- 1.4 Prospect Park is designated as Local Green Space "EN7Wo" as per the Proposals Map in the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 1.5 The two applications are referred to committee owing to them being Council's own (regulation 3) development.
- 1.6 The site location plan together with an aerial view and site photograph area shown below:



Site location plan (not to scale)



Aerial view



Front of the pavilion

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 It is proposed to convert the existing underused and redundant garage space on the east side of the pavilion building and the area directly in front and to the rear of the pavilion into a mix of indoor and outdoor leisure and recreational facilities.
- 2.2 More specifically, the proposals would incorporate the following:
- an indoor low ropes activity for children age 7 and under
 - an outdoor 9 hole mini-golf course (which would allow for wheelchair access)
 - a small café facility with indoor and outdoor seating area
 - new toilet facilities, including an accessible changing places facility
 - an outdoor education area to support the existing play services educational outreach work
- 2.3 The pavilion currently includes changing and toilet facilities for use during sporting events. It is also currently used by the Reading Play Service, who provide play facilities for children aged 0-13 to encourage learning and socialising. These facilities are to be retained as part of the proposal. The existing football changing facilities within the pavilion will also remain.
- 2.4 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): the proposal is CIL liable, but leisure is not a chargeable use, as set out in the Council's CIL Charging Schedule.

2.5 SUBMITTED PLANS AND DOCUMENTS:

Location Plan

Site and Block Plan

Current Layout 2915 (L) 003 dated 12th April 2019

Current Elevations 2915 (L) 004 dated 12th April 2019

Proposed Layout 2915 (L) 005 dated 23rd April 2021

Proposed Elevations 2015 (L) 006 dated 21st April 2021

Planning Statement dated April 2021

Heritage Statement by Avalon dated April 2021

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal ref R2718/a dated March 2021

Transport Statement ref 05500 dated April 2021

Received 27th April 2021

Additional Elevations 2915 (L) 007 dated 01/06/2021

Received 1st June 2021

Tree Protection Plan 03595P_TPP_01 Rev A dated 21/07/2021

Received 23rd July 2021

Transport Statement Addendum ref 05500 dated July 2021

Received 27th July 2021

Arboricultural Impact Assessment ref 03595R dated August 2021

Received 12th August 2021

3. PLANNING HISTORY

There is numerous planning history for Prospect Park however the most recent and relevant to this proposal is as follows (not including applications for the Mansion House):

190537/PRE - Conversion of internal garage to internal play area, conversion of office to café, install external fencing at front of pavilion for new mini-golf zone, remove / replace line of trees at rear of pavilion and extend fenced area for new external play zone. Observations Sent.

210644/REG3 & 210745/LBC - New playground with reinstatement of existing playground back to informal parkland at Prospect Park a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. Permitted 04/08/2021.

090271/NMA - Retrospective Minor Amendment to planning consent 07/00166/REG3 for demolition of existing toilet to be erected in another location. Agree 28/08/2009.

070361/REG3 - Demolition of existing public toilet and new toilet to be erected in another location. Permitted 24/05/2007.

060758/REG3 - 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.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Statutory

Historic England

- 4.1.2 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

- 4.1.3 On the Pavilion, we have no objection to the proposed development but we hope RBC would take the opportunity for the road/car park surfaces and surrounds to be improved/repared and the new complex screened appropriately, bearing in mind the small pond and slope beyond the complex.

4.2 Non-statutory

RBC Conservation & Urban Design Officer

- 4.2.1 Confirmed agreement with the Council's previous Heritage consultant who commented at the pre-application advice stage that whilst there was no objection to the proposals in principle, the addition of a high chain link fence around the golf area to the front of the pavilion would be visually intrusive and unsympathetic to the character of the Registered Park and Garden. It was suggested that this element should be re-designed to provide a more sympathetic solution.

RBC Transport

- 4.2.2 Further to revised information, no objection subject to conditions, discussed further below.

RBC Natural Environment

- 4.2.3 Following initial comments advising that a more detailed Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) was required, a new AIA was submitted. In principle, there is no objection to the proposals; however, a clear plan is required showing the layout (play equipment locations, hard surfacing) within the yard so that it is consistent with that indicated on the Tree Protection Plan.

RBC Ecology Consultant

- 4.2.4 No objection subject to conditions, discussed further below.

RBC Berkshire Archaeology

4.2.5 No objection.

RBC Environmental Health - Environmental Protection

4.2.6 No comments received; however, no concern raised at pre-application stage.

RBC Leisure and Recreation

4.2.7 No comments received; however, comments at pre-application stage: *“This is an exciting investment opportunity to improve an existing leisure and sporting facility and increase participation in physical activity”*.

5. Publicity

5.1 Notification letters were sent to properties along Liebenrood Road and 4 site notices were put up around the site.

5.1.2 On neighbour letter of objection received, concerns summarised as follows:

- additional play equipment would ruin the park
- already sufficient play equipment available
- insufficient parking

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

6.1 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.

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

6.1.3 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

6.1.4 **National**

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

The relevant sections of the NPPF are:

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 15 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

6.1.5 Local

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019):

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

6.1.6 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Tree Strategy (2021)

6.1.7 Other relevant documentation:

7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Land use principles
- Design and impact on the setting of heritage assets
- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Traffic generation and parking
- Natural Environment - trees and landscaping
- Ecology
- Other Matters

Land use principles

7.1 Prospect Park is a designated area of local green space under Policy EN7Wo

(Local Green Space and Public Open Space). This policy seeks that designated open space is protected from development that would result in loss of the open space, which would erode the quality of the open space through insensitive adjacent development and that would jeopardise the use or enjoyment of the open space by the public.

- 7.2 The application site is located in an area already occupied by a playground, a bowls green, a games court, tennis courts, Prospect Pavilion itself, a car park and public toilets. The use of the pavilion building would largely remain as existing with an office element to be retained (currently used by RBC) and the existing leisure facilities will remain, with this element expanded through the proposals.
- 7.3 The pavilion building and the area immediately to the front and rear, which is where the proposed leisure equipment would largely be contained, does not form part of the local green space. Given this, officers do not consider that the proposals would result in loss of any land that would jeopardise the use or enjoyment of the Prospect Park open space used by the public. It is therefore considered that this area of the park is appropriate for the installation of additional leisure/recreational facilities and the proposals are considered to complement and enhance the use and enjoyment of the wider local green space and is in compliance with Policy EN7.
- 7.4 The proposals also include an ancillary café element. This is considered to enhance the function of the facilities and its relatively small-scale nature is considered acceptable.
- 7.5 Further to the above, Policy OU1 promotes the improvement of existing community facilities. The proposal would provide significant benefits for users of the park and is considered to be in accordance with Policy OU1 in this regard.
- 7.6 However, as Prospect Park is a Grade II 19th Century Registered Park and Garden the development needs to be considered against its impact on this heritage asset which is discussed further below.

Design and impact on the setting heritage assets

- 7.7 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. Furthermore, as the site is located within a Grade II 19th Century Registered Historic Park and Garden, the impact of the proposals needs to be considered against Policies EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment), EN4 Locally Important Heritage Assets) and EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) 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 of setting of the park or garden, key views out of the park or prejudice its future restoration”.

- 7.8 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that “*Good Design is a key aspect of sustainable development*” and paragraph 130 states that developments are “*visually attractive as result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change*” and “*create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and wellbeing..*”. The NPPF states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving character, the quality of an area and the way it functions.
- 7.9 Paragraph 197 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.
- 7.10 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 7.11 With regard to the above, the proposals have the potential to affect the heritage interests of the Park as well as the setting of the Grade II Listed “Mansion House” to the west of the site. The pavilion itself, however, is a more modern (late 20th Century) addition to Prospect Park.
- 7.12 Given the nature of the proposed internal changes to the pavilion, this element of the proposals is not considered to result in any adverse harm to any heritage asset.
- 7.13 No increase in the scale or massing of the pavilion is proposed and the external proposals will be contained to the front and rear of the pavilion. The pavilion is sited over 200m away from Mansion House and this is considered to be a sufficient distance from the proposed works to not be detrimentally impacted by the proposals.

- 7.14 The proposals have an emphasis on a design that is accessible to children of all abilities which is welcomed. Whilst the proposals will be visible from the Park, they will be set within the context of the modern pavilion and the surrounding modern sporting, recreational and educational facilities. The proposed mini-golf will not be overtly visible given its nature and the height and appearance of the climbing and archery equipment is not considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area given other recreational and 'play' equipment existing within the Park. However, a condition is recommended requiring details of the proposed equipment to be submitted and approved once the final design has been agreed.
- 7.15 The applicant was advised at the pre-application stage that the then proposed high-level chain-link fencing around the front of the pavilion was, due to its height and design, considered to be an intrusive and unsympathetic feature. These comments have been taken on board by the applicant, which is welcomed. The current proposals include a much lower level 'wave' fence. The lower level and design is considered to be a more sympathetic addition, whilst separating the activities from the rest of the park. The colour of the fencing will be important to help blend with the setting of the park and it is considered the suitable landscaping could be incorporated in to the fencing treatment to further reduce its visual impact. It is considered that the specific detail of the fencing can be dealt with by way of condition.
- 7.16 The comments from Berkshire Gardens Trust are acknowledged. However, it is not considered reasonable to require additional wholesale improvements to the road surfaces which are not in themselves directly linked to the development. It would be expected that RBC would maintain the park and associated roads to a good standard as part of the wider responsibilities in maintaining the park for the benefit of the public. It is, however, considered appropriate for some limited landscaping to be required to help integrate the proposals and soften the appearance around the boundaries.
- 7.17 It is recognised that the proposed leisure facilities will result in an intensification of public facilities at this end 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". Given the distance to Mansion House, the position of the pavilion and that the proposed equipment would be confined to the immediate surroundings of the pavilion, the proposals are not considered to result in any adverse harm to either the character and appearance or setting of the listed building or wider historic park and garden. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with policy and guidance and is acceptable.
- 7.18 Whilst indicative signage is indicated on the proposed plans, this would be subject to a separate advertisement consent application, if required, and an informative will be attached giving this advice.

Impact on neighbouring properties

- 7.19 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.
- 7.20 The closest residential properties are located over 100m away from the pavilion. Given this significant distance, the proposals will not result in any material loss of amenity in terms of loss of light or privacy any or overbearing effects.
- 7.21 Whilst there will be noise associated with the proposals, this will be contained within an existing park environment. Combined with the above-referenced distance, and within the context of the range of events and activities which already take place within the park, including the nearby games area and playground, the proposals are not considered to be harmful to neighbouring properties in terms of noise and disturbance. Importantly, no objection has been received by the Council's Environmental Health team. 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

- 7.22 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.
- 7.23 To establish current usage within the car park the applicant has undertaken a car park survey during four periods of the day 16:00 and 18:00 weekdays and 10:00 and 14:00 weekends. The applicant has proposed to increase the capacity of the car park by formalising the layout of the car park through the marking out of parking bays.
- 7.24 Currently the car park accommodates approximately 80 vehicles. An indicative layout of the existing car park has been provided by the applicant and by formalising the layout this will result in a more efficient use of the space as well as increasing the number of parking spaces by 21 spaces, providing a total of 101 spaces within the car park. As such, the changes to the car park layout will mitigate the potential increase in parking demand associated with the development, which could be for around 19 vehicles. The proposed formalised car park layout has been assessed by Transport officers and is considered acceptable.
- 7.25 The increase in car parking has been assessed based on TEMPro to ascertain the likely modal split for recreational / social journeys to destinations in Reading and this has been accepted identifying 33% of trips being undertaken by car. This has been assessed against the proposed maximum capacity of the proposed facilities with a reduction applied to the mini golf given that it is likely that a proportion of users would be existing park

users. This also does not take into account any car sharing which may occur. Given this, Transport officers are satisfied that the increase in car parking is acceptable.

- 7.26 In relation to the educational support, respite and play based learning activities also proposed on the site it has been stated that these facilities will be operational between 09:00 and 15:00 on weekdays in term time. Children will arrive at the site either by public transport, staff collections or school drop offs. It is not expected that this will generate additional car parking requirements as it is not a public activity with vehicle trips, being drop offs rather than requiring longer stay parking. Given the operation of these activities will be during the day in term time periods, they will not coincide with peak periods of demand for car parking and therefore there will be sufficient capacity within the car park to accommodate any vehicular drop-off trips arising from this use, particularly given the proposals to increase the capacity of the car park by formalising the parking bays. Given this, Transport officers are satisfied that these trips and parking can be accommodated.
- 7.27 No additional cycle parking is proposed as part of the proposed development. However, the applicant has provided an assessment to establish that there is sufficient spare capacity existing within the park and Transport officers are satisfied that no further cycle parking is required.
- 7.28 Given that the proposals will result in increased movements to and from the building and alterations include relocating a path to the north of the building, the proposal should also include improvements to the zebra crossing over the internal road network. This crossing currently leads to a tree trunk and wooden knee rail with the footway being angled off which is difficult to use for people with disabilities and those that are partially sighted. Revised drawings have been provided that improve the configuration of this crossing which Transport officers welcome and are acceptable.
- 7.29 Subject to the recommended condition in respect of the zebra crossing improvements, 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

- 7.30 Policy CC7 seeks that development shall maintain and enhance the character of the area in which it is located including landscaping. Policy EN14 requires new development to make provision for tree retention and planting to assist in extending the Borough's vegetation cover.
- 7.31 During the course of the application, the proposed archery facility at the rear of the pavilion yard was moved away from under the veteran oak canopy, which is one of the most valuable trees in Prospect Park, and relocated to the existing hardstanding where the current large containers on site are located. This was done to reflect the importance of, and to

protect, the veteran oak tree. The silver birch at the front of the pavilion would remain which is also acceptable.

- 7.32 Some of the cypress trees near to the oak are proposed to be removed. Whilst it is considered that this would help the longevity of the oak the removal of these trees should be identified on the tree protection plan. The applicant has been advised of this requirement and clarification will be provided in an Update report for the Committee meeting.
- 7.33 Given the proposed felling of the cypress trees, the application should, provide replacement tree planting. The Council's Parks Team has advised that due to a tree planting programme in Prospect Park in recent years (including memorial trees, an avenue of English oak, cherry trees around the pond, the Jubilee Avenue of liquidambar and liriodendron) there are few suitable places to plant large numbers of new trees in the park.
- 7.34 In light of the above, and in this specific instance, it is not proposed to secure replacement planting on site as part of this application. However, it should be noted that the Council's Parks Team have confirmed that they are committed to ensuring a net gain in tree numbers on RBC land across the Borough, with replacement planting being focused on priority areas with low canopy cover, as defined in the Tree Strategy.
- 7.35 To secure off site planting elsewhere in the Reading Borough a condition is recommended to require a scheme for replacement planting at a ratio of 3:1. This is considered appropriate given any replacement trees would be on land controlled by the applicant (RBC).

Ecology

- 7.36 Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) states that development proposals should retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity.
- 7.37 Whilst no major structural changes are proposed, the proposals do involve the removal of a small patch of scattered scrub, amenity grassland and introduced shrubs. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report has been submitted which the Council's Ecologist considers has been undertaken to an appropriate standard, concluding that the proposals are unlikely to have an impact on protected species and priority habitats. However, precautionary measures during the removal of trees and a section of scrub to avoid impacts to birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles as well as a number of recommendations for enhancing the site to increase biodiversity have been made.
- 7.38 The Ecological report states that some vegetation clearance is to be undertaken to facilitate the works and this should be carried out outside the bird nesting season (March - August). This will be secured via a planning condition to ensure that no birds are disturbed or harmed during the works.

- 7.39 Overall, the proposals are unlikely to have any impacts on bats. However, any increase in lighting could have an impact on bat foraging and commuting. Any lighting should be designed to avoid impacts on bats and as such no additional external light should be installed without prior approval from Council. This can be secured by way of condition.
- 7.40 Given the above, and subject to the recommended conditions, there are no objections to the application on ecology grounds which is considered to accord with Policy EN12.

Other Matters

Equalities Impact

- 7.41 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.

Environmental and Climate Implications

- 7.42 The applicant's planning statement confirms that the design intention illustrates a sustainable designed approach with minimum intervention to the fabric of the building. The proposal improves the future longevity and use of the pavilion and immediate surrounds. Subject to approval of the materials used in the completion of the works officers are satisfied with the sustainable development approach adopted by the applicant.

8 CONCLUSION

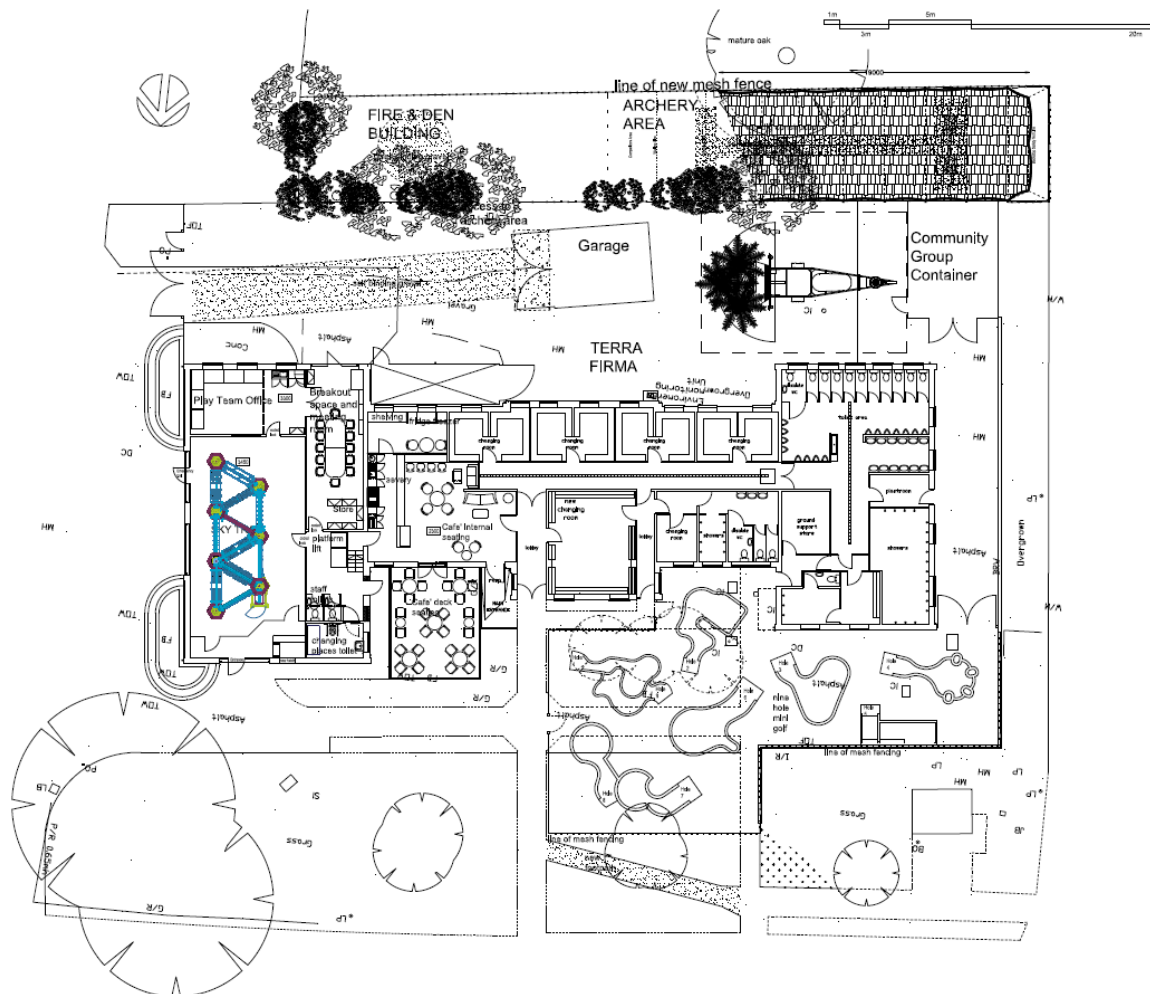
- 8.1 This proposal has been carefully considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. The proposal will provide new leisure and recreational facilities that will meet national and local objectives and policies regarding access and participation in sport and leisure and promoting health and wellbeing. Furthermore, the proposals will provide for additional and better parking and some employment opportunities.
- 8.2 The proposals will complement the existing Prospect Park activities and are not considered to result in any adverse harm to the character and appearance of the Registered Park and Garden, and nor would it affect the setting of Mansion House to the west.
- 8.3 Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant on this scheme with amendments secured to address policy issues. The planning application and listed building consent applications are recommended for approval subject to conditions as detailed above.

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

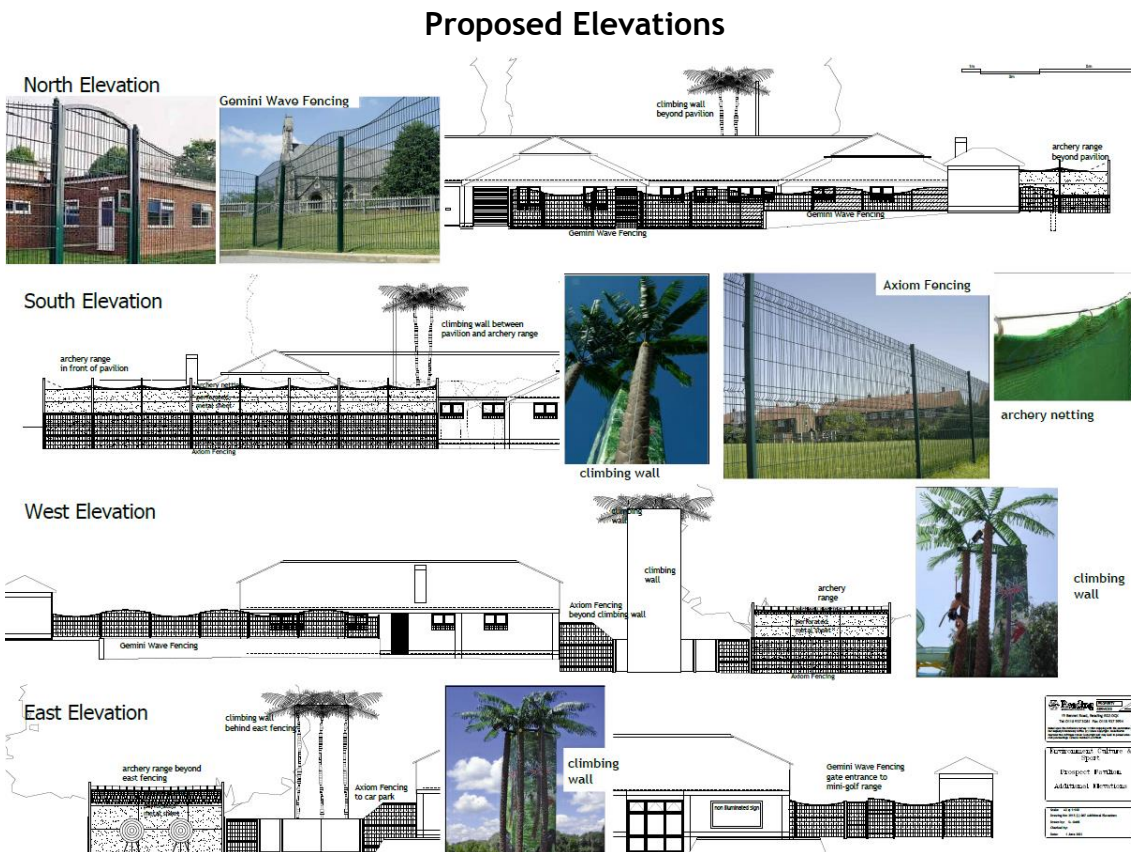
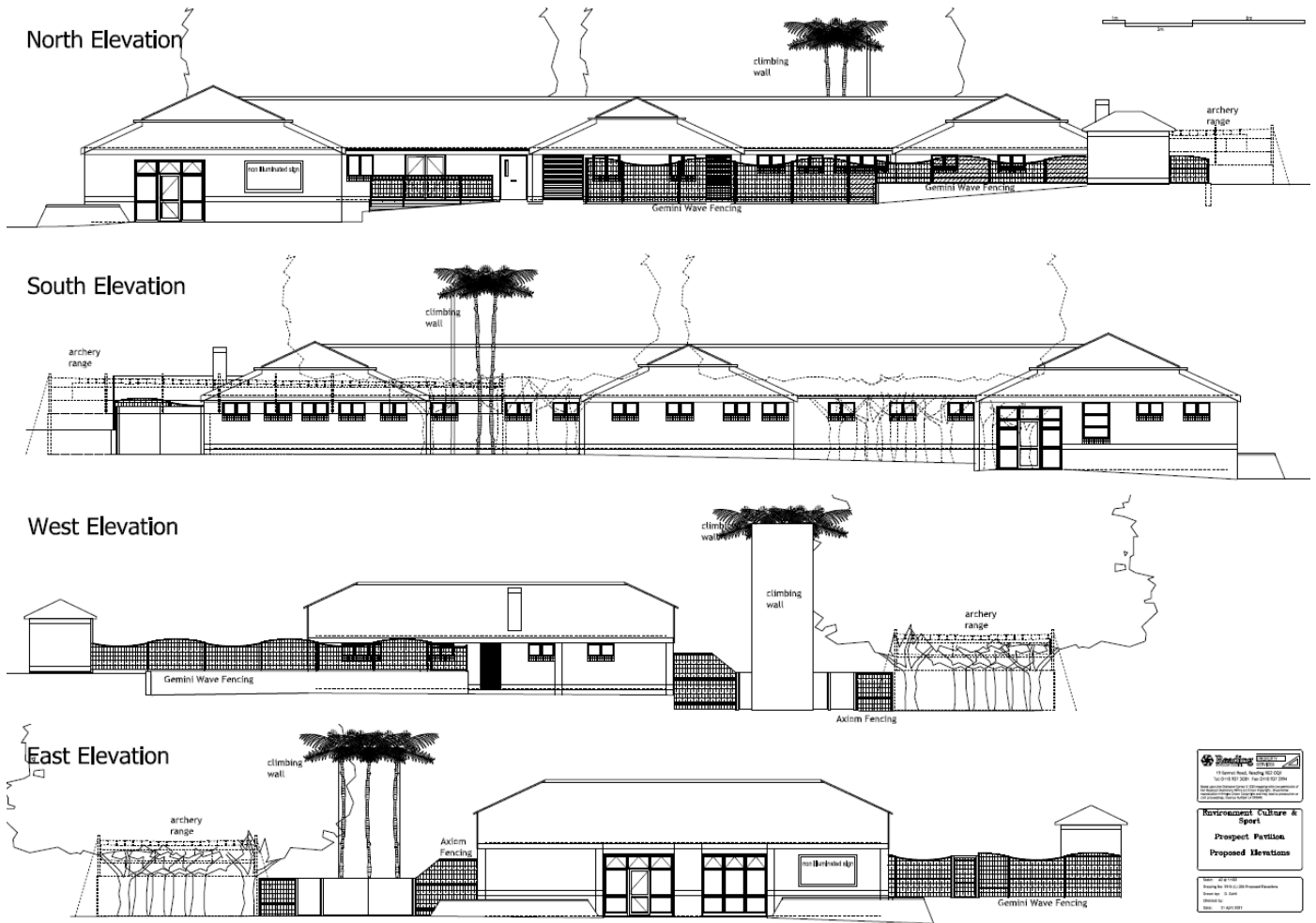
Plans Considered:



Site Plan



Proposed Layout



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 08 SEPTEMBER 2021

Ward: Thames

App No.: 210994

Address: 82 Albert Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7PL

Proposal: Single storey rear extension and new Velux Cabrio windows to rear elevation of loft floor.

Applicant: Mr Steve Gibson

Deadline: 20/08/2021

Extended target date: 10/09/21

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives

Conditions to include:

1. Approved plans
2. Materials - To Match
3. Side windows obscured glazed
4. No part of the roof of the extension shall be used as a balcony or roof garden

Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The area is characterised by mainly redbrick houses although some houses have a mix of redbrick and render finished exterior walls. The roofs are pitched slate. The area comprises of detached and semi-detached houses of varying style and design with relatively large back gardens. Many properties have been extended with rear extensions of various sizes and designs.
- 1.2 The site is a three story semi-detached house built using redbrick. Exterior walls of the property are finished with redbrick to the side, rendered rear elevation and grey and ivory bricks to the front. The roof is pitched slate. The house has an Edwardian setting. The property is not listed and does not fall within a conservation area.
- 1.3 The application has been called in to be decided by Planning Applications Committee by ward councillor Paul Carnell due to concerns raised by the neighbour.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



Figure 2: Aerial photo of the site and neighbouring properties



2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for a single storey rear extension and new Velux Cabrio windows to the rear elevation roof for a loft floor. The rear extension would measure a maximum of approximately 8.83m along the side elevation, a maximum of 5.8m deep from the existing side wall and 3.1m high. A 1m gap will be retained (increased from the original 0.8 metres) between the extension and the boundary fencing of 82 Albert Road. The proposed northern side elevation would have three small windows located approximately 2m above ground level and a side door. The proposed rear extension would have a flat roof and exterior walls would be of redbrick to match the existing side elevation.

2.2 Submitted Plans and Documentation:

Drawing No: GIBSON-1020-01-Rev A - Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Drawing No: GIBSON-1020-02-Rev A - Proposed First Floor Plan
Drawing No: GIBSON-1020-03-Rev A - Proposed Loft Floor Plan
Drawing No: GIBSON-1020-04 -Rev A - Proposed Elevations
Drawing No: GIBSON-1020-05 - Existing Plans and Elevations
Drawing No: GIBSON-1020-06-Rev A- Section B-B
Drawing No: GIBSON-1020-07-Rev A- Block and Location Plans
As received on 17th June 2021 (Amended 12th July 2021)

3. PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant to this application

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Public Consultation

80 Albert Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7PL
84 Albert Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7PL
23 St Andrews Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7PH

One letter of objection received from 84 Albert Road.

Summary of objections raised by the occupants of 84 Albert Road:

- a) Design and appearance - the proposed roof design and exterior wall finish unsympathetic to the existing house and that of the neighbours.
- b) Overlooking/Loss of Privacy due to the presence of windows and a door in the proposed northern side elevation close to the boundary shared with 84 Albert Road.
- c) Scale and dominance - the extension would be very wide on the side facing No. 84 which would create a dominant effect on the neighbour's property.
- d) Massing - the proposed development would result in the overdevelopment of the site which would impact on the appearance
- e) Foul drainage pipes - concerned that new drainage pipes would run very close to the boundary wall.

Planning Officer Comment: Please refer to parts 6.2 and 6.3 under 'Appraisal Section' to see assessment of the proposed development in relation to the above concerns.

Site Visits: A site visit was conducted by the case officer on 28th July 2021 in order to understand the existing conditions of the application site and the surrounding area. During the visit the Planning Officer met both the applicant and the neighbour separately.

4.2 Statutory and Non-statutory

Not required for this application

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC7 - Design and the Public Realm
CC8 - Safeguarding Amenity
H9 - House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

A Design Guide to House Extensions SPD (Adopted 2021)

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- I. Principle of development
- II. Character and appearance
- III. Residential amenity

Principle of development

- 6.1 The principle of householders seeking to extend and alter their properties is generally supported in principle subject to the new development meeting relevant policy criteria as discussed further in this report.

Character and appearance

- 6.2 There are already a number of properties in this street with rear extensions of various types, designs and scales and thus there is no established design and pattern of extensions in the area. Whilst the proposed development would result in a notable increase in the size of the existing ground floor, by approximately 41 square metres, the extension would be single storey, located to the rear, and would be smaller in scale than the existing house. Proposed exterior wall finishes would be of redbrick to match the side elevation of the existing house and the neighbouring houses. Whilst the proposed design includes a flat roof and would be read as a distinctly separate addition to the main house, this is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the original house and neighbouring houses. In addition, the introduction of two new Velux Cabrio windows to the rear elevation roof for a loft floor would not harm the character and appearance of the existing house. In terms of impacting on the street scene, the proposed development would not be visible from the public realm.
- 6.3 In light of the above, an extension of this style is not considered unconventional nor would it be considered to have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of neighbouring houses and the wider area. The proposed changes to the existing house are considered to be acceptable in terms of design quality, scale and materials and thus would not conflict with Policies CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Residential amenity

- 6.4 The main elements to be considered when assessing the impact of development on residential amenity are:

Privacy and overlooking: The loft conversion element would introduce two velux windows to the rear elevation of the loft floor, whilst the proposed single storey element would have three small windows in the northern side elevation facing the boundary with the back garden to 84 Albert Road. These side windows would be positioned at approximately 2m above ground

level so low enough to prevent harmful overlooking of the neighbour's kitchen and dining rooms. Furthermore, no new views would be created or reasonably attainable into adjoining gardens from upper floors as a result of the new loft windows. The proposed rear extension is single-story and the existing boundary fencing and hedge between the site and the neighbour at 84 Albert Road would act as a form of screening between the two properties. Furthermore, the proposed rear extension would be set back by 1m from the boundary fence, reducing any harmful effect on the living conditions of the neighbours. Therefore, the rear extension is not considered to cause any harmful loss of privacy to the neighbour.

Noise and disturbance: As extended, the continued use of the property as a residential dwelling would be unlikely to result in undue noise nuisance for the neighbours.

Concerning the impact of an extractor fan and a new central heating boiler on the neighbour's property, should these be installed on the inside of the proposed side elevation facing the neighbour's property, the applicant would be advised to ensure that no flue/vent pipes or any part of the proposed development extends onto the neighbour's property.

Access to sunlight and daylight: Due to the position of the extension, its scale and generous garden space available to adjoining neighbours, the proposal is unlikely to cause any significant loss of sunlight, daylight or create an unacceptable level of overshadowing to the neighbouring occupants.

Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development: Although the proposed rear extension would have a notable footprint, it would not be visually dominant or overbearing as the scale, design and exterior finishes fit in with the existing house.

Foul drainage pipes: Pipes will run from the new shower room and back to the existing foul drainage therefore the proposed drainage pipes would not have any impact on the neighbour's property at no. 84.

- 6.5 In light of the above, officers consider that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the living conditions of the neighbours nor would it conflict with the requirements of Policies CC8 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 which seek to safeguard amenity and prevent developments that would cause an overbearing impact on neighbours.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1 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.

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 concerns raised by the neighbour have also been considered and found to be mitigated by the proposed design and existing boundary. The recommendation is to grant planning permission as shown above.

Case Officer: Beatrice Malama

Appendix 1: Photos

Photo 1: Existing rear elevation with part of rear extension at 80 Albert Road (photo taken 28th July 2021)



**Photo 2: View of the application site from the neighbour at 84 Albert Road
(photo taken 28th July 2021)**



Photo 3: 84A and 84 Albert Road (photo taken 28th July 2021)



Photo 4: Part of existing Side Elevation (photo taken 28th July 2021)



**Photo 5: View of 84 Albert Road from the application site
(Photo taken 28th July 2021)**



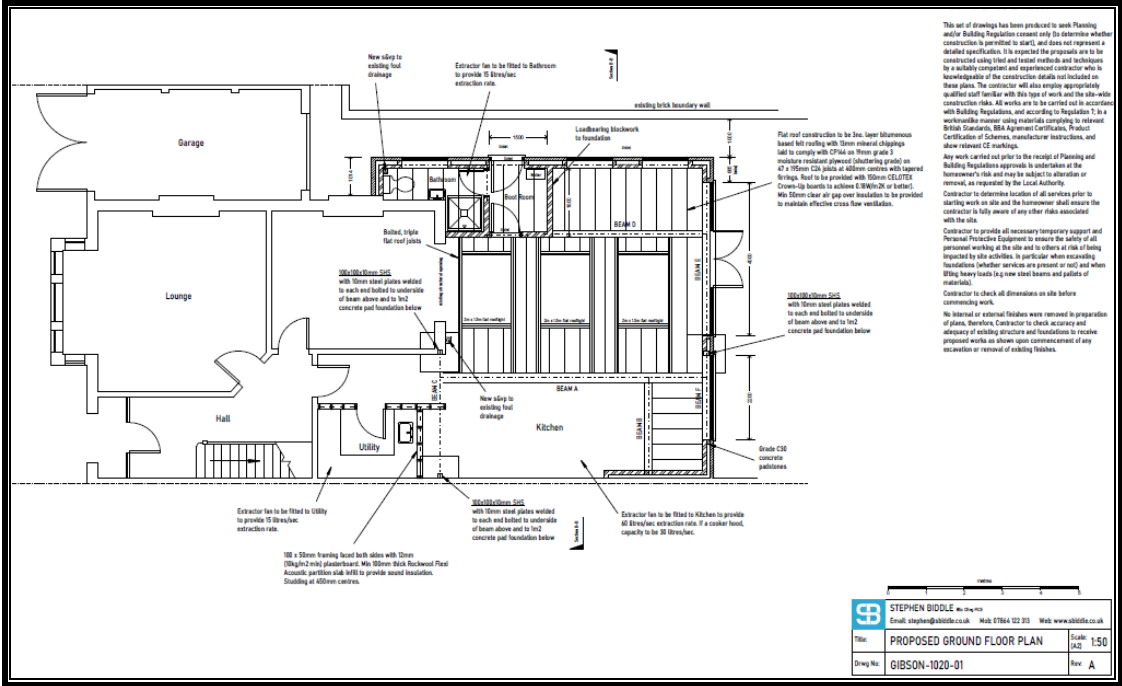
Plan 1: Block Plan

A block plan diagram showing the layout of units 80, 82, and 84 at 80 Albert Road. Unit 82 is highlighted with a red hatched pattern, and a line points to it with the label "Proposed single storey rear extension". Unit 80 is located below unit 82, and unit 84 is to the left. A road labeled "Albert Road" runs diagonally along the left side of the units. A scale bar at the bottom indicates a scale of 1:500, with markings for 0, 10, and 20 metres.

The architectural drawings for the existing building are as follows:

- Floor Plans:**
 - LOFT FLOOR:** Shows a single bedroom and a bathroom.
 - FIRST FLOOR:** Shows three bedrooms, a bathroom, and a central hallway.
 - GROUND FLOOR:** Shows a garage, lounge, dining room, kitchen, and utility room.
- Elevations:**
 - FRONT:** Shows a two-story elevation with a central entrance and a gabled roof.
 - REAR:** Shows a two-story elevation with a central entrance and a gabled roof.
 - SIDE (Left):** Shows a two-story elevation with a gabled roof and a chimney.
 - SIDE (Right):** Shows a two-story elevation with a gabled roof and a chimney.

Plan 3: Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Plan 4: Proposed Elevations

