

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

Direct ☎ : 0118 9372303

22 March 2022

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

NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 30 MARCH 2022

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 30 March 2022 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
<u>KEY TO CODING</u>			
1. MINUTES	-		9 - 12
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-		
3. QUESTIONS	-		
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	Decision		13 - 16
5. PLANNING APPEALS	Information		17 - 30
6. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL	Information		31 - 36
7. 40 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD - PROPOSAL TO ADD TO THE LIST OF LOCALLY IMPORTANT BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES	Decision	REDLANDS	37 - 58

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8.	PALMER PARK PAVILION AND ASSOCIATED BUILDING - PROPOSAL TO ADD TO THE LIST OF LOCALLY IMPORTANT BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES	Decision	PARK	59 - 80
9.	STREET NAME PROPOSALS LIST ADDITIONS	Decision	BOROUGHWIDE	81 - 86
10.	STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT - REAR OF 57 BAKER STREET	Decision	ABBEY	87 - 90

PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED

11.	201585/FUL & 201586/ADV - 109A OXFORD ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	91 - 104
	Proposal (201585)	Change of use from an estate agent use class E to a restaurant and hot food takeaway sui generis use class		
	Recommendation	Application Permitted		
	Proposal (201586)	Fascia and a pr		
	Recommendation	Application Pe		
12.	200142/FUL - 109B OXFORD ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	105 - 120
	Proposal	Change of use from Sui Generis (betting shop) to Class E restaurant with ancillary Sui Generis takeaway and replacement shopfront (Part retrospective)		
	Recommendation	Application Refused		
13.	200931/FUL - 22A WAYLEN STREET	Decision	ABBEY	121 - 142
	Proposal	Conversion of existing storage and distribution use to 1 x 2-bed dwelling, including upward extension to rear, and associated works.		
	Recommendation	Permitted subject to Legal Agreement		
14.	182252/OUT - 80 CAVERSHAM ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	143 - 250
	Proposal	Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale for redevelopment proposal involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 - 24 storeys in height, providing 620 (72 x studio, 196x1, 320x2 & 32x3-bed) residential units (Class C3), office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor shop (Class A1), financial and professional services (Class A2) or restaurant/café (Class A3) uses, a community centre (Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking (94 spaces (70 at basement level)), servicing, public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (amended description).		
	Recommendation	Permitted subject to Legal Agreement		
15.	220294/REG3 - 1 BEDFORD ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	251 - 256

Proposal Installation of Interpretation Board on temporary hoarding on boundary to former Central Swimming Pool site facing the Bedford Road.
Recommendation Application Permitted

16. 220190/REG3 - VARIOUS Decision KENTWOOD 257 - 270
ADDRESSES IN BRAMSHAW ROAD,
WIMBORNE GARDENS, THIRLMERE
AVE, RINGWOOD ROAD &
LYNDHURST ROAD

Proposal Property improvement works and Thermal efficiency upgrades to 31 RBC properties. Works to each property will consist of fitting new External Wall insulation, new triple glazed windows and doors, minor roof adaptations, fitting of Air Source Heat pumps, central heating upgrades and associated works. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Addresses include 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 42, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 83, 87, 89 Bramshaw Road. 1, 4, 8 Wimborne Gardens. 158 Thirlmere Ave. 13 Ringwood Road. 61 Lyndhurst Road. 67 Lyndhurst Road. (Part Retrospective)
Recommendation Application Permitted

17. 211127/REG3 - RANIKHET PRIMARY Decision NORCOT 271 - 314
SCHOOL, SPEY ROAD, TILEHURST

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
Recommendation Permitted subject to Legal Agreement

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GUIDE TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS Agenda Annex

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

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

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

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

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

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

Glossary of usual terms

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

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

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

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

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

Brownfield Land - previously developed land.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Scheduled Ancient Monument - Specified nationally important archaeological sites.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Guide to changes to the Use Classes Order in England.

Changes of use within the same class are not development.

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

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

Apologies: Councillor Duveen

RESOLVED ITEMS

110. MINUTES OF MEETINGS HELD ON 2 AND 15 FEBRUARY 2022

The Minutes of the meetings held on 2 and 15 February 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

111. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS

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

Resolved -

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

211142/FUL - THE RESTORATION PH, 928 OXFORD ROAD, TILEHURST

Demolition of the vacant Restoration Public House and the erection of 18 apartments with associated amenity space, parking and landscaping.

112. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Carnell declared an interest in Item 117 (211843/OUT - Reading Golf Club) as his nephew was a member of Reading Golf Club.

Councillor Robinson declared a prejudicial interest in Item 117 (211843/OUT - Reading Golf Club) on the grounds of predetermination.

113. PLANNING APPEALS

(i) New Appeals

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a schedule giving details of two notifications received from the Planning Inspectorate regarding two planning appeals, the method of determination for which she had already

expressed a preference in accordance with delegated powers, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

(ii) Appeals Recently Determined

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

(iii) Reports on Appeal Decisions

There were no appeal decision reports submitted.

Resolved -

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

114. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details in Table 1 of seven prior approval applications received, and in Table 2 of nine applications for prior approval decided, between 20 January and 18 February 2022.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

115. HUNTLEY AND PALMERS SOCIAL CLUB, GASWORKS ROAD - PROPOSAL TO ADD TO THE LIST OF LOCALLY IMPORTANT BUILDINGS & STRUCTURES

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on a proposal to add Huntley and Palmer's Social Club, Gasworks Road to the list of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix 1: Location map
- Appendix 2: Relevant photos and images
- Appendix 3: Proposed Local List text
- Appendix 4: Nomination form

The report set out details of the consultations carried out, their results and an assessment of the proposal against the criteria in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, concluding with reasons why the building qualified for addition to the Local List.

An update report was tabled at the meeting which corrected an error in the original report regarding the social significance of the building and adding social significance to the reasons that the building qualified for addition to the Local List.

Resolved - That Huntley and Palmer's Social Club, Gasworks Road be added to the list of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

116. 211000/FUL - LAND TO THE REAR OF 29-30 TERN CLOSE, TILEHURST

Erection of 3 bed detached bungalow (Class C3).

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant full planning permission for application 211000/FUL, subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement by 29 May 2022 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended;
- (4) That the condition regarding boundary treatment details be approved in consultation with Ward Councillors.

117. 211843/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 scheme (c3 use) to include affordable housing and public open space at the former 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 errors in the original report and gave further information on the following, recommending amendments to the Section 106 obligations and two additional conditions as a result:

- Thames Water
- Transport
- Layout/Scale/Landscaping
- Woodland Trust Comments
- Policy CA1b
- Drainage SuDS Basins
- Potential Phasing of Development

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 2 MARCH 2022

- Sustainability

The update report also explained that the Secretary of State had notified the Council on 1 March 2022 that they had received a third party request to call in the application for their determination and had therefore requested that, if planning permission were to be granted, a decision notice was not issued until the Secretary of State had had time to consider whether or not to call in the application.

It was reported verbally at the meeting that 16 further letters of objection and a letter of support from Reading Civic Society had been received since publication of the original report.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Objectors Clare Grashoff, Steve Harcourt, Helen Lambert and Jennifer Leach, Supporter Richard Stainthorp, the applicant's agent Jonathan Walton, the applicant Gary Stangoe, Peppard Ward Councillor Clarence Mitchell and Caversham Ward Councillor Adele Barnett-Ward attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

Resolved -

- (1) That, subject to the Secretary of State confirming that they did not wish to call in the application for their determination, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant outline planning permission for application 211843/OUT, subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement by 31 March 2022 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the original report, with the amendments set out in the update report;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the original report, with the additional conditions recommended in the update report and an amendment to Condition 18 on the Habitat Enhancement Scheme to specify that the scheme should be designed to maximise provision of and maintenance of the green link across the site.

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

(Councillor Robinson declared a prejudicial interest in the above application on the grounds of predetermination. He addressed the Committee on the application but abstained in the vote on the decision.)

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.58 pm)

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
Date:	30 March 2022		
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.

Potential Site Visit List:

Ward: Peppard

Application reference: 220304

Application type: Regulation 3 Planning Approval

Site address: 30 Lowfield Road, Reading, RG4 6PA

Proposal: Retention of 28 no. (2 bedroom) self-contained temporary accommodation units with associated access, car parking, communal amenity space, refuse and bicycle storage, a play area and landscaping for Temporary permission (10 years)

Reason for Committee item: RBC Application

**REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	30 MARCH 2022		
TITLE:	PLANNING APPEALS		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams	TEL:	0118 9372461
JOB TITLE:	Planning Manager	E-MAIL:	Julie.Williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

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

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

3. INFORMATION PROVIDED

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

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 Defending the Council's planning decisions when appealed 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. 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: PEPPARD
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3291615
CASE NO: 210018
ADDRESS: "Reading Golf Club", Kidmore End Road, Emmer
PROPOSAL: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential-led scheme (c3 use to include affordable housing) and the provision of community infrastructure at reading golf club
CASE OFFICER: Matthew Burns
METHOD: Public Inquiry
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 21.2.22

WARD: ABBEY
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3284108
CASE NO: 210478
ADDRESS: "Soane Point", 6-8 Market Place, Reading
PROPOSAL: Change of use of part of the ground floor, part basement, and upper floors from office use Class B1(a) to C3, 144 studio apartments. Prior Notification under Class 0, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015
CASE OFFICER: Matthew Burns
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 08.03.2022

WARD: THAMES
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/D/22/3292725
CASE NO: 211739
ADDRESS: 2 Bramblings, Caversham, Reading
PROPOSAL: Ground floor extension, conversion of garage and construction of an attached garage and repitching of roofs.
CASE OFFICER: Marcie Rejwerska
METHOD: Householder Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 08.03.2022

WARD: CAVERSHAM
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3290550
CASE NO: 211658
ADDRESS: 40 Church Street, Reading
PROPOSAL: Partial conversion of ground floor from flat (Class C3) to commercial use (Class E(a))

CASE OFFICER: Tom Hughes
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 09.03.2022

WARD: ABBEY
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3288185
CASE NO: 211214
ADDRESS: County House, 17 Friar Street
PROPOSAL: Change of use of from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 23 dwellings. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

CASE OFFICER: Matthew Burns
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 09.03.2022

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

WARD: CAVERSHAM
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3284791
CASE NO: 210206
ADDRESS: "34,36,36a", Mill Road, Caversham, Reading
PROPOSAL: Single storey front and two storey side and rear extension at 34 Mill Road. First floor rear extension at 36 Mill Road. Single storey front and rear and two storey side extension at 36A Mill Road.

CASE OFFICER: David Brett
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: DISMISSED
DATE DETERMINED: 24.2.22

WARD: SOUTHCOTE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3277469
CASE NO: 191499
ADDRESS: Bath Road
PROPOSAL: Installation of a new 20m high Street Works Pole along with additional equipment cabinets and ancillary development.

CASE OFFICER: David Brett
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: DISMISSED
DATE DETERMINED: 3.3.22

WARD: ABBEY
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3276463
CASE NO: 200188
ADDRESS: 55 Vastern Road
PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road
CASE OFFICER: Jonathan Markwell
METHOD: Inquiry (Virtual)
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED: 17.3.22

APPENDIX 3

Address Index of Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

- 55 Vastern Road

Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions attached.

Ward: Abbey

Appeal No: APP/E0345/W/21/3276463

Planning Ref: 200188

Site: 55 Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8BU

Proposal: Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road.

Decision level: Refused on 09/04/2021 after consideration by Planning Applications Committee

Method: Virtual Inquiry (opened on 26/10/21, sat for 15 days until 19/11/21)

Decision: Appeal Allowed

Date Determined: 17/03/2022

Inspector: A J Mageean BA(Hons), BPI, PhD, MRTPI

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The appeal site comprises part of the Policy CR11g Riverside allocated site within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area. The site contains the former SSE offices, locally listed entrance building and open car-parking between Vastern Road and the southern bank of the River Thames, adjacent to Christchurch Bridge. Of the 1.24 ha allocated area, 0.48 ha largely containing the electrical equipment has remained in SSE ownership (outside the site), with the remaining 0.76 ha forming the appeal site.
- 1.2 The planning application was validated in March 2020 after pre-application discussions. The application was refused at committee on 31st March 2021, for the following seven summarised reasons:
 1. Failure to provide a high quality north-south link through the site;
 2. Height and proximity of the proposed Blocks D & E to the Thames Path harming the setting and character of the path and The River Thames;
 3. Impact on marginal habitats and lack of appropriate mitigation and insufficient space within riverside buffer for required large canopy trees;
 4. Failure to demonstrate sufficient noise mitigation measures for future occupiers;
 5. Benefits not considered to significantly outweigh harm caused through the loss of non-designated heritage asset and retention and reuse not being fully explored;
 6. Failure to adequately demonstrate that it is part of a comprehensive approach;
 7. The absence of a completed S106 legal agreement for various matters.
- 1.3 The applicant appealed against this decision to the Planning Inspectorate, with a virtual Public Inquiry commencing on 26th October 2021 and sitting for 15 days.
- 1.4 As indicated by the Appellant, in advance of planning applications committee, the application stage 20.57% on-site affordable housing offer was removed at appeal stage by the Appellant. At appeal stage, on consultee advice, officers agreed that the scheme could not viably provide on-site affordable housing at this time but a deferred affordable housing contribution mechanism was required to be secured within any S106 legal agreement.
- 1.5 At appeal stage the Council made an application to Historic England to statutory list the entrance building at 55 Vastern Road and issued a Building Preservation Notice. Historic England have confirmed on 17 March that the building will not be added to the List.
- 1.6 During the Inquiry the Appellant submitted further information which the Council's Noise consultant confirmed overcame the 4th reason for refusal, subject to a condition being used.
- 1.7 During the Inquiry the Appellant submitted a S106 Legal Agreement, which had been negotiated with officers, to address the 7th reason for refusal in the event the appeal was allowed.

- 2.1 Mindful of the above, the Inspector considered the remaining main issues addressed at the Inquiry to be:
- A) The effect of the proposed development in design terms with particular reference to the quality and effectiveness of the proposed north-south link through the site and the setting and character of the River Thames and the Thames Path (reasons for refusal 1 & 2);
 - B) The effect of the proposed development on 55 Vastern Road, a non-designated heritage asset (reason for refusal 5);
 - C) The effect of the proposed development on the natural environment with particular reference to marginal habitats and large canopy trees (reason for refusal 3);
 - D) Whether it has been demonstrated that the proposal would be part of a comprehensive approach to the development of the Riverside sub-area of the Station/River Major Opportunity Area (reason for refusal 6); and,
 - E) Other planning matters (for example, those raised by the Rule 6 and interested parties), including the benefits to be weighed in the planning balance.
- 2.2 On issue A), the Inspector concluded in relation to the proposed north-south link that:
- “Overall... the route responds to the need to balance competing space pressures, along with the practical and technical constraints associated with developing this site. It would deliver a strategic link for pedestrian and cycle access between the Bridge and the Station, specifically connecting the podium adjacent to the Bridge with Vastern Road.”* (paragraph 47)
- 2.3 Whilst specifying that site challenges meant compromises would be made and acknowledging that there may be other ways of accommodating a more generous and direct route (as advanced by the Council at the Inquiry), the scheme before the Inspector was considered to meet the Policy requirements of offering a suitably direct, legible and visually attractive route, including effective visual links. The route was also considered to be functionally acceptable in practical utility and safety terms, for both pedestrians and cyclists. The link was considered to assist in realising the RSAF vision of a route which connects the area north of the Station to the Centre. Paragraphs 48 and 50 conclude that:
- “Overall, therefore, the appeal scheme would meet the policy requirement for the provision of a high-quality link, befitting the strategic importance of the north-south route.”*
- “The provision of this key link within the wider north-south route would be a notable benefit of the appeal scheme.”*
- 2.4 On issue A), the Inspector commented in relation to the impact on the Riverside that there are tensions between the policy objectives for realising the vision for the redevelopment of the major opportunity area, whilst simultaneously protecting and enhancing the character of the River Thames as a major landscape feature. She concluded that the proposed design realises the Reading Station Area Framework / Policy CR11 aspiration
- “by responding to the history and character of the area and presenting a visually distinctive and attractive frontage to the River, and a gateway into the site. The setback from the riverbank, the creation of accessible riverside space, as well as planting along this frontage, would assist the integration with and enhancement of the River environment.”* (paragraph 81)
- 2.5 The Inspector therefore found that the proposal would have an acceptable effect on the setting and character of the River Thames and Thames Path, whilst also identifying a minor breach in relation to the Policy CR11g and EN11 requirement for the development be set back a minimum of 10m from the watercourse.

- 2.6 In terms of issue B) the Inspector commented on the loss of the locally listed building that there would be conflict with Policies EN1, EN4 and CR3v given the development results in the total loss of the locally listed building. Policy however allows for consideration of whether there would be clear and convincing justification for such loss, usually in the form of public benefits, and whether such benefits outweigh, or significantly outweigh, significance.
- 2.7 With this in mind, the Inspector concluded the building could be afforded no more than a low level and modest degree of significance overall. Reuse and retention options would either cause harm through loss of fabric or ability to appreciate the original form, or/and raise considerable practical challenging. The Appellant's approach to use the site's industrial heritage to inform the proposed design was "an appropriate and proportionate response to these circumstances". The heritage balance required consideration of the public benefits of the scheme, as discussed further under issue E)
- 2.8 On issue C) in terms of marginal habitats, the Inspector concluded that any harmful effects caused would be adequately addressed. In particular, the off-site compensation (whilst challenging to calculate) was considered proportionate and reasonable. Mindful of paragraph 180a) of the NPPF, the Inspector found that "*on the basis that harm cannot be avoided, there would be adequate compensation*" (paragraph 141).
- 2.9 On issue C) and large canopy trees, the Inspector identified tensions between the need to secure high density development and the aim to deliver large canopy trees and protect and enhance the character of the major landscape feature. Whilst stating the tree types would be "*less than optimal*" and the proposals "*would not fully comply*" with policy, it was also found that the trees "*could be accommodated without future conflict*", and "*relate reasonably well to the landscape character*", leading to the overall conclusion on this matter at paragraph 154 that:
- "this is a compromise position in which a high-density scheme would be accommodated with some softening of the frontage and some environmental benefits. Nonetheless, the appeal scheme does offer broad compliance with policy and guidance"*.
- 2.10 In terms of issue D), in respect of comprehensiveness, the Inspector concluded that:
- "it has not been demonstrated that the proposal would be part of a comprehensive approach to the development of the Riverside sub-area of the MOA. In particular, concerns regarding the viability of development on the remaining part of the site, the effectiveness of movement patterns within and between the sites and the efficiency of the use of the remaining site area have been identified. In these regards there would be conflict with the requirements of Policies CR11viii) and CR2f"* (paragraph 168)
- 2.11 For issue E), matters raised by the Rule 6 and interested parties, the Inspector found in overall terms that the points raised had been adequately addressed by the Appellant.
- 2.12 In terms of Issue E) and housing land supply, the Inspector acknowledged the common ground that the Council can demonstrate a supply of housing land in excess of five years. The Inspector did not conclude on whether the appeal scheme was required to help meet the totality of supply across the wider plan period, the Inspector instead specified that "*securing a policy compliant housing scheme is of benefit to supply right now*" and that should be afforded significant weight.
- 2.13 In terms of the submitted S106 Legal Agreement, the Inspector concluded that all obligations met the NPPF and Regulation 122 tests.
- 2.14 With regards to the planning balance and conclusion reached this is copied in full below for your information.:

Planning balance and conclusion

197. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 establish a statutory presumption in favour of the Development Plan which must be observed. The vision for the development of the allocated area as part of the extension of central Reading northwards has been in place for some 20 years. The challenge of delivering this vision on the appeal site has highlighted the need to address and reconcile tensions between policy and guidance relating to the unique location of the site between the urban core and the River.
198. The proposal would comply with key elements of the planning policy framework for the Borough, and for the site. Specifically, the principle of residential-led mixed use development of this inner urban site as part of the expansion of the core of the town centre northwards is firmly established in the LP. The establishment of a connection to the major north-south movement corridor would support a strategic planning objective. In these regards this highly accessible location is ideally suited to the proposed high-density development with low car dependency. Further, the high-quality design which reflects the history of the site, has regard to its riverside setting, and connects key elements of the MOA with the rest of central Reading, would make a significant contribution to the overall environmental improvement of this area. The scheme would also provide a suitable response to the natural environment, with any harmful effects on MV addressed by an appropriate level of mitigation.
199. Whilst there is a high degree of compliance with policy requirements, I have identified conflict in relation to the loss of the LLB and with provisions relating to the requirement to demonstrate that the proposal would be part of a comprehensive approach to the development of the Station/River MOA. I have also found technical conflict with the policy requirement for development to be set back 10m from the riverbank. I will consider the weight to be given to these harms before turning to the benefits of the appeal scheme.
200. The loss of the LLB must be considered against the requirements of Policy EN1 that the loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits. The Policy EN4 test is that benefits should significantly outweigh significance. I concluded that the LLB can be afforded no more than a low level and modest degree of significance. I also found that, in the context of the site allocation, the approach to using the site's industrial heritage to inform the design of the appeal buildings would be an appropriate response. It may be possible to deliver the benefits of this development whilst in some way retaining the LLB. However, I have addressed the practical challenges of reuse/retention in my reasoning. Furthermore, I must consider the appeal scheme as presented.
201. I have considered the current application for listing this building. If this were to succeed, then the legal requirement that special regard must be had to preserving its special interest would apply. Further, the Framework sets out that great weight must be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, and that any harm requires clear and convincing justification. In these circumstances I give the loss of the LLB significant weight.
202. I turn next to the requirement to demonstrate that the proposal would be part of a comprehensive approach to the development of this sub-area, as set out in Policies CR11(viii) and CR2f. The specific concerns identified

include the viability of development on the remaining part of the site and the effectiveness of movement patterns within and between the sites. There is considerable uncertainty over the future of the remaining part of the allocated area, with the owners suggesting that it is not likely to come forward in the short or long term. This does raise questions about whether development on the appeal site should be predicated on ensuring the feasibility of development options on this site. I raise this point noting also that any changes to accommodate a comprehensive scheme would be likely to lead to a reduction in the quantum of development on the appeal site. Current viability matters have already led to the withdrawal of on-site affordable housing, highlighting the challenge of achieving an economically robust scheme overall.

203. More generally, I have also had regard to the fact that the appeal scheme would secure the development of a substantial portion of the Riverside allocation, a site of great importance as a link between the town centre, the River, the Meadows and beyond. The challenges of designing a policy-compliant scheme in terms of transport links, providing a high-density mixed-use scheme that responds to the River setting and adjacent residential areas, whilst also managing the presence of the adjacent SSE equipment and achieving the highest quality of design, has been considerable. Nonetheless, I must give this policy conflict significant weight.
204. Finally, I consider the breach of policy provisions relating to the requirement that development be set back at least 10m from the River to be a minor matter, noting that in net terms this requirement would be achieved. I therefore give this conflict modest weight.
205. Set against these harms, the appeal scheme would deliver a significant amount of new housing on part of an allocated brownfield site in a highly sustainable location. At the present time the site, and the quantum of housing proposed, may not be needed for the Council to meet its LP housing requirement figures. Nonetheless, the housing requirement is set at a minimum level. In the context of the importance of boosting the delivery of homes nationally, housing supply considerations must attract significant beneficial weight.
206. The scheme would deliver a key section of the north-south pedestrian and cycle link, connecting the Bridge and River towpath with the Station. It would provide an important link supporting the Council's aspirations for this key movement corridor, enabling sustainable and healthy travel choices. The opening up of the riverside area and provision of a café would support the attractiveness of this route. The continuation of this north-south link is a policy requirement. Nonetheless, this has been a policy objective for some 20 years, with the supporting text to Policy CR11g setting out that achieving the north-south link is the main priority for the site and should be given substantial weight in development management. Further, given the evident challenges of achieving a viable route through the site, my view is that securing the delivery of this important piece of infrastructure would be a benefit attracting significant weight.
207. There is dispute as to the extent to which financial contributions towards the provision of a pedestrian/cycle crossing facility over Vastern Road would be a benefit. Nonetheless, as this would support connectivity across the wider north-south sustainable travel corridor, it should be afforded beneficial weight in the balance.
208. There would be wider social, economic and environmental benefits associated with urban development of this nature, though collectively such

generic benefits attract no more than moderate weight. Other considerations, such as biodiversity net gain, the employment and skills contribution, the open space/leisure contribution, the carbon off-setting contribution and the provision of flood protection measures would mitigate against the effects of the development on social, economic and environmental infrastructure. They are therefore required to make the development acceptable in planning terms and do not attract beneficial weight.

209. The scheme would not be able to viably support affordable housing. A deferred contributions mechanism would be secured via the S106 and could convey additional benefits, though I cannot give this weight at this stage.

210. Turning to the final balance, on the one hand I have identified harms which carry weight against the appeal proposal. Set against this are a number of public benefits which carry beneficial weight that is demonstrably above policy compliance. When seen in the context of the significant benefits associated with managing the regeneration of the site as a whole, my view is that the policy harms identified would be clearly outweighed.

211. Section 38(6) requires decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case whilst I have identified a high degree of policy compliance, there remains conflict with some provisions of the development plan. However, the beneficial elements identified represent material considerations which indicate that a decision which does not fully accord with the development plan may be taken.

212. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Assistant Director Planning, Transport & Regulatory Services Comment:

Clearly it is very disappointing to have an appeal allowed and particularly in this case where so many important local plan aspirations were at stake and where officers and consultees have worked so hard to present the Council's case in such a robust manner. The decision to allow is not seen as a criticism of the Council's decision to refuse or the efforts of officers and the Council's appeal team but is more a reflection of the complicated nature of balancing competing constraints and opportunities, aspirations and reality to reach a planning decision.

Officers are working with the legal team to substantiate if the Council has any grounds to challenge the decision as are there are some aspects on how the balancing of policies was set out that are not clear and our thoughts on this will be discussed further at your meeting.

Case officer: Jonathan Markwell

Site Location:



Site Layout:



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REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	30 MARCH 2022		
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 £1,798,619.

(Class E (formally office) Prior Approvals - £1,656,044: Householder Prior Approvals - £86,392: 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 - £2048: Additional storey on dwellings - £206: New dwellinghouses on terrace/detached buildings - £128).

Figures since last report

Class E (formally office) Prior Approvals - £1448: Householder Prior Approvals - £330

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 18th February 2022 to 18th March 2022

Type:	How many received since last report:	Loss in possible fee income:
Householder Prior Approvals	3	£330
Class E Prior Approvals	1	£1448
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	£0
Prior Notification	0	n/a
Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	0	0
Dwellings on detached block of flats	0	0
Householder Additional Storey	0	0
New dwellinghouses on terrace/detached buildings	0	0
TOTAL	4	£1778

Table 2 - Applications decided since 18th February 2022 to 18th March 2022

Type:	Approved	Refused	Not Required	Withdrawn	Non Determination
Householder Prior Approvals	1	1	2	0	0
Class E Prior Approvals	2	1	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
Prior Notification/ Other	0	0	0	0	0
Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Dwellings on detached block of flats	0	0	0	0	0
Householder Additional Storey	0	0	0	0	0
New dwellinghouses on terrace buildings	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3	2	2	0	0

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Redlands

Address: 40 Christchurch Road, Reading, RG2 7AY.

Proposal: To add 40 Christchurch Road, Reading, to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures

RECOMMENDATION

That 40 Christchurch Road be added to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on a proposal to add 40 Christchurch Road, Reading, to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

1.2 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Location map

Appendix 2: Relevant photos and images

Appendix 3: Proposed Local List text

Appendix 4: Nomination Form (09.02.2022)

Appendix 5: Full response from Property and Valuations team

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Reading Borough Council maintains a List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures ('the Local List'). Its purpose is to recognise the buildings and structures which do not meet the criteria for national listing, but are nonetheless significant to the heritage of the local area. It was agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 that decisions on additions to the Local List should be made at PAC.

2.2 A nomination was received on 9th February 2022 to add 40 Christchurch Road, Reading, to the Local List. Consultations have been carried out in accordance with the agreed process, and this report sets out the recommended action.

2.3 The subject building is a two-storey + attic, polychrome (red and grey brick), mid-19th century villa, occupied by two prominent Reading residents, Lady Henrietta St Maur, (1810-1890), and then Henry Marriage Wallis (1879-1941). During WWII until the 1950s, it was used by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, as the regional office for the National Savings Committee, in the 1940s and 1950s. After this

Ashton Lodge as it was known, formed part of Reading's special school provision for over 60 years. The school has now moved to a new location.

- 2.4 The nomination form received for the building identifies the significance of the building as follows:

40 Christchurch Road, has associations with significant Reading historical characters, is a fine example of a quality mid-19th century Victorian Villa, the last remaining example of mansions built along the road around this time, and has been used for Government offices, as well as a local special school over the last 60 years.

3. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The following were consulted on the proposed addition to the Local List:

- Reading Borough Council (landowner);
- Ward councillors;
- Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee; and
- Reading Civic Society.

- 3.2 A response was received from RBC's Property and Valuations team as landowner.

RBC Property and Valuations Team (landowner)

- 3.3 The response from RBC Property and Valuations is summarised below. The full response is in Appendix 5.

- *Site is currently used for a SEN school which is in the process of being relocated to the Hamilton Centre site*
- *Building is generally in poor condition*
- *Disposal of the site will contribute towards the cost of the new facility and therefore maximum value should be realised, which would necessitate a cleared site.*
- *A cleared site would also maximise contribution to housing needs*
- *Existing use makes inefficient use of the current long, narrow site*
- *Not nationally listed and whilst having some architectural and aesthetic appeal is not unique to the area nor does it form an integral or important part of the local street scene*
- *Any retention of the building should not prohibit the development potential of the rear of the site and ensure vehicular and pedestrian access to rear*
- *Object to the addition to the local listing of the building*

4. ASSESSMENT

- 4.0.1 The proposal to add a building or structure to the Local List should be considered against the criteria in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019).

4.1 Exclusions

- 4.1.1 The Local Plan specifies that a building should not be considered for the Local List where it is already part of a conservation area, scheduled monument or subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest. 40 Christchurch Road is not within any of these existing designations and can therefore be considered against the other criteria.

4.2 General principles

4.2.1 40 Christchurch Road dates from the 1860s and therefore needs to be considered against the following general principle:

b. 1840 - 1913: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is of clearly-defined significance in the local context and where elements that contribute to its heritage significance remain substantially complete.

4.2.2 The significance of 40 Christchurch Road in the local context is described under 'significance' below. In terms of whether important elements are substantially complete, the exterior of the original 1860s villa building is in good condition. Inside the building has had a number of changes over the years, but there are still interior details in some rooms with cornices, architraves and window joinery.

4.3 Significance

4.3.1 To be added to the Local List, a building or structure must fulfil at least one of the defined significance criteria, which fall into two categories - historic interest and architectural interest. These are assessed below.

Historic Interest

a. Historical Association

i. The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event.

ii. The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest.

4.3.2 40 Christchurch Road, Reading, is a two-storey + attic, polychrome (red and grey brick), mid-19th century villa, formerly occupied by two prominent Reading residents:

- Lady Henrietta St Maur (1810-1890), and then
- Henry Marriage Wallis (1879-1941).

b. Social Importance

The building or structure has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities. Such buildings/structures may include places of worship, schools, community buildings, places of employment, public houses and memorials which formed a focal point or played a key social role.

4.3.3 H M Wallis participated in local civic life as a JP (1894) and was also involved with the Reading branch of the NSPCC, Reading Literary and Scientific Society and Reading Fat Stock Association. He was a founder member of the Reading Natural History Society. In 1914. Henry Wallis was involved with housing Belgian refugees in Reading and this continued until 1919. 635 people were registered by the Committee for the Relief of Belgian Refugees.

4.3.4 During the Second World War the house was used by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food and was the regional office for the National Savings Committee. This continued until 1957. Thereafter it has been the home of a school: Wakefield Lodge, Reading Alternative School, Phoenix College and now Hamilton School. The school is now moving to new premises in Crescent Road. Ashton Lodge has formed part of Reading's special school provision for over 60 years.

c. Industrial Importance

The building or structure clearly relates to traditional or historic industrial processes or important businesses or the products of such industrial processes or businesses in the history of Reading or are intact industrial structures, for example bridges.

4.3.5 It is not considered that 40 Christchurch Road fulfils this criterion.

Architectural Interest

a. Sense of place

i. The building or structure is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading.

4.3.6 Originally there were four Victorian Villas in this part of Christchurch Road. This is now the last remaining example of development of its kind. It is an example of the more gentrified type of housing that was built in the area and is a rare example of the larger villas that were built for the upper classes. It is a quality good design and still shows this in its exterior elevations. The use of multi-coloured brick and later red brick addition in the entry porch are characteristic. However the functional buildings in the rear and to the sides, that were for the school areas, are not significant in relation to the development of Reading.

b. Innovation and virtuosity

i. The building or structure has a noteworthy quality of workmanship and materials.

ii. The building or structure is the work of a notable local/national architect/engineer/builder.

iii. The building or structure shows innovation in materials, technique, architectural style or engineering.

4.3.7 It is not an example of innovation as such, but the building is a good example of traditional building design and materials, therefore fulfilling criterion i. The architect of the building is not known.

c. Group value

i. The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.

ii. The buildings/structures are an example of deliberate town planning from before 1947.

4.3.8 The building was part of a group of four residential Victorian Villas, built in the late 1850s and 1860s. It is the last of these villas remaining. It is directly south of the listed residential group known as The Mount, (built by Huntley and Palmer, for their staff in the 1870s). This gives it a group value, in development in this area in the second half of the 19th-century.

4.4 Other matters

- 4.4.1 The objection from RBC Property and Valuations is set out in Appendix 5.
- 4.4.2 Much of the objection relates to the importance of realising the full value of the site in contributing towards the new SEN school, and in contributing towards housing needs. However, the criteria to be considered when considering a nomination for the local list are limited to those considered in this report, which are around its historic significance. It would be at planning application stage that this historic significance would need to be judged against other material considerations if the building is proposed to be lost in full or in part.
- 4.4.3 However, the objection does argue that the historic significance is limited, by it not being nationally listed, not unique to the area, and not forming an integral or important part of the local street scene being set back from the road and fronted with parking areas. In terms of national listing, the purpose of the Local List is explicitly to deal with those buildings that do not qualify for the national list. Uniqueness in itself is not required for addition to the Local List, but the assessment has shown that it fulfils the innovation and virtuosity criterion. Finally, whilst there are factors that detract from its contribution to sense of place, the building nonetheless does continue to make a positive contribution in this regard.
- 4.4.4 The objection also refers to the importance of ensuring development potential to the rear. The original footprint of the building is shown on the maps in Appendix 4, and the development to the rear, covering around two thirds of the site, is broadly in the form of modern additions. Removal of these modern additions to be replaced by development to the rear may be possible without negatively impacting the significance of the original building. The text for the local list (Appendix 2) should reflect that it is the original building that is the primary feature of interest.

4.5 Conclusion of assessment

- 4.5.1 40 Christchurch Road, Reading, qualifies for addition to the Local List because it:
- Is not within a conservation area, a statutory listed building, a scheduled monument or area subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest;
 - Dates from between 1840 and 1913 and is of clearly-defined significance in the local context and elements that contribute to its heritage significance remain substantially complete;
 - Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its historical association;
 - Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its social importance;
 - Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its sense of place;
 - Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its innovation and virtuosity;
 - Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its group value.
- 4.5.2 A description of the significance of the building for inclusion in the Local List is included in Appendix 3.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Local listing of buildings and structures, where it leads to the retention of those buildings or structures, can help to address the climate emergency by negating the

need for demolition and new development, which are processes that use significant amounts of energy and result in emissions. However, in the long-term, it can be more difficult to achieve high levels of energy performance in older buildings than in new builds. There are therefore potentially either positive or negative effects, and schemes will need to be assessed at the application stage in terms of their compliance with the Council's policies.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 It is not expected that there will be any significant adverse impacts on specific groups due to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or religious belief as a result of the recommendations of this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Addition to the Local List is not a statutory process, and there are no legal implications of the recommendations of this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Consideration of this nomination and any resulting amendments to the Local List will be accommodated within existing budgets.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

APPENDIX 1: LOCATION PLAN



APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

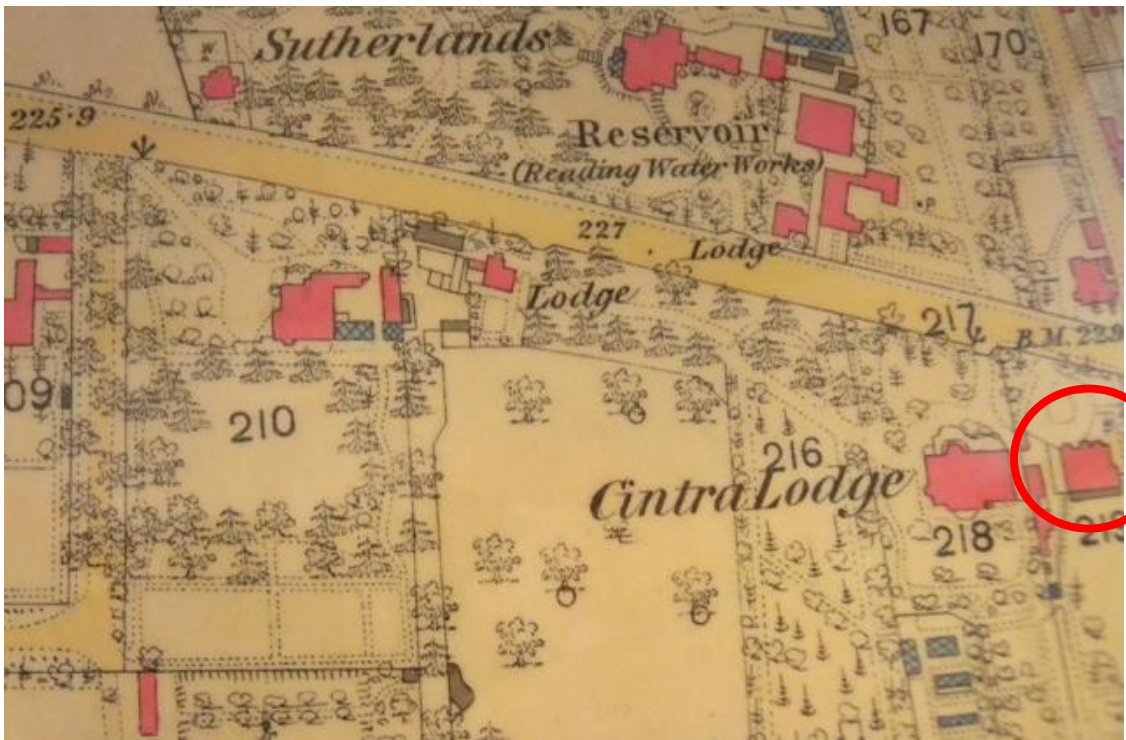
Fig. 1. 40 Christchurch Road, is a fine, c. 1860s Reading Residence, sited, opposite a significant residential Estate of Listed Grade II dwellings, built for Huntley & Palmer's staff in the 1870s. It was originally built for Lady St Mair in the second half of the 19th century.



Fig. 2. GIS Map showing the location of nearby Conservation Areas, “Christchurch CA” to the west and “The Mount CA” on the opposite side of the road. There are listed buildings directly opposite in the Mount CA, so it is part of a significant late 19th century urban, historical precinct.



Fig. 3: 1877 OS Map, showing, 40 Christchurch Road



APPENDIX 3: PROPOSED LOCAL LIST TEXT

It is thought that the house at 40 Christchurch Road was probably built for Lady Henrietta St Maur, who was living there in 1861. This fits in with historical maps, which shows the house on an 1877 OS map.

Lady Henrietta St Maur (1810-1890), was daughter of Edward St Maur, 11th Duke of Somerset (1775-1855) and the sister of the 12th Duke of Somerset. She never married but had an influencing role as a Woman of Society in Reading. She died in March, 1890 and was buried in Reading at London Road cemetery.

The house was a substantial grand Victorian Villa. The original 1860s house is built of brick with grey and red brick patterns, stone-work quoins and window frames. The pattern is of three grey stretchers and one red header. The 1890s extensions are primarily red brick in English Bond. The hanging tiles in the gables were added later, probably when the west wing was added at the end of the nineteenth century. Hanging tiles are common in Reading and are a common feature in buildings of this time. The keystone of the front porch bears a 'W' (presumably for Henry Marriage Wallis) and the date, 1897.

Ashton Lodge is the last remaining example of the villas built in the period at the end of the 1850s and beginning of the 1860s along Christchurch Road (at the time Southern Hill). These included Cintra Lodge next door to the west, but this has since been demolished.

Henry Marriage Wallis (1879-1941) lived at the house from the late 1890s, until at least the 1920s. He was the son of Henry Wallis (1854-1899) a corn merchant, originally from Suffolk. They were a Quaker family. The business continued as Wallis, Son and Wells until 1939. H M Wallis participated in local civic life as a JP (1894) and was also involved with the Reading branch of the NSPCC, Reading Literary and Scientific Society and Reading Fat Stock Association. He was a founder member of the Reading Natural History Society. In 1914. Henry Wallis was involved with housing Belgian refugees in Reading and this continued until 1919. 635 people were registered by the Committee for the Relief of Belgian Refugees.

During the Second World War the house was used by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food and was the regional office for the National Savings Committee. This continued until 1957. Thereafter it has been the home of a school: Wakefield Lodge, Reading Alternative School, Phoenix College and now Hamilton School. The school is now moving to new premises in Crescent Road. Ashton Lodge has formed part of Reading's special school provision for over 60 years. The rear garden backing on to Cintra Park is now covered with outbuildings and extensions added for its education use, but it is the original villa and the 19th Century extensions that are the main features of importance.

APPENDIX 4: Listing Nomination Details

Details of the nomination - 40 Christchurch Road

Address of building/structure: 40 Christchurch Road

Postcode of building/structure: RG2 7AY

Owner of building (if known): Reading Borough Council

Age of building:

(b) 1840 - 1913: any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance.

Please provide comments or further explanation of above:

The house was probably originally built for Lady Henrietta St Maur who was living there in 1861. The period at the end of the 1850s and beginning of the 1860s saw the building of other mansions along Christchurch Road (at the time Southern Hill), including Cintra Lodge next door, and down Basingstoke Road [ref 1].

Additions to the property such as a front porch, extensions on the western side and also possibly at the rear were carried out by Henry Marriage Wallis (1854-1941) at the end of the nineteenth century (image 1-6). There is a keystone over the front porch entrance bearing a stylised 'W' and the date 1897 (image 4).

The rear of the property which is not as visible as the front suggests that on top of the late nineteenth century additions there have been twentieth century extensions. There is evidence of original windows with decorative exterior pelmets which are a reproduction of earlier 18th century Georgian window detailing (image 6).

The garden is now covered with additional outbuildings required for its use as school. On the west side of the house are partial remains, considerably extended, of original outbuildings.

In 1921 the house was put up for sale but it is likely that it did not sell as in 1928 when one of H M Wallis's daughters was married, the address was given as Ashton Lodge [ref 2]. At the time of the sale the accommodation was described as [ref 3]:

Ground floor - porch, hall, verandah, summer lounge (glass roof), morning room, dining room, domestic offices and tradesmen's entrance.

First floor - 6 bedrooms, bathroom and dressing room

Second floor - 2 bedrooms, box and cistern rooms

Large attic

Garage and stabling abutting on blue brick Staffordshire paved yard

Garage, coal house, wash house, two living rooms, loose box, potting and tool houses

Tennis lawn bordered by rockeries

Kitchen Garden

The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event: Yes

Please provide further comments or explanation:

Lady Henrietta St Maur (1810-1890) for whom the property was probably built was daughter of Edward St Maur, 11th Duke of Somerset (1775-1855) and the sister of the 12th Duke of Somerset, Lord Edward Seymour (1804-1885), MP for Okehampton (1830-31) and Totnes (1834-55). [refs 4 & 5]. It would seem that around 1860 there was a rift between the Duke and his siblings which may have led to Lady Henrietta moving to Reading. [ref 5] In the 1861 census she described herself as 'daughter of a Duke'. She never married. She died 2 March 1890 and was buried in Reading at London Road cemetery.

Her name appears in the press in connection with society events around the country in the 1830s-1850s. The first mention we have found in the Reading press is as one of the patrons of a bazaar of work by the Ladies of Limited Means at the New Hall, London Street on 2 and 3 October 1863. Other patrons included Lady Emma Cust and Mrs Monck of Coley Park [ref 6].

Lady St Maur's furniture and effects were put up for auction on 11 June 1897 after the house had been sold (date unknown) [ref 7].

The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest: Yes

Please provide further comments or explanation: Henry Marriage Wallis (1879-1941) lived at the house from the end of the nineteenth century until at least the 1920s. He was living at 64 Northcourt Avenue at the time of his death in November 1941 [ref 8]. He moved there in the late 1930s [ref 9]. He was the son of Henry Wallis (1854-1899) a corn merchant, originally from Suffolk. The business continued as Wallis, Son and Wells until 1939 [ref 10]. In 1914 the firm's premises were at Victoria Wharf, 82 King's Road. They were a Quaker family.

Civic Life

H M Wallis participated in local civic life as a JP (1894), and was also involved with Reading branch of the NSPCC, Reading Literary and Scientific Society and Reading Fat Stock Association. He was a founder member of the Reading Natural History Society. [various refs including 12.

He was responsible for the location of the current location of Leighton Park School [ref 9]. When he died in 1941 W A Smallcombe, the Curator of Reading Museum and Art Gallery wrote an appreciation. 'For well over half a century he has been associated, not by any means in the limelight, but always quietly behind the scenes, with good deeds.' He goes on to say that Henry M Wallis had been important with William Isaac Palmer in the building of the new Art Gallery and Museum and credits him with the acquisition of the King's Deer for the collection. He had been Honorary Curator of Vertebrates and a member of the Museum Committee for over 40 years. [ref 10 & 15]

National and World Events

In 1912 he and his brother-in-law J B Crosfield travelled to Bulgaria, during the First Balkan War (1912-1913) to distribute funds from the Society of Friends Relief Fund [ref 6]. He was asked by the Reading Standard to report to them on his mission and one such letter appeared on 30 November 1912 accompanied by a map of the Balkan States and a photograph of H M Wallis. In this he documented his trip across Europe on the Orient

Express [ref 11].

In 1914 he was involved with housing Belgian refugees in Reading. This is a better known relief effort that continued until 1919. 635 people were registered by the Committee for the Relief of Belgian Refugees. A plaque was presented to Reading by the refugees which is in Reading Museum's collection. [ref 13]

Literary Career

H M Wallis wrote at least several books under the pseudonym Ashton Hilliers, *The Master-Girl*, described as a prehistoric sci-fi tale [ref 14], *Memoirs of a Person of Quality* and *The Walbury Case* [ref 9].

The building or structure has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities: Yes

Please provide further comments or explanation:

During the Second World War the house was used by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food as was the regional office for the National Savings Committee. This continued until 1957. Thereafter it has been the home of a school: Wakefield Lodge, Reading Alternative School, Phoenix College and now Hamilton School. The school is now moving to new premises in Crescent Road. Ashton Lodge has formed part of Reading's special school provision for over 60 years [ref 16].

The building or structure is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading: Yes

Please provide further comments or explanation:

The original 1860s house is built of brick with grey brick with red brick patterns, stonework quoins and window frames. The pattern is of three grey stretchers and one red header. The 1890s extensions are primarily red brick in English Bond. The hanging tiles in the gables were added later, probably when the west wing was added at the end of the nineteenth century. Hanging tiles are common in Reading and are a common feature in buildings of this time.

Please upload any evidence you have assembled that help to make the case as to why the building or structure fulfils the above criteria: Appendix 1.docx, Appendix 2.docx
Please briefly describe the relevance of the evidence you have attached: References

Appendix 1 - (Nomination) - Images

Appendix 2 - (Nomination) Maps

1. Dennis Wood, Views from the Hill. The Story of Whitley p25
2. Reading Standard 3 November 1928 p1 via findmypast.
3. Estate Agents Particulars, to be sold 10.9.1921 unless acceptable offer before. BRO D/ENS B3/38.
4. Wikipedia entries for the 11th and 12th Duke of Somerset.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_St_Maur,_11th_Duke_of_Somerset
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Seymour,_12th_Duke_of_Somerset
5. The Seymours at Burton Hall, Wolds Historical Society.
<http://www.hoap.co.uk/who/burton05.htm> accessed 28 January 2022.
6. Reading Mercury 29 August 1863 p3 via findmypast
7. Reading Mercury 29 May 1897 p3 via findmypast
8. Reading Standard 14 November 1941 p7.

9. Penny Kemp, Northcourt Avenue: its history and people.
10. Henry Marriage Wallis - a Reading benefactor, Vicki Chesterman. Berkshire Family History Society. <https://berksfhs.org/henry-marriage-wallis-a-reading-benefactor/> (accessed 28 January 2022)
11. Reading Standard 30 November 1912 p10 via findmypast
12. David Cliffe, Reading Natural History Society and its records: the first fifty years, published in Berkshire Old & New No 32 2015. <http://www.blha.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/BOAN15.pdf> (accessed 9 February 2022)
13. Belgian Refugees Plaque, Reading Museum Collection. <http://collections.readingmuseum.org.uk/index.asp?page=record&mwsquery=%20%7Bcollection%7D=%7Bhistory%7D&filename=REDMG&hitsStart=1985> (accessed 28 January 2022).
14. Ashton Hilliers, The Master Girl. https://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/hilliers_ashton (accessed 28 January 2022]
15. Reading Standard 21 November 1941 p5 via findmypast. The deer are probably those still on display in the Museum presented by George V in 1911. [http://collections.readingmuseum.org.uk/index.asp?page=record&mwsquery=\({search}={s tag}\)&filename=REDMG&hitsStart=61](http://collections.readingmuseum.org.uk/index.asp?page=record&mwsquery=({search}={s tag})&filename=REDMG&hitsStart=61)
16. Dennis Wood, Views from the Hill. The Story of Whitley pp42 and 99-100

Please provide any additional comments that you would like to make in support of adding this building or structure to the Local List:

Summary

1. 40 Christchurch Road is the last remaining of the grand mansions and villas on Christchurch Road built c1860.
2. It had two notable occupants.
3. During the Second World War it was turned over for government use and after the war as a school which it has been for the last 60 years.
4. The architecture tells a story of the life of the building. It is not an intact 1860s home, there have been many additions to the house and outbuildings.
5. As such it should be recognised as a locally important building.

APPENDIX 1 (Nomination) - IMAGES OF 40 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD

No		Descriptions
1		40 Christchurch Road 1897 Porch and additional wing on the right. (Evelyn Williams)

2		<p>40 Christchurch Road</p> <p>East side of the house showing original stonework quoins and chimney brick details.</p> <p>(Evelyn Williams)</p>
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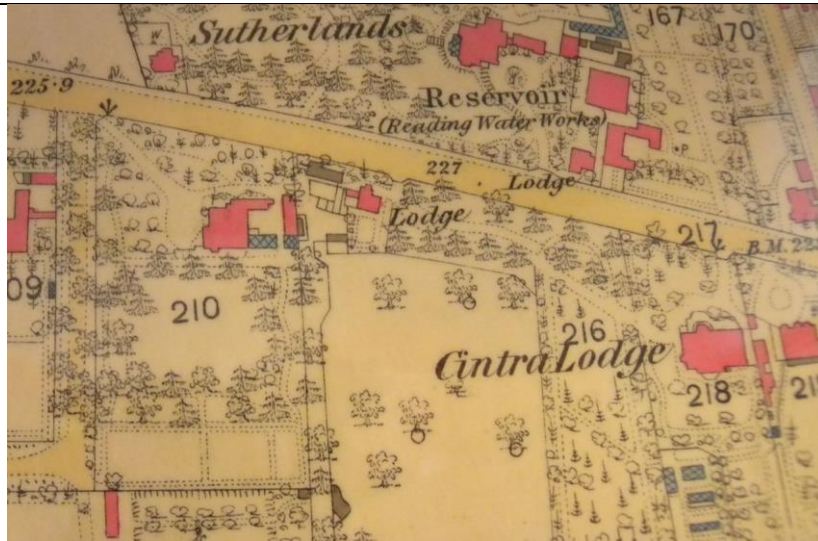
3		<p>40 Christchurch Road</p> <p>West side of the house showing new wing.</p> <p>(Evelyn Williams)</p>
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4		<p>40 Christchurch Road</p> <p>Keystone on porch 'W', for Henry Marriage Wallis, and 1897.</p> <p>(Evelyn Williams)</p>
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5		<p>40 Christchurch Road</p> <p>Hanging tiles on gables. The original stonework can be seen protruding beneath the hanging tiles on the furthest left gable. It is likely that the additional windows on the second floor were added at this time.</p> <p>(Evelyn Williams)</p>
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6		<p>Rear of 40 Christchurch Road.</p> <p>The rear of the property can be seen from Cintra Park but is not easy to photograph because of the fence. This makes it more difficult to date.</p> <p>Later (twentieth century) extensions seem probable but on the left there is evidence of original windows with decorative exterior pelmets which are a reproduction of earlier 18th century Georgian window detailing.</p> <p>(Dennis Wood)</p>
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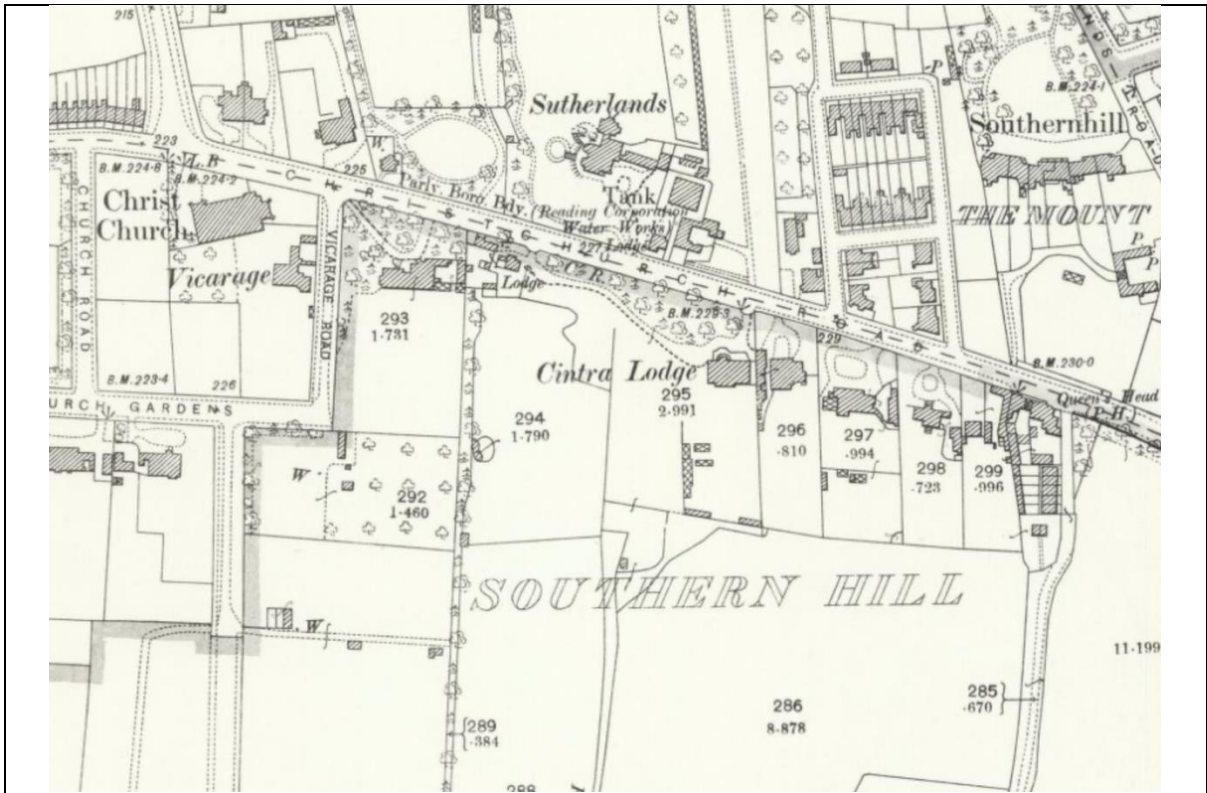
Appendix 2 – (Nomination).



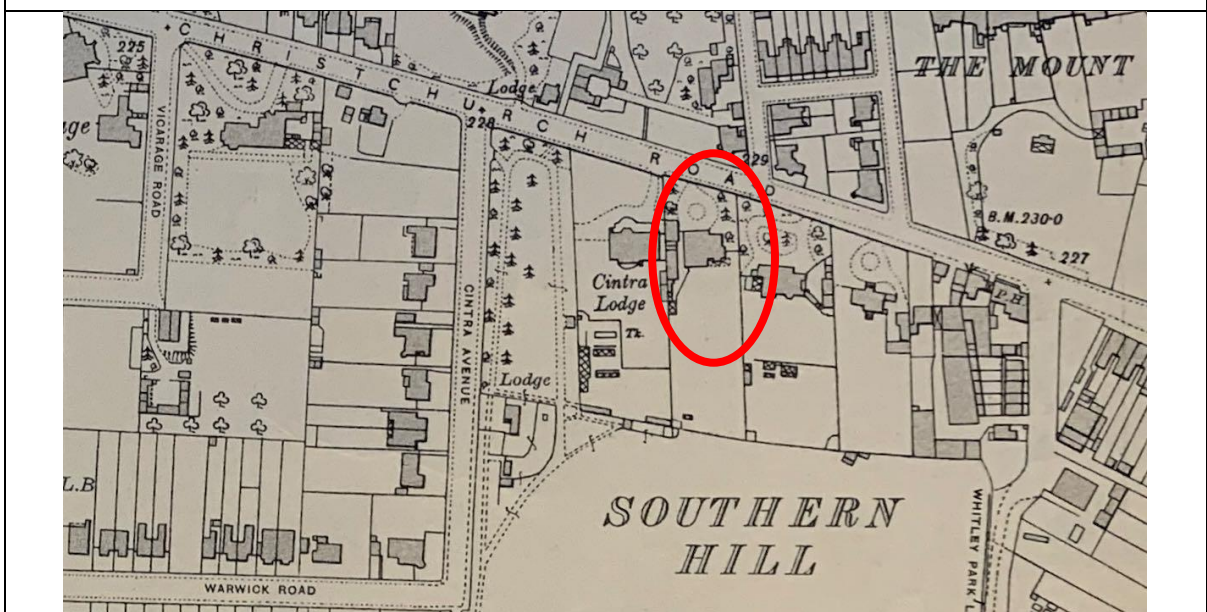
Extract from 1877 OS map. Ashton Lodge (40 Christchurch Road) is on the east of Cintra Lodge. The footprint is smaller than on later maps



Extract from 1883 OS map.



Extract from 1899 OS map. Ashton Lodge (40 Christchurch Road) is on the east of Cintra Lodge



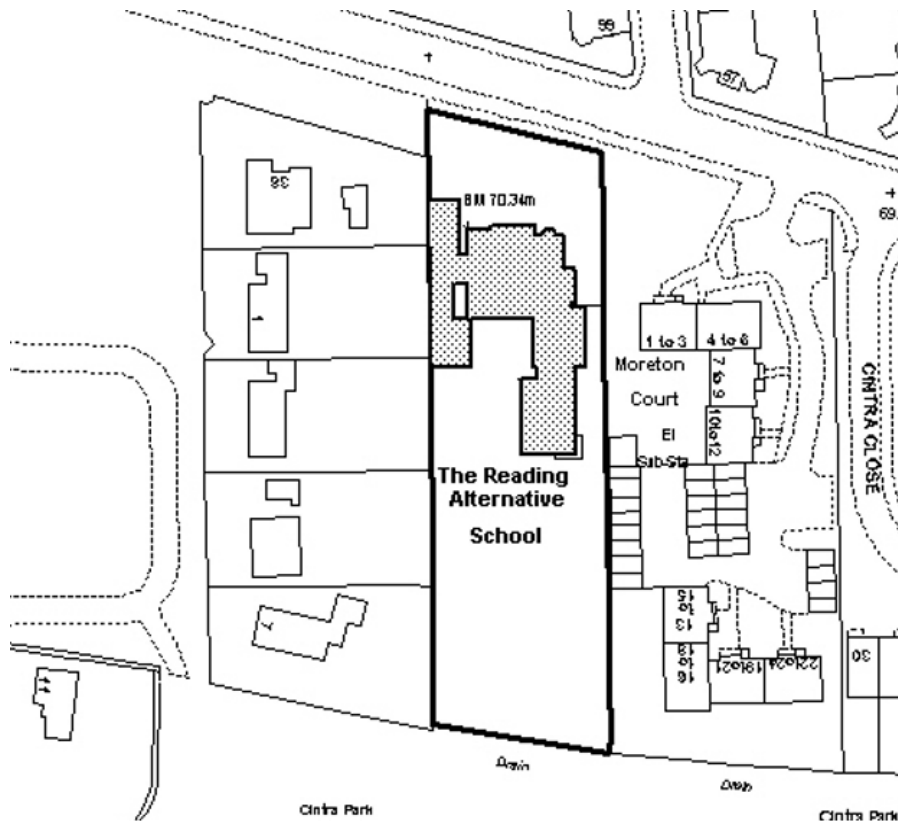
Extract from 1932 OS map. Ashton Lodge (40 Christchurch Road) is on the east of Cintra Lodge. The footprint is very similar to that in the 1899 map.

APPENDIX 5: FULL RESPONSE FROM PROPERTY AND VALUATIONS TEAM

The above property is owned by Reading Borough Council and shown edged black on the plan below and in the aerial photograph

The property is currently used as a special school which is being relocated to new a constructed/repurposed facility Hamilton Road as the current site at Christchurch Road is not considered appropriate in terms of circula suitability and sufficiency or building condition and functionality.

The building is generally in poor condition throughout.





Any disposal of the current site will contribute towards the cost of the new facility and in such a situation should seek to maximise the asset value.

The property occupies a long narrow plot and takes up the majority of the frontage so in terms of built form makes poor use of the space and potentially landlocks further development opportunity.

The property is not nationally listed and whilst having some architectural and aesthetic appeal is not unique to the area nor does it form an integral or important part of the local street scene being set back from the road and fronted with parking areas.

Full value would be realised from a cleared site and this would be the Council's desired outcome in order to optimise the quantum of developable area both as a new build and also incorporating the land to the rear.



A clear site will also maximise the development potential of the site, most likely residential providing much need housing within the Borough.

Any proposal to retain the building is not a desirable outcome as conversion will materially affect viability as opposed to a new build option.

If done sympathetically a cleared site redevelopment could have a beneficial impact on the site and local area as has been the case with other adjacent developments

Any retention should not prohibit the ability to develop the rear portion of the site and enable vehicular and pedestrian access where possible whilst also enabling a refurbishment/conversion opportunity

The Council as a landowner is seeking to maximise development potential and value from the site would object to the property being locally listed.

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Park

Address: Palmer Park Pavilion and associated building, Palmer Park, Wokingham Road, Reading, RG6 1LF

Proposal: To add Palmer Park Pavilion and associated building, Wokingham Road, Reading, to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

RECOMMENDATION

That Palmer Park Pavilion and associated building and entrance gates, Wokingham Road, Reading, be added to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on a proposal to add Palmer Park Pavilion and associated building, Wokingham Road, Reading, to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

1.2 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Location map

Appendix 2: Relevant photos and images

Appendix 3: Proposed Local List text

Appendix 4: Nomination Form

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Reading Borough Council maintains a List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures ('the Local List'). Its purpose is to recognise the buildings and structures which do not meet the criteria for national listing, but are nonetheless significant to the heritage of the local area. It was agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 that decisions on additions to the Local List should be made at PAC.

2.2 A nomination was received on 23rd September 2020 to add Palmer Park Pavilion (and associated building) to the Local List. Consultations have been carried out in accordance with the agreed process, and this report sets out the recommended action.

2.3 The nomination form received for the building identifies the significance of the building as follows:

"Palmer Park Pavilion, Keepers residence and associated building close-by within the park when the Park itself was opened to the people of Reading in 1891. They

are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance to the people of Reading.

The Pavilion itself, designed as a refreshment house for users of the park, is as of June 2020 occupied by Tutu's Ethiopian Café, the Keeper's residence still in residential use, and the associated building found close by (within the children's play area) is unused, and has sadly been allowed to fall into some disrepair.

Historic Association

Opening of park by George Palmer (and others, including then Mayor, Cllr Daniel Heelas of Heelas & Sons Ltd) - land and buildings donated and commissioned by Palmer.

Social Importance

The importance of Victorian parks through to the modern day (buildings now in use as residential and community café - Tutu's - although associated building remains unused) has never been more acute with the arrival of Covid in the community.

Relates to tradition or historic industrial process

Huntley & Palmers was originally founded in Reading in 1822 by Thomas Huntley, with George Palmer joining in 1841. They continued to trade until the early 1990's; their association with Reading being so strong that it was known as the biscuit town. George Palmer gave the land and buildings of Palmer Park to the people of Reading.

The park and buildings relate to the Victorian parks tradition. Motives for the Victorian parks tradition varied widely, including adding value to new housing developments, to give a green space to the urban sprawl, and even to try to regulate the leisure activities of the working classes. Free to use, they were viewed as expressions of civic pride or as examples of desirable behaviour valuing fresh air, exercise, and walking. Residents of Reading need these values now more than ever.

Sense of Place

The day after the opening of Palmer Park, the Daily Graphic newspaper (Thursday, Nov 5th, 1891) reported the fete held to mark the opening of the park and the granting of the freedom of the town to George Palmer. The paper says: "In the new park is a handsome pavilion" with "large public refreshment bar and room." These buildings epitomise the Victorian philanthropist's lasting legacy to Reading.

Local/National Architect

Nationally known local architect William Ravenscroft designed buildings.

Ravenscroft (b: Reading 1848, d: 1943. Lived: 6 Market Place, Reading and 22 The Forbury, Reading. First practice: Reading, 1875 to 1908) also known locally for Reading University Great Hall, Nos 2-3 Gun Street, Chiltern Court and the Wyecliffe Baptist Church. Considered to design in a mixture of Arts & Crafts and Gothic Style.

Townscape Value

Designed to be the view through the gated entrance on the Wokingham Road these buildings are fundamental to Palmer Park, and to East Reading. Visible on the higher section overlooking the Wokingham Road these provide a strong focal point for the park."

3. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The following were consulted on the proposed addition to the Local List:

- Reading Borough Council, Parks (landowner);
- Ward councillors;
- Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee; and
- Reading Civic Society

3.2 Responses were received from RBC Parks, CAAC and Reading Civic Society.

3.3 RBC Parks

The lodge (currently a café/restaurant) and adjacent house would originally have framed the main entrance to the Park along with the ornate entrance gate, railings and pillars adjacent to the Wokingham Road and St Bartholemew's Road junction. These clearly provide a link to the past and add to the sense of place also complementing the changed landscape within which they now sit. Consideration should be given to including these gates within the listing along with the gates of the same design at what would have been the other main entrance on London Road.

The old disused toilet block is contemporary with the lodge and keepers house and of similar style. They are in a poor state of repair and situated within a children's play area and have attracted antisocial behaviour. Their small size, location, limited access and need to consider safeguarding issues relating to their location has prevented a sustainable use to be found for them, without which decline will continue and will detract from other facilities. Toilets are available at the adjacent café and new supervised toilets going to being provided at the redeveloped Leisure centre next year including a changing place that could not be accommodated within the old block. Without a prospect of constructive use we do not support listing.

3.4 Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee - (02 November 2021)

CAAC supports the local listing but has requested that the listing be increased to include the entrance gates and the 1930s Library.

Group value. *Taken together the buildings have group value and from a distance the refreshment room and residence appear as one integrated unit (see image Appendix 2).*

Architecture description of Pavilion. *Originally the large open shelter between the refreshment rooms and the house had a ventilating turret which also contained a bell for clearing the park. (Reading Observer 7 November 1891 p3 & 4 with image).*

There is a clear differentiation in some of the features and materials between the public and domestic buildings. The residence has wooden window frames but those of the pavilion and public conveniences are stone. The park keeper's house also has a bay window and porch.

The half-timbered style is reminiscent of others of the time linked with philanthropic and enlightened industrialists such as Lever at Port Sunlight, housing from 1888 onwards (Philip Wilkinson and Peter Ashley (2006). The English Buildings Book: an Architectural Guide. English Heritage) and Cadbury's Bournville housing of this era. There is also a much grander, larger and slightly later, listed Men's Pavilion at the Bournville Club of 1902. (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1075715>).

The builder was Mr Margretts of Brunswick Street (Reading Observer 7 November 1891, p3 & 4).

History of the park. *The donation of land for the park came in two parcels. A letter from George Palmer to his son, Mayor of Reading, George William Palmer, on 28 October 1889 offered 21 acres of land between St Bartholomew's Church and the railway line for a 'public pleasure and recreation ground'. The land came with £300 for the Corporation to make improvements but would be fenced off before handed over. (Berkshire Chronicle 2 November 1889 p8.) Additional land was promised in 1890 by which time the first parcel was already in use. (Mercury 5 April 1890 p5.) At this time George Palmer understood that there was a demand for facilities for tennis, football and cricket grounds that could be hired by the hour. He had made inquiries and was aware of such facilities in Birmingham. He withdrew the £300 offer and added additional land and agreed to fence it all and put up a suitable building with lavatories etc. near the junction of Vicarage and Wokingham Roads. A condition of the gift was that no intoxicating drinks were to be sold on the ground. (Letter from George Palmer to the Mayor J T Dodd 2 April 1890 reproduced in the Reading Observer 7 November 1891 p3).*

Official Park opening. *The official opening of the park on 4 November 1891 was the same day as George Palmer (1818 - 1897) was made freeman of the borough and his statue by George Blackall Simonds (now in Palmer Park) was unveiled in Broad Street.*

Historic maps - OS map extracts published 1883 and 1900 in Appendix 1.

On Wokingham Road there are two adjacent gateways and three pillars and on London Road, one gateway and two pillars. The pillars show the arms of the Borough of Reading and Mr George Palmer.

The Reading Observer press report (7 November 1891) of the opening of the park says that the gate piers are chiefly Yorkshire and Portland stone, with wrought iron gates. The works were carried out by J H Margretts, builder of Brunswick Street and the lamps and gates by Messrs Barford and Norkett of Maidenhead, supervised by the architect W Ravenscroft.

In addition, in our opinion Palmer Park Library (1937) is worthy of local listing. Whitley Library (1935) is already included on the local list.

3.5 Reading Civic Society

The committee of Reading Civic Society has reviewed, and support, Palmer Park Pavilion being added to the Local List.

- 3.6 Councillor Josh Williams, Park ward Councillor, made the initial nomination and therefore did not make any comment on the proposal for local listing.

4. ASSESSMENT

- 4.0.1 The proposal to add a building or structure to the Local List should be considered against the criteria in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019).

4.1 Exclusions

- 4.1.1 The Local Plan specifies that a building should not be considered for the Local List where it is already part of a conservation area, scheduled monument or subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest. Palmer Park

Pavilion and the associated building are not within any of these existing designations and can therefore be considered against the other criteria.

4.2 General principles

4.2.1 The Pavilion and associated structures date from around 1891, when the park was opened and therefore need to be considered against the following general principle:

b. 1840 - 1913: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are of clearly-defined significance in the local context and where elements that contribute to its/their heritage significance remain substantially complete.

4.2.2 The significance of the Pavilion and associated buildings and structures in the local context is described under 'significance' below. The elements that contribute to the heritage significance, at least externally, remain substantially complete, although in the case of the disused toilet block, some elements are in poor condition.

4.3 Significance

4.3.1 To be added to the Local List, a building or structure must fulfil at least one of the defined significance criteria, which fall into two categories - historic interest and architectural interest. These are assessed below.

Historic Interest

a. Historical Association

i. The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event.

ii. The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest.

4.3.2 The park is linked in particular with George Palmer (1818-1897), of Reading's well-known Huntley & Palmers biscuit manufacturers. Huntley & Palmers had a long association with Reading for more than 150 years, between 1822 and 1976, and as a result biscuit manufacture became almost synonymous with Reading. Other buildings and structures associated with Huntley & Palmers have recently been added to the local list. Palmer also served as mayor of Reading and a member of parliament.

4.3.3 Palmer donated the land for the park, initially 21 acres, in 1889, and it was extended in 1891 to cover 49 acres. A statue of Palmer stands at the heart of the park. The Grade II listed bronze statue by George Blackall Simmonds dates from 1891, the time of the park's opening, and was originally erected in Broad Street, but was moved to this location in the park in 1930. As the statue is nationally listed, it would not be covered by any local listing, but it provides a clear illustration of the historical association with a figure of particular local importance.

4.3.4 All of the buildings and structures proposed to be covered by the local listing stem from this period and enjoy the direct association with Palmer.

b. Social Importance

The building or structure has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities. Such buildings/structures may include places of worship, schools, community buildings, places of employment, public houses and memorials which formed a focal point or played a key social role.

- 4.3.5 Palmer Park clearly fits into the Victorian tradition of creation of public parks, which started in the 1840s, with Birkenhead Park in 1847 an early example. These parks were created in response to concerns about the health and well-being of the workers of the growing industrial towns and cities, a description which clearly applied to 19th Century Reading, including a parliamentary select committee report in 1833 that emphasised the importance of access to recreation. Palmer Park was in close proximity to large amounts of Victorian worker housing, and has therefore fulfilled an extremely important social role in eastern Reading and beyond for more than a century.

c. Industrial Importance

The building or structure clearly relates to traditional or historic industrial processes or important businesses or the products of such industrial processes or businesses in the history of Reading or are intact industrial structures, for example bridges.

- 4.3.6 Although the park and buildings relate to the industrial history of Reading through the connection to George Palmer, an important industrial figure, they are not associated with the business itself in the same way as other buildings and structures recently added to the list, and it is not considered that the Pavilion and associated building fulfil this criterion.

Architectural Interest

a. Sense of place

i. The building or structure is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading.

- 4.3.7 The buildings and structures include elements of Arts and Crafts and Gothic styles, both of which are to be found elsewhere within Reading. The architect, William Ravenscroft, designed a number of buildings in and around the Reading area which remain, some of which display a similar mix of styles.

b. Innovation and virtuosity

i. The building or structure has a noteworthy quality of workmanship and materials.

ii. The building or structure is the work of a notable local/national architect/engineer/builder.

iii. The building or structure shows innovation in materials, technique, architectural style or engineering.

- 4.3.8 The park and its main buildings and structures were designed by local architect William Ravenscroft (1848-1943). Ravenscroft designed a number of local late Victorian buildings in the local area, including a number of buildings on the national list. These include Chiltern Court at 37 St Peter's Avenue, Caversham; the Great Hall of the University of Reading on London Road; Stable Cottages in Tidmarsh; and a group of cottages at Maidenhatch near Pangbourne. Other significant buildings in Reading include the former Central Boys School (now part of Katesgrove Primary School), whilst Ravenscroft was also responsible for a number of arts and crafts houses and buildings elsewhere in England.

c. Group value

i. The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.

ii. The buildings/structures are an example of deliberate town planning from before 1947.

4.3.9 The opening of extensive public parks during the Victorian era was a clear example of deliberate town planning, and as a response to concerns about public health it shares the same underpinning as the modern planning system. The two buildings, together with the entrance gates and pillars together clearly form a group value as the main original remaining built features within the park. The pavilion building is visible as part of the same view as the entrance gates from Wokingham Road and, once within the park, there is a clear group relationship between the pavilion and former toilet block.

4.4 Other matters

4.4.1 The landowner (RBC Parks) has suggested including the ornate entrance gate, railings and pillars adjacent to the Wokingham Road and St Bartholemew's Road junction within the local listing. These features are also echoed at the London Road entrance to the park, and it is therefore suggested that, if they are to be included, then both sets of gates and pillars should be included. It is considered that further consultation on this proposal would not be needed as it is a suggestion from the landowner. These features have been referred to in the assessment where relevant, and it is considered that they are worthy of inclusion in the local listing.

4.4.2 The response from CAAC has suggested adding the 1930s Palmer Park library to the local listing, as well as the entrance gates. However, this is perhaps best considered separately for a number of reasons. Firstly, our processes would require consultation with the landowner, which has not been carried out for that building. Secondly, as a 1930s feature it would need to be determined against a different local listing criterion. Finally, as it is not one of the original park features, it does not belong to the same group linked to the opening of the park. If a nomination is received, it can be considered at a future point.

4.4.3 The landowner has also objected to the proposal to include the disused toilet block within the local listing, with particular reference made to their condition and the difficulty of finding an alternative use. However, the criteria to be considered when considering a nomination for the local list are limited to those considered in this report, which are around its historic significance. It would be at planning application stage that this historic significance would need to be judged against other material considerations if the building is proposed to be lost in full or in part.

4.4 Conclusion of assessment

4.4.1 Palmer Park Pavilion (and associated buildings/assets, including toilet block and entrance gate and pillars) qualifies for addition to the Local List because it:

- Is not within a conservation area, a statutory listed building, a scheduled monument or area subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest;

- Dates from between 1840 and 1913 and is of clearly-defined significance in the local context and elements that contribute to its heritage significance remain substantially complete;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its historical association;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its social importance;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its sense of place;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its innovation and virtuosity; and
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its group value.

4.4.2 A description of the significance of the building for inclusion in the Local List is included in Appendix 3.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Local listing of buildings and structures, where it leads to the retention of those buildings or structures, can help to address the climate emergency by negating the need for demolition and new development, which are processes that use significant amounts of energy and result in emissions. However, in the long-term, it can be more difficult to achieve high levels of energy performance in older buildings than in new builds. There are therefore potentially either positive or negative effects, and schemes will need to be assessed at the application stage in terms of their compliance with the Council's policies.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 It is not expected that there will be any significant adverse impacts on specific groups due to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or religious belief as a result of the recommendations of this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Addition to the Local List is not a statutory process, and there are no legal implications of the recommendations of this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Consideration of this nomination and any resulting amendments to the Local List will be accommodated within existing budgets.

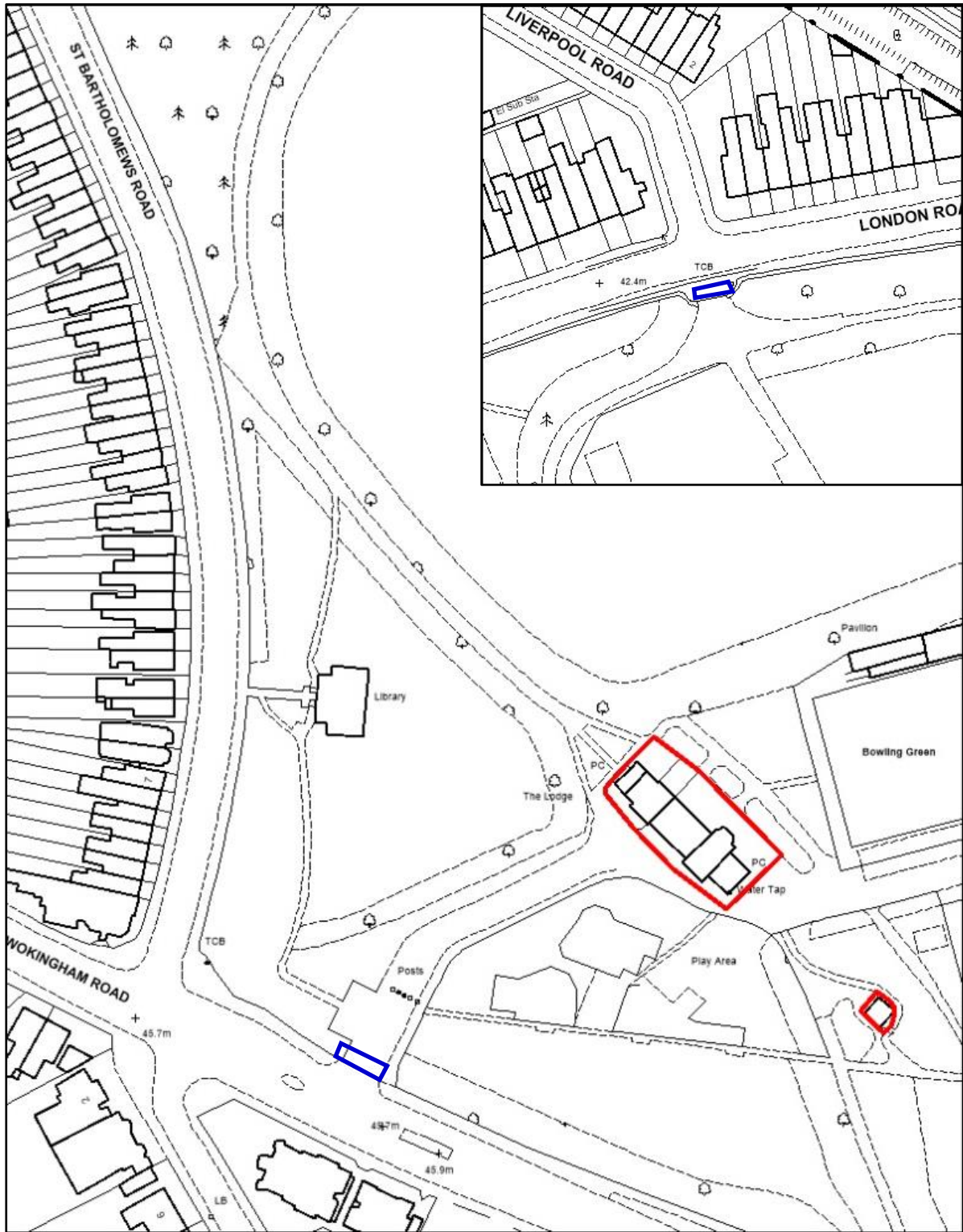
9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

Bruce Edgar, Conservation and Urban Design Officer

APPENDIX 1: LOCATION PLAN

Original nomination shown bounded in red. Proposed addition of gates shown bounded in blue.



APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig: 1. Recent photos were taken as part of a site visit by Reading Borough Council's Conservation and Design officer on 15 March 2022.
Shot looking west, showing the group value of the late 19th century nominated buildings, within the setting of the community park.



Fig. 2: Caretakers residence (c.1891) on the left and restaurant on the right



Fig: 3. Pavilion buildings (c.1891), café on the right.



Fig: 4. Toilet block, one of the associated buildings (c.1891). Needs some maintenance, to repair the lower roof.



Fig. 5: Entrance gate to park from Wokingham Road.



Fig. 6: Extract from OS Map published in 1900, show Palmer Park layout.
(CAAC Letter 02 Nov, 2021)



Fig. 7: Entrance gate to park from London Road



APPENDIX 3: PROPOSED LOCAL LIST TEXT

Palmer Park was opened for the people of Reading in 1891. The land was gifted and buildings and structures commissioned by George Palmer, of Huntley & Palmers biscuit manufacturers, a major contributor to Reading's 19th Century industrial expansion, who were present in Reading between 1822 and 1976.

The day after the opening of Palmer Park, the Daily Graphic newspaper (Thursday, Nov 5th, 1891) reported the fete held to mark the opening of the park and the granting of the freedom of the town to George Palmer. The paper says: "In the new park is a handsome pavilion" with "large public refreshment bar and room." These buildings epitomise the Victorian philanthropist's lasting legacy to Reading.

The Victorian tradition of public, free to access urban parks was characteristic of the period, addressing concerns about the need for the working and middle classes to access space for leisure and recreation. As is the case with Palmer Park, such parks provided a welcome relief to areas with substantial amounts of worker housing. Palmer Park has fulfilled a role as a vital area of open space for the people of Reading and beyond for over a century.

The buildings and gated entrance were designed by local architect William Ravenscroft, also responsible for a number of other buildings of historic significance in and around Reading, and show features of both Arts & Crafts and Gothic styles.

The Pavilion and associated structures are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance to the people of Reading. The Pavilion itself, designed as a refreshment house for users of the park, is as of June 2020 occupied by Tutu's Ethiopian Table. On the western side, the Caretaker's / Keeper's residence is still in residential use. However, the associated toilet block, found close by (within the children's play area) is currently unused, and has been allowed to fall into some disrepair. The gated entrances, comprising ornate railings, gates and pillars bearing the arms of the Borough of Reading and George Palmer.

The local listing covers the following elements:

- The Pavilion and keeper's residence;
- Former toilet block;
- Gated entrance from Wokingham Road; and
- Gated entrance from London Road.

APPENDIX 4: Listing Nomination Details

Assessment form for locally listing buildings in Reading Borough November 2012

CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATION FOR LOCALLY LISTING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES IN READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Background and explanation: Heritage assets cannot be replaced once lost. They include both nationally and locally listed buildings. Harm to an asset's significance can cause a loss of value to society and a loss of public benefit.

The criteria for assessment of locally listing buildings/ structures are set out below and are taken from the adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document. These criteria and the accompanying explanation of how a particular building or structure meets these criteria will be used to assess whether that building or structure merits designation as a locally listed heritage asset.

The assessment will be based purely on the evidence provided with this form (unless the authority has access to further evidence).

Identification of buildings or structures for local listing: Buildings or structures worthy of being locally listed will mainly be identified through the process of considering and determining planning proposals and applications.¹

Exclusions

Buildings and structures will not be considered for the Local List when they are already part of a Conservation Area², Scheduled Monument, or subject to an article 4 direction relating to historical or architectural interest.

Address of building/ structure: Palmer Park Pavilion (and associated bldgs)
Palmer Park
Wokingham Road
Reading
Postcode: RG6 1LE

¹ Buildings or structures identified outside the application process will be considered as resources become available.

² Buildings that warrant local designation in a conservation area are awarded a 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' designation. For the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012), Buildings of Townscape Merit will be considered to warrant conservation and where appropriate enhancement in accordance with the NPPF.

Selection for the Local List

For any building, structure or group of buildings to be included in the Local List it must clearly meet the relevant age and integrity criteria:

	Please tick relevant box ³
(a) pre-1840: Any building, structure or group of buildings where its/ their style, form and construction are easily identifiable.	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) 1840 - 1913: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(c) 1914 - 1939: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of a high level of significance.	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) post 1939: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are of exceptional significance and wholly complete and unaffected by inappropriate changes.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide comments/ further explanation of above:

Palmer Park Pavilion, Keepers residence and associated building close-by within the park were opened in 1891 when the Park itself was opened to the people of Reading. They are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance to the people of Reading.

The Pavilion itself, designed as a refreshment house for users of the park, is as of June 2020 occupied by Tutu's Ethiopian Café, the Keeper's residence still in residential use, and the associated building found close by (within the children's play area) is unused, and has sadly been allowed to fall into some disrepair.

³ Note - if none of the above boxes are ticked, the building/ structure will not qualify for consideration as a locally listed building.

In **addition** it must also be shown that it contributes to the character of an area and is valued by local people in accordance with at least one of the criteria detailed below under the headings of historic interest, architectural interest and townscape value.

Historic interest

Please tick the relevant box/es

(a) Historical Association i. The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event.	✓
ii. The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest.	
(b) Social Importance The building or structure has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities. Such buildings/structures may include places of worship, schools, community buildings, places of employment, public houses and memorials which formed a focal point or played a key social role.	✓
(c) Industrial Importance The building or structure clearly relates to traditional or historic industrial processes or important businesses or the products of such industrial processes or businesses in the history of Reading or are intact industrial structures, for example bridges	✓

Comments/ further explanation of this should be provided in the box at the end of this section.

Architectural interest

(a) Sense of place i. The building or structure is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading.	✓
(b) Innovation and Virtuosity i. The building or structure has a noteworthy quality of workmanship and materials.	
ii. The building or structure is the work of a notable local/national architect/engineer/builder.	✓
iii. The building or structure shows innovation in materials, technique, architectural style or engineering	
(c) Group Value i. The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.	
ii. The buildings/structures are an example of deliberate town planning from before 1947	

Comments/ further explanation of this should be provided in the box at the end of this section.

Townscape Value

The buildings/structures have prominence and a landmark quality that is fundamental to the sense of place of a particular locality.



Please provide comments/ further explanation of above

Historic Association

Opening of park by George Palmer (and others, including then Mayor, Cllr Daniel Heelas of Heelas & Sons Ltd) - land and buildings donated and commissioned by Palmer.

Social Importance

The importance of Victorian parks through to the modern day (buildings now in use as residential and community café - Tutu's - although associated building remains unused) has never been more acute with the arrival of Covid in the community.

Relates to tradition or historic industrial process

Huntley & Palmers was originally founded in Reading in 1822 by Thomas Huntley, with George Palmer joining in 1841. They continued to trade until the early 1990's; their association with Reading being so strong that it was known as the biscuit town. George Palmer gave the land and buildings of Palmer Park to the people of Reading.

The park and buildings relate to the Victorian [parks](#) tradition. Motives for the Victorian [parks](#) tradition varied widely, including adding value to new housing developments, to give a green space to the urban sprawl, and even to try to regulate the leisure activities of the working classes. Free to use, they were viewed as expressions of civic pride or as examples of desirable behaviour valuing fresh air, exercise, and walking. Residents of Reading need these values now more than ever. (Ref: https://mhm.hud.ac.uk/digitalvictorians/the-intriguing-history-of-public-parks-during-the-victorian-era-and-the-craze-for-exotic-botanicals/#_ftn4)

Sense of Place

The day after the opening of Palmer Park, the Daily Graphic newspaper (Thursday, Nov 5th, 1891) reported the fete held to mark the opening of the park and the granting of the freedom of the town to George Palmer. The paper says: "In the new park is a handsome pavilion" with "large public refreshment bar and room." These buildings epitomise the Victorian philanthropist's lasting legacy to Reading.

Local/National Architect

Nationally known local architect William Ravenscroft designed buildings. Ravenscroft (b: Reading 1848, d: 1943. Lived: 6 Market Place, Reading and 22 The Forbury, Reading. First practice: Reading, 1875 to 1908) also known locally for Reading University Great Hall, Nos 2-3 Gun Street, Chiltern Court and the ~~Wycliffe~~ Baptist Church. Considered to design in a mixture of Arts & Crafts and Gothic Style.

Townscape Value

Designed to be the view through the gated entrance on the Wokingham Road these buildings are fundamental to Palmer Park, and to East Reading. Visible on the higher section overlooking the Wokingham Road these provide a strong focal point for the park.

Recommendation made by (name of Proposer) : Cllr Josh Williams (RBC, Park Ward)
Date : September 2020

General notes and any other relevant information on the building/ structure by Proposer⁴ making recommendation for local listing including reasons for recommendation⁵

All the above information is in the public realm and readily available on the internet, as are images of the buildings, ranging from 1904 (<https://www.francisfrith.com/reading/reading-palmer-park-1904-52023>) through to the present day.

Newly taken images are included below, but if any information/details require references, please request: Cllr Josh Williams josh.williams@reading.gov.uk

Source of all information and details of any supporting document used to support the recommendation to locally list the building or structure⁶.

Detail of evidence/ document (including photographs)

Source/ reference of information



Associated building to Pavilion.
Photo#1. Cllr Williams

⁴ The 'Proposer' is anticipated to normally be the Planning Case Officer given that the identification of most buildings or structures will currently be identified through the process of determining planning applications, however, the 'Proposer' could also be a member of the public or another organisation' group.

⁵ Failure to meet the requirements for a building or structure to be locally listed at a particular point in time does not rule out future re-consideration of that building or structure if significant new evidence is produced.

⁶ Any supporting documentation provided cannot be returned and will be kept on file as part of the supporting documentation should the building be locally listed. Please only send photocopies (subject to relevant copyright) should you wish to keep a copy of any documentation.



Associated building to Pavilion. Photo #2. Cllr Williams



Pavilion building, Palmer Park. Photo: Cllr Williams



Pavilion building, Chimney detail. Photo: Cllr Williams



Keepers building, Chimney detail.
Photo: Cllr Williams



Park keepers and Pavilion building,
Palmer Park. Photo: Cllr Williams



Buildings from Wokingham Road
entrance way, Palmer Park.
Photo: Cllr Williams

Continue on separate sheet if necessary

For official use only.

Recommendation confirmed/rejected by Conservation Officer:

Date:

Conservation Officer signature confirming recommendation:

Position:

Print name:

Reasons that the recommendation for locally listing the building/ structure have been confirmed/ rejected

--

Any additional comments regarding the building/ structure

--

Building/ structure identification :

Grid reference:

UPRN:

Signature of Manager accepting recommendation: _____

Date: _____

Position: _____

Print name: _____

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	30 MARCH 2022		
TITLE:	STREET NAME PROPOSALS LIST ADDITIONS		
SERVICE:	GI & BUSINESS SYSTEMS	WARDS:	SOUTHCOTE
LEAD OFFICER:	Andy Fisher	TEL:	0118 937 2606
JOB TITLE:	GI & Business Systems Team Leader	E-MAIL:	Andy.Fisher@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for a name to be added onto the Street Name Proposals List for future allocation.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Committee approve the name listed in section 4.3 be added to the Street Names Proposals List to be available for selection by Committee for future street name allocation.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The “Street Names Proposals List” contains names previously approved by Committee that can be offered to be assigned to new developments. It is occasionally appropriate to suggest that additional names be added.
- 3.2 A suggestion has been received to add a name to the list and this is detailed in section 4.4.
- 3.3 The existing “Street Names Proposals List” is included in Appendix 1.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 That Committee approve the name listed below and that it be added to the existing list.
- 4.2 Names on the “Streets Names Proposals List” are then available for selection by Committee to be assigned to new developments when a street name is required.

4.3 Checks have been undertaken against the Council’s Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) for duplicate or similar names in Reading.

4.4 Names suggested:

Name	Reason for suggestion	Suggested area	Existing address check.	Suggested by:
Bobbie Richardson	Bobby Richardson was a Southcote Councillor for the best part of a decade and she was a Southcote local campaigner for over thirty years, making positive change in the Southcote area. Bobby passed away two years ago from Cancer and Covid. Bobby was loved by many in Southcote and she has an extensive family in the area which verifies her roots to Southcote.	Southcote	No duplicate or similar names found.	John Ennis

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None directly from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATION

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

7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

7.1 Having street names that either commemorate people of local interest or who have contributed to Reading or that reflect local characteristics or provide a sense of place can encourage civic pride and interest for thriving local communities as identified as one of the themes of the Council’s Corporate Plan:

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

Appendix 1

Street Name Proposals List

Street Name	Reason for suggestion	Preferred area / site
Alderney	Channel Island	None specified
Ambleside	A place in the lake district	Kentwood
Arlington	Random selection	West Reading
Barnes	David Barnes was a firefighter who dies at an accident at Elgar Road, Reading in 1977	Caversham or Tilehurst
Belvedere	Victorian name for a viewing point on a tall building	None specified
Braunston	UK place name and canal junction	None specified
Brecon	A Welsh town	Bugs Bottom / Caversham
Buckler	Derek Buckler, and Bucklers Of Reading Car company. 1947 - 1964 at 67 Caversham Road	Caversham Road / Caversham Heights
Burns	2001 World Rally Champion who died in 2005, aged 34.	None specified
Byron	Poet	None specified
Coppell	Former Reading Football Manager	None specified
Curtis	Geoff Curtis, Reading Racers Speedway in 1973, part of the British League Division One Championship team. Killed in Sydney on 5th Dec 1973, 40 years anniversary in 2013.	None specified
Day	Jim Day was a Tilehurst councillor on both County and Borough councils for nearly 40 years, serving twice as Mayor of Reading and once as Chair of the County Council.	None specified
Depass	Harvey DePass, Reading's first Community Relations Officer	Caversham
Dundas	Canadian town name	None specified
Dunelm	Abbreviation of a latin word	None specified
Eastwood	Random selection	None specified
Elgin	Scottish town name	None specified
Erith	Riverside town name in Bexley Borough London	None specified
Falcon	Name of a bird	None specified
Festival	40+ years of Reading Festival	None specified
Flint	Old Reading street name - lost during building of civic centre & IDR	Katesgrove
Flower	Random selection	None specified
Gardener	Random selection	None specified

Street Name	Reason for suggestion	Preferred area / site
Garland	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Gold	Mineral theme	None specified
Goldsmith	Neil Goldsmith was a firefighter who dies at an accident at Elgar Road, Reading in 1977	None specified
Guernsey	Channel Island	None specified
Hampshire	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Hampton	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Hanley	Jim Hanley was a Reading Councillor for Whitley Ward, and Chair of Planning Committee.	Whitley
Harwich	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Hope	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Humber	Named after British naval vessel	None specified
Iron	Mineral theme	Katesgrove
Ivory	Random selection	None specified
Jersey	Channel Island	None specified
Jones	Selwyn Jones was one of the founders of the annual Reading Pride festival and a well-known teacher and Youth Worker in Reading and West Berkshire who passed away in December 2015.	None specified
Jonsson	Per Jonsson. Reading speedway team and World Champion.	Whitley
Kennedy	Phil Kennedy, BBC Radio Berkshire presenter	None specified
Knox	Random selection	None specified
Larose	Random selection	None specified
Ledger	Random selection	None specified
Leicester	Random selection	None specified
Limerick	Celebrating Reading's Irish community.	None specified
Madejski	John Madejski - Reading Football Club owner	None specified
Margate	Random selection	None specified
Matrix	Former Reading nightclub	None specified
Michanek	Anders Michanek. Reading speedway team and World Champion.	Whitley

Street Name	Reason for suggestion	Preferred area / site
Monarch	Random selection	None specified
Norwich	Random selection	None specified
Nottingham	Random selection	None specified
Nuneaton	Random selection	None specified
Oban	Random selection	None specified
Pantry	Peoples Pantry restaurant, badly damaged by a bomber on 10th February 1943. 41 people killed and 49 injured.	None specified
Peach	Andrew Peach, BBC Radio Berkshire presenter	None specified
Price	Candle-maker	None specified
Pyeatt	Reading Speedway rider from 1981/82 who was killed in July 1982.	None specified
Ransome	Make of steam engine used locally	Worton Grange
Redway	Bernard Redway, Poet, Athlete, expeditioner and mountaineer.	None specified
Rowland	Unknown reason	None specified
Sangar	Sangar is a type of look out tower.	Brock Barracks
Sark	Channel Island	None specified
Saunderson	Make of tractor once used locally	Worton Grange
Saxon	Anglo-Saxon tribe, Readingas, who settled the area.	None specified
Sprott	Michael Sprott is the former British and Commonwealth Heavyweight champion from Reading.	None specified
Stephenson	Steam engine designer	None specified
Steve Death	Steven Victor Death, former Reading Football Goalkeeper	None specified
Tallow	A form of lubricant once made locally	None specified
Thompson	Make of steam engine used locally	Worton Grange
Thornycroft	Historic firm formerly based on the bank of the Thames	None specified
Tilley	Historic type of oil lamp	None specified
Ufton	Local village	None specified
Ullapool	Scottish town	None specified
Vickers	Aircraft manufacturer	None specified

Street Name	Reason for suggestion	Preferred area / site
Viking	Norse warriors	None specified
Vulcan	Royal Airforce Bomber	None specified
Walford	Senior medical officer of the Reading Union	Former Battle Hospital Area
Watkins	Professor Derek Watkins, Reading pupil, cancer survivor, trumpet player and trumpet designer. Went to school in Whitley.	Whitley
Westray	Scottish island	None specified
Whitchuch	Local village	None specified
Yateley	Local village	None specified
Yattendon	Local village	None specified
Zenith	Random selection	None specified

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	30 MARCH 2022		
TITLE:	STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT - REAR OF 57 BAKER STREET		
SERVICE:	GI & Business Systems	WARDS:	Abbey
LEAD OFFICER:	Andy Fisher	TEL:	Ext 72606 (0118 937 2606)
JOB TITLE:	GI & Business Systems team leader	E-MAIL:	andy.fisher@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

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

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

3. BACKGROUND

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

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 That Committee approve one name for the development.
- 4.2 In the event that Committee consider none of the names offered to be acceptable, alternative names will need to be selected from the Approved Street Names listed in Appendix 1 of the previous report (Item 07a).

Name	Reason for suggestion	Ward	Site	Source
Fox Talbot Mews	There is a plaque on the wall next to the site commemorating Fox Talbot (Photography pioneer).	Abbey	Rear of 57, Baker Street, Reading.	Developer
Fox Talbot Close	Details as above. Response from the Councillor consultation was that the suffix "Close" was preferred.	Abbey	Rear of 57, Baker Street, Reading.	Cllrs Page, Rowland, and Ayub
Tallow Mews	A form of lubricant once made locally. The site was previous used for commercial purposes.	Abbey	Rear of 57, Baker Street, Reading.	Approved Street List

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None directly from this report.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

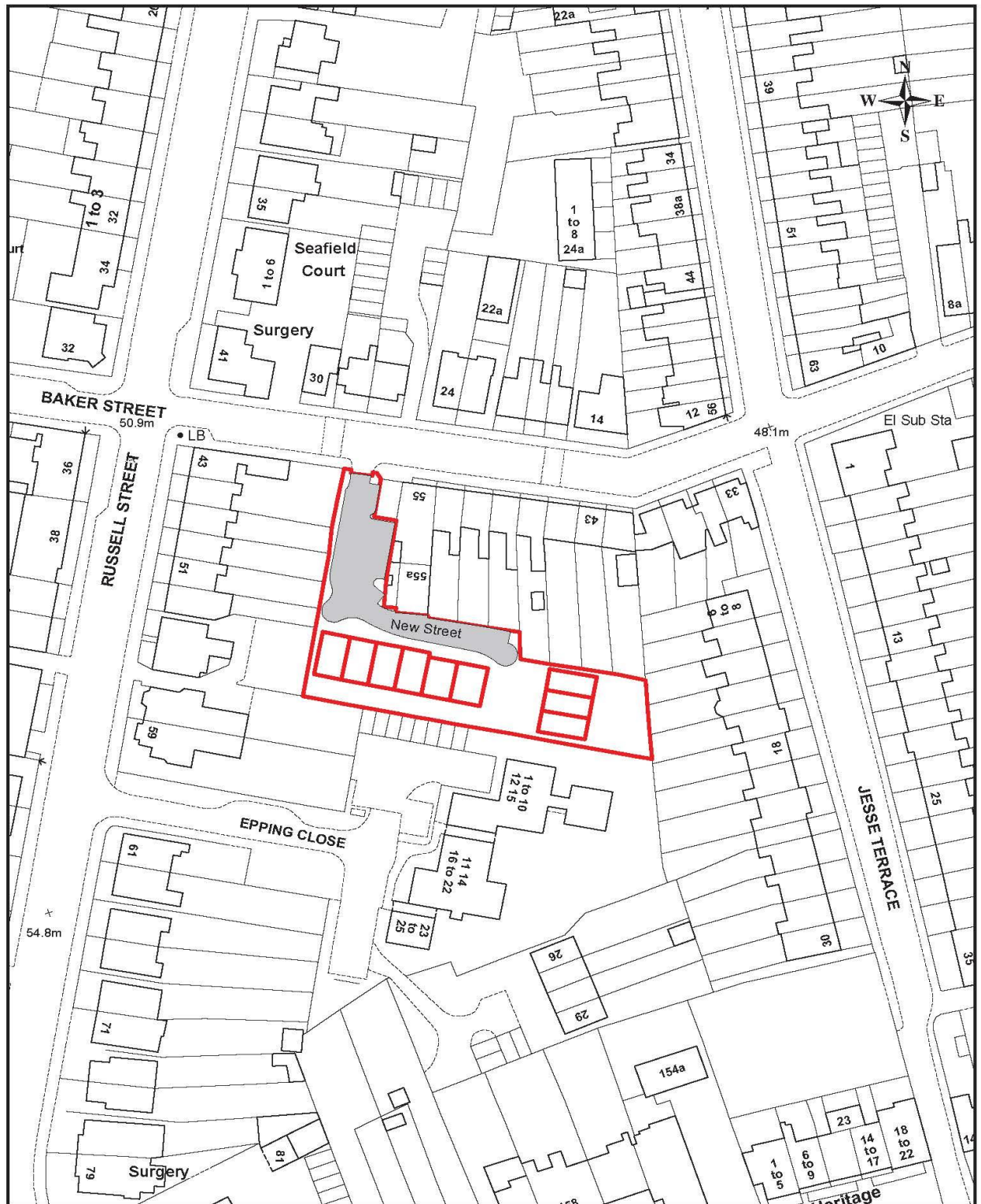
6.1 The creation of street names should follow the guidelines detailed in the "Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the National Land and Property Gazetteer", a reference manual based on Property Addressing Standard BS7666:2006 Parts 1 & 2.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

7.1 Having street names that either commemorate people of local interest or who have contributed to Reading or that reflect local characteristics or provide a sense of place can encourage civic pride and interest for thriving local communities as identified as one of the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan:

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

Appendix 1 - Rear of 57 Baker Street (Street Plan)



Title: STREET NAMING & NUMBERING PLAN.
 New road name required for development off Baker Street, Reading.
 SN&N Xref.No.: 34520220304 Date: 10/03/2022 Scale at A4: 1:1000
 Produced by GIS & Mapping Services Ref: G:\SN&Numbering\RBC process\2022\0322 Applications Mar 2022\34520220304



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 201585/FUL

Address: 109a Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7UD

Proposal: Change of use from an estate agent use class E to a restaurant and hot food takeaway sui generis use class

App No: 201586/ADV

Proposal: New fascia and projecting sign

Applicant: ARA FT Investment Ltd t/a Fat Twins Reading

Deadline: 12/03/2021 Extended to 10th December 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant planning permission for 201585 with the following conditions:

Conditions to include:

- Implement within 3 years
- In accordance with approved plans
- Material samples to be approved before works commence on exterior of property
- Opening times for public limited to 9am - 11:00pm Sun - Thurs and BH.s and 9am - 23:30 Fri - Sat
- Delivery times/waste collection times limited to 8am - 18:00pm Mon - Sat and 10:00 - 18:00 Sun & BH.s
- Construction times limited to 08:00 - 18:00 Mon - Fri and 08:00 - 13:00 Sat. No works at all on Sun or BH.
- Kitchen Ventilation System to be installed strictly to the specifications as approved and the use hereby approved shall not be made open to the public until an odour risk assessment has been carried out and a detailed odour management plan to include scaled plans, odour control specifications and a maintenance plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reference shall be made to the DEFRA guidance on the Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems (Jan 2005) when assessing potential odours and selecting appropriate odour control methods. Thereafter, the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved scheme unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- The plant shall only be installed in accordance with the acoustic assessment including the proposed acoustic enclosure and shall thereafter be maintained so that it operates to the same standard.

The specific sound level of the plant/equipment hereby approved, (LAeq,TR) (with reference to BS:4142) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive facade shall be at least 10dB below the pre-existing background sound level, LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation. The rating level, LAr,Tr (specific sound level plus any adjustment for the characteristic features of the sound) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive facade (habitable window of a dwelling) shall not exceed the pre-existing background sound level, LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation. It shall thereafter be maintained so that it operates to the same standard.

- Litter management plan adhered to

Informatives to include:
HSHAZ advice and completion of public realm works
Pre-commencement conditions agreed by the applicant

And to Grant Advertisement Consent for 201586

Conditions to include:

- Details and materials to be submitted and approved before works commence as approved
- Standard advert conditions

1. INTRODUCTION

Site Description

- 1.1 The application site is on the corner of Zinzan Street and Oxford Road in the Central Reading area as defined in the Local Plan. The property is not a listed building but lies in the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area and within the High Street Heritage Action Zone. The last use of the building at ground and basement floor was as an estate agency. There is residential use on the upper floors accessed via Zinzan Street.



Location Plan

Photo of application site on the corner from 2020.

Background

- 1.2 The planning application and the advertisement consent application for the ground floor and basement area of this property has been with the Council for determination for over a year now. The two applications were first considered at the 31 March PAC meeting and deferred further to public speaking on the matter, for the following reasons:

a) To allow time for public notification of 201585 and comments to be made

b) For more information to be provided regarding the relevant policy requirements in the local plan and the recent changes to use classes;

c) For more information on noise and smells, including the referenced noise and odour risk assessments; and

d) To explore whether any of the conditions from the 2014 consent at the property could be attached to the current application.

- 1.3 These matters were dealt with in a report intended to be discussed at the Committee meeting on 28 April 2021 but the item was deferred again, before any debate, to allow the applicant time to provide additional technical information on their proposed kitchen odour ventilation system and accompanying acoustic assessment.
- 1.4 This information was provided and reviewed by officers and presented to Committee on 1st December but the matter deferred once again to allow further questions on the planning history of the property and desired improvements to the forecourt area to be investigated with the applicant and site owner by officers.
- 1.5 Copies of the previous committee reports and update reports can be viewed on the Committee Section of the Council's website.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposals seek planning permission to change the use to a mix of dine in restaurant (Use Class E) and a take-away use (sui generis class). It is by virtue of the proposed mixed use that planning permission is required for it is currently "permitted development" for an estate agency to change to a restaurant use as both are in the same Use Class E. To facilitate the proposed change of use the planning application includes the provision of kitchen extraction equipment and alterations to the existing shop front are proposed and an advertisement application (201586) is made.
- 2.2 Further to discussions with the Conservation & Urban Design Officer amended plans were provided to change the shop front appearance and advertisement design to be more in keeping with the conservation area designation. These show that the shopfront would be constructed from timber painted dark grey with a 500mm high stall riser and timber door and window frame. The fascia panel will also be timber painted black with name also in timber and applied to the fascia. The projecting sign would also be made of timber with external illumination.
- 2.3 The proposed opening hours of the premises have been amended from as originally proposed (to open at 7am and to close by 2am) to open at 9am and to close at 23:30 Monday to Sunday with all trade deliveries during opening hours.
- 2.4 Submitted Plans and Documentation:
 - A.02.01
 - A.02.03
 - A.02.4 Existing Elevations
 - A.02.5 Proposed Elevations as received 1st March.

Heritage Statement

Design and Specification For Kitchen Ventilation

An updated noise assessment (Report reference: 3947\NL\June 2021\NA)

Litter management statement

2.5 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):

In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. The proposed development would not be liable to make a CIL contribution.

3. **PLANNING HISTORY**

920740(92/00554/ADV)-Internally Illuminated sign. Refused 9/9/1992
920741(92-00555)- New cashpoint to side elevation. Refused 9/9/1992
990554 (00/00004) - Erection of 2 blocks of garages. Granted 11/2/2000
990966 (00/00041/ADV) - Fascia signage. Granted 25/2/2020
101773 (10/01947) - retrospective permission for change of use of upper floors from A2 use to residential use - Withdrawn 15/02/2011
100968 - (10/01261) retrospective change of use from B1 to residential. Declined. 4/10/2010
110985 (11/00437) - Certificate of Lawfulness for residential use of upper floors. Refused. 12/07/2011
120218 (12/00764) - Conversion of upper floors from two flats to three 2-bed and three 1-bed flats and 1 studio. Including rear extension and alterations to both shop fronts and boundary wall. Withdrawn 13/7/2012
120588 - Conversion of upper floors from two flats to three 2-bed and three 1-bed flats and 1 studio. Including rear extension and alterations to both shop fronts and boundary wall (resubmission of 12/00764/FUL) - Approved
140365/CLP - Proposed use as 2 x 2 bedroom flats. Refused 15/5/2014
140959 - Rear extensions and associated external works. Permitted 17/12/2014.

4. **CONSULTATIONS**

Non-statutory

Environmental Protection

Original comments from March 2021

Noise - delivery hours / waste collections/ opening hours

I had concerns about the potential for noise disturbance due to deliveries, waste collections and commercial operations on occupants of nearby residential properties, particularly late at night and early morning. The proposed opening hours were originally until 2 am and were a concern as this is significantly later than the opening hours of the existing use and there may not be sufficient sound insulation between the ground and first floor to enable this late night use, as there is residential at upper floor levels.

The applicant has now agreed to reduce the opening times to close by 23:30pm. A noise assessment is still required to be submitted to demonstrate that the insulation will be sufficient to protect first floor occupiers from late night noise in the ground floor use, or that suitable mitigation can be put in place. But with the reduction in opening times I can recommend a condition is used to require submission of a satisfactory assessment before the new use starts. Also, if permission is given, I recommend that hours for deliveries and waste collections are restricted.

Noise generating development

Applications which include noise generating plant when there are nearby noise sensitive receptors should be accompanied by an acoustic assessment carried out in accordance with BS4142:2014 methodology. The noise data submitted is not sufficient so a noise assessment identifying the risks and proposing mitigation is needed.

However as noted above with the reduced opening times I am satisfied that a noise assessment can be submitted before the use starts. It should be noted that dealing with the noise assessment by condition rather than as part of the determination means that there some risk that suitable noise mitigation may mean that changes need to be made to the design of the system which may mean that the permission needs to be altered from the plans that are approved.

Kitchen Extraction - odour

In addition to concerns about noise (as discussed above), cooking odour is often a significant problem in commercial kitchens and therefore the applicants must provide a risk assessment of the likelihood of odours based on the proposed cuisine and a statement of how the proposals will ensure that odour nuisance will be prevented. Reference must be made to the Defra Guidance on the Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems (January 2005) or more recent EMAQ version. The information submitted is detailed but needs to be submitted alongside a risk assessment showing that the odour controls proposed are sufficient based on the location of the extract and type of cuisine. A ventilation and extraction condition is recommended.

It should be noted that the purpose of the risk assessment is to ensure adequate odour controls are in place taking into account the height of the discharge and the proximity of residents.

Following the submission of additional information and a revised design for the kitchen equipment for additional mitigation in the form of an acoustic enclosure around the fan which would reduce the noise levels by a further 15-18 dBA the Environmental Protection officer has confirmed that she is satisfied with the proposals on noise terms subject to the following condition being imposed.

Condition for Noise Levels of Plant

The plant shall only be installed in accordance with the acoustic assessment including the proposed acoustic enclosure and shall thereafter be maintained so that it operates to the same standard.

The specific sound level of the plant/equipment hereby approved, (LAeq,TR) (with reference to BS:4142) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive facade shall be at least 10dB below the pre-existing background sound level, LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation. The rating level, LAr,Tr (specific sound level plus any adjustment for the characteristic features of the sound) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive façade (habitable window of a dwelling) shall not exceed the pre-existing background sound level, LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation.

Kitchen Extraction - odour

Information had been submitted regarding proposed carbon filtration and an electrostatic precipitator system to control odour. The extraction system has been specifically designed to eliminate odours from the proposed usage. However, for reassurance, it is reasonable to require an odour risk assessment to be carried out to confirm that these measures are adequate taking into account the location of the extraction system and the type of food being cooked etc. Environmental Protection have advised that should additional odour control measures be required following the risk assessment then they would be unlikely to be significantly more than the measures already proposed.

The following condition is therefore recommended.

Condition for Odour Assessment

The use hereby approved shall not be made open to the public until an odour assessment has been carried out and a detailed odour management plan to include scaled plans, odour control specifications and a maintenance plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Reference shall be made to the DEFRA guidance on the Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems (Jan 2005) when assessing potential odours and selecting appropriate odour control methods. Thereafter, the development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved scheme unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Conservation & Urban Design Officer

Planning issues and other matters

Any new development of the site needs to comply with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in particular Section 72 (1), which requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Proposals must also address Section 16 of the NPPF. Reading's Local Plan 2019 contains policies that require new development in a conservation area to be an enhancement to the character and significance of conservation areas. Relevant policies are EN1.

Conservation comments

The site was visited on 26 February 2021. The building shop is within a Conservation Area, and part of a Heritage Action Zone project to upgrade Oxford Road and other streets in the town centre. The NPPF, gives guidance that proposed works in areas like this should be an enhancement to the character and significance of the property.

- There are no objections to the proposed change of use for the building from office to restaurant.

- The agent has modified the application drawings to ameliorate the impact of the changes on the character and significance of the conservation area for:
 - a. the internal changes for use as a restaurant;
 - b. the exhaust duct has been amended so that it is mainly on the interior with filters contained within the building, reducing the need for a large external circular metal duct on the rear wall;
 - c. the shop front has been designed to replace existing with more sympathetic timber framed shop front with stall riser;
 - d. The signage has been amended to more sympathetic and appropriate for a conservation area and has a non-internal hanging sign as well.

Summation

The amended application is now supported as shown in the attached drawings and approval is recommended.

Public

The Conservation Area Advisory Committee have objected.

In summary:

- *Improvements to the shop front in the amended plans are welcomed however we note that in terms of overall improvement of the streetscape they fall very far short of those in the 2014 consented application 140959. That application would also have improved the adjacent shop front. For such a significant corner location and one of the two gateposts to Zinzan Street more significant improvement is required and the adjacent shop front should be similarly upgraded.*

- *In our opinion the height of the fascia board, just below first floor window level, is excessive and detracts from the heritage features of the frontage.*

- *The boundary treatment agreed in application 140959 has still not been fully implemented. The impact of that, should this change of use be approved, will be even greater as the quantity of waste and the type of waste produced by a restaurant differs considerably from that of an estate agent.*

- *It is questionable whether this section of Oxford Road needs yet another restaurant/takeaway. Given that there is a restaurant/takeaway in the adjacent shop unit and on the opposite corner of Zinzan Street (109b) another similar offering does not enhance the diversity of the high street offering in this section of the town centre.*

- *The restaurant/takeaway at 109b followed a change of use application from a betting shop in 2018 (180273). Consequently, there is a risk that the living environment of local residents on Zinzan Street will be damaged by the noise, waste and odours of three restaurant/takeaways if this application is approved. They also noted the opening hours as originally proposed to be unacceptable for local residents.*

Adjacent properties were consulted, a site notice displayed and a notice placed in local paper. By reference to update report at appendix XX officers can confirm that further notices were provided and that the appropriate public consultation procedures for this application have been followed.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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

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

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

CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres
RL3: Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres
OU4: Advertisements
OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines
CR7: Primary Frontages in Central Reading
CR8: Small Shop Units in Central Reading

- 5.3 Other relevant other documents are:
Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
Design Guide for Shopfronts SPD 2022

6 APPRAISAL

Principle of development - the new use

- 6.1 The matter for consideration is a planning application for the use of the ground floor and basement as a restaurant and takeaway outlet with storage.
- 6.2 The unit is currently vacant and the loss of the existing estate agency premises raises no land use concerns. This stretch of Oxford Road is within the boundary of Central Reading as shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map but is not within either a primary shopping area or a parade designated as being a primary frontage. One of the reasons for deferral previously was for clarification that with the changes to the Use Class Order in late 2020 permitting a change from estate agency to a restaurant use were there any

adopted local plan policies that would weigh against the take-away element as proposed. It has been confirmed that there would be no in-principle land use policy objection to the replacement of the estate agents with a mixed use of restaurant and takeaway.

- 6.3 It is therefore necessary to consider if the proposed development complies with policy in terms of design and the conservation area, residential amenity issues and parking and deliveries arrangements.

Design considerations and effect on Conservation Area

- 6.4 The relevant policies to be considered are OU4, OU5, EN1 and EN3.
- 6.5 Policy OU4 requires advertisements in conservation areas to respect or enhance the building or area and Policy OU5 also requires new shopfronts in conservation areas to respect or enhance the building or area and will respect the key features of special historic interest. The fascia boards should be lower than any first floor windows and reflect the height of historic fascia boards in the area. The changes to the materials of the advertisement and use of external lighting are positive responses by the applicant to show consideration for the property location in a conservation area. Policies OU4 and OU5 are complied with. The recently adopted Design Guide for Shopfronts has also been considered and the proposed shopfront and advertisement design is consistent with the advice set out here.
- 6.6 Policy EN1 requires that historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment will be protected and where possible enhanced.
- 6.7 Policy EN3 then focuses on conservation areas by requiring that development proposals within these areas should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. This may include removing inappropriate additions to buildings; Improving signage and street furniture; restoring of appropriate paving etc.



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION

- 6.8 The proposed new shopfront will better respect the age of the building and will reveal the features of the shopfront. The new signage fits within the fascia board below the first floor window cill. The case officer has discussed the objectives of the High Street Heritage Action Zone with the agent and how, if planning permission is granted, we would be looking to the new occupier to play an active part in the project. The applicant would be a tenant at the site with no control over the area outside the red line of the application site so it would be unreasonable to impose a

planning condition to require that they carry out improvements to the pavement outside as included in the 2014 approved plans. However, that permission stays extant so the case officer with the HSHAZ project team have engaged with the owner to try to secure these improvements to the public realm as part of that initiative.



Front and side elevation of 109a from consented, and partially implemented, application 140959

- 6.9 The comments from CAAC are noted but in terms of the application being considered and with the benefit of the amended plans submitted Officers are satisfied that the proposed new shop front and advertisements are appropriate for this conservation area and they meet the objectives of policies EN1, EN3 and OU4. Relevant conditions recommended.

Impact on residential amenity

- 6.10 The relevant policies are CC8 and EN17. Policy CC8 aims to prevent development from having a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties through noise and disturbance, dust, smells, fumes and vibrations. The applicant’s agreement to reduce their opening times and to reduce their delivery times to reduce potential impact is welcome. Policy EN17 requires that any noise generating equipment should be designed to read at least 10dBA below the existing background level as measured at the nearest sensitive receptor.
- 6.11 The applicant has changed their proposed odour extraction system (from as originally proposed to be at the rear of the building) to an internal filtration system designed to emit low level odour discharge and a quieter air supply system. The updated submitted specifications for the equipment show how the noise and odour will be controlled with all of the equipment inside the building so external noise will be limited to clean air blowing out and no machinery noise. The freezer units are proposed to be in the basement to minimise vibrations being felt by residents living above and a silencer is proposed to further reduce the noise inside by 15dBA.
- 6.12 Environmental Protection officers have considered the information provided and are satisfied that the proposed changes and the equipment specifications are acceptable and should adequately protect the amenities of those living nearby. They recommend carefully drafted conditions that

reflect the learning experience from adjacent properties; for a noise assessment to be carried out based on the proposed equipment and measures and to ensure that the equipment is installed and maintained as approved to perform to required standards.

Transport

- 6.13 The proposed change from one commercial use to another does not raise any concerns. The property lies close to public car parking areas and public transport services. There is lay-by parking nearby too.
- 6.14 Oxford Road and the surrounding road network all have extensive parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. A residents' permit parking scheme operates in the area thereby restricting and monitoring unauthorized parking.
- 6.15 Using the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the proposed use would generate a parking demand in excess of the current use. However, there is no off-street parking associated with the site and therefore any parking demand generated by the proposal would have to be accommodated within the short stay parking bays on Oxford Road or nearby public car parks.

Equalities impact

- 6.16 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development.

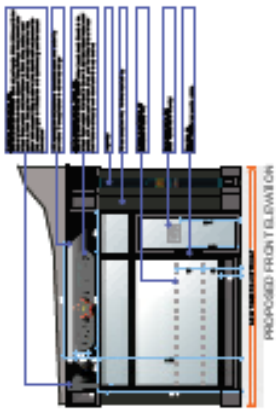
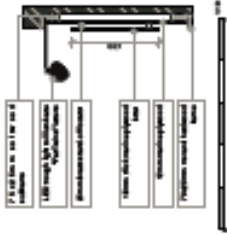
7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The planning application and the advertisement consent application for this property have been carefully considered and concerns noted. Additional information has been provided and reviewed by officers and found to be acceptable in terms of odour and noise mitigation. At Committee on 1st December the matter was deferred again to allow further exploration by the case officer on the desired improvements to the forecourt area with the applicant and site owner. This investigation has confirmed that while the applicant has no objection to these improvements, they are outside of their control to implement and officers confirm this. Discussions are continuing with the site owner and their agent to secure these changes as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone project.
- 7.3 The applications are recommended to be granted planning permission and advertisement consent.

Case Officer: Julie Williams

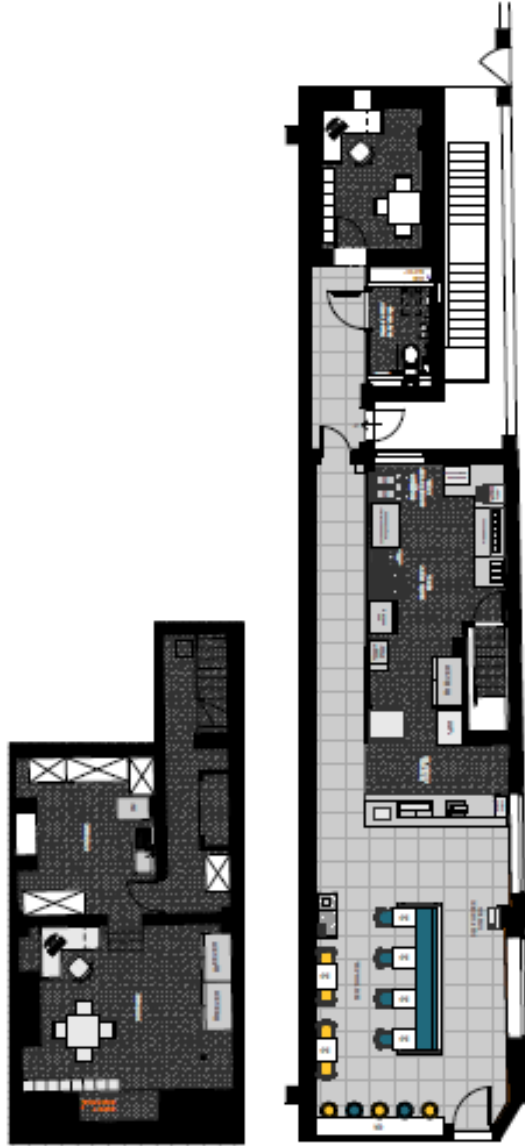
PROJECT NO. 2024-001 SHEET NO. 102 DATE: 10/26/2024 DRAWN BY: [Name] CHECKED BY: [Name] PROJECT: [Project Name]
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SECTION OF FASCIA SIGN



Proposed Elevations

PROJECT: CLUBHOUSE DRAWING NO.: CLUBHOUSE DATE: 11/11/2011 DRAWN BY: CLUBHOUSE CHECKED BY: CLUBHOUSE PROJECT MANAGER: CLUBHOUSE ARCHITECT: CLUBHOUSE PROJECT NO.: CLUBHOUSE SHEET NO.: CLUBHOUSE
PROFESSIONAL SEAL: _____ REGISTERED ARCHITECT: _____ EXPIRES: _____ STATE: _____ PROJECT NO.: _____ SHEET NO.: _____



Proposed Plans

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 200142

App Type: FUL

Address: 109b Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7UD

Proposal: Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary A5 takeaway and replacement shopfront (Part retrospective)

Applicant: Express Team Ltd

Deadline: 9th April 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS

Refuse full planning permission, for the following reasons:

1. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the construction, odour control measures, noise levels, and running specifications of the kitchen extract flue will not result in noise, disturbance and odours affecting occupiers of surrounding dwellings resulting in harm to the amenity of occupiers of those dwellings. The development is therefore contrary to Policies CC8, CR6, EN16 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives to include:

- 1) Refused drawings and details
- 2) Positive and Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The application relates to a ground floor shop at the end of a terrace located on the south side of Oxford Road and forming the corner with Zinzan Street. Until 2018, the ground floor was occupied by a vacant betting shop 'Ladbrokes' - a *Sui Generis* use. The upper floors are in residential use.
- 1.2 This part of Oxford Road is characterised by retail/commercial activity at ground floor, with residential ancillary uses (to the ground floor use) on the upper floors. Backing on to the site are residential properties in Zinzan Street which are predominantly Victorian terraces. Oxford Road is a busy shopping street and a major route into and out of Reading town centre for vehicles and pedestrians alike.
- 1.3 The building is not listed but is located within Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. The site is located within the defined Reading Central Area, but outside of the central core, primary shopping area and office core areas. In addition, the site is also within an air quality management area.
- 1.4 The application was called in by Councillor Page and Councillor Rowland due to concerns regarding the impact on heritage assets and odour/noise disturbance.

Location Plan



Not to Scale

The application site as seen from Oxford Road:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1 Application 180273 granted planning permission for “Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary takeaway and replacement shopfront”. This was approved subject to pre-commencement conditions intended to control the materials used in the new façade and the construction and control of kitchen extraction/ventilation equipment. No such details were submitted and, furthermore, works commenced on site which were not undertaken in accordance with the approved plans. Given that the change of use and associated development occurred without the discharge of conditions, the works are unauthorised.

2.2 In response and given the level of concern raised over the works that had taken place, an Enforcement Notice dated 17 January 2020 was served under ref Legal/SQ /IKEN13003 with the following requirements:

- (a) *“Cease the unauthorised use of the building on the land as a restaurant/takeaway (Use class A3/A5)*
- (b) *Remove, in their entirety, the existing unauthorised shopfronts from the north (Oxford Road) and east (Zinzan Street) elevations including the incorrectly-positioned doorway, display window and transom light and the “ornate timber plinth”, “ornate timber columns” (including corbel mouldings) and “ornate timber panelling”, and restore those elevations to their pre-existing state as shown on the attached Photograph ‘B’ ‘C’ and ‘D’ (Google Streetview images dated June 2018)*
- (c) *Remove the unauthorised air-handling plant installed within the east (Zinzan Street) elevation and restore that elevation to its pre-existing state as shown on the attached Photographs ‘C’ and ‘D’ (Google Streetview image dated June 2018)*
- (d) *Remove the two unauthorised air conditioning units and associated pipework and wiring from the south (rear) elevation and restore that elevation to its pre-existing state as shown on the attached Photograph ‘E’ (Google Streetview image dated June 2018)*
- (e) *Remove from the land all debris and excess building materials resulting from compliance with steps (b) to (d) above”.*

In response, this applicant submitted this application for retrospective planning permission to regularise the works on site. The Enforcement Notice remains in force but has been held in abeyance pending the outcome of this application.

2.3 The current application comprises amended shopfront proposals which are largely based on the previous approval (180273) but with a few changes, most notably the change to a centrally located doorway to the main shopfront and a revised material specification scheme. The proposals also seek to retain the existing kitchen extraction equipment used to treat and reduce fumes.

- 2.4 The application was due to be considered by Planning Applications Committee on 23 June 2021. The published minutes of that meeting state:

“It was reported at the meeting that information had been received on the day of the meeting which indicated that the specification of the odour control equipment at the premises was not as stated in the application. In consultation with officers in Environmental Protection it had been agreed that it was not safe to proceed with consideration of the application and that it should therefore be deferred to allow further investigation. Resolved - That consideration of application 200142/FUL be deferred to allow further investigation of the odour control equipment.”. This is discussed further below.

- 2.5 The following plans and supporting documents have been assessed:

Exiting Site and Location Plan 2017 0176
Existing Plan/Elevations 2017 0176
Proposed Plan/Elevations 2017 0176 Rev 3
Standard Block Paving Specification
Received 29th January 2020

Design and Access Statement Rev A
Received 27th July 2020

Odour Control Equipment Specification
Received 29th January 2020

Noise Assessment
Received 21st August 2020

Litter Management Details
Received 29th January 2020

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

180273/FUL Amended Description: Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary takeaway and replacement shopfront (revised elevation details). Permitted.

181755/ADV Externally illuminated fascia sign to Oxford Road and Zinzan Street shopfronts and externally illuminated projecting sign fronting Oxford Road. Permitted.

181785/APPCON Application for discharge of conditions 3,4 and 9 of Planning permission 180273. Split Decision.

Enforcement Notice Legal/SQ /IKEN13003 dated 17 January 2020

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory

4.1 None

(ii) Non-statutory

4.2 Highways: No comments received.

4.3 Environmental Protection: Have raised concerns relating to the lack of information in respect of noise and odours associated with the kitchen extract system.

4.4 Heritage Officer: No objection subject to material details to be submitted and agreed.

(iii) Public/ local consultation and comments received

4.5 Consultation letters were sent to 17 nearby occupiers (site notice and notice in local paper). Site notices were displayed on 1 April 2021 on the street frontage and again inside the shop window on 26 April 2021.

4.6 No neighbour letters of representation received at the time of writing this report

4.7 Representations from local groups have been received as follows:

4.8 *The Baker Street Area Neighbourhood Association (BSANA):
“BSANA understands that 109B Oxford Road has had previous planning approval for A3 restaurant with ancillary A5 takeaway but that the previous application and decision notice has been withdrawn.*

The present application 200142 is understood to be essentially a re-representation of the previously consented proposals in the circumstances that work proceeded on the earlier consented development in breach of pre-commencement conditions contained in the earlier consent. Hence this application is in part retrospective.

We infer from the Design and Access statement submitted with this application that the breaches of condition have been so extensive that it was agreed to resubmit the earlier consented proposals in a fresh, partially retrospective application with a view to fresh or varied planning conditions being imposed in respect of any issues that remain unresolved.

We do have some strong concerns with this development as it now appears at present, and we wish to draw attention to the following matters that we hope will be addressed.

We are particularly concerned that the restaurant and takeaway has been opened, and is being operated, without prior completion of the shop front, side front and forecourt enhancement works in accordance with the conditionally consented designs. Also that details of the materials being used have not been previously submitted to, and approved by, the Council in accordance with the then current planning conditions for the development. The materials used appear to be of inferior quality and the architectural detailing appears “incorrect” - it certainly does not match that of the earlier approved design.

We are also concerned about the existing advertising signage on the Zinzan Street frontage of these premises. So far as we are aware, the only signage consented is that in decision notice 181755. The visual impact of the existing signage appears excessive and lacking in the restraint that should prevail in a Conservation Area.

The forecourt of the premises has been tarmacked and not brick-paved as in the earlier approved design and the side boundary wall is an eyesore that has not been re-rendered and painted. There is a most unsightly, and possibly hazardous, cluster of loose electric cabling rising from the ground to the first floor level at the left hand corner of the Oxford Road façade. We ask that this eyesore also be addressed in the determination of this application.”

- 4.9 *Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC):*
“CAAC apologise for the late submission of these comments but having commented on 109a Oxford Road (201585/201586) we felt that we should also comment and object to this application.

We note that the application is required because of the failure of the applicant to adhere to approved plans and conditions of approval of the application for change of use from a betting shop to a restaurant/takeaway (180073).

Summary of objection:

We do not believe that this application can be accepted without amendment to the plans because of the central positioning of the front door and the asymmetrical appearance that results.

109b Oxford Road is (with 109a) one of the twin gateways to Zinzan Street. It is similarly within a conservation area and Reading’s HSHAZ pilot area so expectations of a very positive improvement to the appearance of the building apply equally.

Subject to this should this application be granted we would like to be assured that the previous failings will be rectified and if not, enforcement action taken in relation to the appearance of the property, the paving and the extractor fan and ventilation.

1. Elevations

1.1 Shopfront onto Oxford Road

1.1.1 Originally approved plans were for an entrance door to the side of the frontage and one large window. The plans submitted with this application have a central door as per the current situation (see below). The impact of this is that it looks unbalanced as the timber panel on the left hand side of the left window now needs to be reproduced on the right hand side of the right window if the front door position is to be retained. The asymmetrical configuration is only in keeping with a door to the side.

1.1.2 The originally approved plans (amended plan version 3.0) and those now submitted do not have signage across the whole width of the frontage. The signage in place does extend across the whole frontage. Therefore, the signage will also need to be amended when the columns are installed.



1.1.3 The 'mock up', 'faux' columns on the frontage are not consistent with the example photograph included of the Timberland shop in Guildford (see below). Whilst the image may have been illustrative only, this together with the side elevation submitted it clearly gave the impression of a much higher quality frontage.



1.2 Side elevation

1.2.1 Plans for side elevation indicate a scroll at the top of the column on the frontage consistent with the Timberland frontage. The elevation submitted with this application is consistent with the original application.

1.2.2 The originally approved plans (amended plan version 3.0) and those now submitted do not have signage across the whole width of the frontage. The signage in place does extend across the whole frontage. Therefore, the signage will also need to be amended when the columns are installed (see below).



3. Conclusion

3.1 Please reject this application for the reasons stated above.”

Officer Response: *The Council’s previous Heritage Consultant raised no objection to the repositioning of the doorway, and it is not considered that this in itself raises such harm to warrant a refusal within the context of the overall improvements identified in this report. The applicant will be making an application for advertisement consent to amend the signage.*

4.10 Reading Civic Society: No comments received.

5. LEGAL CONTEXT

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

5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

5.3 In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of

consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

- 5.4 Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Planning Policy Guidance
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres
OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines
CR1: Definition of the Centre
CR2: Design in Central Reading
CR6: Living in Central Reading

Supplementary Planning Documents and other guidance
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
Design Guide for Shopfronts SPD (2022)
Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal

6. APPRAISAL

Principle of development

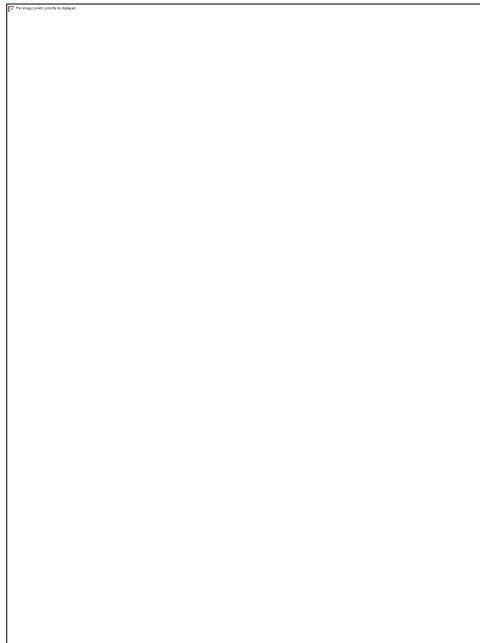
- 6.1 Planning permission was granted at the Planning Applications Committee 30th May 2018 for “Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary takeaway and replacement shopfront” (application 180273). This application was granted with conditions attached to include material samples and extraction/ventilation details to be submitted prior to commencement of works. The change of use itself from Sui Generis to A3 restaurant with ancillary A5 takeaway was considered acceptable in principle and that remains the case.
- 6.2 Officers worked closely with the applicant during the course of the 2018 application to arrive at a positive recommendation. However, the development was subsequently commenced without discharging the conditions, furthermore the works were not undertaken in accordance with the approved plans. This resulted in a poor visual appearance and gave rise to concerns over noise and odours from the kitchen extraction equipment.

- 6.3 The works that have taken place are considered to be unauthorised and are subject to the 2020 Enforcement Notice. This current application seeks planning permission for largely the same as that approved under application 180273 but with some changes to details including the centrally located door to the shopfront and revised material specification scheme. Retrospective approval is sought for the kitchen extraction system as installed.

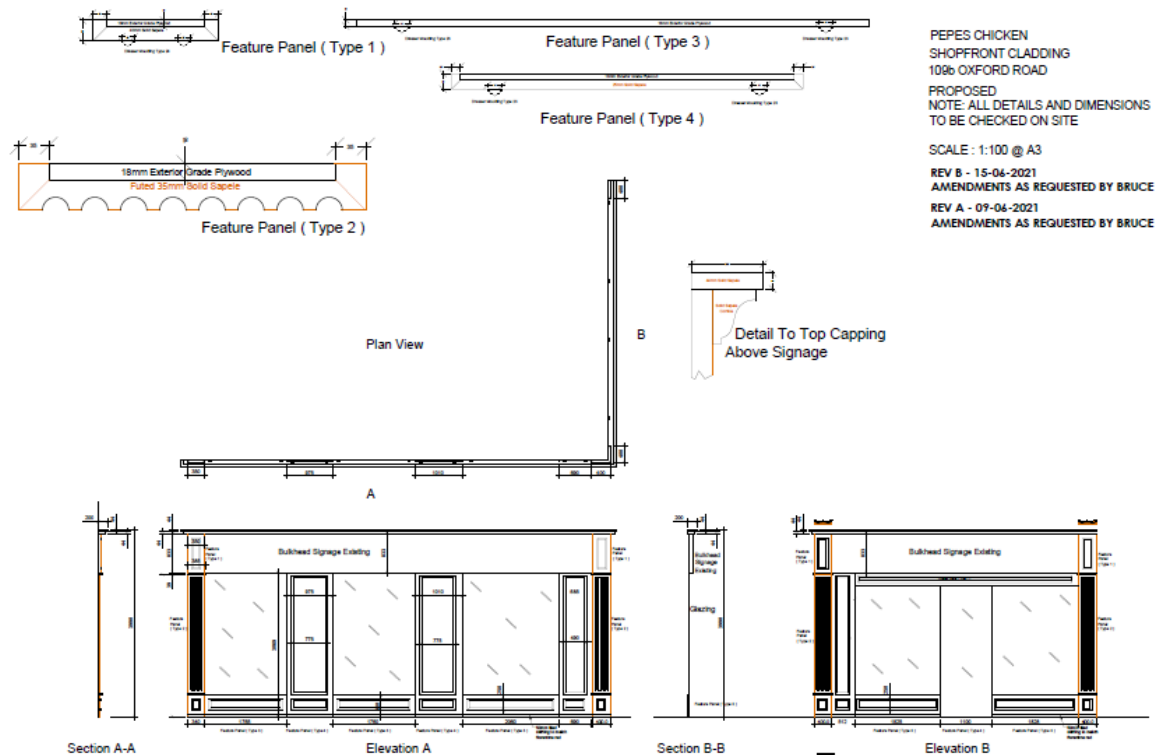
Design and Heritage

- 6.4 The unauthorised works have resulted in a poor-quality appearance and are considered unacceptable in terms of the impact on the character and appearance of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. This contrasts with the permission (180273) which represented a clear improvement to the appearance of the original 'Ladbroke's' building which had a notably poor appearance and did not contribute positively to the Conservation Area. The specific areas of breach are highlighted as follows:
- The main front door of the shopfront has been installed centrally rather than to the left-hand side (viewed from the street) as shown on the previously approved drawings;
 - The corbel moulding shown on the previously approved drawings is missing from the pilasters;
 - The timber panel above the pilaster corbel shown on the previously approved drawings (at fascia level) is missing;
 - A coated metal infill panel has been installed under the fascia in place of the transom light glazing shown on the previously approved drawings;
 - The timber shopfront panelling shown on the previously approved drawings is missing from much of the shopfront and a painted render finish with pinned-on timber beading has been applied instead;
 - The 'ornate panelling' as annotated on the previously approved drawings, where installed, consists of a manufactured timber board which grooves routed out and painted;
 - The surfacing materials for the front forecourt are not the same as that shown on the previously approved drawings;
 - The opening on the flank elevation shown on the previously approved drawings to be closed off with brickwork remains in use for extraction;
 - Two air conditioning condensers have been mounted to the rear elevation, the position of one obstructs the installation of the air supply system acoustic louvre grille as previously approved.
- 6.5 The proposed plans largely seek to address the above and revert to a design which more closely reflects what was originally granted permission. It is proposed to keep the front door centrally as installed rather than revert to the side and this is considered acceptable, resulting in a balanced composition and being similar to other shopfronts along this part of Oxford Road.
- 6.6 It is also no longer proposed to block up the opening on the flank elevation adjacent Zinzan Street. The applicant has stated that this is only for fresh air intake and this is the same as that for application 201585 at 109a Oxford Road. Given this and that this is an existing small-scale opening, this is not considered unacceptable.

- 6.7 It is proposed to move the air conditioning unit to a lower position on the rear elevation. This would allow for the installation of the air supply system and it would also further minimise its impact visually. Whilst it would be visible when viewed directly from the rear of the site (from the rear yard), it would not be readily visible from Zinzan Street.
- 6.8 Further details of the external architectural appearance have been submitted during the course of the application as follows:
- a sample of the Herringbone brick paving (red) for the front of the shop;
 - a colour chart depicting the 'Florentine' red proposed to paint the timber columns and panels; and
 - a more detailed drawing depicting the timber panel detail (using Solid Sapele timber)



Paving sample and colour chart



Timber panel detail

6.9 Further to the above, the applicant has provided a final drawing of the shopfront which also now includes the proposed timber front door painted Florentine red.

6.10 It is considered, in consultation with the Council’s Conservation and Urban Design Officer, that the proposals would represent an opportunity to enhance this building, with the ground floor colours sympathetic to the upper floor and the shopfront restored to a more traditional form which respects the age and character of the host building. Similarly, the proposal to replace the tarmac with a charcoal colour paving would also improve the appearance when viewed from Oxford Road.

6.11 The design and heritage aspects of the proposals are considered to comply with Policies EN1, EN3, CC7, CR2 and the recently adopted Design Guide for Shopfronts SPD (2022)

Impact on neighbouring amenity (including environmental protection matters)

6.12 Policy CC8 seeks to prevent development from having a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties through noise and disturbance, dust, smells, fumes and vibrations. Policy EN17 requires that any noise generating equipment should be designed to read at least 10dBA below the existing background level as measured at the nearest sensitive receptor.

6.13 The main issue in terms of residential amenity is noise and odours from the extraction equipment associated with the use. It is not uncommon for

restaurants and hot food takeaways to be located close to residential accommodation and for fumes and smells to be dealt with by means of extraction equipment. It is noted that in this regard, whilst planning application 180273 included a specific condition requiring further ventilation and extraction details to be submitted prior to works commencing, these details were not provided. Furthermore, there are concerns that the system that has been installed (and which the current application retrospectively seeks to retain) does not satisfactorily control odour emissions.

- 6.14 Information had been received on the day of the 23 June 2021 Planning Applications Committee meeting in respect of this current application, which indicated that the specification of the odour control equipment at the premises was not as stated in the current application. This led to the application being deferred to allow further investigation. The applicant has been invited to submit further detail in terms of the current system that is installed but has not submitted anything meaningful since in this regard.
- 6.15 A noise assessment has been submitted. This currently shows the level is 20dBA above the required level but recommends an indoor or external silencer which the Environmental Protection Officer considers should reduce the level sufficiently to meet the Council's plant noise criteria of 10dB below background - and be significantly quieter than the existing system.
- 6.16 The information received on 23 June 2021 suggested that the installed system in fact falls well short of the specifications which the submitted noise and odour reports stated as being necessary to avoid noise and odour concerns. As things stand, it remains far from clear as to the extent of the shortcomings of the installed system (which the retrospective application seeks to retain in its current form) and therefore if any works could be carried out to bring it up to the required standard. Indeed, it may not be possible and a wholly different system may be required. Given the considerable degree of uncertainty that exists, it is considered that the current application fails to demonstrate that the retention of the existing system would avoid harm to the amenity of adjoining dwellings in terms of noise and odour, contrary to policies CC8, CR6, EN16 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 6.17 Despite the fundamental concern over the extraction equipment identified above, other relevant matters include the proposed hours of use of the premises. These remains as previously approved under application 180273: 11:30-23:00 Sunday - Thursday and 11:30 - 23:30 Friday-Saturday. This is not considered unreasonable given the operating hours of other nearby establishments and this could be secured by condition. The use of the premises incorporating hot food takeaway might generate additional usage over and above the current use, especially in the evening hours, however, it is not considered that this would be so significant as to be detrimental to neighbouring residential properties especially in view of the existing hot food takeaway businesses nearby in this parade of shops which are of a similar character.

Highway Matters

- 6.18 This site is situated on A329 Oxford Road which is a main transport corridor in and out of Reading and is a busy public transport route between central Reading and the west. It is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the

Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading.

- 6.19 Oxford Road and the surrounding road network all have extensive parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. A residents' permit parking scheme operates in the area thereby restricting and monitoring unauthorised parking.
- 6.20 In accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the proposed restaurant use would generate a parking demand of 1 space per 5sqm whereas the proposed take-away use would generate a parking demand of 1 space per 40sqm. There is no off-street parking associated with the site however the parking demand generated by the proposal could be suitably accommodated within the short stay parking bays on Oxford Road and nearby public car parks as is currently the case with other similar uses in the street.
- 6.21 There are therefore considered to be no transport objections to the proposals in accordance with Local Plan Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5 and the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Having regard to the Development Plan, material considerations and all matters raised, the Local Planning Authority considers that, whilst the proposals would visually enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, insufficient evidence is available within the application to demonstrate that the construction, odour control measures, noise characteristics, and running specifications of the existing kitchen extract flue would avoid causing noise, disturbance and unpleasant odours to occupiers of surrounding dwellings. It has also not been established what, if any, alterations could be made to the system to ensure that it performs in such a way as to avoid harm to the amenity of these neighbouring dwellings. The development is therefore contrary to Policies CC8, CR6, EN16 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and is recommended for refusal on that basis.

The Implications of Refusal

- 7.2 The use remains unauthorised, as does the existing shopfront and kitchen extract. It is not possible to separate these elements and the application must be determined as it stands. The Enforcement Notice dated 17 January 2020 is still in force and can be enforced through the courts. It should be noted however that this leaves an undesirable situation whereby the heritage benefits would not be realised because the Enforcement Notice requires the return of the site to its pre-existing state - i.e. the 'Ladbroke's' shopfront configuration. An alternative approach would be to quash the existing notice and serve a new one targeting the kitchen extraction system.
- 7.3 It is however hoped that the likelihood of further enforcement action would motivate the applicant to resolve matters in respect of the kitchen extraction system by reapplying to secure permission for the shop front with a good quality heritage design and a high standard of noise and odour control.

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations

Proposed Elevations

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BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 200931/FUL

Address: 22a Waylen Street

Proposal: Conversion of existing storage and distribution use to 1x2 bed dwelling, including upward extension to rear, and associated works

Applicant: Mr Neil Marshall

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to Assistant Director, Planning, Transport & Public Protection to:

- (i) **GRANT** full planning permission subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement, or
- (ii) **REFUSE** permission should the legal agreement not be completed within 3 months (unless officers on behalf of the Assistant Director, Planning, Transport & Public Protection agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).

The legal agreement to secure the following:

- an Affordable Housing contribution of £16,250 towards affordable housing in the Borough in accordance with Policy H3 index-linked from the date of the permission, to be paid on the commencement of the development.

Subject to conditions and informatives.

Conditions

1. Standard time limit
2. Approved plans
3. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Materials and finishes to be approved including cladding, fenestration and roof slates - to be in accordance with submitted Design and Access Statement.
4. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Landscaping, a small scheme of hard and soft landscaping to be approved
5. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Arboricultural Method Statement
6. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Construction Method Statement
7. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Contaminated Land Assessment
8. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Remediation Scheme, to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use
9. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Notwithstanding the approved drawings - details of cycle parking to be submitted.
10. PRE-OCCUPATION - SAP Assessment (as built) by an accredited energy assessor
11. Refuse and recycling, space for storage to be provided as per approved plans.
12. Permitted development rights removed - (i) no enlargement of the dwellinghouse (no extensions) and (ii) no addition or alteration to its roof (no roof extensions)
13. Permitted development rights removed - no new openings
14. Permitted development rights removed - restricting use of roof
15. Standard hours of construction/demolition
16. No burning of waste on site
17. Implementation and verification of approved remediation scheme
18. Unidentified contamination
19. Access closure with reinstatement of kerb
20. Parking permits - notification of address
21. Parking permits - informing occupiers
22. Use as a two bedroom dwelling only

Informatives

Terms

Building Control

Pre-commencement conditions

S106

Complaints about construction

Encroachment

Contamination

Highways

Noise between residential properties

CIL

Parking permits

Advice about TPO trees and trees in Conservation Areas

Positive and proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

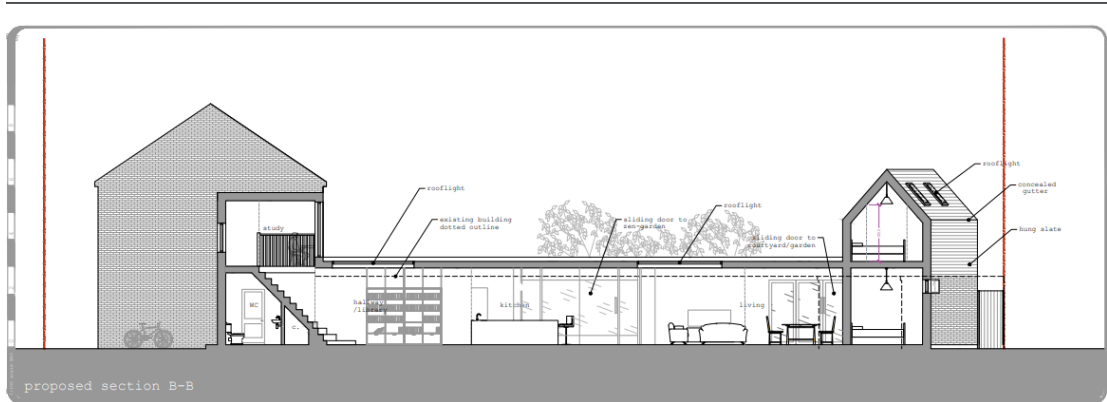
1.1 The application was deferred from your 2nd February 2022 Planning Applications Committee for further amendment to the element of the proposal to the Waylen Street frontage. The main report to that meeting is appended below.

2. AMENDED PLANS

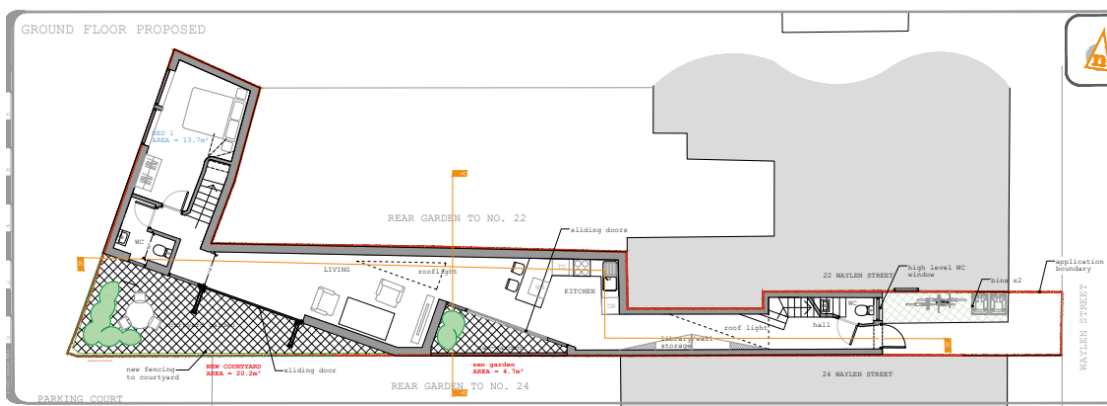
2.1 Following concerns raised by Members, a set of amended plans have been supplied omitting the frontal porch extension and boundary wall/railings. The existing double door access to the building would be replaced with a traditional single leaf timber frame door and matching wall panel. High level windows would be located above. The proposals are otherwise as per the main report.



Proposed Front Elevation



Proposed Section



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

- 2.2 This further amendment reinforces the overall design aspiration to retain the building’s original character, whilst introducing contemporary elements. The proposed door and wall panel would be of suitably high quality and would have a similar appearance to the existing double doors, which have been identified as an important feature of the Conservation Area. The omission of the porch extension enables the original form of the building to be better discerned, with a resultant reduction in the overall impact of the development proposals on the Waylen Street setting.
- 2.3 Officers consider that the further amendment has satisfactorily addressed the concerns raised by Members and that an overall enhancement of the Conservation Area would be achieved. Viewed from Waylen Street, the form of the building would be broadly consistent with its current appearance, with cues signalling its residential use. On this basis, the proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC7, EN1 and EN3.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 As set out in the main report, officers find no conflict with the identified policies and the application is recommended for approval on this basis with recommended conditions to ensure that no significantly harmful impacts arise as a result of the proposed development.

Case Officer: Tom Hughes

APPENDIX 1

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES READING BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE:	ITEM NO.
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Ward: Abbey

App No.: 200931/FUL

Address: 22a Waylen Street

Proposal: Conversion of existing storage and distribution use to 1x2 bed dwelling, including upward extension to rear, and associated works

Applicant: Mr Neil Marshall

Deadline: 16/11/21

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to Assistant Director, Planning, Transport & Regulatory Services to:

- (iii) GRANT full planning permission subject to the completion of a S106 legal agreement, or**
- (iv) REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed within 3 months (unless officers on behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).**

The legal agreement to secure the following:

- **an Affordable Housing contribution of £16,250 towards affordable housing in the Borough in accordance with Policy H3 index-linked from the date of the permission, to be paid on the commencement of the development.**

Subject to conditions and informatives.

Conditions

1. Standard time limit
2. Approved plans
3. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Materials and finishes to be approved including cladding, fenestration and roof slates - to be in accordance with submitted Design and Access Statement.
4. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Landscaping, a small scheme of hard and soft landscaping to be approved
5. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Arboricultural Method Statement
6. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Construction Method Statement
7. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Contaminated Land Assessment
8. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Remediation Scheme, to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use
9. PRE-COMMENCEMENT - Notwithstanding the approved drawings - details of cycle parking to be submitted.
10. PRE-OCCUPATION - SAP Assessment (as built) produced by an accredited energy assessor
11. Refuse and recycling, space for storage to be provided in accordance with approved plans.
12. Permitted development rights removed - (i) no enlargement of the dwellinghouse (no extensions) and (ii) no addition or alteration to its roof (no roof extensions)
13. Permitted development rights removed - no new openings
14. Permitted development rights removed - restricting use of roof
15. Standard hours of construction/demolition
16. No burning of waste on site
17. Implementation and verification of approved remediation scheme

- 18. Unidentified contamination
- 19. Access closure with reinstatement of kerb
- 20. Parking permits - notification of address
- 21. Parking permits - informing occupiers
- 22. Use as a two bedroom dwelling only

Informatives

Terms

Building Control

Pre-commencement conditions

S106

Complaints about construction

Encroachment

Contamination

Highways

Noise between residential properties

CIL

Parking permits

Advice about TPO trees and trees in Conservation Areas

Positive and proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 22a Waylen Street comprises a narrow, L-shaped plot within the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. The site originally formed part of 22 Waylen Street, a large villa. Set back from the Waylen Street building line is this historic two storey outbuilding. Single storey extensions fill the extent of the plot to the rear of the outbuilding. The site is currently vacant, most recently in use as a workshop/storage.
- 1.2 Immediately to the rear of the site are parking areas serving properties on Waylen Street and Russell Street. Sycamore trees growing adjacent to the site overhang its south-west corner. The surrounding area is residential in character, with a variety of built forms between two and three storeys in height.
- 1.3 The application was called in for determination at Planning Applications Committee by Councillor Page due to the constrained nature of the site in a conservation area setting.



Site Location



Aerial view of site (front)



Aerial view of site (rear)



Photograph of front elevation



Photograph of site frontage

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal is for the conversion of the existing building to a 1x2 bed dwelling, with an upward extension to the rear and associated works. To the site frontage, a contemporary porch extension and 1m high boundary wall would be erected. To the rear, the building would have an angled design, with two small triangular courtyards created. The upper floor extension would have a pitched roof and a timber-clad gable end. Upper floor glazing would be to the southward side elevation only. The site would have no rear access.

2.2 The agent supplied the following, received on 03/07/20:
Design & Access Statement
Heritage Statement, ref: AH_190-DHG-3MX by Archway Heritage, dated 28/04/20
Heritage Statement Appendix 11 - Site Plans and Maps
Heritage Statement Appendix 12 - Site Photographs
Affordable Housing Statement
Drawing No: 02-00 - Site Location
Drawing No: 02-01 - Existing Site Plan
Drawing No: 03-00 - Existing Floor Plans
Drawing No: 05-00 - Existing Front and Side Elevations
Drawing No: 05-01 - Existing Side Elevation and Section
Drawing No: 05-02 - Existing Section
Drawing No: 03-10 - Proposed Floor Plans
Drawing No: 03-11 - Proposed Roof Plan
Drawing No: 05-10 - Proposed Elevations
Drawing No: 05-12 - Proposed Section

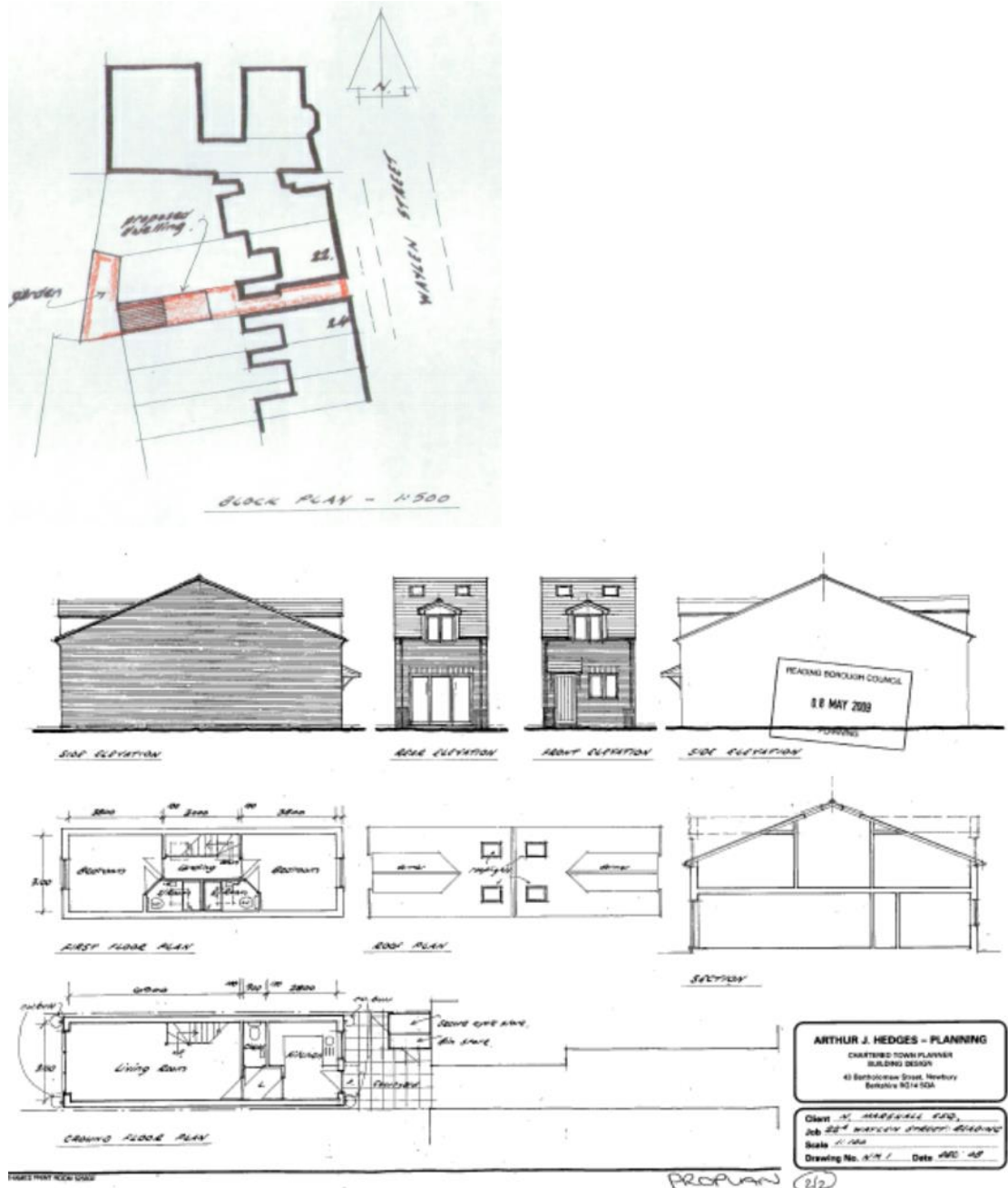
2.3 Officers raised concerns with the initial proposal relating to the provision of outdoor amenity space, use of materials, cycle/bin storage, and arboricultural matters. Subsequently the agent supplied the following, received on 29/01/21:
Drawing No: 03-10 Rev. A - Proposed Floor Plans
Drawing No: 03-11 Rev. A - Proposed Roof Plan
Drawing No: 05-10 Rev. A - Proposed Elevations
Drawing No: 05-11 Rev. A - Proposed Side Elevation and Section
Drawing No: 05-12 Rev. A - Proposed Section

2.4 Subsequently the agent supplied the following, received on 12/04/21:
Tree Survey by Arbtech, dated 27/07/20
Arboricultural Method Statement by Arbtech, dated 17/08/20
Drawing No: Arbtech AIA 01 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment
Drawing No: Arbtech TPP 01 - Tree Protection Plan

2.5 Officers advised of discrepancies with the amended plans, and sought clarity on the use of materials. Subsequently the agent supplied the following, received on 18/10/21:
Drawing No: 03-10 Rev. B - Proposed Floor Plans
Drawing No: 05-11 Rev. B - Proposed Side Elevation and Section

3. PLANNING HISTORY

090574/FUL - Demolition of office, stores and workshop. Erection of 2-bedrooed house - Refused 03/07/09
 Officer note: see below, proposed site plan and elevational drawings



Officer note: this proposal was for the erection of a two-storey house, with a more conventional design, but sited to the rear of the plot. The application was refused on three grounds. Firstly, due its the siting, density, scale and design, the development would have been out of character with the scale and rhythm of the terrace and existing pattern of development, causing harm to the character of the conservation area. Secondly, due to its siting overlooking, visual dominance and overshadowing would have been caused to the rear of no.s 22 & 24 Waylen Street, with an equivalent level of overlooking back towards the proposed dwelling. The third reason for refusal was due to the absence of a completed S106 legal agreement

161207/UPA - Notification of Prior Approval for a Change of Use from Storage or Distribution Buildings (Class B8) and any land within its curtilage to Dwelling houses (Class C3). The proposed development comprises the change of use from storage (B8) to Residential (C3), converting 98 sqm of Storage into 1 bed dwelling. Prior notification under Class P, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 - Prior Approval Refused 09/09/16

Officer note: this application was refused on the grounds of failure to demonstrate the lawful use of the building, therefore not meeting the basic technical requirements for consideration under an application for Prior Approval.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Reading Borough Transport Development Control

- 4.1 Raised no objections to the proposal as there would be no material change to the character of traffic in the vicinity of the site. Advised that unauthorised parking could be controlled via the administration of the Residential Parking Permit Scheme. Suggested conditions relating to parking permits, access reinstatement, bin/cycle storage and a CMS.

Reading Borough Ecology

- 4.2 Raised no objections to the proposal as it was considered unlikely that they would affect bats or other protected species.

Reading Borough Environmental Protection

- 4.3 Advised that the pre-existing use of the site has the potential to have caused contamination of the land, and that the proposed development is a sensitive land use. Recommended conditions relating to the requirement for submission of a Contaminated Land Assessment and remediation scheme, and further conditions relating to the implementation of that scheme. Further conditions recommended relating to the construction/demolition phase.

Reading Borough Natural Environment

- 4.4 Raised concerns with the proposed development regarding the future impact of the proposal on Sycamore trees growing adjacent to the site. Noted that the Tree Protection Plan includes appropriate measures to mitigate direct development impact on these trees, but required a more succinct, site specific Arboricultural Method Statement be supplied. Advised that this could be secured via pre-commencement condition.
- 4.5 Noted that given the extent of the development, significant on-site planting would be unlikely, but a small scheme of landscaping should be secured by condition.

Reading Borough Conservation and Urban Design Officer

- 4.6 No response received to consultation.

Reading Civic Society

- 4.7 Offered support for the proposal, noting that it would be an attractive, innovative and imaginative design.
- 4.8 Neighbouring owners and occupiers at 22-24 (odds) Waylen Street were consulted by letter. A site notice was displayed. No letters of representation were received.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which also states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.
- 5.2 The following national and local planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy Framework

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy CC3 - Adaption to Climate Change

Policy CC6 - Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

Policy CC7 - Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8 - Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Policy EN3 - Enhancement of Conservation Areas

Policy EN6 - New Development in a Historic Context

Policy EN12 - Biodiversity and the Green Network

Policy EN14 - Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Policy EN15 - Air Quality

Policy EM3 - Loss of Employment Land

Policy H1 - Provision of Housing

Policy H2 - Density and Mix

Policy H3 - Affordable Housing

Policy H5 - Standards for New Housing

Policy H10 - Private and Communal Outdoor Space

Policy TR3 - Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Policy TR5 - Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Affordable Housing SPD (2021)

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Planning Obligations under Section 106 SPD (2015)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

Other relevant documents:

Tree Strategy (2020)

Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2020)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues to be considered are:

- Principle of development
- Design and impact on the character of the area
- Density, mix and affordable housing
- Impact on the amenity of existing and future occupiers
- Transport
- Natural environment
- Sustainability

Principle of development

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework 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 general principle of provision of new housing in this location would align with the broad objectives of Policy H1. Although it is apparent that this remains very much dependent on the detailed design of the proposals within this constrained site.

6.3 The loss of the pre-existing workshop/storage use of the building must also be considered. The building has most recently been associated with a small plumbing/heating business, and is now vacant. The site is not located within a Core Employment Area and Policy EM3 states that these circumstances the 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 whether an employment use is appropriate for the location.

6.4 The building has been vacant for a significant period of time, without market interest for the existing use. The building is not in an optimum location for access to the strategic road network. 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. As such the proposed loss of employment land is considered to be acceptable in this location, in accordance with Policy EM3.

6.5 The broad principle of the proposal for residential development is therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policies CC6, H1 and EM3 although the overall acceptability remains heavily-dependent on the design and the effect on character, as discussed below.

Design and impact on the character of the area

6.6 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 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 seeks that development proposals preserve and enhance the special character of conservation areas.

- 6.7 As set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal, many properties along Waylen Street are in a poor state of repair, with cluttered facades and uneven frontages as a result of boundary walls being removed. The absence of greenery to front gardens is also a negative aspect of the streetscape.
- 6.8 A detailed heritage statement has been submitted with the application and considers the impact of the proposals on the significance of Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. The heritage assessment shows that the building has been subject to a variety of alterations and additions over its history, evident in the form of a single storey extension filling the rear part of the plot. It is officers' view that the existing building has a limited contribution to the character of the area, by virtue of its narrow plot width and recessed building line. The building's long-term vacancy is also considered to detract from its significance and general contribution to the character of the area.
- 6.9 Amended plans and additional details have been sought during the course of the application. Red brick in Flemish bond pattern has been selected to reflect the style of the surrounding buildings. To the frontage, the existing timber sash window would be preserved, with secondary glazing installed behind. A contemporary porch extension would be constructed on fibre cement panels and a frameless glass door. The upper storey of the rear extension would have a timber clad gable wall, treated with clear lacquer to ensure longevity. The remainder of the extension would be clad in grey slate and grey hung slate tiles. These external materials would be secured by way of a suitably worded condition. The proposal has been designed to retain some of the building's original character, whilst introducing contemporary elements. The design would be a departure from the generally traditional appearance of the conservation area, although it is apparent that the change would in fact be relatively minimal when viewed from Waylen Street. To the front, the alterations and addition of a small porch would fit with the existing scale, layout and appearance and could not be described as obtrusive. These changes would still allow the original form and appearance to be discerned when viewed as part of the Waylen Street frontage. The main changes would be to the rear and viewed in the context of the less visually sensitive commercial yard which adjoins the site to the west. The constrained irregular site would not allow existing building forms or plot layouts and therefore lends itself to a good quality contrast to the prevailing character. This is considered to be well executed to the rear within the new building responding well to the site in terms of its form, appearance and appropriate scale. Overall it is considered that the introduction of this particular high quality, design-led scheme into this particular site-context would represent an enhancement to the conservation area.
- 6.10 Furthermore, the site has been vacant for a long time, and a proposal to bring the site back into viable use is considered to be of benefit to the conservation area. The contemporary design approach is considered to be

the correct approach in the circumstances for the reasons set out above and the result would be a good quality design that contributes positively to the character of the surrounding area. On this basis, the proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC7, EN1 and EN3.

Density, Mix and Affordable Housing

- 6.11 Policy H2 states that development proposals should provide an appropriate mix of units based on the character and mix of units found in the surrounding area. Waylen Street contains a variety of residential properties including single dwellings and flats. The proposed 1x2 bed unit is considered to be suitable for family occupation, and is appropriate for the site's location just outside the defined Reading Central Area. Amended plans have been sought during the course of the application to address a third bedroom originally proposed to the upper floor of the existing building. The room is not deemed to be of a sufficient size to accommodate a bedroom. This has now been changed to a study and will be secured to remain as such by condition.
- 6.12 Policy H3 states that development proposals of between one and four dwellings should provide an affordable housing contribution to enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough. In accordance with the adopted Affordable Housing SPD, this equates to a contribution equivalent to 5% of the Gross Development Value of the scheme. The agent has supplied three independent valuations to enable an appropriate contribution to be calculated. The applicant has agreed to a policy compliant contribution of £16,250, to be secured by way of a S106 legal agreement.

Impact on the amenity of existing and future occupiers

- 6.13 Terraced rows of housing extend either side of the application site, with parking courts located immediately to the rear. The proposed upper floor extension would occupy the L-shaped part of the site, approximately 18m distant from the rear elevation of 22 Waylen Street. First floor glazing would be located only to the southward elevation of this extended part, looking out directly over the parking courts. Glazing at the ground floor would be largely obscured by close-boarded timber fencing. The proposed arrangement of windows is not considered to cause any significant harm to neighbouring residential amenities in terms of loss of privacy through direct overlooking. Given single storey extensions already occupy the entirety of the plot depth, the proposed development is not considered to cause any greater degree of harm in terms of visual dominance or overbearing effects. A condition is applied removing future development rights of the property to alter or enlarge the roof space. The proposals are not considered to cause harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers in accordance with Policy CC8.
- 6.14 Policy CC8 seeks to protect the amenity of future occupiers. Policy H5 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 seeks that residential developments are provided with adequate private or communal outdoor space.
- 6.15 Though the proposed dwelling would have an unusual, angular design it would comfortably exceed the minimum gross internal floor area as set out

in the prescribed space standards. Two bedrooms would be provided, each of a sufficient size. Due to the constraints of the site, the opportunities for the provision of glazing are somewhat limited. The proposed ground floor bedroom would be provided with two high level windows only. This would afford fairly limited outlook only, however this is balanced by the room being of a decent size. Where the proposed use to be as a house in multiple occupation, officers would be more concerned about the outlook from this bedroom as it would be likely that the occupant would spend the majority of their time in the house there. Given the proposals are for the use as a single dwelling, officers have taken a slightly more relaxed approach to the outlook from this bedroom. The upper floor bedroom would be provided with windows of sufficient size, with no harm to outlook. On this basis, the proposal is considered to provide a sufficient standard of accommodation for future occupiers. A condition is recommended removing the future permitted development right for new openings, to protect the amenities of neighbouring properties.

- 6.16 The angular design of the rear element enables the provision of two courtyard spaces, totalling approximately 30sqm in floor space. While this is less than spaces that generally characterise the area, officers are satisfied that the development as a whole provides adequate amenity space provision. A condition removing permitted development rights to extend the dwelling across the garden is recommended to ensure the spaces are retained.
- 6.17 The site has formerly been occupied as a workshop/storage use associated with a plumbing/heating business. There is the possibility that the historic use of the site would have introduced contaminants to the land and therefore recommended conditions are attached to secure the submission and approval of a contaminated land assessment and remediation scheme prior to commencement of the development. 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. The proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC8, H5 and H10 on this basis.

Transport

- 6.18 Policies TR3 and TR5 seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking related matters. The site is located within walking/cycling distance of the town centre, bus routes and local services.
- 6.19 Waylen Street has on-street parking on both sides of the carriageway. Shared user parking bays can be utilised by permit holders at any time and by non-permit holders for up to two hours between 8am-8pm. At all other times the bays revert to permit holders only.
- 6.20 In accordance with the Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development is required to provide one off-road parking space. No off-road parking spaces are proposed in this application. In order that the proposed development does not exacerbate existing parking pressures in the area, future residents of the development will not be entitled to a residents parking permit. Suitably worded conditions and an informative will be applied to that effect.
- 6.21 In accordance with the SPD, the development is required to provide two cycle spaces in a secure, covered store. A covered store is shown to the site

frontage however this could appear as a poorly integrated obtrusive feature at odds with the otherwise high-quality design of the scheme and the need to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. A condition is recommended to secure details of cycle parking which may be more appropriately located in the rear garden, which would also be more secure.

- 6.22 A location for bin storage is also proposed to the site frontage. This simple storage location is considered to be appropriate for the proposed house. It is apparent that a bulky, poorly integrated freestanding store would not be appropriate in this location in heritage terms.
- 6.23 Given the site location close to the town centre and on a busy road with parking restrictions, a condition is recommended to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement prior to the commencement of development on site.
- 6.24 Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with the identified policy.

Natural Environment

- 6.25 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 and moreover, may reduce light and outlook to the dwelling itself. The proposals include small areas of planting to the front and rear, with these details to be secured by condition. In overall terms the proposals would represent a small enhancement and net gain in terms of greening on the site and within the conservation area.

Sustainability

- 6.26 Policy CC3 seeks that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy H5 seeks that all new housing development achieves a 19% improvement above the dwelling emission rate as described in the Building Regulations and that the 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 and provision of car free development. On this basis the proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC3 and H5.

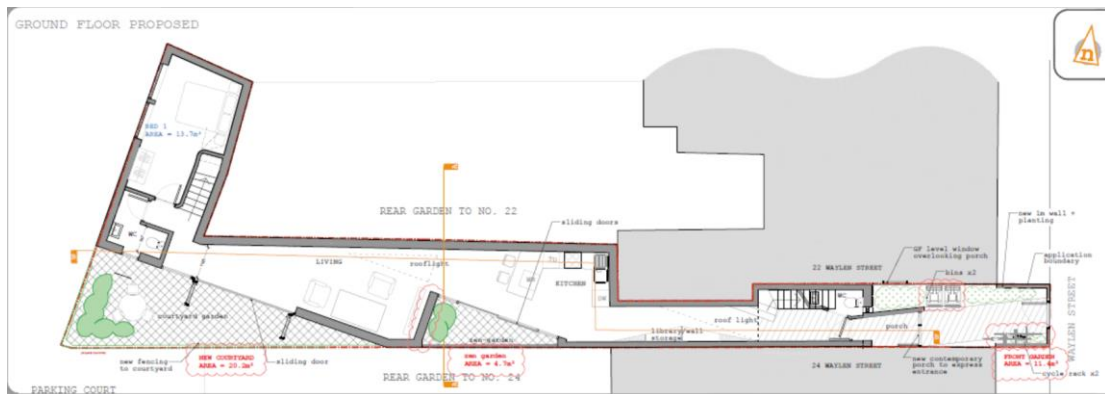
Equalities Impact

- 6.27 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified in the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. Therefore, In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

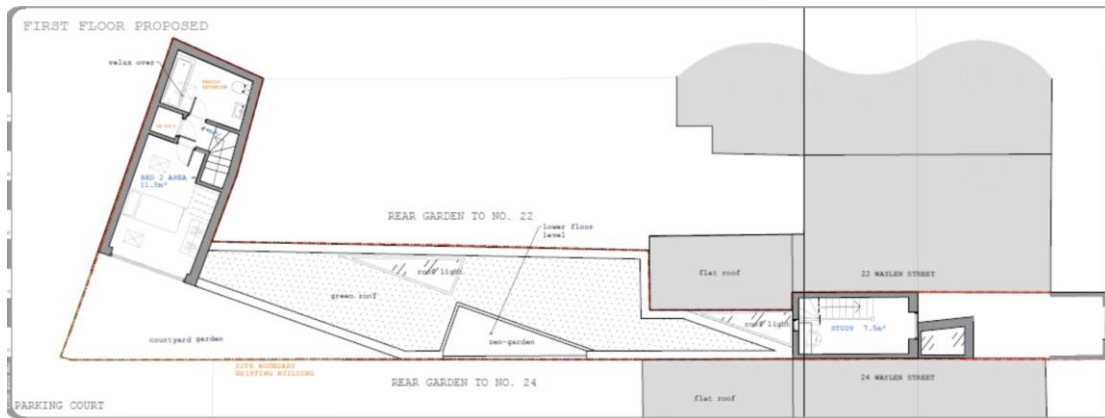
7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposals have been assessed against relevant policies contained within the Reading Borough Local Plan, with due regard to supporting local and national policy guidance and all other material considerations. The proposed development is considered to represent imaginative and high-quality design which responds well to the constrained and irregularly shaped site and which would enhance the conservation area. The proposal is recommended for approval, subject to conditions and the completion of the legal agreement.

Case Officer: Tom Hughes



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



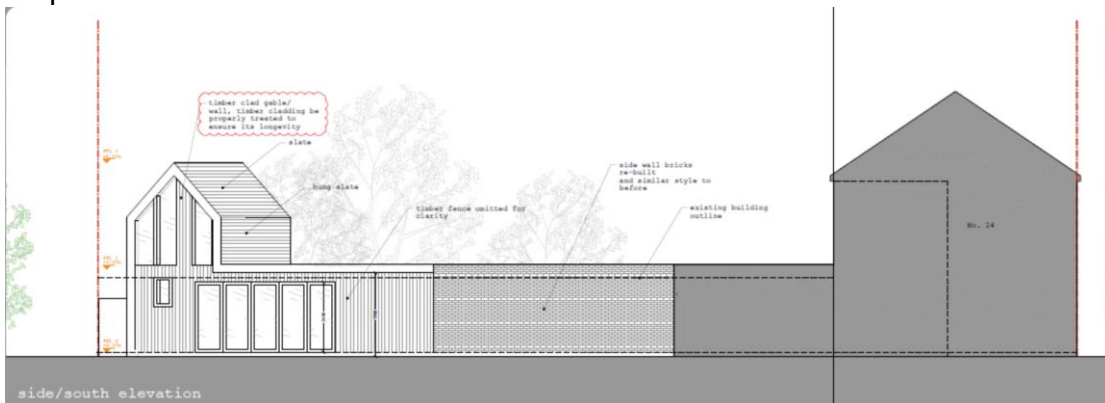
Proposed Roof Plan



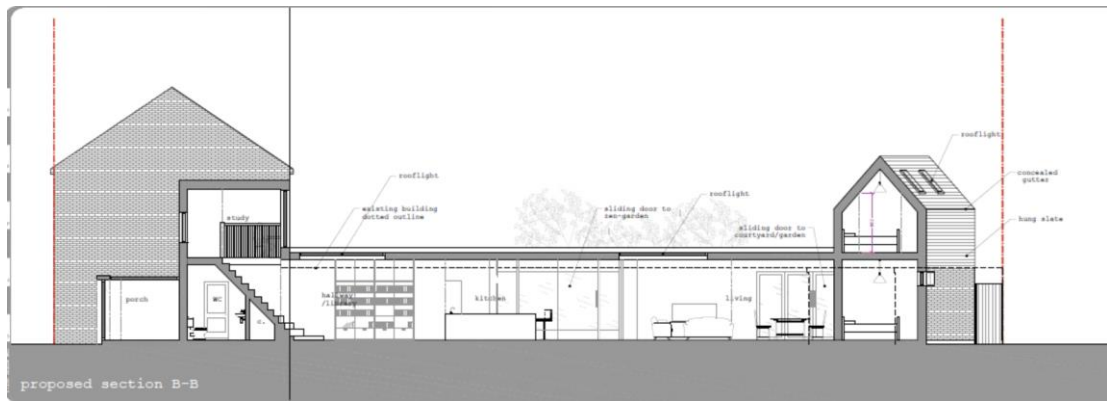
Proposed Front Elevation



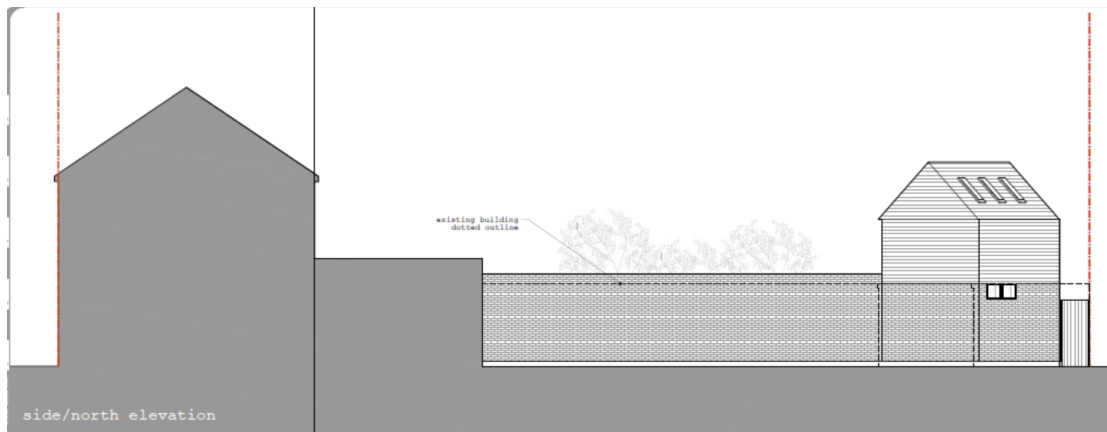
Proposed Rear Elevation



Proposed Side Elevation



Proposed Section



Proposed Side Elevation



Illustrative image - viewed from Waylen Street - from Design and Access Statement



Illustrative views from neighbouring yard to the rear.

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30th March 2022

Ward: Abbey

Application No.: 182252/OUT

Address: 80 Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8JG

Proposal: Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale for redevelopment proposal involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 - 24 storeys in height, providing 620 (72 x studio, 196x1, 320x2 & 32x3-bed) residential units (Class C3), office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor shop (Class A1), financial and professional services (Class A2) or restaurant/café (Class A3) uses, a community centre (Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking (94 spaces (70 at basement level)), servicing, public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (amended description).

Applicant: Hermes Property Unit Trust

Date Valid: 03/04/2019

Application target decision date: Originally 24/07/19, but extensions of time have been agreed until 27/04/2022

26 week date: 02/10/2019

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to the Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services (AD PTRS) to (i) GRANT outline planning permission subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE outline permission should the legal agreement not be completed by 27th April 2022 (unless officers on behalf of the AD PTRS agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).

The S106 legal agreement to include a minimum of the following:

- Arrangements concerning the interaction between the application site and the Aviva site in terms of access and seeking to ensure the delivery of a single vehicular route, as specified in more detail within the Transport observations at section 4 1) of this report.
- Secure a S278/38 Agreement to upgrade the signalized pedestrian crossing located on Caversham Road adjacent to the site south of Northfield Road to a toucan crossing (to allow cyclists as well as pedestrians).
- £5,000 towards a Traffic Regulation Order for alterations to the parking restrictions along the Caversham Road frontage of the site.
- £200,000 towards upgrading / improving the underpass beneath Reading Station so that it is suitable for cyclists.
- To provide and fund the 2 car club spaces identified on the submitted plans.
- Baseline guaranteed on-site provision of 98 affordable housing units (equating to

15.81%), comprising:

- Reading Affordable Rented (53 units) in Building G - 11 no. 1 bedroom & 42 no. 2 bedroom residential units
- Shared Ownership (45 units) in Building H - 22 no. 1 bedroom and 23 no. 2 bedroom residential units
- Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution Mechanism:
 - 1st stage review (Option 1) To give opportunity for uplift in value to be captured as additional units on-site
 - Open book review of updated inputs (costs and values as prevailing at market rates)
 - Fixed land price £14.8m
 - Tigger point for review to be on submission of Reserved Matters application.
 - At that point, any agreed profits in excess of 20% developer return on GDV (Gross Development Value) be subject to a profit share 50/50 with the Council.
 - 1st stage review (Option 2) To give opportunity for uplift in value to be captured as additional units
 - Open book review of updated inputs (costs and values as prevailing at market rates)
 - Benchmark Land Value agreed between applicant and Council of £14.8m
 - Tigger point for review to be 24 months from date of the grant of this outline permission, if not implemented
 - At that point, any agreed profits in excess of 20% developer return on GDV (Gross Development Value) be subject to a profit share 50/50 with the Council.
 - 2nd stage review - To give opportunity for uplift in value to be captured as additional units
 - Open book review of updated inputs (based on actual costs and values or at prevailing market rates in default)
 - Benchmark Land Value agreed between applicant and Council of £14.8m
 - Tigger point upon occupation pf 80% of units
 - Trigger share in excess of 20% Developer return on GDV
 - Profit share 50/50
- Total Affordable Housing cap: Maximum potential affordable housing contribution is the equivalent of 30%. This is as a combination of the guaranteed baseline onsite provision and additional units or commuted sum equivalent generated by deferred contribution mechanism 1st Stage review (option 1) and commuted sum equivalent generated by deferred contribution mechanism 2nd stage review.
- Should any Affordable Housing Units have not been disposed of to a Housing

Association (HA) or Registered Provider (RP) within certain times and under certain circumstances, the applicant shall give notice to the Council to seek a Housing Association or RP, or for the Council to purchase the affordable housing units. Within certain times and under certain circumstances, should the Council not exercise this option the affordable housing contribution transfers to a financial contribution towards affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough (as per the policy requirements and methodology) and the on-site units are no longer required to be provided as on-site affordable units.

- Build to Rent (BTR) - The Council reserves the right to include any unit or block disposal for BTR as part of the GDV calculations for the Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution Mechanism (i.e. if units are sold for BTR and is more valuable than a sales value then the Council can use it as part of the value element of the appraisal).
- Delegate to the Head of Planning Development and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Council's Valuer to agree further detailed terms/adjustments to the affordable housing obligations, as may be required.
- Public realm / space - To provide and deliver all areas of public realm / public space and allow unrestricted public pedestrian and cycle access to all areas of public realm / space (subject to reasonable restrictions relating to short-term maintenance works). Subsequently, the owner/developer to maintain the public realm areas to at least the standards reasonably required by the Council.
- Provision of public art / public art strategy within the proposed on-site public open space
- Public open space financial contribution of £620,000.
- Employment, Skills and Training - The production, implementation and monitoring of an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) for the Construction and End User phases of the development, or in the event that the developer chooses not to provide the ESP themselves then a financial contribution commuted sum, calculated using the SPD formula in relation to both the construction and end user phases, will be secured in lieu of an ESP.
- CCTV - No Building within with relevant phase (phase 4 / phase 6) to be occupied until a CCTV Scheme for that Building and adjacent Public Realm has been submitted and approved by the Council and the apparatus referred to in the Approved CCTV Scheme for that Building and Public Realm has been installed and is operational.
 - o The CCTV scheme to accord with Council and Thames Valley Police requirements for such a system, be compatible with the Council's/Police CCTV system; be linked into the CCTV system operating in the central area of Reading; and provide for connection to and control by the Council's town centre CCTV system.
 - o To be retained and maintained in accordance with the Scheme at all times thereafter.
- Securing the commercial unit in Building H as a Community Centre or other related community use in perpetuity
- Securing the commercial unit in Building G as a Health Centre or other related use for the benefit of the community in perpetuity
- Zero Carbon Offset as per SPD 2019 a minimum of 35% improvement in regulated

emissions over the Target Emissions Rate in the 2013 Building Regulations, plus a Section 106 contribution of £1,800 per remaining tonne towards carbon offsetting within the Borough (calculated as £60/tonne over a 30-year period).

- Contribution towards monitoring costs plus a separate commitment to pay the Council's reasonable legal costs in connection with the proposed S106 Agreement will be payable whether or not the Agreement is completed.
- Any unexpended contributions to be repaid within ten years beginning with the start of the Financial Year after the final (including phased contributions) obligation payment for each obligation is received. In accordance with Policy CC9.
- Indexation - All financial contributions to be index-linked from date of permission unless expressly stated otherwise.

And the following conditions to include:

- Submission of all Reserved Matters applications within 3 years
- Development to commence no later than either a) 3 years or b) expiration of 2 years from the approval of the last Reserved Matters
- Pre-commencement approval of Reserved Matters - a) Appearance b) Internal layout and use
- Approved plans (existing plans; demolition plans; development plot and height plan; proposed floorplans submitted; proposed sections submitted; phasing plan; CIL plan detailing the location of on-site affordable housing (N.B. the proposed elevation plans submitted are NOT approved, with Appearance instead being a Reserved Matter)
- Outline principles for future reserved matters application to accord with principles of development plot and heights, sections and phasing plan
- Phasing to be carried out in accordance with the phasing plan
- Building heights restrictions as per Development plot and height plan
- Maximum floorspace amounts for each proposed use
- Daylight and sunlight assessment and mitigation to be submitted concurrently with Reserved Matters. Implementation in accordance.
- Wind tunnel testing assessment and mitigation to be submitted concurrently with Reserved Matters. Implementation in accordance.
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) material details
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) building maintenance and cleaning systems details
- Pre-occupation details of hours of use of non-residential / office uses
- No conversion of non-residential uses to residential without separate permission
- No change of C3 use to Class C4 without separate permission
- Pre-occupation accessible and adaptable and 5% wheelchair user dwelling details
- Dwelling mix restricted to 72 x studio, 196 x 1-bedroom, 320 x 2-bedroom and 32 x 3-bedroom units
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) SAP assessment (energy) - design stage
- Pre-occupation of the relevant residential building SAP assessment (energy) - as built
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) interim BREEAM Excellent certification in relation to all non-residential uses
- Within 6 months of first occupation final BREEAM Excellent certification in relation to all non-residential uses
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) PV (solar photovoltaic array) details
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) sustainable drainage details
- Flood mitigation and protection measures implemented prior to first occupation of

- relevant building within relevant phase.
- Permitted development rights (Class A, B, D & E) removed for proposed townhouses
- Commercial extensions / alterations restricted
- Maintaining active window displays at ground floor level
- On site play space facility details
- Management of miscellaneous items (lights, meter boxes, flues, vents or pipes, and no window cleaning or telecommunications equipment, building maintenance unit, alarm boxes, television aerials or satellite dishes)
- Pre first use of a) Building C & b) Building J office roof terraces, measures to protect neighbouring amenity strategy/details
- Flat roof areas not to be used as roof terraces unless where specified on the approved plans
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) fire statement / strategy

Transport

- Pre-commencement demolition and construction method statement*
- Pre-occupation of dwelling/building in relevant phase door opening details
- Gradient of pedestrian and cycle ramps (compliance condition)
- Pre-occupation (of relevant unit) cycle parking for retail/health/community uses
- Pre-occupation of any residential unit short stay visitor cycle parking details
- Vehicle Parking provision (compliance condition)
- Pre-occupation of phase 4 details of parking allocation between different uses
- Cycle parking as specified for residential and office uses
- Pre-occupation of relevant phase refuse and recycling details to be approved
- Access closure with reinstatement (compliance)
- Travel Plan (within 5 months of first occupation of Buildings A & C)
- Annual review of travel plan
- No parking permits - details submitted prior to first occupation of relevant phase
- Delivery and servicing plan for retail/community/health unit prior to occupation of relevant unit**
- Pre-commencement of any residential unit within phase 4 details of EV Charging Points

* Noise and dust measures required by Environmental Protection

** Condition separately requested by Environmental Protection as well

Environmental Protection

- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) sound insulation from external noise assessment
- No mechanical plant installed until noise assessment details
- No kitchen extraction system installed until odour assessment and detailed odour management plan
- 4 stage contaminated land condition:
 1. Pre-commencement site characterisation
 2. Pre-commencement remediation scheme***
 3. Pre-construction implementation of approved remediation scheme***
 4. Reporting of any unexpected contamination
- Hours of working -demolition and construction phases
- No burning of materials on site during demolition and construction phases
- Pre-occupation (within relevant phase) details of measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing bin stores
- Hours of deliveries and waste collection 0800 to 2000 Mondays to Saturdays and 1000 to 1800 on Sundays/bank holidays
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) Air Quality Assessment and mitigation strategy

*** Conditions also separately recommended by the Environment Agency as well

Natural Environment

- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) hard and soft landscaping scheme details
- Pre-occupation (within relevant phase) details of all boundary treatments
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition) landscape management plan
- Pre-commencement arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan

Ecology

- Pre-commencement (habitat enhancement scheme)
- Pre-occupation (within relevant phase) external lighting strategy and details

Thames Water

- Pre-occupation (within relevant phase) wastewater network upgrades or housing and infrastructure phasing plan;
- Pre-occupation (within relevant phase) water network upgrades or housing and infrastructure phasing plan;
- No piling until a piling method statement is approved
- Pre-construction strategy for preventing damage to subsurface potable water infrastructure

Berkshire Archaeology

- Pre-commencement (barring demolition to ground level) archaeological field evaluation and mitigation strategy

Crime Prevention Design Advisor

- Pre-commencement, above slab level, security strategy, (including a vehicle dynamics assessment and how the development will achieve Secured by Design)

Network Rail

- Glint and glare study to be submitted concurrently with Reserved Matters. Implementation in accordance.
- Pre-commencement (barring demolition to ground level), details of a) excavations and earthworks b) vibro-compaction/displacement piling, including a method statement c) drainage proposals.

Environment Agency

- Piling using penetrative methods details
- Drainage systems details where they infiltrate surface water to the ground.

And the following informatives to include:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Damage to the highway (Transport)
3. High density residential development and car parking
4. Works affecting highways
5. Sound insulation between residential properties (Environmental Protection)
6. Section 106 Legal Agreement
7. Ongoing information conditions (Natural Environment)
8. Crane operations in accordance with Civil Aviation Authority guidance (Civil Aviation Authority)
9. Working near to Thames Water underground assets (Thames Water)
10. A series of Network Rail recommended informatives
11. EA to be consulted on EA recommended conditions
12. Separate Advertisement Consent will be required

13. Flexible A1/2/3 units clarification

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises land immediately north of Reading Railway Station in Central Reading. It is broadly triangular in shape and level in terms of topography. The site totals 2.2 hectares in area and is part of an allocation site within the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 (Site CR11e - North of the Station), allocated for redevelopment comprising retail, leisure, residential and office uses. The exact site location is detailed below in figure 1:

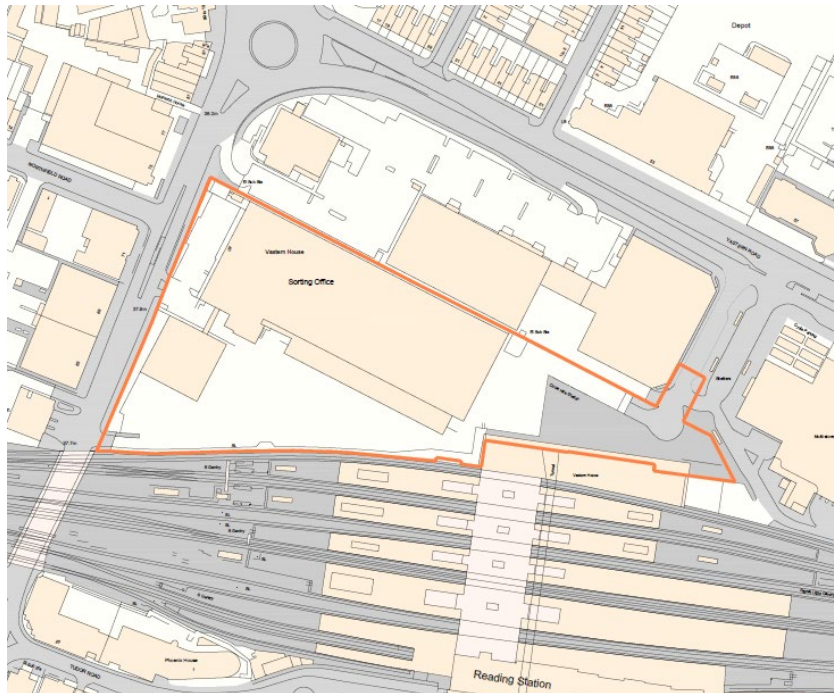


Figure 1: Extract of A11113 C 2002 Rev P2 - Existing Site Location Plan with Application Boundary, as received 08/02/2019

- 1.2 As existing, the site contains the former Royal Mail sorting office and distribution centre, together with three storey offices adjacent to the western boundary of Caversham Road. Previously the site had been a goods yard with sidings for the adjacent railway line and station since the 19th century. The existing site buildings date from the 1980s, but Royal Mail ceased use of the site after transferring its sorting office function to the Swindon Mail Centre in 2009, with a delivery office provided in Gillette Way, South Reading. The buildings were last used by Network Rail as part of upgrade works associated with Reading Railway Station, with the completed CIL form confirming the building was last occupied on 01/02/2018. There are also significant areas of hardstanding for car parking and loading space associated with the former Royal Mail use, with the site known to have on-site service shops for vehicles and sub-surface fuel storage tanks. In the north-west corner of the site is an existing sub-station. The application site boundary also includes the north station entrance area and part of Trooper Potts Way. Network Rail, Reading Borough Council Highways, Thames Water and Aviva Investors were all served notice of the application under certificate B, as per the application form submitted. The applicant has provided the plan below in figure 2 to explain different ownerships at the site:

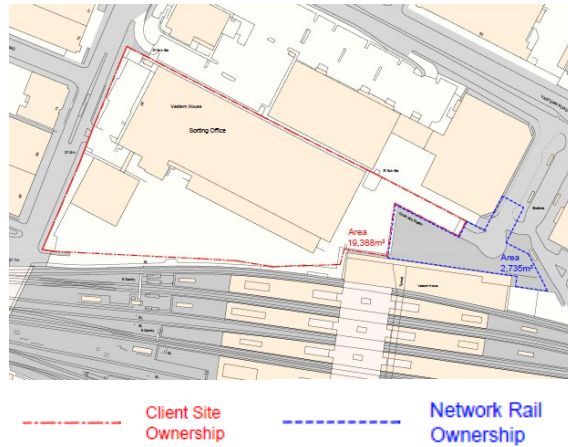


Figure 2: Extract of Existing Site Location Plan with Ownership Boundary A11113 C 2001 P1

- 1.3 The surrounding area comprises a broad mix of uses. To the north is the Vastern Court Retail Park (see below in Figure 3), comprising occupied retail units of 2-3 storeys in height and a separate restaurant unit close to the major roundabout junction of Vastern Road and Caversham Road. There are 280 surface level car parking spaces and servicing areas associated with the retail park too. Both roads form part of the town's Inner Distribution Road (IDR) with 2/3 lane traffic each way incorporated. Beyond Vastern Road (A329) are terraced residential properties and side streets (the predominantly residential De Montfort Road and Lynmouth Road) which lead to the River Thames and Christchurch Meadows / Caversham beyond. Also fronting onto Vastern Road is the former Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSE) offices at 55 Vastern Road and electricity transfer station serving the town. To the east, beyond Trooper Potts Way where the Station North Interchange Bus Stops are located, is the GWR multi-storey car park serving the station.



Figure 3: Aerial view looking north

- 1.4 To the south is the North Station entrance building and offices, beyond which is Reading Railway Station with links to London and the south-west, Wales, the Midlands and beyond. A pedestrian walkway provides a tunnel link to the south of the station for access to the town centre at this point. A high retaining wall also borders the application site to the south, with there a considerable level change between the site and the railway lines above. To the west is the already referenced Caversham Road, which is a busy and main route to the north-west of the town centre, and also includes wide footpaths. The west side of Caversham Road

comprises a variety of largely 2-3 storey buildings and are largely commercial in nature, with residential predominant further west within the terraced streets of Northfield Road, Swansea Road and beyond.



Figure 4: View of the application site from Caversham Road looking south-east

1.5 There are also a number of other site constraints / designations / nearby designations, including:

- Within the Reading Central Area
- Within the Office Core
- Within the Central Core
- Within the Primary Shopping Area (a designated primary frontage run diagonally from the Station entrance towards the Vastern Road / Caversham Road roundabout. A separate line runs north towards Vastern Road from the station entrance, adjacent to Trooper Potts Way.
- Within the Tall buildings cluster (Station Area Cluster)
- Within Flood Zone 2
- Within an air quality management area (AQMA)
- Within a smoke control zone
- Includes contaminated land
- Trooper Potts Way is a cycle route (part of a local cycle route in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) between the Thames and Station tunnel)
- There are mature trees on the Caversham Road frontage, within the application site
- Within the North of the Station cluster identified in the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD as being potentially suitable for connection to (a) heat network scheme(s).
- Caversham Road and Vastern Road are part of the Classified Highway Network (also an orbital cycle route in the LCWIP)
- Nearby Northfield Road (to the west) and De Montfort Road (to the north) are cycle routes. Northfield Road is part of a local cycle route in the LCWIP)
- Adjacent to areas safeguarded for Crossrail (to the east and south)
- Nearby residential streets to the north and west of the site are within residential controlled parking zones
- The closest Conservation Area is Market Place/London Street Conservation Area, which at its closest point is 225m to the south-east of the site.
- There are no designated heritage assets on site. The closest listed buildings are the main building of Reading Station and the Three Guineas public house, the statue of Edward VII on the Station Approach roundabout and Great Western House on Station Road (Malmaison hotel/restaurant).

- 71-73 Caversham Road (the former Drew's site) (LL15) and the entrance building to 55 Vastern Road (LL8) are locally listed buildings (therefore non-designated heritage assets). 55 Vastern Road is also subject to a current application for statutory listing, with this presently being considered by Historic England.
 - Near to the site, Tree Preservation Order 3/06 protects 7 individual trees on the south side of Vastern Road (4 adjacent to the roundabout) by the retail park.
- 1.6 As referenced at the outset, the site is part of the Policy CR11e sub-area allocation. The site is therefore also within the designated wider CR11 Station/River Major Opportunity Area (MOA). There are three separate MOAs within Central Reading, which is the focus for intensive mixed-use development. Within Central Reading it is important to be mindful of framing any proposal within the following context, as detailed at paragraph 5.2.2 of the Local Plan:

“The challenge will be to provide an appropriate scale and mix of uses that make a major contribution to meeting Reading’s needs, are viable, well connected to the core, particularly the station and the transport interchange, and that help to achieve a modern 21st century town centre while protecting and enhancing the historic interest and other special qualities of Reading”.

- 1.7 The overarching element of the CR11 policy specifies a vision which applies to each of the nine separate sub-areas (specified as A through to I) within the MOA, as follows:

Station/River Major Opportunity Area

VISION: The station/river area will be a flagship scheme, extending the centre and providing a mixed use destination in itself and centred on the new station and public transport interchange. It will integrate the transport links and areas northwards towards the River Thames and into the heart of the centre.

Figure 5: Extract from Reading Local Plan 2019

- 1.8 As well as the vision, there are also a number of policy requirements which apply to each of the nine sub-areas too. Policy CR11 states:

“Development in the Station/River Major Opportunity Area will:

- i) Contribute towards providing a high-density mix of uses to create a destination in itself and capitalise on its role as one of the most accessible locations in the south east. Development for education will be an acceptable part of the mix;*
- ii) Help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability, particularly on the key movement corridors. North-south links through the area centred on the new station, including across the IDR, are of particular importance;*
- iii) Provide developments that front onto and provide visual interest to existing and future pedestrian routes and open spaces;*
- iv) Safeguard land which is needed for mass rapid transit routes and stops;*
- v) Provide additional areas of open space where possible, with green infrastructure, including a direct landscaped link between the station and the River Thames;*
- vi) Give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and conserve and, where possible, enhance listed buildings, conservation areas and historic gardens and their settings;*

- vii) Give careful consideration to the archaeological potential of the area and be supported by appropriate archaeological assessment which should inform the development;
- viii) Demonstrate that it is part of a comprehensive approach to its sub-area, which does not prevent neighbouring sites from fulfilling the aspirations of this policy, and which contributes towards the provision of policy requirements that benefit the whole area, such as open space; and
- ix) Give early consideration to the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrades where required.

1.9 The sub-area the application site is located within is referenced as ‘North of Station’, with the specific sub-area policy stating:

CR11e, NORTH OF STATION:
There will be retail and leisure development on the ground floor activating the streets and spaces including the new northern station square, with other uses including residential and offices on upper floors. Retail will have good pedestrian links to, and will not have a detrimental impact on, the rest of the retail core of the centre. Public car parking will be provided. A high quality route incorporating a green link should be provided through to the Thames. Development should take account of mitigation required as a result of a Flood Risk Assessment, and should consider opportunities to open up the culverted Vastern Ditch and enhance it as an ecological feature.

Site size: 6.71 ha Indicative potential: 640-960 dwellings, 50,000-80,000 sq m net gain of offices, 3,000-6,000 sq m net gain of retail and leisure, hotel.

Figure 6: Extract from Reading Local Plan 2019

1.10 The application site forms the south-western part of this sub-area, with land to the north and east under separate ownership, as illustrated below:

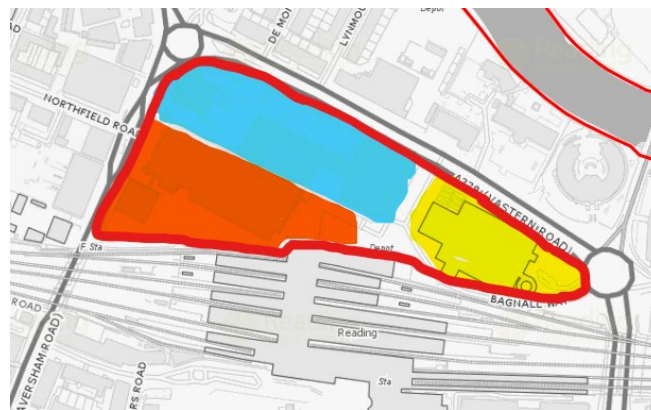
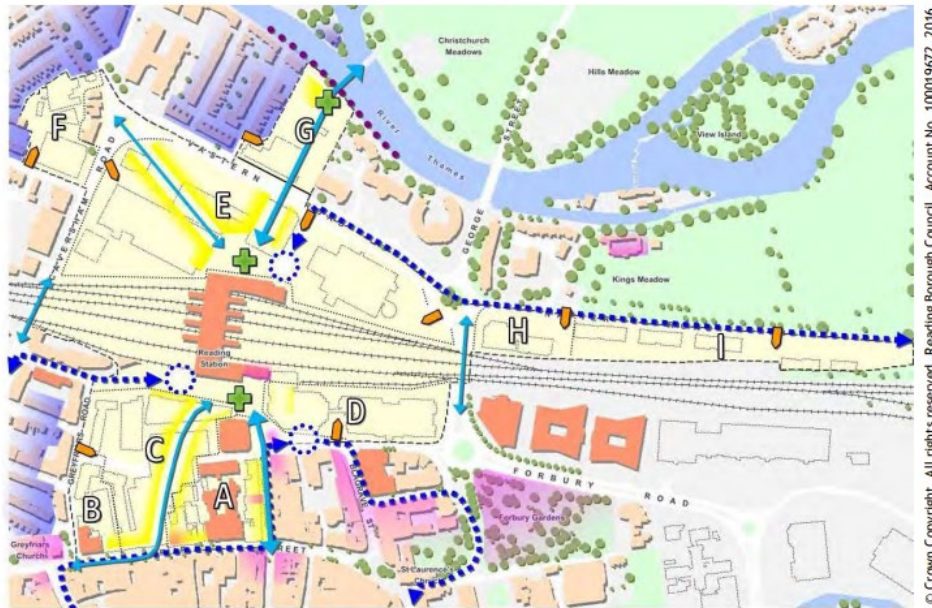


Figure 7: Visualisation of different land ownerships in CR11e

1.11 The Aviva owned Vastern Court Reail Park (highlighted blue) is presently subject to a planning appeal (see relevant history below). The multi-storey car park (highlighted in yellow) has not been subject to any current or recent planning application.

1.12 A visual overview of the Station/River MOA Strategy as a whole is as specified at figure 5.3 of the Local Plan, as detailed below in figure 8. The application site was the subject of an outline planning approval granted in 2012 (see relevant history below), but this has since lapsed.



Key		Sub-Areas
-----	Sub-area boundary	A CR11a: Friar Street and Station Road
■	Major Opportunity Area	B CR11b: Greyfriars Road Corner
□	Footprint of existing building in Major Opportunity Area	C CR11c: Station Hill and Friars Walk
■	Existing building	D CR11d: Brunel Arcade and Apex Plaza
■	Recent building or building under construction	E CR11e: North of the Station
■	Nearby sensitive location—low-rise residential	F CR11f: West of Caversham Road
■	Nearby sensitive location—heritage assets	G CR11g: Riverside
+	New area of open space	H CR11h: Napier Road Corner
▶	Vehicle access point	I CR11i: Napier Court
↔	Key movement corridor (pedestrian and/or cycle)	
⊙	Location of transport interchange	
→	Proposed Mass Rapid Transit route	
⋯	Retained or new public access along waterways	
■	Activation of key routes and spaces with town centre uses	

Figure 5.3: Station/River Major Opportunity Area Strategy

Figure 8: Extract from Reading Local Plan 2019

2. PROPOSALS

2.1 The proposals have been subject to numerous changes since the original application submission. The current proposals seek Outline Planning Permission, providing details on all matters except Appearance, which is the sole Reserved Matter. Accordingly, the outline application does consider matters of Access, Landscaping, Layout and Scale, with such details submitted and assessed accordingly.

2.2 In terms of Appearance (clarified as including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture) this is 'reserved' for later determination, despite the applicant submitting 'indicative' elevation plans and associated visual material within the Design and Access Statement. Accordingly, to clarify, Appearance matters have not been assessed and will only be considered at Reserved Matters stage should Outline Permission be granted.

2.3 The 2021 amended description of development is as follows:

Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale for redevelopment proposal involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 - 24 storeys in height, providing 620 (72 x studio, 196x1, 320x2 & 32x3-bed) residential units (Class C3), office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor shop (Class A1), financial and professional services (Class A2) or restaurant/café (Class A3) uses, a

community centre (Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking (94 spaces (70 at basement level)), servicing, public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (amended description).

2.4 In short, the proposals involve the comprehensive redevelopment of the site, barring the retention of an existing sub-station in the very north-west corner of the site. Following the demolition of all existing buildings the proposals comprise the erection of a series of buildings, broadly set out in the pattern of two large urban ‘perimeter blocks’ of development, as shown below. The proposals are for a mix of uses, although they are predominantly residential and office led.

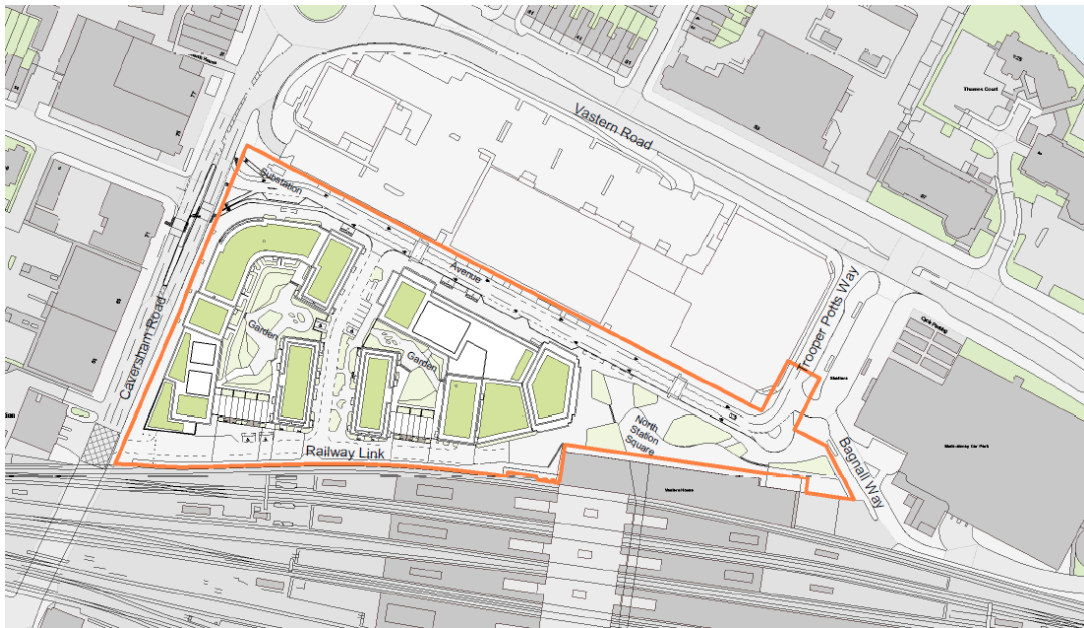


Figure 9: Extract of Proposed Site Location Plan with Application Boundary A11113 C 2 003 Rev P4, as received 22/02/2022

2.5 Each building has been individually titled A - H, J and TH1 - TH2, as shown below in figure 10:

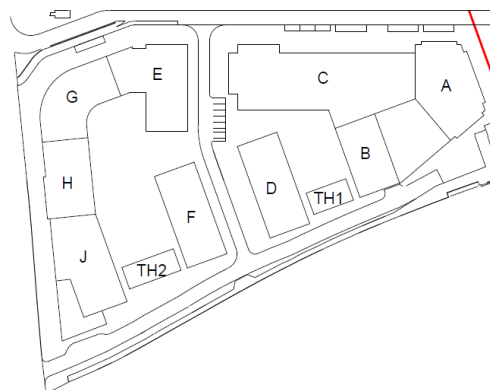


Figure 10: Titles of each building

2.6 Details of each proposed building in terms of the proposed number of storeys, maximum height and proposed uses is detailed below in Table 1. In summary, the height of the buildings are greatest on the east side of the site, with Building A being basement and 24 storeys in height. On the southern side of the site this scale reduces from east to west to 16 (Building B), 12 (Building D), 11 (Building F) and

8/7 (Buildings H/J) storeys. There are also two-storey townhouses between Buildings B&D and F&J on the southern side of the site. To the west of Building A on the northern side of the site the scale varies from 8 storeys (Building C) to 11 (Building E) storeys and returning to 8 (Buildings G& H) as the plot curves onto the Caversham Road frontage.

Table 1: Building by building - storeys, maximum height, uses and phase details

Building & Phase of development	Number of storeys	Maximum height	Use
A (phase 4)	Basement and 24 storeys (ground to 23 rd floor)	+114.18m AOD	Basement: car park / plant / bins / cycles Ground floor: Office/Retail/residential entrance. Upper floors: Residential
Area between A & B (phase 4)	Basement and ground floor (1 storey)	+46.63m AOD	Basement: energy centre Ground floor level: Retail and entrance to basement car park
B (phase 4)	Basement and 16 storeys (ground to 15 th floor)	+90.18m AOD	Basement: energy centre and plant Ground floor: residential entrance and associated facilities Upper floors: Residential
C (phase 4)	Basement and 8 storeys (ground to 7 th floor of office)	+73.18m AOD	Basement: car park, office refuse, cycles and shower/changing Ground floor: Office / 'Health club' / retail Upper floors: Office
D (phase 4)	12 (ground to 11 th floor)	+77.18m AOD	Residential
E (phase 6)	Basement and 11 storeys (ground to 10 th floor)	+74.18m AOD	Basement plant and storage Ground floor: Retail and residential Upper floors: Residential
F (phase 6)	11 storeys (ground to 10 th floor)	+74.18m AOD	Residential
G (phase 6)	8 (ground to 7 th floor)	+66.18m AOD	Ground floor: 'Health centre' and residential Upper floors: Residential
H (phase 6)	8 (ground to 7 th floor)	+68.18m AOD	Ground floor: 'Community centre' and residential Upper floors: Residential
J (phase 6)	Basement and part 5, part 7 storeys (ground to 6 th floor of offices)	+66.68m AOD;	Basement: office refuse, cycles and shower/changing. Ground floor and above: Office
TH1 (phase 4)	2 (ground and first floors)	+48.64 AOD;	Residential townhouses
TH2 (phase 6)	2 (ground and first floors)	+48.64 AOD	Residential townhouses

2.7 Buildings C and J are proposed for Class B1 office use, totalling 19,729sqm (GEA) in total (as seen in table 2 below). Flexible retail retail uses (Class A1/2/3) are proposed at ground floor level at Buildings A, C and E on the eastern and northern frontages of the site, totalling 1,752sqm floorspace in total. A health centre (Class

D1) use is proposed at ground floor level at Building G (the north-west corner of the site, visible from Caversham Road), a community centre use (Class D1) is proposed at Building H fronting onto Caversham Road and a health club (Class D1) use is proposed at ground floor level of Building C.

Table 2: Floorspace of non-residential units (sq m GEA figures)

Building	Class B1 Office	Flexible Class A1/A2/A3	Class D1 community centre	Class D1 health use
A	13,220*	897		
C		650		268
E		205		
G				311
H			198	
J	6,509			
Totals	19,729	1,752	198	579

*The ground floor entrance is within Building A, but merges into Building C

2.8 The remainder of the development is proposed for residential uses, amounting to a floorspace of 55,705sqm (GEA) with 620 residential units proposed in total. 98 of these will be affordable housing units, within Buildings G (53 Reading Affordable Rented units) and H (45 Shared Ownership units). This equates to a 15.81% provision of on-site affordable housing.

2.9 The proposed mix of unit sizes seeks 43.23% (268 in numbers) studio or 1-bedroom units, 51.61% (320) 2-bedroom units and 5.16% (32) 3-bedroom units. The building by building breakdown is provided below in Table 3. The overwhelming majority of the units proposed are single-floor flats, although two duplex units are proposed at ground/first floor level of both Buildings D and F. Furthermore, two sets of 3-bedroom townhouses are proposed between the larger flatted blocks on the southern side of the site, providing 7 family sized single dwellinghouses.

Table 3 - Residential mix - building by building

Building & tenure	Studio	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	Total
A (Private)	12	74	87	10	183
B (Private)	30	15	45	-	90
D (Private)	14	13	46	7	80
E (Private)	3	49	35	2	89
F (Private)	13	12	42	6	73
G (Reading Affordable Rented)	-	11	42	-	53
H (Shared Ownership)	-	22	23	-	45
TH1 (Private)	-	-	-	3	3
TH2 (Private)	-	-	-	4	4
Total	72	196	320	32	620
Total %	11.61%	31.61%	51.61%	5.16%	15.81% affordable / 84.19% private market housing

2.10 A main new access point off Caversham Road (in the north-west corner of the site) creates a new highway connection route. This is referenced in the submission as 'The Avenue' and runs west-to-east to connect to the station entrance and Trooper Potts Way. Caversham Road will act as a left-in only route for vehicles, with entry and exit possible via Trooper Potts Way (as per the 2012 outline permission arrangement). The Avenue is the primary pedestrian and vehicular route within the site, with two secondary routes also provided. Within the site, a single north-south vehicular route (referenced as 'Middle Road') leads around to a secondary vehicular route (referenced as 'Railway Link', which leads to the basement car park beneath Buildings A-C. Access back onto Caversham Road from Railway Link is precluded through the use of lockable bollards, which will enable Network Rail and emergency access when required. Whilst secondary in the urban hierarchy, Railway Link does also provide a further pedestrian link to Caversham Road. 70 basement parking spaces are provided, with 24 at surface level, equating to a total of 94 parking spaces across the site.

2.11 The routes through the site will be landscaped, with the Avenue being a particular focus of public realm works, as detailed in figure 11 below. The Avenue is tree lined and leads into a reconfigured Station Square, which seeks to provide an enhanced public space at the entrance to the station and the site. In addition to these two primary spaces, private shared courtyard spaces are provided within the middle spaces of the two main residential blocks, each including play spaces and space for relaxing. There are also small individual rear amenity spaces for each of the seven townhouses proposed.

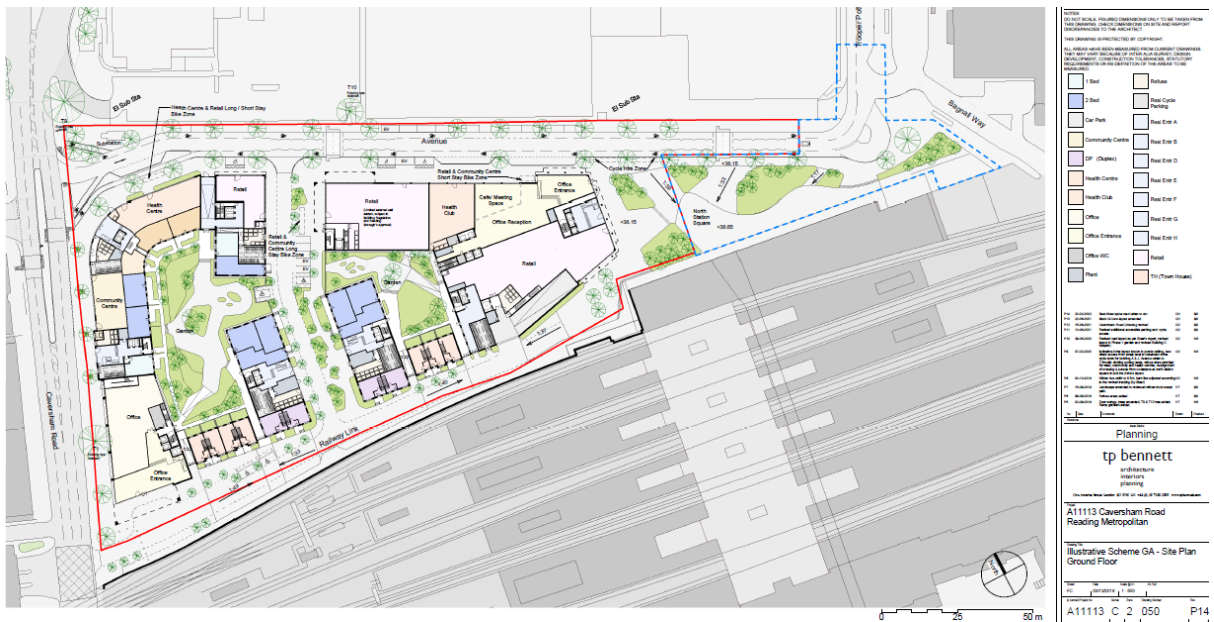


Figure 11: A11113 C 2 050 Rev P14 - Illustrative Scheme GA - Site Plan Ground Floor, as received 22/02/2022

2.12 The applicant has provided details of the proposed phasing of the proposed development (see figure 12 below), with phase 1 comprising demolition of all existing buildings and structures. Phase 2 comprises the superstructure works for future phase 4. Phase 3 comprises the construction of the west-east Avenue vehicular route, together with the landscaping and public realm works outside Reading Station. Phase 4 comprises Buildings A-D & TH1, together with the north-south access, landscaping and public realm around these buildings. Phase 5&6 comprise the superstructure and full construction of Buildings E-H, J & TH2,

together with the landscaping and public realm around these buildings in the western part of the site.

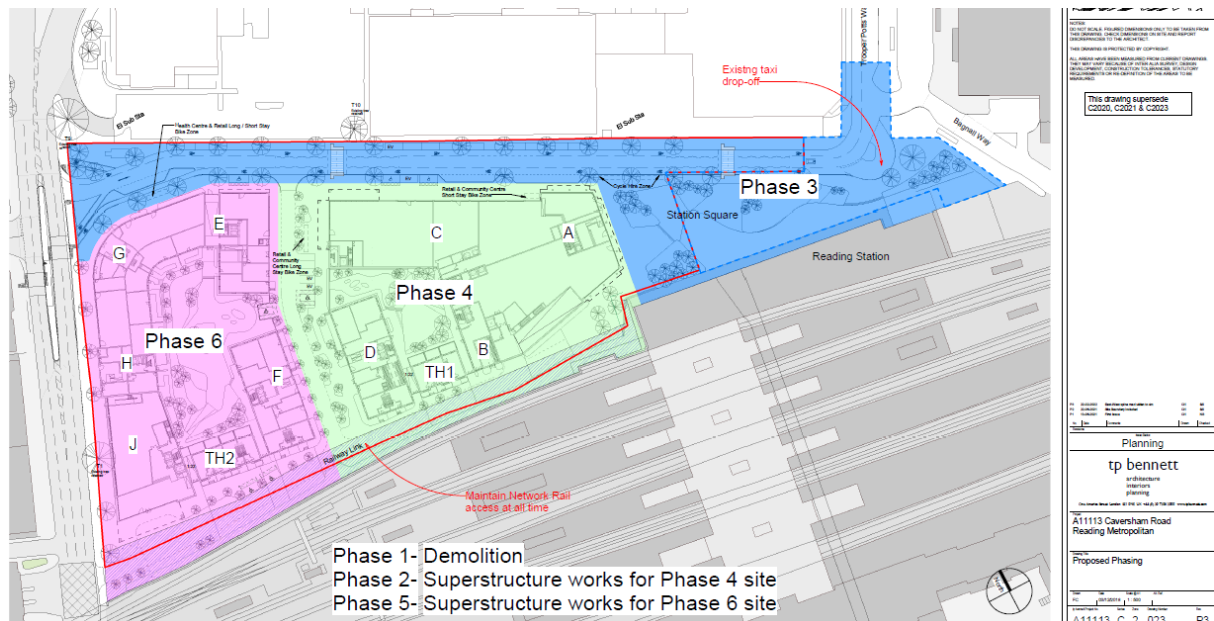


Figure 12: Phasing Plan A11113 C 2 023 Rev P3, as received 22/02/2022 - the applicant defines superstructure as “All work to the buildings in creating the structure and finishes above ground floor slab level”

- 2.13 There have been a number of changes made during the lifetime of the application, since it was originally validated in April 2019. These are summarised at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.14 To clarify, all land uses referred to are those which existed prior to the September 2020 Amendment to the Use Classes Order. This is because the application was received prior to that date and the requirements are that the application should be determined on that basis. Once implemented and the uses commenced they would then fall under the ‘new’ post-September 2020 version. For example Classes A1, A2 and A3 would be new Class E.
- 2.15 In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the applicant duly completed a CIL liability form as part of the submission of this application. This has been updated during the course of the application to reflect the various changes made to the scheme. The applicant has indicated that the existing buildings were last occupied on 01/02/2018, meaning it does not qualify for the existing floorspace to be deducted from the future CIL liability. The Council’s Infrastructure Monitoring Officer provided comments on the anticipated liability in July 2021, which based on the officer’s floorspace figures equalled £9,592,410.20 without any social housing relief being applied (which would occur later in the process). If the social housing relief was applied, again based on the officer’s figures, the liability would reduce to £8,228,185.40. Based on the applicant’s figures provided in June 2021 the liability with no relief would be £9,258,838.35, reducing to £7,943,571.32 with relief calculated. As such, there are differences in the figures depending on the exact calculation and methodology of the proposed floorspace, which for a scheme of this size and nature is a complex matter with numerous variables. Furthermore, all of these figures were based on the 2021 CIL rates, which have been recalculated for 2022. Both the residential and office charges are slightly lower in 2022 than they were in 2021 (due to the yearly indexation figures changing). As such, in due course the exact figures will be calculated with a hopefully agreed methodology

with the applicant, but as a broad guide the CIL liability with social housing relief applied is anticipated to be around £8,000,000 (eight million pounds).

3. PLANNING HISTORY

Application site

- 3.1 The site has a long planning history with numerous applications associated with the Royal Mail use. The following are considered to be of most relevance:
- 3.2 84/TP/340 - General industrial buildings for the Post Office mechanised letter sorting operation together with workshops, ancillary administration offices, car parking, parking for large vehicles and servicing areas with associated access to Caversham Road and Vastern Road. Outline permission granted 25/05/1984 (decision notice is also dated 01/06/1984).
- 3.3 84/TP/512 - General industrial buildings for the Post Office mechanised letter sorting operation together with workshops, ancillary administration offices, car parking, parking for large vehicles and servicing areas with associated access to Caversham Road and Vastern Road. Reserved matters approved 22/06/1984 (decision notice is also dated 10/07/1984).
- 3.4 091218 (alternative reference 09/00773/FUL) - Construction of temporary access onto Caversham Road. Application for Prior Approval under Part II of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) order 1995. Prior Approval Granted 01/07/2009.
- 3.5 100912 - Request for a Screening Opinion in respect of the redevelopment of the Former Royal Mail Distribution Centre for a mix of uses. Screening Opinion issued 24/05/2010.
- 3.6 101066 - Request for a Scoping Opinion for the redevelopment of the former Royal Mail Distribution Centre for a mix of uses. Scoping Opinion issued 24/05/2010.
- 3.7 110024 (alternative reference 11/00276/OUT) - Outline planning application with all matters reserved with the exception of means of access, for the demolition of existing buildings; site preparation; and redevelopment of the application site for a mix of uses from amongst employment and business uses (use class B1) and residential accommodation (C3); Hotel (C1), retail floor space (A1), food and drink uses (A3, A4 and A5), leisure uses (D2), car parking, public and private open space, landscaping works, highways, access and associated works. Outline permission granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 26/03/2012.
- 3.8 121483 (alternative reference 12/01101/CLP) - Class B8 with ancillary offices and car parking. Certificate of Lawfulness issued following completion of s106 legal agreement 05/10/2012.
- 3.9 180146 - Request for a Scoping Opinion. Scoping Opinion issued 29/03/2018.

Nearby applications also of relevance

- 3.10 Vastern Court, Caversham Road (referenced elsewhere as the Aviva site or Vastern Road/Court Retail Park)

200328 - Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. A demolition phase and phased redevelopment (each phase being an independent act of development) comprising a flexible mix of the following uses, Residential(Class C3 and including PRS), Offices (Use Class B1(a), development in Use Classes A1, A2, A3(retail), A4(public house), A5 (take away), D1 and D2(community and leisure), car parking, provision of new plant and renewable energy equipment, creation of servicing areas and provision of associated services, including waste, refuse, cycle storage, and lighting, and for the laying out of the buildings, routes and open spaces within the development, and all associated works and operations including but not limited to demolition, earthworks, provision of attenuation infrastructure, engineering operations. Appeal (Ref APP/E0345/W/21/3289748) under non-determination lodged 23/12/2021. Application reported to Planning Applications Committee on 15/02/2022, whereby members resolved that had they been able to determine the planning application they would have refused outline planning permission. Appeal scheduled to be heard via Public Inquiry commencing in April 2022.

3.11 55 Vastern Road (referenced elsewhere as the former SSE / Berkeley Homes site)

200188 - Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road. Refused 09/04/2021/ Appeal (Ref APP/E0345/W/21/3276463) against refusal lodged and Public Inquiry took place October-November 2021. Appeal allowed 17/03/2022.

3.12 Station Hill

Plot F and North site

192032/HYB - Hybrid application comprising (i) application for Full Planning Permission for Phase 2 (Plot G and public realm) including demolition of existing structures, erection of an eighteen storey building containing office use (Class B1) and flexible retail, non-residential institution and assembly and leisure uses (Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2). Provision of podium deck, vehicular access and parking. New public open space and landscaping. Bridge link over Garrard St and (ii) Application for Outline Planning Permission for Phase 3 (all Matters reserved) for four building plots (A, B, C and D). Demolition of existing buildings and structures. Mixed-use redevelopment comprising residential dwellings (Class C3), hotel (Class C1), residential institutions (Class C2), office use (Class B1). Flexible Retail, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food takeaways, non-residential institutions and assembly and leisure (Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2). Provision of podium deck and basement storey running beneath Phase 2 and 3. Formation of pedestrian and vehicular access. Means of access and circulation and car parking within the site. Provision of new public open space and landscaping. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 22/07/2021.

201536/VAR - Outline application (pursuant to Section 73 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990) for mixed use redevelopment of the site through the demolition and alteration of existing buildings and erection of new buildings & structures to provide Offices (Use Class E (g)(i) and (g) (ii)), a range of town centre uses including retail and related uses (Use Class E (a),(b) and (c); Drinking establishments (sui generis) and Hot food takeaways (sui generis)), leisure and community (Use Class E (d), (e), and (f); Class F.1; Class F.2; and Theatres;

Cinemas; Concert Halls; Bingo Halls; Dance Halls (sui generis)), and residential units (Use Class C3), associated infrastructure, public realm works and ancillary development (all matters reserved) as permitted by planning permission 190441 granted on 6 December 2019 (as amended). Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 22/07/2021.

201533/REM - Application for the approval of reserved matters (access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) and submission of details (Conditions 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 52) for Plot F within the development site known as Station Hill, submitted pursuant to the Outline Planning Application ref. 201536/VAR. The proposals comprise the construction of a ground plus 12 storey building comprising 184 Build to Rent residential units, 762 sqm (GEA) of flexible retail, leisure and business floorspace (Use Class E, Sui Generis, F.1 and F.2), cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 23/07/2021.

Plot E

201532/VAR - Outline application under s.73 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 with all matters reserved for mixed use redevelopment of Plot E of the Station Hill site and neighbouring Telecom House site (48 to 51 Friar Street & 4 to 20 Garrard Street) to comprise the demolition of existing buildings and erection of new buildings/ structures to provide residential units (Use Class C3), a range of town centre uses, including retail and related uses (Use Class E (a),(b) and (c); Drinking establishments (sui generis) and Hot food takeaways (sui generis)), and leisure uses (Use Class E (d), (e), and (f); Class F.1; Class F.2; and Theatres; Cinemas; Concert Halls; Bingo Halls; Dance Halls (sui generis)), associated infrastructure, public realm works and ancillary development as permitted by planning permission 190442 granted on 6 December 2019 (as amended). Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 22/07/2021.

201537/REM - Application for the approval of reserved matters (access, scale, appearance, layout and landscaping) and submission of details (Conditions 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 30, 34 and 62(i)) for Plot E within development site known as Station Hill, submitted pursuant to the Outline Planning Application ref. 201532/VAR. The proposals comprise the construction of a 12 storey building, plus basement storey, comprising 415 Build to Rent residential units, 722 sqm (GEA) of flexible commercial and leisure (Use Class E (a),(b) (c),(d),(e), (f), (g)(i), and (g)(ii), Use Class F.1 and Use Class F.2); the following sui generis uses: Drinking establishments; Hot food takeaways; Theatres; Cinemas; Bingo Halls and Dance Halls; cycle storage, car parking, servicing, plant areas, landscaping, new public realm and other associated works. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 23/07/2021.

3.13 Thames Quarter - Kings Meadow Road

162166 - Erection of a part 12 storey, part 23 storey building comprising 315 apartments in a mix of studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and 3-bedroom units; residents' lounges, tech-hub, dining room, and cinema room, various rooftop outdoor amenity spaces, concierge/reception with coffee meeting area, residents' storage facilities, postroom, ancillary back-of-house facilities, 315 secure cycle parking spaces, 49 car parking spaces, landscaping, and associated works. Demolition of existing multi-storey car park. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 23/11/2017.

3.14 71-73 Caversham Road (former Drews The Ironmonger site)

191792 - Demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 44 residential units consisting of x5 affordable units, 194sqm of retail floorspace (Use Class A1) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping. Refused 16/10/2020. Appeal (Ref APP/E0345/W/20/3263270) against refusal lodged and dismissed at appeal 14/05/2021.

3.15 29-35 Station Road

181930 - Demolition of the existing vacant 6-storey retail and office building and erection of a replacement basement and part 4, part 22 (with rooftop plant above) storey building to provide flexible retail (Class A1, A2 or A3) use at part ground floor level, a 135-bedroom hotel (Class C1) at 1st to 16th floors and offices (Class B1a) at 17th to 21st floors, associated servicing from Garrard Street and other associated works (amended description). Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 29/10/2019.

4. CONSULTATIONS

1) RBC Transport Development Control

4.1.1 The Transport Development Control section has provided a series of comments throughout the lifetime of the application, with the final comments from February 2022 being included in full as Appendix 2 to this report. In summary, the scheme has been amended to take into account various transport-based comments during the application. Following revisions there are no transport objections to the proposal subject to conditions and s106 legal agreement requirements, as detailed within the overall officer recommendation above and Appendix 2 below.

2) RBC Environmental Protection

4.2.1 Original consultation in 2019: In summary, Environmental Protection officers are satisfied with the proposals, subject to a range of planning conditions being applied.

4.2.2 More specifically in terms of the noise impact on development, it is confirmed that suitable glazing performance has been proposed. However, a planning condition is recommended for this to be assessed in more detail, to ensure the standards will be met (e.g. to ensure rail noise from higher levels of accommodation and the frequency of noise are fully considered).

4.2.3 With regards to noise and disturbance from the proposed development, no details of any proposed plant have yet been submitted, so details will be secured via condition. Delivery and servicing plans will also be required for non-residential units, with hours of collections separately controlled via condition. Noise, dust and disturbance during demolition/construction will be managed through the demolition and construction method statement condition. Standard working hours and the prevention of burning waste on site are also recommended. In addition to noise concerns, odours will similarly be managed through planning conditions.

4.2.4 In terms of contaminated land, the phase 2 site investigation undertaken in 2012 identified some hotspots of contamination. The risk assessment and remediation

strategy will need to be updated to take into account the new layout of the site. Accordingly, the standard 4-stage contaminated land condition is recommended, to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.

- 4.2.5 With regards to air quality, mechanical ventilation has been recommended to protect certain new occupants where the NO₂ objective levels are predicted to be exceeded. A planning condition will be required to ensure the further details of this mechanical ventilation system are submitted for approval. In terms of potential increased emissions as a result of the development, the assessment concludes that there will not be a significant NO₂ impact on local sensitive receptors. The conclusion is that NO₂ levels will not be above the NO₂ objective level at any of the receptors. However, questions have been raised by officers as to whether modelling has been verified against monitored levels. This was not clarified by the applicant and it is therefore entirely necessary for a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition to secure a complete air quality assessment, and if appropriate, a mitigation strategy too.
- 4.2.6 In the event permission is recommended, a series of conditions should therefore be secured from an Environmental Protection perspective, as identified above and within the overall officer recommendation at the outset of this report.
- 4.2.7 Re-consultation in 2020: No further response required over and above previous comments.

3) RBC Housing

- 4.3.1 Original consultation in 2019: Broad support for the provision of 97 on-site affordable housing units, whilst noting that this is below the 30% on-site requirement and the need for discussions concerning the tenure breakdown, size and exact location of the proposed units.
- 4.3.2 Re-consultation in 2020: Significant disappointment that the affordable housing offer has been removed, given the clear policy requirement and need within Reading.
- 4.3.3 Further response in 2021 (following the re-introduction of on-site affordable housing within the scheme): The proposed offer of 98 on site affordable housing units (11x1-bed and 42x2-bed Reading Affordable Rent units within Block G and 22x1-bed and 23x2-bed shared ownership units within Block H) is fully supported and welcomed in principle. Although the tenure breakdown is not in full compliance with the Affordable Housing SPD, the inclusion of 'Reading Affordable Rent' is particularly welcomed. Any future S106 legal agreement should include a cascade mechanism, so should there be difficulties with a registered provider taking on the units, this would need to be evidenced in full and offered to the Council too to take on.

4) RBC Valuations / BPS Chartered Surveyors (in conjunction with RBC Valuations)

- 4.4.1 The proposals have been subject to extensive discussions and negotiations with the applicant since the original submission in 2019. This has included BPS Chartered Surveyors being instructed on behalf of RBC Valuations to provide reviews of the affordable housing viability information submitted by the applicant. In short, whilst acknowledging some viability-based difficulties associated with the site, officers strongly challenged the original affordable housing offer (98 units within a 658 unit

scheme = 14.89% - with no deferred contribution mechanism), and the subsequent revised offer (in June 2020) which reduced to a nil on-site affordable housing.

- 4.4.2 In response to officer concerns the applicant further revised the affordable housing offer in 2021 to the on-site provision of 98 units / 15.81% (11x1-bed and 42x2-bed Reading Affordable Rent units within Block G and 22x1-bed and 23x2-bed shared ownership units within Block H), together with a deferred contribution mechanism, which itself is in two stages. This has been agreed through considerable discussions between the parties, with the subsequent draft Heads of Terms for a s106 legal agreement being agreed as per the recommendation at the outset of this report.
- 4.4.3 In particular, the baseline position of providing 98 on-site affordable housing units is welcomed, demonstrating a minimum commitment to 15.81% on-site provision. Moreover, the nature and structure of the staged deferred mechanism in this case is strongly supported, with it particularly noted that the second stage will be upon occupation of 80% of the open-market residential units. This taking place at such a (relatively) late stage in the process will increase the likelihood of the Council being able to share in any subsequent uplift in actual value at the site.
- 4.4.4 In the context of a challenging viability climate, the negotiated provision of both a considerable amount of on-site affordable housing, supported by a two-stage deferred contribution mechanism to capture any future betterment in profitability, represents a significant improvement over either the original or initial revised offers by the applicant. The proposal provides as close to the Policy H3 30% on-site Affordable Housing policy target amount as possible. In the context of an acknowledged challenging viability position, as agreed by both RBC Valuations and BPS Chartered Surveyors, the proposed offer is considered to be robust and is strongly supported.

5) RBC Planning Natural Environment

- 4.5.1 Original consultation in 2019: As means of background, the proposal offers the opportunity to improve this primary site adjacent to the station and in terms of open space/landscaping, it would appear that the provision is appropriate. The development should, in accordance with the Reading Station Area Framework (RSAF) provide the visual and physical north-south link from the Station to the river. It was advised during pre-application discussions in 2016 that the site is within a 10% or less canopy cover area and as such proposals must result in a net increase in tree cover and should aim to retain good quality, established trees. As a town centre location, close to the IDR/Caversham Road, the site is likely to suffer from high pollution levels therefore tree provision on the Caversham Road frontage will be important to help filter the pollution.
- 4.5.2 Initial concerns were raised in relation to the lack of a full condition survey of existing trees along Caversham Road (within the application site), with the original proposals appearing to indicate the removal of all trees. Concerns were also raised in respect of ambiguity in terms of replacement planting along Caversham Road. Concerns were also raised in respect of the low levels of sunlight entering the courtyard gardens on the spring equinox.
- 4.5.3 In terms of the soft landscape areas, these are broken down into zones with the west-east Avenue consisting of lines of Liquidambar, the Station Square with Liquidambar and Birch, Middle Street & Railway Walk with ornamental Pear and the roof terraces with multi-stem Amelanchier - all incorporating shrub planting in addition to trees. Substantial green roofs are also included, as required by the

RSAF. The tree species are consistent with that proposed in the Station Hill (Plots E & F) proposals. However, it was suggested that further species are introduced to either Middle Street or Railway Walk to add diversity.

- 4.5.4 The North-south line (the 'spine', as it's referred to in the RSAF) is stated in that document to be a green link to the river - the proposals potentially allow this (within their site boundary), although further details will be secured via condition to ensure this aligns with any permissions which may be in place at that time in respect of the neighbouring sites to the north.
- 4.5.5 On the basis of the initial comments from the Natural Environment officer, the applicant submitted an Arboricultural Assessment and Method Statement in July 2019, confirming the proposed removal of one category 'B' tree (normally expected to be retained), 3 category 'C' trees and one group of category 'C' trees along Caversham Road. Following further discussions with officers, the category 'B' Norway Maple tree has been subsequently proposed to be retained, which is considered positive, albeit it appears future pruning will be required to allow for development and thereafter maintain a sustainable relationship between the building and tree. Three further trees were already to be retained along the Caversham Road frontage (1 category 'B' and 2 category 'C'). The newly proposed trees along the Caversham Road frontage will be planted in planters owing to the relocated culvert at this point. In overall terms, whilst improvements have been made since the original submission, the loss of existing trees is disappointing and appears to be justified by the applicant due to the location of the proposed building plots, rather than the development coming forward taking into account all existing trees.
- 4.5.6 Re-consultation in 2020: No further comments to those raised in 2019, which facilitated the submission of more information and revised proposals (incorporating the retention of a greater number of existing trees than was originally proposed along the Caversham Road frontage).
- 4.5.7 Further comments in 2021: In the event that permission is recommended to be granted, a series of conditions will be required. Given the length of time since submissions, the Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) is now out of date and an updated AMS will be secured via condition. The landscaping, although explored in some depth at the outset, is now out of date in view of the RBC newly adopted Tree Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plans (both adopted March 2021), so instead of securing the details submitted, conditions to secure details will be required. This will also ensure that the development's hard and soft landscaping in the Station Square aligns with any permissions which may be granted on sites to the north prior to the submission of such details. Long-term maintenance will also need to be secured. Accordingly, recommended conditions are referenced in the recommendation at the outset of the report.

6) RBC Historic Buildings Consultant

- 4.6.1 Original consultation in 2019: There are no designated heritage assets within the site. The Environmental Statement identifies the settings of a number designated heritage assets may be affected by the proposed development, including the follow:
- Grade II Listed Main Building at Reading General Station, c. 125 m to the south east of the site (A);
 - Grade II Listed Statue of King Edward VII, c. 200 m to the south (B);

- Recommendation that any Class A3 licensed premises should restrict opening hours to 2300hrs due to the residential nature of the site and the issues around potential public nuisance and crime and disorder.
- 4.7.2 A later response in 2019 raised queries in terms of the interaction between the station square area and street traders in this location.
- 4.7.3 Re-consultation in 2020: Queries raised in relation to taxi facilities adjacent to the station and the inclusion of street trading pitches outside the station entrance.
- 8) RBC Emergency Planning**
- 4.8.1 Original consultation in 2019: Given this application is within Flood Zone 2, the main potential concern regarding this development is reference to a basement. The following is therefore suggested:
- 1) No below ground habitation
 - 2) A form of dry access from the development to the raised pavement under the bridge should be explored to ensure dry access can be provided.
 - 3) No displacement of floodwater should occur
- 4.8.2 Re-consultation in 2020: No response.
- 9) RBC Ecology Consultant (GS Ecology)**
- 4.9.1 Original consultation in 2019: The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Applied Ecology Ltd, December 2018) submitted with this application, has been undertaken to an appropriate standard.
- 4.9.2 In terms of existing habitats on site, none are not “Priority Habitats” (as defined by the NPPF) and the report concludes that the habitats are of limited ecological value. There are no bat related constraints as the existing buildings have been assessed as having “negligible” potential for use by roosting bats. In relation to other wildlife, the proposals will not affect other protected or priority species.
- 4.9.3 Turning to the proposed landscaping, two landscaping documents show the general layout of the proposals and appear to be satisfactory in principle; however further details would need to be provided either prior to determination or via a planning condition.
- 4.9.4 With regard to ecological enhancements, as per the recommendations given in the report and in accordance with paragraph 175 of the NPPF, which states that “opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged” a condition should be set to ensure that enhancements for wildlife are provided within the new development.
- 4.9.5 In relation to lighting, it is considered necessary for a condition to secure details of the proposed external lighting scheme, in order to ensure wildlife is not adversely impacted by the proposed development.
- 4.9.6 In summary, subject to the conditions referenced above, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.
- 4.9.7 Re-consultation in 2020: The original consultation response still stands unchanged.

10) RBC Sustainability / Element Energy on behalf of RBC Energy

4.10.1 Consultation in 2020: Element Energy were engaged to provide sustainability/energy advice to the local planning authority. Element Energy's initial advice in September 2020 confirmed the then proposed strategy was not compliant with RBC Policy. The applicant subsequently revised the proposed strategy. In its further review in December 2020 Element Energy summarised the proposed strategy as follows:

- "Fabric first" approach to reducing space conditioning demands through high-performance building fabric specifications;
- Residential development is served for space heating and hot water by a communal air source heat pump (ASHP) system from centralised heat pump units;
- Air-to-air heat pump technology shall supply space heating and hot water to the office non-residential development, utilising a variable refrigerant flow (VRF) or variable refrigerant volume (VRV) system;
- Mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) for reducing space conditioning fuel consumption, in both residential and non-residential development (natural ventilation is used in retail spaces only);
- 117kWp of rooftop solar PV panels are proposed to be installed, which is maximised considering space available that is not shaded or used for rooftop mechanical plant/services.

4.10.2 Element Energy confirmed that the key difference for the revised strategy was the employment of electrified heat supply via communal heat pumps, versus the previously proposed gas-fired combined heat and power approach. In addition, renewable on-site energy generation in the form of solar PV was introduced to the strategy.

4.10.3 However, further information was still required to demonstrate compliance with RBC policy. This resulted in the submission of a further updated strategy by the applicant in December 2020. Element Energy confirmed in January 2021 an overarching conclusion that the energy statement provided by the Applicant complies with RBC's energy and carbon policies. Compliance is achieved in the following ways:

- The residential part of the development likely achieves a 35% reduction in carbon emissions over Part L of the Building Regulations (2013) - some discrepancies were subsequently incorporated, with Element Energy reaffirming in February 2021 that the submission is a compliant statement;
- A "decentralised" communal heat pump system is employed for heat provision to residential units;
- The site deploys on-site renewable generation as far as is practicable via rooftop solar PV installations;
- The non-residential development is proposed to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent':

11) RBC Leisure & Recreation

4.11.1 Original consultation in 2019: The proposed mixed use development of this brownfield site is welcomed, particularly the underground basement car parking which increases potential for open space at ground level. The development should

provide an exciting opportunity to maximise the overall amount of high quality public amenity space. The uplift in floor area has enabled an increase in the overall level of amenity space, which is positive.



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





 Overall Site Total Area: 22,475 m ²	 Station Square (Pedestrian Area Only) Total Area: 3157.5 m ²	 Semi Private Courtyards (Including Play Areas and Private Gardens) Total Area: 2914.2 m ²
 Overall Public Realm Total Area: 12,020.7 m ²	 Middle Street Amenity Area Total Area: 595.5 m ²	 Courtyard Play Areas Total Area: 436 m ²
 The Avenue Amenity Area Total Area: 1681.3 m ²	 Balconies (1935.5 m ²) and Amenity Roof Terraces (1093 m ²) Total Area: 3028.5 m ²	

Figure 14 Extracts of Proposed Open Space - HED.1354.SK004 Rev C, received 27/02/2019

4.11.2 The eight “character areas” referenced (some shown in Figure 14) comprise: Station Square; The Avenue; Square on The Avenue; Middle Street; Railway Walk; Caversham Road; Communal Gardens; and, Roof Terraces. Whilst in some respects it is unclear how each of these areas plays a central role in the public realm strategy (e.g. opportunities for improvements along Caversham Road are limited), in overall terms the delivery of high quality open space, including on site tree planting, will provide value to the public realm for both residents and visitors alike.

4.11.3 The new Station Square has been described as representing a significant new public space for Reading and one of the key gateway spaces for the town. As such it lends itself to having a large scale feature providing a focal point and sense of place. Consideration should be given to a water feature, statue or other forms of public art. The provision of public art should be secured via s106, in addition to the delivery and maintenance of all the public realm / space proposed. The exact form of the new Station Square will be secured via the proposed landscaping strategy.

4.11.4 Given the constraints (size and density) of the proposed development, it is accepted that there is limited opportunity for the provision of a local play space (LEAP, NEAP or MUGA). The inclusion of courtyard play areas is welcomed in principle, with details to be secured via condition. Furthermore, the applicant’s inclusion of private amenity areas for residents will go a small way to providing some green space within the development, but these areas appear likely to be constrained by shading.

4.11.5 As with all major developments (in the central area), there is a need to emphasise the fact that there is a shortfall of public open space in and around the town centre and that this development fails to meet recommended benchmark guidelines for the provision of equipped/designated play space and other outdoor recreational activities which should be provided on site. This will also increase the burden on sports and indoor recreation facilities. It will therefore be necessary to seek an off-site financial contribution towards leisure infrastructure improvements to make this application acceptable in planning terms.

4.11.6 Re-consultation in 2020: No further comments received.

12) Lead Local Flood Authority (Via RBC Transport, in conjunction with RBC Streetcare Services Manager - Highways)

4.12.1 Response received in February 2022: The proposed drainage strategy includes a significant reduction in run off rates from the existing and therefore the principle of the drainage strategy is deemed acceptable. However, given the uncertainty over the exact access arrangements for the site and that the drainage strategy also identifies areas to be developed during the detailed design stage it is necessary that this is dealt with by way of pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition. This will secure details of the exact Sustainable Drainage Strategy and also the associated detailed design, management and maintenance plan of surface water drainage for the site using SuDS methods. The subsequently approved strategy will then be completed prior to first occupation and managed / maintained in line with the approved strategy. With this condition secured the proposals are satisfactory.

13) RBC CCTV / Community Safety

4.13.1 Original Consultation in 2019: CCTV replied stating no objection.

4.13.2 Re-consultation in 2020: CCTV replied stating no objection.

14) RBC Access Officer; RBC Education; RBC Waste Services

4.14.1 No response received to either the original consultation in 2019 or re-consultation in 2020.

15) Berkshire Archaeology

4.15.1 Original consultation in 2019: The desk-based assessment is a fair and reasonable assessment of the archaeological potential of this site at 80 Caversham Road and Berkshire Archaeology is in agreement with the conclusions of the report; namely that the archaeological potential of this site is limited but that there are sufficient grounds to undertake some exploratory archaeological investigation. A pre-commencement (barring demolition to ground level) condition is therefore recommended for a programme of archaeological field evaluation in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, followed by a mitigation strategy if required.

4.15.2 Re-consultation in 2020: Berkshire Archaeology's advice remains unchanged.

16) Berkshire Fire and Rescue

4.16.1 Original consultation in 2019: No response.

4.16.2 Re-consultation in 2020: Series of comments received, summarised as:

- Full comment will be made when consulted under Building Regulations.
- The premises will be subject to the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Strongly recommended that the applicant takes appropriate measures to reduce the likelihood of arson.

17) BRE Daylight and Sunlight

4.17.1 Original consultation in 2019: BRE were instructed by the local planning authority to independently review the daylight and sunlight assessment submitted in support of the application. BRE's initial review in May 2019 provided a number of findings, which the applicant responded to in June 2019. BRE provided a follow up response in June 2019 confirming agreement with most of points raised by the applicant.

4.17.2 Re-consultation in 2020: A revised Daylight and Sunlight Assessment was submitted as part of the revised proposals in June 2020. A further iteration was then submitted in July 2020 following initial discussions between BRE (for the LPA) and Point 2 (for the applicant). This submission had the benefit of further information concerning the neighbouring Vastern Court Retail Park (VCRP) site. A summary of BRE's main findings from August 2020 are detailed below, together with an officer note comparing it with the BRE 2019 review conclusions (where relevant):

- The assessment has been carried out using the guidelines in the BRE Report 'Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice' (Officer note: consistent with 2019 review).
- Loss of daylight and sunlight to existing residential properties is predicted to be negligible or minor, with nearly all relevant windows meeting the BRE guidelines. There may be minor impacts on daylight distribution to four rooms with dormer windows in 37-43 Vastern Road, with loss of light only just outside the guidelines (Officer note: this is more specific than the 2019 conclusion).
- With the hypothetical massing of the VCRP scheme in place (see figure 15 below), the proposed development would cause little extra loss of daylight and sunlight to existing nearby dwellings (Officer note: this is a new conclusion, based on the 2020 review).



Figure 2. Drawing by Point 2 showing the proposed development in green/blue and the proposed Vastern Road Retail Park development behind it (in violet). In the foreground to the left in light blue is the outline massing for Station Hill, another proposed development. To the right in magenta is another smaller development at 53-55 Vastern Road.

Figure 15 - Aerial view of proposal and surrounding proposals

- The proposed development is likely to block significant daylight and sunlight to the VCRP site. Overall it can be concluded that although this proposed application scheme would reduce the daylight available to the VCRP site, the applicant's light consultant indicates (and BRE agrees) that it should still be possible, with careful daylight design, to have a scheme there with adequate daylight to the rooms on the

southern side facing the application site (Officer note: this is a more informed conclusion to the 2019 review, as more information about VCRP is known).

- Although Point 2 have not assessed the effect on sunlight to rooms in the VCRP scheme, it is likely that it should still be possible for it to receive adequate sunlight in most locations, except perhaps on the lowest floors and where there are balconies or overhangs that block the sun (Officer note: same conclusion as the 2019 review).
- Point 2's report assesses daylight provision for sample rooms within the scheme itself and also from a cumulative perspective with the hypothetical VCRP scheme in place. Of the 160 rooms analysed, 152 would meet the average daylight factor (ADF) guidelines. There are some concerns with the methodology. As this is an outline scheme one potential way forward would be to impose a condition requiring all, or a certain (large) proportion of the rooms to meet the recommendations in BS8206 Part 2 or, depending on the timing of the full scheme, BS EN 17037 (Officer note: assessment has altered between 2019-2020, but some concerns remain and the suggested condition is again recommended as before).
- Point 2 have not given sunlight data for rooms in the proposed development. The basic layout means some sunlight should be able to penetrate to most of the windows. The VCRP scheme would have little impact on sunlight as it lies to the north (Officer note: same conclusion as the 2019 review).
- There are no existing gardens for which sunlight could be affected by the proposed development (Officer note: same conclusion as the 2019 review).
- Sunlight provision in open spaces (see figure 16 below) in the proposed scheme itself is relatively poor, because of the density of the scheme with high, closely spaced blocks (Officer note: same conclusion as the 2019 review)
- In a future VCRP scheme sunlight provision is better, with two of the three main open spaces meeting the relevant guidance with both schemes in place. The deficiency in the third space is partly because of overshadowing from the application site and partly because of the nature of this space in a gap between two tall blocks within the retail park site. (Officer note: more informed conclusions reached in comparison with 2019 review, as more information is available).

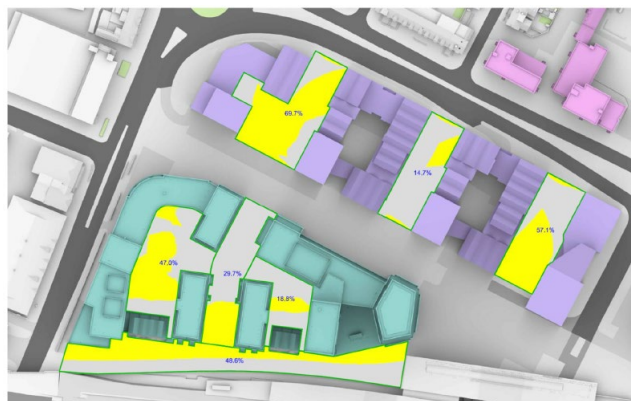


Figure 4. Sunlight in open spaces. Yellow areas could receive two hours sunlight on March 21. The percentages give the proportion of each space with more than two hours sun on that date.

Figure 16 - Sunlight in open spaces on March 21 (Spring equinox)

4.17.3 Following BRE's review, Point 2 produced a further updated report in September 2020, solely updating the sunlight in open spaces information. Based on this, BRE confirmed that the applicant had now demonstrated that the Station Square would be well sunlit, with over 80% of the space receiving 2+ hours sunlight at the spring equinox, but the same conclusions remained in terms of the two internal courtyards not meeting the standard, although the western courtyard is only marginally below the 50% requirement, at 47%.

18) BRE Wind and Microclimate

4.18.1 Original consultation in 2019: BRE were instructed by the local planning authority to independently review the wind microclimate assessment (By RWDI) submitted in support of the application. BRE's initial review in September 2019 detailed a series of concerns and limitations. A revised assessment submitted in October 2019 was further reviewed by BRE, with three points outstanding matters remaining in January 2020. A further response resulted in an updated BRE report being provided in February 2020, summarised as follows:

- The RWI report is clear and consistent.
- With the exception of a single matter of minor disagreement relating to the assessment of the pedestrian safety conditions, the RWDI updated report addresses completely all of the other concerns and matters raised by BRE.
- The BRE believes that pedestrian safety should be assessed for each month, as well as for the year as a whole (RWDI believes solely a yearly assessment is adequate). BRE advises that this is a relatively minor difference of professional opinion; there is no right or wrong answer.
- The BRE agrees with the conclusions reached by RWDI.

4.18.2 Re-consultation in 2020: When the scheme was revised in June/July 2020 RWDI submitted an addendum report, which included an updated review of the revised proposal and further analysis of the impact of cumulative schemes in the area (Vastern Court Retail Park; 55 Vastern Road; 71-73 Caversham Road (Former Drew's); Station Hill North - officer note - see relevant history section above for application details). BRE's subsequent review, provided in September 2020, included findings summarised below:

- BRE confirmed the level and nature (including the methodology) of technical addendum information submitted to be sufficient and proportionate
- BRE agrees with almost all of the RWDI opinions. The most significant point of agreement is that BRE believe that the proposed wind amelioration measures (as previously considered as part of the 2019 review) do not need to be amended in light of the changes to the scheme.
- In the context of Policy CC3, BRE confirms that RWDI has used an appropriate wind tunnel testing approach, coupled with the usage of the Lawson wind comfort and wind safety criteria. These are commercial best-practice approaches in the UK.
- With regards to ensuring that a new development does not reduce the quality of the environment for others (in the context of Policy CC8), amenity space wind comfort conditions have been developed by RWDI, and these criteria are used to assess whether test locations are suitable for this category of pedestrian usage. This approach is currently commercial best-practice in the UK.
- In the context of Policy CR10, the original scheme showed that the judicious use of architectural devices such as screens, terraces and awnings as well as façade setbacks enabled suitable ground level wind conditions to be produced around the base of the scheme buildings. The technical addendum report states that these same devices will be adopted for the updated scheme.
- Accordingly, BRE conclude that *"the analysis and conclusions reached by the technical addendum report are set within the adopted local policy context"*, which comprises Policies CC3, CC8 and CR10.
- BRE does however consider there to be 3 outstanding matters. BRE advise in the context of the overall scheme, these matters are relatively minor, or will be addressed by future testing. These relate to: Issue 1) Vastern Court Retail Park scheme potentially worsening wind conditions along the adjacent 80 Caversham Road site perimeter; Issue 2) there being a small localised region of "unsafe" wind

conditions next to Block E; Issue 3) wind impact of 71-73 Caversham Road cumulative scheme should be assessed by wind tunnel testing (Officer note: the scheme at this site was subsequently dismissed at appeal - see relevant history at section 3 above).

- 4.18.3 Responding to the final point RWDI provided further commentary in September 2020, in summary concluding that the three issues identified “*will be quantified and investigated in the detailed design stages of the project through further wind tunnel tests*”. Responding to this, BRE reaffirmed in September 2020 that these were relatively minor issues and:

“Having explained the interactive behaviours between the cumulative schemes in more detail (essentially RWDI agree with BRE’s remarks), RWDI and BRE are in agreement about this matter. Fundamentally, we both agree that further testing is required, and that this should be undertaken by means of wind tunnel testing investigations”.

19) Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)

- 4.19.1 Original consultation in 2019: Due to the distances from the nearest aerodromes, there are not believed to be any safeguarding issues. However, the viewpoints of the National Police Air Service (NPAS) and Air Ambulance Unit (AAU) were suggested to be sought owing to the heights involved.
- 4.19.2 Both were subsequently contacted, with Thames Valley AAU confirming while this is a substantial build, it is nearly 1800m away from Reading Royal Berkshire Hospital and does not have an impact on operations to that site.
- 4.19.3 Re-consultation in 2020: The CAA did not have any comments to make on the proposed application. However they make the following observations:
- In respect of any aerodrome-specific safeguarding issue, it is the aerodrome license holder or operator that holds associated safeguarding responsibility
 - Given the potential for unusual landing operations, it is advisable to consult NPAS and local AAU.
 - Crane operations associated with planned developments, including lighting and notification, should be in accordance with the Civil Aviation Authority guidance.

20) Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police (TVP)

- 4.20.1 Original consultation in 2019: Many of the observations and recommendations made through the pre-application stage have been incorporated. Pleased to note the inclusion of single cores and a design where compartmentalisation can be achieved. However, secure ground floor lobbies have not yet been included. Ask that these be included within the future reserved matters application. This relates to the apartment blocks, as access control within very large developments will be critical in creating a safe and secure community, safeguarding the building and its residents.
- 4.20.2 Re-consultation in 2020: Commend the applicant for a design and layout that provides clear lines of sight through the development and a good level of active surveillance between public and private realm has been proposed. However some concerns are raised, summarised as follows:

- Station Square - need to ensure the hostile vehicle mitigation bollard protection the station entrance should not be compromised; unclear what effect the proposal will have. Suggestion that a vehicle dynamics assessment identifies any vulnerabilities from each approach (Trooper Potts Way, Bagnall Way and The Avenue) to ensure accidental or deliberate intrusion is prevented.
- Reiterate 2019 comments that secure ground floor lobbies be provided.
- Inclusion of postal services details for each block needed within future details.
- TVP request Secured By Design principles and standards be made a condition of any future planning approval.

21) Crossrail

4.21.1 Original consultation in 2019: The application relates to land outside the limits of land subject to consultation by the Crossrail Safeguarding Direction. The implications of the Crossrail proposals for the application have been considered and Crossrail Limited do not wish to make any comments on this application as submitted.

4.21.2 Re-consultation in 2020: Identical response to the original consultation.

22) Design South East

4.22.1 The proposals were considered by Design South East in June 2018 and November 2018, when the proposals were at pre-application stage. The summary of the November 2018 advice was:

4.22.2 *“Updates since the previous review have addressed some of our concerns and greater engagement with landscape and public realm issues has benefitted the scheme. The creation of an accessible public route along Railway Walk and increased variation in the heights of the blocks is positive. The way proposals for the Avenue and Station Square are developing also shows a lot of promise. However, the updated layout presents a cause for significant concern, with the 22m wide north-south Street running through the centre of the scheme giving too great an emphasis on a route of limited use* (*Officer note: the application has reduced the width to 16-18m). The decision to kink the route away from Caversham Road means that the proposal does not support pedestrian desire lines to the wider area, and this creates a very challenging condition, with little reason for non-residents to use this route. This central portion of the site remains problematic and needs re-evaluation.*

4.22.3 *It should be demonstrated that the scheme can be resolved in a way that provides adequate daylight to all homes. Some corner units in the current proposal are a particular cause for concern, and the way north facing single aspect units can be designed out should be described.*

4.22.4 *As the proposal steps outside the grain and scale of the immediate surrounding context it places greater emphasis on design quality, and the tower in particular must be of a very high standard. However, as this is an outline application it presents a challenge in how architectural and material quality can be secured as the scheme is developed with a clear strategy needing to be agreed with the local planning authority as to how it is resolved.*

4.22.5 *The team need to demonstrate that adequate daylight and sunlight is available to all amenity spaces and surrounding public realm.”*

23) Environment Agency

4.23.1 Original consultation in 2019: In terms of contaminated land, it is recommended that an additional Phase 2 Environmental Site Investigation is undertaken to provide an assessment of the current status of soil and groundwater beneath the site and potential impacts to identified receptors. The proposed development will be acceptable if a) a remediation strategy and b) a verification report are secured via condition. Further conditions are recommended relating to securing details of any piling using penetrative methods and details of any drainage systems for the infiltration of surface water to the ground. Without these conditions the EA would object to the proposal on potential contaminated land / water pollution grounds.

4.23.2 Re-consultation in 2020: No objections subject to the previous conditions requested. Also advised the LPA to take into account FRA standing advice.

24) Historic England

4.24.1 Original consultation in 2019: Historic England (HE) provided responses in April and June 2019 seeking more information from the applicant to be able to fully assess the proposals. A subsequent response in August 2019 confirmed HE's position, summarised as:

- The nearby and recently consented schemes, such as Station Hill, would likely obscure the bulk of this development in views looking up from the St Mary's Butts/ Castle Street Conservation Area.

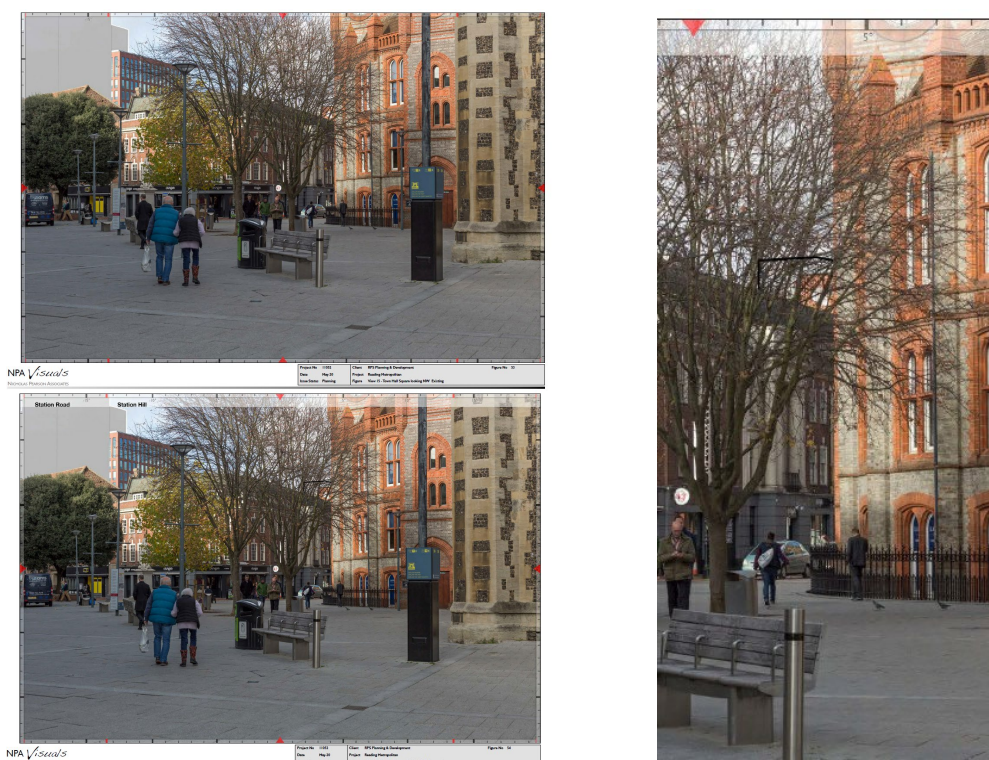


Figure 17 - View 15 of Townscape & Visual Resources Assessment (TVRA) from the Town Hall Square looking north-west - (top left) existing; (bottom left) proposed; (right) zoomed in extract of proposed showing the black line extent of the application site massing

- The highest element of the development would be visible within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area (View 15 - see figure 17 above), from views within the Town Hall Square above the small scale and fine grained townscape, in the backdrop to the Grade II* Council Chamber and Clock Tower and Grade I St

Laurence Church. The effect would introduce a vertical form that bears no relationship to the existing distinctive sense of place. The presence of existing trees within the Market Place would appear to obscure the development in some views, particularly in summer months, which does reduce the development's impact on the setting of these heritage assets somewhat, but does not, in our view, altogether remove it.

- The main visual impact the development would have on the St Peters Conservation Area would be on the descent from St Peter's Hill onto Church Road. From the elevated position on the hill the development would be visible as part of the wider Reading skyline, with the tallest element falling away behind the rooftops and tree line as the viewer descends, and would not be visible in the key conservation area views from the Grade II listed main entrance to the registered Caversham Court Gardens looking east along Church Road (View 22 - see figure 18 below). There is the potential this element will still be perceptible in glimpsed views in-between buildings. This would cause some harm, as it would signal the encroachment of intensely urban and metropolitan characteristics and the visible hardening of the conservation area's setting.

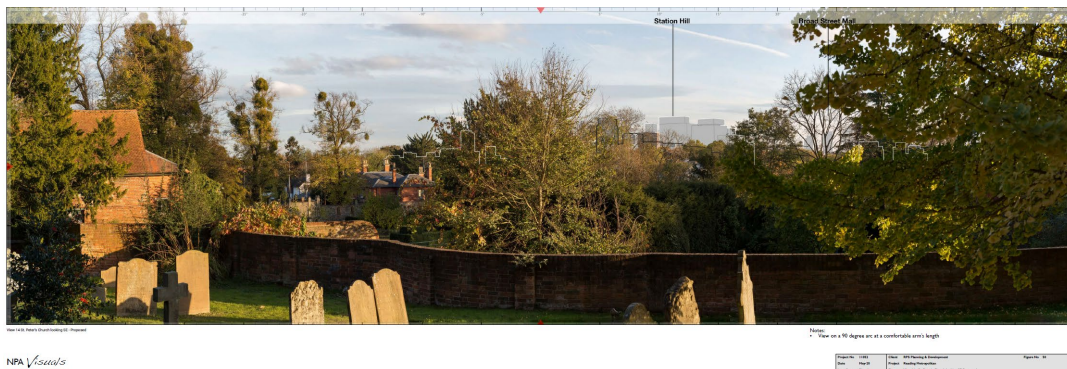


Figure 18 - View 22 - Church Road by entrance to Caversham Court Gardens and View 14 from St Peter's Church - both looking south east and showing other approved schemes.

- HE conclude that the proposals would cause harm to the setting of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area and St Peter's Conservation Area and setting of the Grade II* Council Chamber. Whilst this harm is not substantial, it is material and needs to be clearly and convincingly justified and weighed against the public benefits associated with the scheme, in accordance with paragraphs 194 and 196 of the NPPF.

4.24.2 Re-consultation in 2020: HE advised that they did not wish to offer any comments. HE suggested that the LPA seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers, as relevant.

25) Natural England

4.25.1 Original consultation in 2019: Natural England has no objection, specifying that based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites.

4.25.2 Re-consultation in 2020: Natural England specified that the advice provided in the previous response applies equally to this amendment, although they made no objection to the original proposal. The proposed amendments to the original application are unlikely to have significantly different impacts on the natural environment than the original proposal.

26) Network Rail (NR)

4.26.1 Original consultation in 2019: Network Rail (NR) initially objected (response dated 20th May 2019) on the basis of the application site including a small pocket of land in Network Rail's ownership. After correspondence with the applicant, NR provided a further response on 6th June 2019, stating that land that runs along the retaining wall is subject to negotiation and agreement for use by the applicant, and that this has yet to be finalised. However, NR also confirmed:

Network Rail formally withdraws its objection providing agreement is reached to use the land, should agreement not be reached, it should be noted that this proposal will not be able to use Network Rail's land.

4.26.2 Notwithstanding, NR also made a series of comments and requirements for the safe operation of the railway and the protection of NR's adjoining land, secured via planning conditions if not addressed at application stage. Below is a summary of the main points raised:

- Maintain access to the retaining wall;
- Any construction requiring piling will need NR approval
- Discussions with NR prior to demolition/construction works
- Disable glare risks onto NR property/signals from facades/windows
- Need to retain the Station Hostile Vehicle Measures
- Control of Waste and recycling storage to reduce food sources for rodents.
- Suitable trespass-proof roof adjacent to NR's boundary and future maintenance
- No Soakaways / attenuation ponds / septic tanks within 5 metres of NR's boundary
- Drainage plans to be agreed in consultation with NR Asset Protection Engineer.
- No encroachment onto NR land or over-sailing onto air-space.
- Maintain access and keep open all NR roads, paths or ways.
- All buildings at least 2m from NR's boundary
- Any vibro-compaction/displacement piling plant agreed in consultation with NR
- Foundation works / ground displacement penetrating NR's support zone require NR approval
- NR's ground disturbance regulations applies.
- No interference with or obscure of signals.
- Any noise/ vibration impacts to accord with NPPF & LPA to condition as necessary.
- Future residents informed of railway noise/vibration and potential future increases.
- No trees closer than 1.5 times their mature height to NR land. Adhere to NR's tree/plant species guide. Tree felling works may require railway supervision.
- No scaffold poles, plant or cranes to over-sail or fall onto the railway or NR land.

- No lighting (including location/colours) to interfere with signalling apparatus and/or train driver's vision.

4.26.3 Re-consultation in 2020:

4.26.4 In addition to points raised by Network Rail in 2019, a summary of the further comments raised are:

- General concerns regarding the close proximity to the station building, especially plant rooms, and fire exit route leading to Caversham Road. Applicant must take into account NR's need to access heavy equipment to the north side of the station.
- Applicant suggested to provide soundproof windows, to ensure that any station noise (PA systems, fire alarms and trains) can't be heard.
- All roads, paths or ways providing access to any part of the railway undertaker's land shall be kept open at all times during and after the development.

27) **Primary Care Manager (Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group - CCG)**

4.27.1 Original consultation in 2019: The CCG advise that although the proposal is a significant development, and will eventually provide accommodation for in excess 1,500 new residents, it will not on its own provide sufficient new patients to sustain a newly commissioned, modern general practice. In addition, the CCG are not aware of any local need for an existing practice to seek relocation to newly built premises, or who are looking to set up a new branch premises.

4.27.2 Although engagement with local GPs regarding CCGs estates strategy is ongoing, as things currently stand the CCG Primary Care team would take the view that whilst the development will lead to significant additional pressure on local primary and secondary care services, it does not on its own justify the provision of newly built 'health centre uses (Class D1)' for general practice.

4.27.3 Re-consultation in 2020: No response received.

28) **Reading UK CIC**

4.28.1 No response received to either the original consultation in 2019 or re-consultation in 2020.

29) **Sport England**

4.29.1 Original consultation in 2019: Sport England (in providing a non-statutory consultation response - LPA's are "advised to consult" Sport England where more than 300 residential units are proposed) would encourage the Council to consider the sporting needs arising from the development as well as the needs identified in its Infrastructure Delivery Plan (or similar) and direct CIL monies to deliver new and improved facilities for sport. The proposed leisure development at Palmer Park should be considered for CIL contributions from this application.

4.29.2 The absence of an objection to this application, in the context of the Town and Country Planning Act, cannot be taken as formal support or consent from Sport England or any National Governing Body of Sport to any related funding application, or as may be required by virtue of any pre-existing funding agreement.

4.29.3 Re-consultation in 2020: Sport England has reviewed the revision and have no comments to make beyond the initial response.

30) Thames Water (TW)

- 4.30.1 Original consultation in 2019: In terms of both waste and water matters, TW has identified an inability of the existing foul water / water network infrastructure to accommodate the needs of the development. A position for foul water / water networks has not been agreed, so TW recommends pre-occupation condition to secure details on both matters.
- 4.30.2 The application indicates that surface waters will not be discharged to the public network and as such TW has no objection, however approval should be sought from the Lead Local Flood Authority. TW to be contacted should the applicant subsequently seek a connection to discharge surface water into the public network.
- 4.30.3 Given the proximity of the development to a strategic water main, TW recommends a pre-piling details-based condition to protect the local underground water utility infrastructure. TW also request a condition preventing construction taking place within 5m of the water main, with information securing alternatives submitted for submission/approval in conjunction with TW.
- 4.30.4 Re-consultation in 2020: The same conditions were recommended as in the original consultation. An additional informative was requested given the location of the site within 15m of TW underground assets.

31) Public consultation

- 4.31.1 The application has been subject to two rounds of public consultation. For ease of reference, each is detailed separately below.
- 4.31.2 Original consultation in 2019: First, at the outset of the application in April 2019, notification letters were sent to nearby occupiers on 09/04/2019. A series of site notices were erected on 10/04/2019. A press notice was published on 18/04/2019.
- 4.31.3 As part of this original consultation in 2019, a total of 13 objections and 1 observational comment (not specifying support or objection to the proposals) was received. The objections were received from the following addresses: 4 from separate Addison Road RG1 addresses; 1 each from addresses at De Montfort Road RG1, Fairfax Close RG4, Highmoor Road RG4, Ivydene Road RG30, Reading Station Retail Park RG1 (2 separate submissions on behalf of the same landowner), Rose Kiln Lane RG1, Swansea Road RG1, Woodford Close RG4, York Road RG1.
- 4.31.4 The observation comments were from a Hamilton Road, RG1 address.
- 4.31.5 An initial objection sent on behalf of **Aviva Investors**, owner of Reading Station Shopping Park / VCRP (to the north of the application site), was received on 16/05/19, summarised as follows:
- Concern for the ability of Aviva to bring forward redevelopment on their site in accordance with the existing/emerging Core Strategy/Local Plan policy, RCAAP and RSAF
 - Proposed development is based on unreasonable assumptions (e.g. substantial set back of Aviva scheme from the boundary with this site), rendering assessments and justifications being suggested as acceptable, as unfounded;

- 2012 permission cannot reasonably form the base position against which to establish the net additional impacts of the development, such as the highway impact
- Daylight and sunlight assessment does not establish what VSC (vertical sky component) levels are being achieved; disputes regarding the ADF (average daylight factor) façade analysis methodology;
- Potential conflict with the ability for Aviva to service its existing shopping park;
- Potential inability for the proposed scheme to be implemented because of the potential requirement for third party land and conflict with other user rights;
- Lack of Road Safety Audit for proposed new access from Caversham Road
- Impact and compatibility of proposals on the public realm approach for north of the station
- Only reserved matter is appearance, but most plans are labelled illustrative, so unclear which details the planning permission is sought for, and which are indeed illustrative only.

4.31.6 A further objection response was received on behalf of **Aviva Investors** on 20/02/2020, summarised as follows:

- Aviva have significant concerns regarding the overshadowing impact of the proposals on the Aviva site.
- More specifically, Aviva's modelling shows the proposed tower would significantly reduce sunlight within the Aviva site (Plot C), such that residential use could not be delivered in this location. Suggested that the proposed tower would need to be substantially reduced to achieve sunlight penetration into the Aviva site. The applicant should consider alternative options for locating height within their scheme, which would better align with the aspirations set out in the RSAF. Without changes Aviva will have no option but to continue to object to this fundamental point.
- Suggestion that major improvements to the masterplan of the area and avoidance of negative impacts on the Aviva site could be achieved either through reducing the height of the proposed Tower or by relocating this closer to the railway tracks.
- Suggestion for timed use for servicing from Trooper Potts Way to minimise vehicular use across Station Square North is generally supported, but Aviva would resist any proposal to restrict the servicing arrangements for the existing retail park (also serviced via Trooper Potts Way).

4.31.7 A summary of the other 12 objections received as part of the original public consultation are as follows:

- Layout / uses - Low-rise houses should be built on Caversham Road and a gateway building be built where they are currently proposed, including community facilities.
- Scale, density and massing/height exceeds Local Plan concepts (including tall building strategy benchmark heights), would be excessive, out of character with terraced housing nearby and cause visual harm, dominating the skyline.
- Suggestions regarding alternative massing, from consistent with existing to, no greater than 16 storeys reducing to 4 storeys towards Vastern and Caversham Roads.
- Greatly increased traffic along the already heavily used A33 and Caversham Road.
- Increased traffic is dangerous if the fire service are unable to access Caversham Road quickly.
- Increase in traffic will increase pollution and noise.
- Proposed parking facilities are insufficient / woefully inadequate.

- Amenity impacts on nearby occupiers - overshadowing, loss of openness and detracting of character to historic low rise terraces to the west, owing to the proposed density and height.
- Reduce natural light to residents living along Swansea Road, Cardiff Road and York Road.
- Proposed height/density could cause increased anti-social behaviour for future occupiers
- Insufficient infrastructure - parking, traffic, hospitals, nursery and school places (particularly primary), outside playing spaces for children and medical facilities. Suggestion for finance and land to be provided for such uses.
- Insufficient facilities/infrastructure when other developments are taken into account (Thames Quarter, Weldale Street, Station Hill, former SSE site)
- Suggestion that provision for the neighbourhood is included in the proposals
- Other matters - The Council has not provided enough online documentation to enable a positive view to be formed
- "This project is ridiculous! You're planning on taking away affordable shopping* for families like mine and add more housing that the average person cannot even afford to buy! This MUST NOT go ahead" * Officer note: there are no existing shopping facilities at the site; it is assumed the respondent has confused the site with the separate site to the north.

4.31.8 A summary of the matters raised in the observation / comment received are as follows:

- Concerns about potential lack of separation between cyclists and pedestrians and need to ensure conflicts between vulnerable pedestrians and aggressive adult pavement cyclists is minimised. Suggestion that cyclists and pedestrians are separated and where crossings occur, pedestrians have priority and design features incorporated.

4.31.9 Responses from local groups as part of the initial 2019 consultation:

4.31.10 Both **Reading CAAC** (the Conservation Area Advisory Committee) and **Reading Civic Society** were separately formally consulted. No response was received from either local group.

4.31.11 **Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA)** commented on the proposals, summarised as follows:

- Future development of this important site and its return to beneficial use is welcome.
- Layout - positive features include the north-south orientation of the blocks, the possible future connection on the line of De Montfort Road and the positioning of the tallest building adjacent the station entrance.
- Concerned about the sheer quantity of residential accommodation proposed. Heights/widths between blocks means the proposed amenity spaces will largely be in shadow and the green space proposed seems inadequate for successful urban living.
- Concerned residential blocks directly adjacent to the railway with openable windows would expose residents to noise, air pollution and a poor living environment.
- Massing and height - The 25/26 storey tower proposed cannot be properly assessed. It should be set out and compared visually with other tall permitted / under construction buildings around the station, to assess the cluster as a whole and the impact on Reading and Caversham.

- The 7/ 8 storey buildings proposed fronting Caversham Road do not relate to the scale of buildings on the west side of Caversham Road and the predominantly 2 storey residential community beyond. Heights should be reduced to allow a more gradual stepping up in scale and avoid an unpleasant trafficked canyon effect.
- The town houses proposed seem an afterthought and reduce the green amenity space.
- Conclusion - CADRA believe on the basis of the above points that these proposals represent over development of the site.

4.31.12 Bell Tower Community Association objects, summarised as follows:

- Reservations about the tower blocks, particularly the 25-storey one and office blocks on Caversham Road overlooking and overshadowing Bell Tower and Vastern Road areas. Suggestion of reduction to 16 storeys and more stepping of heights to reduce the overshadowing of Caversham Road and beyond.
- Fear the recreational areas as well as the proposed town houses on the site would be in perpetual gloom due to proposed heights and layout.
- Suggestion that small start-up office accommodation be provided as a low-rise alternative to the shaded town houses.
- Lack of open recreation spaces and parking spaces will not make the accommodation family-friendly. Central Reading should include a broad social mix, not just single people and couples without children.
- The scale and outward appearance* of the blocks means they will not blend in with the surrounding 2/3 storey Edwardian/Victorian streets.
* Officer note: Appearance is not a matter applied for as part of this outline application and is only shown indicatively on the plans submitted; it will instead be proposed at the Reserved Matters stage.
- The proposed medical centre and community building are very welcome in theory. Concerns regarding backing from NHS / whether local groups would be able to access the community centre (e.g. times / costs).
- The plan represents an over-development of the site.

4.31.13 Re-consultation in July 2020: After the submission of revised/additional information and proposals by the applicant, a period of public re-consultation commenced in July 2020. Re-notification letters were sent on 09/07/2020 to nearby occupiers and those who had commented as part of the original consultation. A series of site notices were erected on 24/07/2020. A press notice was published on 16/07/2020.

4.31.14 As part of this formal re-consultation in 2020, a total of 26 objections were received. The objections were received from the following addresses: 4 from 3 separate De Montfort Road RG1 addresses, 2 from separate Addison Road RG1 addresses, 2 from separate Cardiff Road RG1 addresses, 2 from a single Chiltern Road RG4 address (separately named respondents), 2 from a single Westfield Road RG4 address (separately named respondents) and 1 each from addresses at Briar Close RG4, Ellesmere Close RG4, Hemdean Road RG4, Heroes Walk RG2, Kings Road RG1, Mayfield Drive RG4, Morecambe Avenue RG4, Newport Rd RG1, Reading Station Retail Park RG1 (2 separate submissions on behalf of the same landowner), St Peters Avenue RG4, Sheridan Avenue RG4, Valentine Crescent RG4, Yew Lane RG1 and York Rd RG1.

4.31.15 Aviva Life & Pensions UK Limited, owners of Vastern Court Retail Park (to the north of the application site and on separate correspondence referenced as Reading Station Retail Park), made two separate objections (submitted on their behalf by

separate consultants) on 21/07/2020 and 13/09/2021, with the first response summarised as follows:

- Concerns it will have on the ability to comprehensively develop the Aviva site in line with the adopted Local Plan, and the Reading Station Area Framework. Both the Hermes application and the Aviva application need to be considered together (albeit not as one application) to ensure the comprehensive redevelopment of this area in accordance with the Council's adopted policies.
- While some amendments have been made, these do not address the daylight and sunlight issues previously raised.
- References to planning policy and guidance recognising the need for a comprehensive approach to the area's future development, one that takes into account adjacent sites and seeks to ensure development would not affect another development site within the sub-area. Specific reference is made to policies CR2 (specific reference to CR2f), CR10 and CR11 (specific reference to CR11viii), as well as the following sections of the Reading Station Area Framework: paragraphs 1.1-1.8 (specific reference to 1.4), chapter 6 and paragraph 13.1. The objector states that the Hermes application does adversely affect bringing forward the Aviva site in a manner that is consistent with these relevant policies and guidance. In addition, there are concerns that the Hermes application is being considered in a manner that is inconsistent with the development plan policies.
- Aviva ask that the Hermes application and the Aviva application are considered together to ensure that neither will prevent the other coming forward as envisaged by the policies and guidance. Aviva seek a daylight/sunlight meeting between the parties and Council, the Council to provide Aviva with any third party studies undertaken and not grant permission for the application where that will have a negative effect on the ability to deliver a policy compliant scheme on the Aviva site.

4.31.16 The later response received from on behalf of **Aviva** in September 2021 is summarised as follows:

- Note that the affordable housing offer is now being proposed to be changed from 0% to 16% and that the rationale for the revised affordable housing offer is unclear.
- Comments that planning permission should not be approved on the basis that 16% affordable housing is likely to be forthcoming if the planning permission is implemented. It is clearly more likely based on the current viability assessment submitted in support of the application that any permission granted on this basis will either never be implemented or material changes to the permission reducing the affordable housing level will need to be agreed post its approval.
- In the absence of any new evidence to establish the viability of the scheme with a requirement for 16% affordable housing, the fact that the scheme is unlikely to be delivered in that form is an important material consideration which needs to be taken into account in the determination of the application and the weight that can be attached to the revised offer for the purposes of Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- Note that the Council's appeal statement of case for the Berkeley Homes 200188 application (55 Vastern Road) accepts a 0% affordable housing base, subject to a financial viability review mechanism.

4.31.17 A summary of the other 25 objections received as part of the public re-consultation is as follows:

- Proposed land uses - the amount/increase of office floorspace is excessive and should be residential. Concern office floorspace could become low-grade residential through permitted development in the future.
- Concern flats and offices will sit empty due to lack of demand
- Public spaces, community centre and health centre should be in the first, not final, phase (doubts they will be built)
- Scale, density and massing at 24 storeys described as excessive, too high, out of character, overbearing, cramped, uninspired and ruining of the atmosphere of the town, causing a blot on the skyline. A number of responses refer to this in comparison with the nearby Victorian terraces.
- Caversham Road frontage excessively tall and overbearing to buildings opposite.
- Suggestions that site heights should be limited to 3 or 4 storeys throughout.
- Lack of affordable housing deplorable.
- Removal of affordable housing at the time of a housing crisis is unacceptable / an insult.
- Mix of residential units' concerns - not enough units for families (3-bed rooms).
- Combined with the Aviva site next door, this represents gross overdevelopment of an already densely populated area with limited scope for new infrastructure.
- Transport - Not enough car parking spaces for residents included. Cars will be parked in Caversham instead.
- Suggestion that there should be no parking facilities in the proposed development.
- The current road infrastructure cannot accommodate building works nor sustain additional traffic (Caversham and Vastern Roads, Thames bridges already clogged).
- No cycle parking details - suggestion to require one secure cycle parking facility per flat to encourage sustainable journeys around town.
- If residential take-up is low, the site could become forbidding, especially at night.
- The height and proximity of blocks to each other offers poor quality accommodation with inadequate communal space.
- Lack of outside space; a necessity to mental health, shown through the pandemic.
- Infrastructure (doctors, dentists, parking, school/nursery spaces) needs further development before 620 additional apartments can be added; detrimental effect on services and infrastructure will be intolerable.
- Impact on Christchurch Meadows - an important green space will feel hugely overlooked by grey giant buildings.
- Adverse impact on views: glass wall at station looking towards Caversham; Fox and Hounds Public House on Gosbrook Road from Westfield Road; from Balmore Walk/Park.
- Concerned about the negative impact this proposed development will have on the local area with limited benefits.
- Proposals will only bring profit to Hermes, rather than benefit existing / potential Reading residents.
- Aldi and the Range* should not be lost. * Officer note: these units are not within this application site.
- Local residents have not been consulted with many missed off* the distribution list for plans. * Officer note: The local planning authority has met its statutory consultation requirements for this application.

4.31.18 Responses from local groups as part of the 2020 re-consultation:

4.31.19 Both **Reading CAAC** and **Reading Civic Society** were separately formally re-consulted. No response was received from either local group.

4.31.20 **Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA)** responded with further comments, summarised as follows:

- Welcome the 9m / 1 storey tower height reduction.

- Other previously raised matters remain substantially unaddressed and in some respects are worse than originally.
- Despite a modest reduction (658 to 620), the total number (when including the Aviva site too) grossly exceeds the Local Plan allocation.
- The proposals represent over development of the site, e.g. a mean 22m distance between blocks B (14 storeys) and D (12 storeys) and 18m between blocks D and F (11 storeys). Unsatisfactory living conditions for the occupants. Grossly inadequate useable green space and amenity space worsened by the revised encroachment of Block C.
- Continued concern with proposed height on Caversham Road.
- New concern of reduction in residential / increase in office floor space increasing the built volume, due to the greater floor to floor heights of office space.
- Unclear on removal of affordable housing, but given Reading's housing need and the site size/value CADRA expect / support a sizeable social housing commitment.

4.31.21 **Bell Tower Community Association (BTCA)** objects, specifying that the amended application goes nowhere near far enough to address the objection on the grounds of scale and the development's failure to blend in with the surrounding Victorian and Edwardian streets. In addition (in summary):

- The massive blocks and high density of the proposals conflict with the harmony of the historic character of the area. Lack community space and extending building C means even less open space.
- The small increase in three-bedroom units does go a tiny way to addressing the issue of family friendliness. However, the removal of all affordable housing will be extremely detrimental to the social mix of the development.
- The economic argument for increasing the amount of office space is not agreed with home working as a result of the pandemic. Risk that office space is commercially unviable and could be converted to residential without permission or s106 payments.
- Home-working trend may also render the whole operational argument for a complex on this scale invalid. How many people will want to live in a development like this?
- BTCA welcome signs of coordination between this development and the Reading Station Retail Park development shown in the alignment of the tiger crossing.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Sections 16(2) and 66(1) 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 architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which means 'approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay' (NPPF paragraph 11).

5.4 The application proposals are subject to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and are supported by an Environmental Statement issued pursuant to these Regulations.

5.5 The development plan for this Local Planning Authority is now in one document, the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). It fully replaces the Core Strategy, the Sites and Detailed Policies Document and the Reading Central Area Action Plan (which were in force at the time of the original submission of the application). The relevant national and local policies / guidance are:

5.6 **National**

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The following NPPF chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- 7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.7 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

EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance

EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets

EN5: Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest

EN6: New Development in a Historic Context

EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space

EN9: Provision of Open Space

EN10: Access to Open Space

EN11: Waterspaces

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

EN13: Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

EN15: Air Quality

EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

EN17: Noise Generating Equipment

EN18: Flooding and Drainage

EM1: Provision of Employment Development
 EM2: Location of New Employment Development
 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
 RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres
 RL2: Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development
 OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities
 OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines
 CR1: Definition of Central Reading
 CR2: Design in Central Reading
 CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading
 CR4: Leisure, Culture and Tourism in Central Reading
 CR6: Living in Central Reading
 CR9: Terraced Housing in Central Reading
 CR10: Tall Buildings
 CR11: Station/River Major Opportunity Area

5.8 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:
Topics

Affordable Housing (March 2021)
 Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
 Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
 Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
 Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
 Design Guide to Shopfronts (2022)

Sites

Reading Station Area Framework (2010)

5.9 Other relevant documents include:

Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
 Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)
 Reading Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) (November 2019)
 Local Transport Note 1/20 - Cycle Infrastructure Design (July 2020)
 BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A guide to good practice, 2nd edition (2011)
 The National Design Guide (2019)
 The National Model Design Code (July 2021)
 DCLG Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (2015)
 Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015)
 Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition) The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017)
 Historic England: Advice Note 4: Tall Buildings (Historic England 2015)
 Tall Buildings Strategy 2008
 Tall Buildings Strategy Update Note 2018
 Reading Open Space Strategy (2007)

Reading Open Space Update Note (2018)
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016)
Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)
St Mary's Butts / Castle Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2008)
St Peters Conservation Area Appraisal (2018)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- 1) Principle of development and associated land use considerations, including density, residential mix and provision of affordable housing
- 2) Design related matters - including demolition, proposed layout, scale, townscape and effect on heritage assets
- 3) Quality of accommodation for future occupiers
- 4) Amenity for nearby occupiers
- 5) Transport and Highways (including access)
- 6) Trees, landscaping and ecology
- 7) Sustainability and energy
- 8) Flooding and SuDS
- 9) Other Environmental Statement matters
- 10) Other matters - Archaeology, Fire, S106 matters & Equality
- 11) Overall Planning Balance

1. Principle of development and associated land use considerations, including density, residential mix and provision of affordable housing

6.1.1 As a starting point it is relevant to note that the application site forms part of a wider site allocation (Policy CR11e - North of Station) within the Station/River Major Opportunity Area. This is explained in detail within section 1 of this report. With this context in mind, the principle of development and related issues are first discussed.

Loss of existing uses

6.1.2 The loss of Royal Mail sorting office and distribution centre use (see figure 19 below) was envisaged as part of the site allocation within the Local Plan (2019) and previous adopted local plans for the borough. Furthermore, the loss of the existing uses at the site has previously been accepted in the previous outline permission granted at the site in 2012 (see relevant history at section 3 of this report). It is also noted that Royal Mail vacated the site in 2009, although Network Rail used the site up to early 2018, meaning the buildings have been vacant for over four years. In short, there are no land use principle concerns with the loss of the existing uses at the site, with this not according with the long held future vision for the site and wider area.



Figure 19 - External and internal views of the existing former sorting office (09/05/2019)

Principle of proposed uses

- 6.1.3 Each of the proposed uses are identified below. In short, it is demonstrated that the proposed uses align with the objectives for the wider CR11e allocation and broader policy requirements too. Accordingly, the principle of the proposed uses are established, as detailed below.

Residential use

- 6.1.4 The proposals include 620 residential units and in floorspace terms this represents the predominant use sought at the site (55,705sqm of the total 80,266sqm GEA floorspace). As such, the development can be considered as a mixed-use residential-led scheme. The principle of providing residential accommodation at the site is supported within the wider CR11e allocation, where residential accommodation on the upper floors is specifically referenced. Furthermore, it contributes to the overall vision for mixed use development of the Station/River MOA. Moreover, there is a pressing need for residential accommodation in the Borough, as detailed by Policy H1. There is need for on average 689 homes per annum across the plan period, so the proposed development of 620 dwellings equates to almost a whole year of future supply. This does however also need to be considered within the healthy 6.95 years' supply of housing land in the Borough (as per the December 2021 Annual Monitoring Report), which comfortably fulfils the NPPF requirement for a minimum of 5 years supply.
- 6.1.5 It is also relevant to consider the contribution the proposal makes to the wider Policy CR11e (North of Station) allocation, where there is an indicative potential for 640-960 dwellings. This proposal for 620 dwellings would in itself almost equate to the lower end of the indicative potential for the wider site. When considered within the context of the Vastern Court Retail Park application, currently subject to an appeal, where between 600 and 1,000 dwellings are proposed, both sites combined would exceed the indicative range considerably, even prior to any proposal coming forward on the existing car park site within the allocation. However, it is important to recognise that paragraph 5.4.5 of the supporting text to Policy CR11 states:

“It should be noted that, to an even greater extent than other areas, development capacity can vary significantly on high density town centre sites, and these figures are therefore an indication only. Of greatest importance will be the creation of a high-quality, well-designed mixed-use destination, and there is potential for development figures to vary in order to achieve this aim.”

- 6.1.6 With the above in mind, it is considered that other sections of this appraisal demonstrate that the scheme does achieve these aims in order to justify the proposed number of dwellings, without preventing neighbouring sites from fulfilling aspirations of the wider policy either.

Office use

- 6.1.7 The proposals include two separate office buildings, one in each proposed phase of development. More specifically Building C, fronting onto the proposed Avenue proposes 13,220sqm (GEA) office floorspace and Building J, in the south-west corner fronting Caversham Road, proposes a further 6,509sqm (GEA). Combined, this equates to a proposed 19,729sqm of office floorspace across the site, which contributes sufficiently to the 50,000-80,000sqm indicative net gain of offices across the wider CR11e allocation. The proposed office use also aligns with the CR11 vision of assisting in providing a mixed use destination. Furthermore, the site is within the designated 'office core' and the proposed office floorspace would contribute to the Borough wide Policy EM1 net increase of 53,000-112,000sqm of office space within Reading across the plan period. The proposed use and amount of floorspace is therefore policy compliant in principle and will be secured as such via condition. It is noted that the Vastern Court Retail Park proposal (at the current appeal) proposes a maximum of 24,500sqm and no minimum of office floorspace. In contrast, the proposal (in the same way as a full planning application would) offers no range of possible office floorspace and has instead been clear in the uses/floorspaces proposed, providing certainty of the mix of uses, as required by policy.

Flexible Class A1/A2/A3 uses

- 6.1.8 At ground floor level within parts of Buildings A and C, and also at Building E, flexible Class A1/2/3 uses are proposed. As per table 2 within section 2 of this report, this totals 1,752sqm (GEA) of retail floorspace. These proposed uses will activate the streets and spaces including the new northern station square, as explicitly required by Policy CR11e. The amount of floorspace proposed is also considered to strike an appropriate balance between provision to serve the development and wider area, whilst not being of such a level to be likely to have a detrimental impact on the rest of the retail core of the centre, as also required by Policy CR11e. Furthermore, the location of the proposed retail units (two along the northern boundary and the other on the eastern boundary adjacent the station square and underpass through to the south) are such that good pedestrian links to the rest of the retail core of the centre will be provided. This is another requirement of Policy CR11e.
- 6.1.9 Within the RSAF figure 9.3 shows (see figure 20 below) how active frontages will be applied to individual plots. The RSAF warns that without active frontages a successful public realm is unlikely to be created, and that the key message is that key routes and areas of public realm must be fronted by active uses. The provision of the flexible A1/2/3 uses would assist in achieving this. Furthermore, these uses provide further evidence of the proposed development being genuinely mixed-use. In addition, the provision of A1/2/3 floorspace aligns with the general retail plan Policies RL1 and RL2. It is noted that Class A1/2/3 now falls into new Class E. However, it is the old use classes which are being used for this application under the regulations. The new use classes would allow for a similar mix of town centre uses. Accordingly, the principle of the A1/2/3 uses is established and supported.

Figure 9.3 Active frontages



Figure 20 - Left: Extract of Figure 9.3 of RSAF, showing active frontages along the north and east elevations of the site. Right: Extract of A11113 C 2 050 Rev P14 - Illustrative Scheme GA - Site Plan Ground Floor, as received 22/02/2022

Class D1 Community Centre and Health uses

6.1.10 In addition to the flexible retail floorspace proposed at ground floor level, a health club is proposed within part of the Building C frontage (268sqm GEA), a health centre (311sqm GEA) is proposed at Building G and a community centre (198sqm GEA) is proposed at Building H. The health centre and community centre would be considered new community facilities, which align with the objectives of Policy OU1 and paragraph 93 of the NPPF. All are within the Class D1 use and therefore also represent active frontage uses along the northern frontage (and Caversham Road in terms of the Community Centre). Similar to the conclusion reached above in relation to retail uses, these are welcomed in principle in activating the streets and spaces and provide community uses as an essential part of the mix for a mixed-use redevelopment scheme. Accordingly, in total, the vast majority of the eastern and northern frontages will be active in use, with the exceptions being office/residential entrances (an inherent requirement) and a small stretch of office reception area / meeting space. This broadly accords with Policy CR11 and the RSAF requirements, as already referenced. Therefore, the community and health uses are welcomed in principle.

Density of development

6.1.11 The proposed development would deliver 281.82 dwellings per hectare, which meets the minimum 'above 100' density indicatively specified at figure 4.5 of Policy H2 of the Local Plan. Throughout various policies and guidance documents it is clear that high density development is envisaged at the site. Policy CR11i) specifies in the context of the Station/River MOA as a whole that development will contribute towards providing a high-density mix of uses to create a destination in itself and capitalise on its role as one of the most accessible locations in the south east. The proposal will assist in this regard. Within the RSAF at figure 6.6 (see figure 21 below) it is illustratively shown that the eastern half of the site is earmarked for high density (Plot N8) and the western half (Plot N7) for medium density development. The proposals broadly follow this approach, with the highest density on the eastern side.

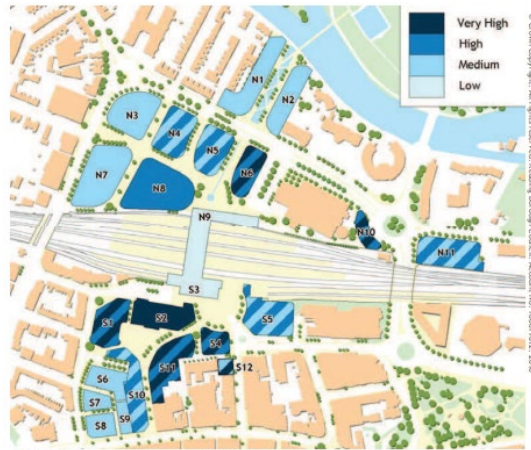


Figure 21 - Figure 6.6 of RSAF (Application site is Policies N7 & N8)

6.1.12 Policy CC6 is also clear in detailing that the scale and density of development relates to its accessibility level, by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities. This supports the approach that the densest and largest scale development should take place in the most accessible locations. This is also recognised by Policy H2, amongst other factors. The proposed location, within the centre of Reading and adjacent to both the railway station and inner distribution road, when also considered within the context of the need to maximise the efficient use of land and the characteristics of the area (other factors referenced by Policy H2) means the proposed density is considered appropriate in principle.

Residential mix

6.1.13 The proposed dwelling mix has been improved during the course of the application. It was originally proposed for only 2.58% 3-bed units to be provided, significantly below the minimum 5% guidance figure referenced in Policy CR6. This has been altered following officer feedback, with the proposals now including 32 family-sized 3-bedroom dwellings, equating to 5.16% of the overall mix and is therefore policy compliant. This is welcomed and considered to be a planning benefit of the proposed development.

6.1.14 In terms of smaller units, Policy CR6 guards against an over-provision of studio / 1-bedroom properties in the town centre, with a maximum guidance figure of 40%. In this instance the percentage has decreased from the originally proposed 46.5% to the now proposed 43.23%. Whilst this continues to be marginally contrary to the guidance percentage, in this sustainable town centre location and given the presence of the larger units, this shortfall is accepted in this specific instance. In overall terms a broad range of unit sizes are proposed, which largely accord with the policy objectives. The proposed mix of dwellings will be secured via condition.

Affordable housing

6.1.15 As detailed within the consultee responses at sections 4.3 (RBC Housing) and 4.4 (RBC Valuations) of this report, the affordable housing proposals have been subject to significant change during the course of the application. In short, the current proposal represents clear benefits over the two previous offers earlier in the application. Moreover, it is considered in itself to represent an advantageous offer from the perspective of the local planning authority when considered within the context of a challenging viability situation for the developer/applicant, acknowledged by RBC Valuations.

6.1.16 The proposed offer amounts to an on-site provision of 98 units within Buildings G (53 Reading Affordable Rent units, comprising 11x1-bed and 42x2-bed units) and H (45 Shared Ownership units, comprising 22x1-bed and 23x2-bed units), as shown in figure 22 below. This provision would make a significant contribution to the assessed need of 406 affordable homes per year in Reading (as per the SHMA, referenced in Chapter 3 of the Affordable Housing SPD 2021).

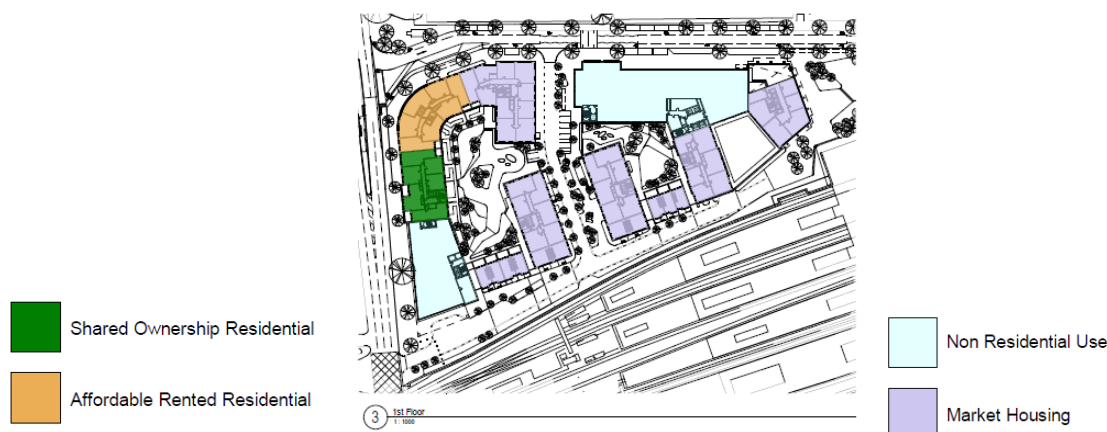


Figure 22 - Location of proposed affordable housing

6.1.17 In particular, the provision of the affordable rent element specifically being ‘Reading Affordable Rent’ is especially welcomed by the RBC Housing Team. It shall be at a level which is considered affordable to those in housing need in Reading, thereby equating to the local need. Whilst the tenure breakdown of Reading Affordable Rent, at 54.1%, is below the 62% minimum detailed at paragraph 4.2 of the March 2021 adopted Affordable Housing SPD, the Council’s Housing Team acknowledges that this is partly as a consequence of the layout of the buildings and this percentage results in the greatest possible amount of this tenure being provided within the same block, which aids management by the Registered Provider. The shared ownership units, within Building H, also comprise the entirety of this block of development and is strongly supported too.

6.1.18 It is acknowledged that the proposed affordable units solely comprise 1 and 2-bed units. It is disappointing that no 3-bed units are provided, with paragraph 4.30 of the Affordable Housing SPD 2021 stating that the greatest need is for larger homes with three or more bedrooms. However, Policy H3 of the Local Plan 2019 also specifies that priority needs are currently for housing with two or more bedrooms that can house families. In addition, paragraph 4.29 of the SPD details that site circumstances will be taken into account, with a town centre flatted scheme needing to have a differing mix to suburban development. Accordingly, set within the context of the town centre location, the preference by Registered Providers for units being within the same block and the fact Policy H3 states 2-bed units can house families (with the affordable housing in this instance predominantly being 2-bed), it is considered that the non-provision of 3-bed units can be accepted in this specific instance, as supported by the RBC Housing Team.

6.1.19 It is also fully recognised that the provision of 98 units equates to a 15.81% provision of on-site affordable housing, below the Policy H3 30% requirement. However, through the applicant’s viability submissions, it has been demonstrated that there are some viability challenges in bringing this site forward and the proposed offer is robust in that context. Moreover, the provision of a deferred affordable housing contribution provides further scope for the amount of on-site

affordable housing to increase within the scheme in the future. With this secured within the s106 legal agreement, the proposal is considered to be in full accordance with Policy.

6.1.20 Accordingly, in overall terms, the overall affordable housing offer is considered to be a key tangible planning benefit of the proposed development, which should be afforded significant weight in the overall planning balance.

2. Design related matters - including demolition, proposed layout, scale, townscape and effect on heritage assets

Principle of demolition

6.2.1 In relation to the demolition of the existing buildings at the site, they are considered to be of no particular special architectural or historic merit to warrant retention. Demolition is therefore considered appropriate subject to the proposed replacement buildings being suitable.

Layout

6.2.2 Building on the policy context detailed at section 1 of this report, the proposed layout adheres to the broad urban design structure shown at figure 8.2 of the RSAF. The paths/pedestrian links envisaged within the RSAF, as shown below in figure 23, are all incorporated in the proposals. This is in terms of the east-west routes on the northern and southern boundaries of the site, together with the north-south route through the middle of the site, which beyond the VCRP site connects to the existing De Montfort Road and the River Thames.



Figure 23 - Figure 8.2 of the RSAF (left), zoomed in site extract (centre), proposed layout - extract of A11113 C 2 003 Rev P4, as received 22/02/2022 (right).

6.2.3 Moreover, the North Station Square public space / square connects into the major path / pedestrian link between the River and Station - the north-south link. The application site forms a limited, but nonetheless key component part of the wider strategic link and it is imperative that it satisfactorily connects to the underpass and station entrance to the south and VCRP site to the north. The applicant has shown a north-south link within the application site which is satisfactory in itself in principle, although it is considered necessary for the future landscaping condition to potentially re-visit this in due course to ensure it is future-proofed (e.g. configuration of alignment to ensure directness) for the possible future developments at the VCRP and 55 Vastern Road sites to the north (see relevant history section above). From a transport perspective the proposed layout of development is also supported, subject to a series of conditions and obligations, as detailed within sections 4.1, 6.5 and Appendix 2 of this report.

6.2.4 The proposed layout also builds on and respects the grid layout structure of the central area, as required by Policy RC2. The two large urban ‘perimeter blocks’ of development also broadly align with the framework for the north-side area, as specified at figure 8.6 of the RSAF, as detailed below in figure 24. Accordingly, the general layout of development, as proposed, is strongly supported in aligning with policy and guidance for the area. In particular, the proposed layout has been designed to allow connections to the north and west in particular, to demonstrate it is part of a comprehensive approach to the wider area.



Figure 8.6 Framework for the Northside area

Figure 24 - Figure 8.6 of the RSAF

Open space / public realm

6.2.5 Intrinsically linked to Layout matters are open space and public realm matters. The proposal includes an extended (in comparison with existing) and reconfigured Station Square North, which provides a significant area of public on-site open space. Subject to a condition securing further details, as discussed separately within landscaping section 6.6 below, this element of the proposals will make a positive contribution towards the quality of the public realm in the central area, as required by Policy CR3 in particular. Another important element of the public realm strategy is the Avenue, with this discussed in the context of the neighbouring site to the north within the transport sections of this report (sections 4.1, 6.5 and Appendix 2).

6.2.6 Moreover, all of the public realm / space will also be secured via s106 legal agreement, for this to be delivered as shown and enable unrestricted public pedestrian and cycle access to all such areas, subject to reasonable restrictions relating to short-term maintenance works). Furthermore, additional commitments relate to maintaining the public realm areas and also securing a public art strategy within the publicly accessible space, as requested by RBC Leisure (see section 4.11 above). Please see the separate quality of accommodation section below in respect of the off-site public open space financial contribution being secured too.

Height, scale and massing

6.2.7 As already detailed within sections 1 and 2 of this report, the site is within a tall buildings cluster (Policy CR10a Station Area Cluster) and proposes a series of tall buildings (as shown below in the heights plan shown below in figure 25). Accordingly, the proposed height, scale and massing has been carefully considered, set within the context of matters of Scale being applied for as part of this outline application, but Appearance being the sole Reserved Matter of the application. In addition to the Policy CR11 context summarised at section 1 above, Policy CR10a specifies that the station should be at the heart of a cluster of new tall buildings to, “*signify the status of the station area as a major mixed-use destination and the main gateway to and most accessible part of Reading*”. The policy continues that

the tallest buildings should be close to the station and step down in height from that point towards the lower buildings at the fringes. Policy CR10a also states tall buildings in this area should, “contribute to the creation of a coherent, attractive and sustainable cluster of buildings with a high-quality public realm”. Furthermore, it should provide adequate space between buildings to avoid overly dense townscape and to allow buildings to be viewed as individual forms and be designed to fit within a wider planning framework (thereby being consistent with Policy CR11viii).

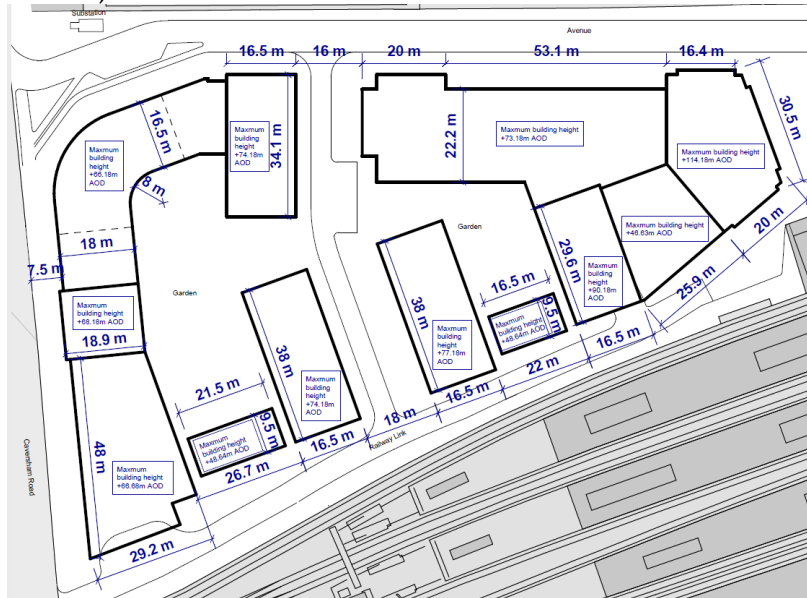


Figure 25 - Extract from Development Plot and Height Plan A11113 C 2 010 Rev P2, as received 03/06/2020

6.2.8 The RSAF also provides more detailed guidance. In particular, the principle of stepping down in height away from the station is reinforced in RSAF figure 6.10, while RSAF figures 6.8 and 6.9 identifies benchmark heights for individual plots, with the western half of the site (Plot N7) having a benchmark height of 6 commercial storeys (equivalent 7/8 residential storeys) and the eastern part of the site (Plot N8) specifying 8 commercial storeys (see figure 26 below in all instances). Furthermore, the eastern part of the site is identified as a potential location for ‘landmark buildings’. There are two landmark building categories, with the tallest being ‘district landmarks’ (e.g. Plot C / S2 at Station Hill) and lower ‘local landmarks’ to the north of the station clustered around the Station Square (North), such as within the eastern part of the application site.

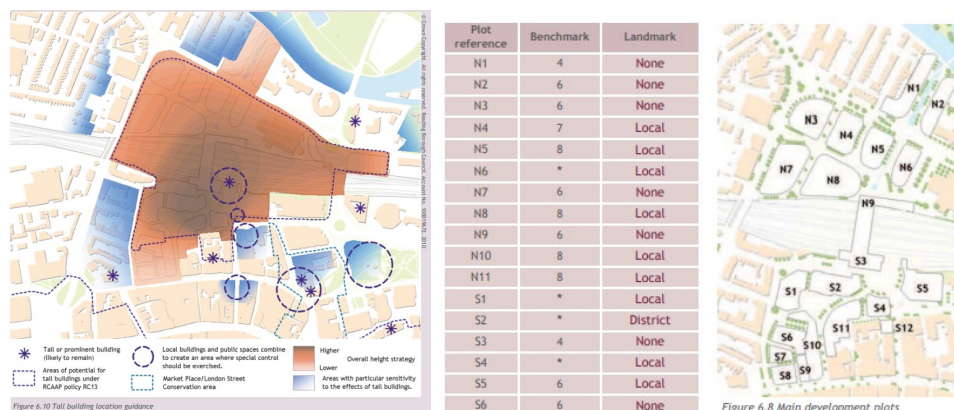


Figure 26 - Left: Figure 6.10 of the RSAF detailing the tall building location guidance. Right: extracts of Figures 6.8 and 6.9 of the RSAF (application site is plots N7 and N8).

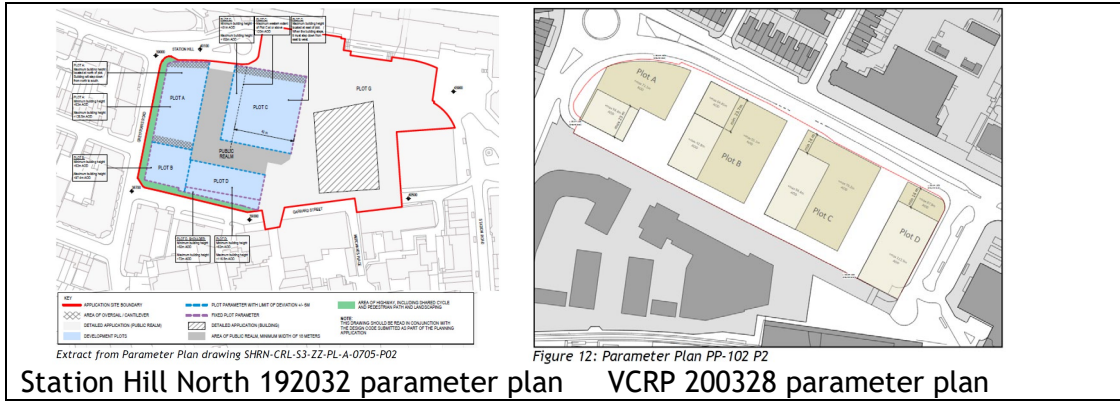
6.2.9 The RSAF provides guidance on tall and landmark buildings. In summary, development should:

- Promote high-density development (RSAF 6.11).
- Tall buildings should rise up around the Station ‘nexus’ (RSAF 6.12).
- A dramatic cluster of taller buildings forming a new and distinctive skyline (RSAF 6.13)
- Buildings of the greatest permissible heights form a ‘Crown’ to the immediate south of the Station (RSAF 6.14).
- The RSAF does not necessarily advocate tall buildings across the Area (RSAF 6.28).
- Landmarks may exceptionally ‘puncture’ benchmark heights to emphasise important places (RSAF 6.26).

6.2.10 It is also important to initially identify the existing and possible future surrounding context within the Station Area Cluster (which is both north and south of the station). Table 4 below provides a clear context of other tall buildings in the close vicinity of the site. It is evident that nearby sites are at a variety of stages in the planning/development process, from those implemented, those with permission and under construction, those with an unimplemented permission and those subject to a current appeal.

Table 4 - Other nearby sites including/proposing tall buildings

Site	Plot and maximum heights (all in AOD)	Comment/status
Station Hill North	Plot A up to 126.5m Plot B up to 97.4m Plot C up to 163m Plot D up to 116.5m Plot G - 122m	Hybrid permission 192032 (22/7/21) - plots A-D have been granted in outline, not yet implemented. Plot G granted full planning permission and commenced (so under construction)
Thames Quarter	111.7m	Permission 162166, completed.
29-35 Station Road	121m	Permission 181930 (29/10/19), not yet implemented.
Thames Tower	103.3m	Permission 141043, completed (with roof extension)
Vastern Court Retail Park (VCRP)	Plot A - north up to 71.1m; south up to 94.4m. Plot B - north west up to 64.45m; south-west up to 92.8m; east up to 55.1m. Plot C - north and east up to 79.1m; south west up to 94.4m. Plot D - north up to 87.9m; south up to 112.9m.	Outline permission 200328 would have been refused had appeal under non-determination not been lodged; Appeal in progress.



6.2.11 With the above in mind, the tallest building proposed at the application site comprises Building A, which is basement and 24 storeys in height, with an overall AOD height (including the roof parapet) at 114.18m. This incorporates a shoulder height of 103.76m AOD (although this itself includes a significant parapet height covering a floor of accommodation based on the section plan below at figure 29), with the four upper most floors being set in slightly from the main footprint of the building. During the course of the application, following officer feedback, the height was reduced to that stated above, from the original proposal of 123.18m AOD / shoulder height of 111m AOD.

6.2.12 The location of the tallest element of the scheme is considered to be appropriate in principle, being adjacent to Station Square North and the entrance/underpass associated with Reading Station as Policy CR10 and the RSAF require. Moreover, a tall building at the closest possible point of the station will assist in signifying the status of the station area as a major mixed-use destination and the main gateway. In terms of the overall height being up to 114.18m AOD, whilst undoubtedly significant in itself, in the context of the prevailing emerging context within the Station Area Cluster this proposal would positively contribute to the area. In particular, outline permission at Station Hill North approved (in July 2021) Plot C up to a maximum of 163m AOD and Plot A up to 126.5m AOD, together with full permission for the now under construction Plot G at 122m AOD (see the parameter plan at table 4 for the exact locations). Furthermore, an extant permission for 29-35 Station Road at 121m AOD remains extant. Set within this context the district landmark buildings at Station Hill would maintain their primacy at the crown of the cluster, with the proposed height being suitably subordinate in its role as a local landmark. The proposed massing therefore accords in full with the massing strategy diagram at figure 6.5 of the RSAF, as seen below at figure 27. Also included in figure 27 is a comparative (although from the opposite side) showing the proposal (the blue shaded area is the application site, with the originally proposed - now superseded - massing outlined for information in red) in the context of the previously approved Station Hill massing, which at that time permitted a height up to 128m AOD, rather than the now permitted up to 163m AOD. In short, Building A respects its position in the Station Area Cluster hierarchy of tall buildings.

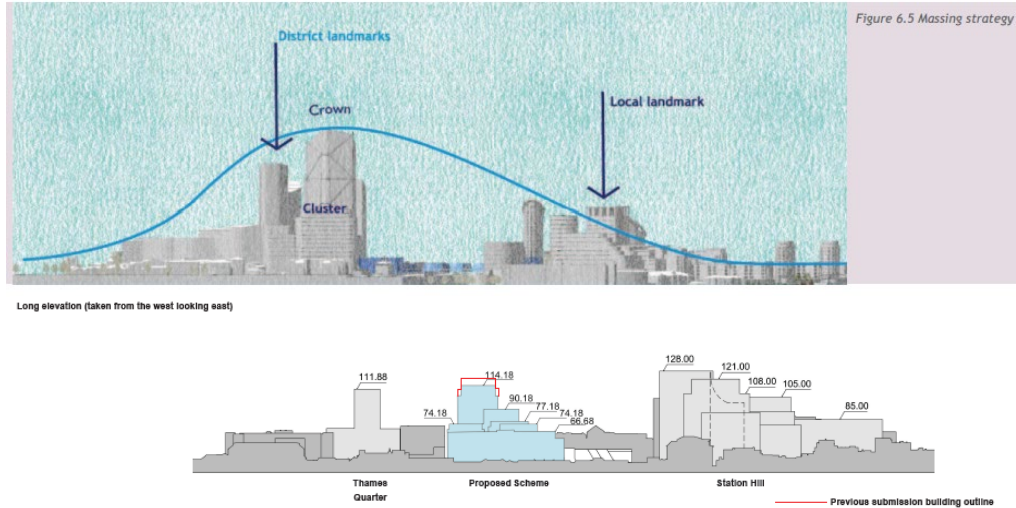


Figure 27 - Top: Figure 6.5 of RSAF (taken from the east looking west), with south of the station being the crown.
Bottom: Extract from addendum DAS (taken from the west looking east) showing the revised massing in the context of Thames Quarter and a previous Station Hill massing - 192032 has since permitted a height of upto 163m AOD, rather than the 128m shown here)

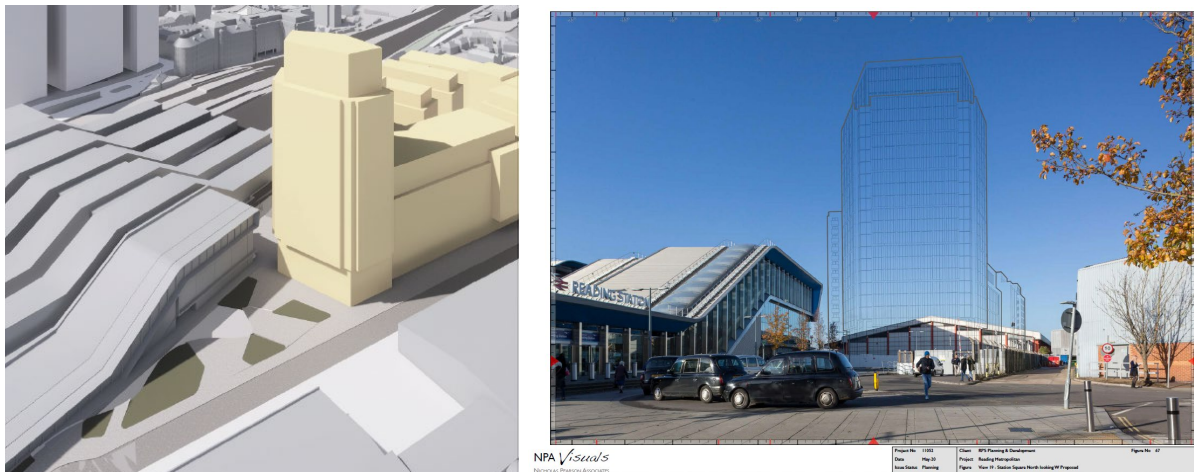


Figure 28 - Left: Extract from Addendum DAS showing Building A. Right: Proposed view 19 - Station Square North looking west from Townscape & Visual Resources Assessment (TVRA).

6.2.13 It is acknowledged that the proposed basement and 24 storey building represents a clear increase when compared with the 16 storey height approved under outline permission 110024 at the site in 2012. However, it is relevant to note that the 16 storey proposal was for office accommodation, up to 103.4m AOD, whereas this proposal is predominantly residential up to 114.18m AOD. Therefore, although there is an 8 storey increase, in real terms the increase in height is only 10.78m in practice. Moreover, it is considered that the proposed height is acceptable in itself within the present context, as demonstrated throughout this report.

6.2.14 Building A is also shown to accord with other component parts of Policies CR10. In particular, the proposal is considered to suitably avoid bulky, over dominant massing, with the Development Plot and Height Plan (see figure 25 and section plans / visualisations confirming - see figures 28, 29 and 30) that a sufficiently slender massing is proposed. The footprint of Building A is significantly less than that possible at Station Hill North or that subject to the current appeal at VCRP. Although the matter of Appearance is reserved for future consideration, from the

section plans and visualisations submitted (see figures 28, 29 and 30) it is evident that the proposed building has a clearly defined base, middle and upper sections, with indicative plans indicating that a suitable 360 degree designed building is proposed. There are some elements which cannot be confirmed at this juncture owing to the outline nature of the application, such as all Appearance related matters. The future Reserved Matters application will separately assess these important elements. In terms of other Policy CR10v requirements, other sections of this report comments on specific elements such as impact on views, impact on listed buildings/conservation areas, public realm, parking, energy efficiency, wind, day/sunlight and amenity matters. In short, the proposals are considered to comply with the policy at this outline application stage.

6.2.15 Accordingly, in overall terms, the height, scale and massing of Building A is supported and considered to evidently comply with policy and guidance. The proposed scale is however considered the maximum allowable within the context of the RSAF (in particular figure 6.5, as seen at figure 27 above) and the character/heights emerging through other permitted/under construction developments.

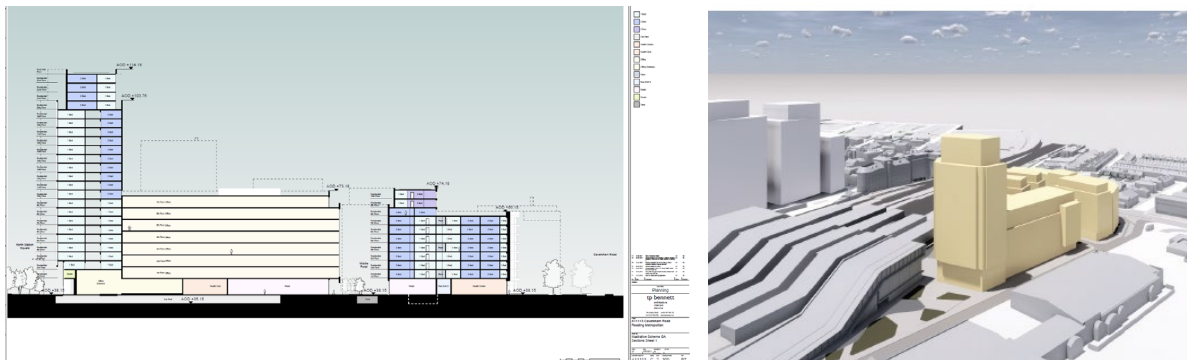


Figure 29 - Left: A11113C2200P7 Illustrative Scheme GA Sections Sheet 1, as received 28/06/2021. From left to right are Buildings A, C, E and G. Right: Extract from Addendum DAS by TP Bennett showing the proposed massing from a point to the north-east of the site (Station Hill massing in the background is not the latest approved massing under 192032)

6.2.16 Beyond Building A on the northern side of the site Building C is basement and 8 storeys in height, aligning with the envisaged benchmark height within Plot N8 (figures 6.8 and 6.9 of the RSAF, as shown above at figure 26). The proposal at this point is considered appropriate in response to being required to relate to the Avenue (east-west spine), not seeking to compete with the Building A massing (the architect has explained a “truck and trailer” concept approach to the massing at this point) and also being at a scale which does not compromise the neighbouring site to the north being developed (as per the Policy CR11viii requirements). In this latter regard, the 18.5m distance to the northern boundary (the width of the Avenue up to the footprint of the proposed buildings), combined with the proposed massing along the north side of the site, is sufficient to reasonably demonstrate that the proposals are part of a comprehensive approach to the sub-area.

6.2.17 Continuing west on the northern side of the site, beyond Building C, is residential Building E, which is marginally (1m) taller than Building C. As Building E is residential above ground level it totals 11 storeys, but the mass is satisfactorily reduced by the two uppermost storeys including a set-back. Although Building E is greater than the Plot N7 benchmark height (equivalent 7/8 residential floors), this is justified in design terms to assist framing the entrance to ‘Middle Street’, with the massing balanced with Building C opposite. Furthermore, the 11 storey element, although considered to be at the upper limit of acceptability at this part

of the site, is solely in a narrow stretch (meaning Building E is slender in itself and would not compromise the separate site to the north) of the Avenue frontage, with the massing soon reducing to the 8-storey (aligning with the benchmark) Building G, which wraps around onto Caversham Road. Accordingly, the massing along the Avenue as a whole is seen to be appropriate in gradually reducing to the west, whilst also not preventing the neighbouring VCRP site to the north from fulfilling the aspirations of Policy CR11.

6.2.18 Turning to consider the massing on the southern half of the site, it is firstly recognised that in addition to the Building A being a tall building, Buildings B and D also fall within the Policy CR10 definition of tall buildings by being residential blocks 16 (90.18m AOD) and 12 (77.18m AOD) storeys in height (see figure 30 below). Given the height of Building A, they follow the Policy CR10 approach of stepping down in height away from the station (also referenced in the RSAF) and are adequately spaced in order to create a coherent, attractive and sustainable cluster in themselves and, moreover, within the context of proposals south of the station. By locating these tall buildings (both of which are residential in use) on the south side of the application site, they are located away from other parcels of land within the Policy CR11e allocation in order to ensure they do not prevent the neighbouring site from fulfilling the aspirations of the policy. The general approach to reduce massing from south to north and east to west (as per Figure 6.10 of the RSAF) is also evident.



Proposed massing: aerial view from south west

Figure 30 - Left: A11113C2202P6 Illustrative Scheme GA Sections Sheet 3, as received 28/06/2021. From left to right are Buildings J (fronting Caversham Road), F, D, B and A. Right: Extract from Addendum DAS by TP Bennett showing the proposed massing from a point to the south-west of the site.

6.2.19 Building D, similar to Building A, has a clearly defined base (larger floor to ceiling height) and two set-back upper floors to mirror the Building A approach (on a smaller overall massing basis). In-between these two blocks Building B provides a transition in scale at 16 storeys and includes no setback on the upper most floors to provide contrast and variety in form to its neighbours. Buildings B and D are both slender in form, to assist them appearing as elegant additions to Reading’s skyline, whilst also being clearly subordinate to the primary tall building (Building A) next to the station. Buildings B and D are both considered to comply with the relevant sections of Policy CR10 at this outline application stage, with many of the component parts evidenced in other sections of this report (as previously referenced in relation to Building A too).

6.2.20 Further to the west, beyond Building D on the opposite site of Middle Road is Building F, which rises to 11 storeys. Whilst being greater than the Plot N7 benchmark height (equivalent 7/8 residential floors), it is considered appropriate for similar reasons as explained above in relation to corresponding Building E to the

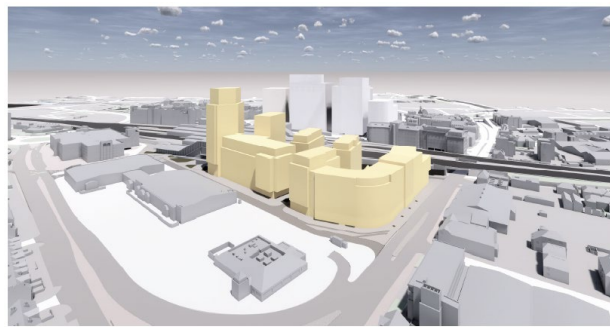
north. In addition, Building F continues the gradual reduction in scale from the station on the southern side of the site, being a storey lower than Building D. This then reduces further to the part 5/7 office Building J, as discussed separately below in the context of the western boundary. However, in terms of the east-west alignment on the southern side of the site, the pattern of decreasing scale to the west is maintained.

- 6.2.21 It is also recognised that the southern boundary (referenced as ‘Railway Walk’ and envisaged to largely be a pedestrian route) is also complimented by two blocks of townhouses. One set of townhouses is between Buildings F and J, while the other is further east between Buildings D and B. The contrasting scale (2 storeys with protruding roof forms) and form of these buildings is considered to bring a welcome contrast, enlivening the streetscene by providing houses with front doors straight onto the street and thereby assisting in creating a character of their own with a more domestic feel. The townhouses also serve a purpose of screening the two private residential courtyards, breaking down the mass of the other proposed buildings (therefore assisting in enabling better outlook/daylight/sunlight for occupiers and ‘breathing space’ within this street) and in themselves providing family-sized residential dwellings.
- 6.2.22 Turning to consider the western boundary of the site, the proposed height on the Caversham Road frontage broadly complies with the benchmark heights detailed within the RSAF (see extracts of RSAF figures 6.8 and 6.9 at figure 26 above). Plot N7 at RSAF figure 6.9 specifies a benchmark height of 6 commercial storeys, with proposed office Building J broadly according with this by being basement and part 5, part 7 storeys in height. Bearing in mind the general rule that 10 commercial storeys equate to 12 residential storeys (paragraph 6.22 of the RSAF), the residential benchmark height can be considered to equate to 7-8 storeys on the western half of the site. Along Caversham Road, the proposed height of residential Buildings G and H is 8 storeys, thereby aligning with the equivalent RSAF benchmark. In this regard it is also relevant that an illustrative proposal of the area at figure 14.8 of the RSAF shows a 7 storey building along the Caversham Road part of the site, rising to 9 storeys at the south-west and north-west corners (see figure 31 below). Accordingly, the proposed scale of Buildings G, H and J fronting onto Caversham Road broadly align with that anticipated within the RSAF.
- 6.2.23 It is also noted that the proposed scale on the Caversham Road frontage marks a contrast to the existing situation and the largely low-rise 2/3 storey traditional character to the west. Paragraph 6.29 of the RSAF recognises this, with a transition zone referenced so that building heights step down. Within the context of the application site Buildings G, H & J do step down in comparison with the 11 storey heights of Buildings E and F and tall buildings further east. Nevertheless, the contrast between Buildings G, H & J and those on the west side of Caversham Road and beyond to the west would be significant. However, as the Inspector noted in dismissing a proposal at Drew’s (71-73 Caversham Road, opposite the application site) in May 2021 (paragraph 15) *“Caversham Road forms a wide and assertive segregating boundary. This is confirmed by the Council’s policy work for the area”*. The tall buildings cluster boundary and the site allocation, as part of a major opportunity area, are referenced at this point. It is therefore considered that Caversham Road, an urban dual carriageway (part of the Inner Distribution Road - IDR) at this point, provides a suitable break which enables a significant change in scale to be considered appropriate. The IDR marks the change in character from town centre to the east (the application site) to the lower rise largely residential character (to the west), with this seen at other points of the IDR too. Accordingly, in overall terms the proposed massing on the Caversham Road frontage is

acceptable, albeit this is considered by officers to be at the very upper limits of acceptability owing to the character of the area to the west.



Figure 14.8 Perspective view from Caversham Road



Proposed massing: aerial view from north west

Figure 31 - Left: RSAF Figure 14.8 - Illustrative proposals showing the buildings fronting Caversham Road at 7 storeys, rising to 9 storeys in the south-west and north-west corners of the application site. Right: Extract from Addendum DAS showing 8 storey residential / part 5 / part 7 storey office building fronting Caversham Road (Station Hill massing shown in background is NOT the latest approved massing)

6.2.24 In overall terms the height, scale and massing has been carefully considered, maximising opportunities for the greatest height in appropriate areas and lowering it in more sensitive locations. A series of conditions will secure the height/scale/massing as shown.

Townscape/views

6.2.25 As part of the Environmental Statement the applicant has submitted a comprehensive Townscape & Visual Resources Assessment (TVRA). Additional information was submitted following requests by Historic England and an updated TVRA was submitted in June 2020, which took into account additional cumulative schemes at that time (which included the Drew's 71-73 Caversham Road scheme which was subsequently refused and dismissed at appeal). It is acknowledged that there is a degree of uncertainty with the interaction of the proposed development with a currently at appeal scheme (VCRP [200328]), under construction schemes (Station Hill North Plot G [192032]) and consented but not yet implemented schemes (29-35 Station Road [181930], plots A-D at Station Hill [192032] and the recently allowed on appeal scheme at 55 Vastern Road [200188]), all of which are material considerations in this assessment. Most pertinently, the Station Hill outline approval includes a maximum building height of Plot C at 163m AOD, whereas the TVRA submitted is based on a previous Station Hill permission whereby the maximum permitted height is 128m AOD.

6.2.26 However, based on the viewpoints and information provided, a selection of which are provided below in figure 32 (and, in terms of Station Square North see figure 28, and Station Square South see figure 13) it is considered that robust conclusions can be reached. The proposed development includes tall buildings which, due to their height and massing, would inevitably cause some visual obstruction. Indeed, the TVRA identifies a moderate adverse impact on a number of viewpoints including Caversham Road, Christchurch Bridge, Swansea Road and Station Square North & South. Importantly, no significant adverse impacts are identified. In townscape terms no inherent changes are identified in most cases and no major significant impacts are denoted. A minor adverse impact is identified from Caversham Road (due to the proximity of the tall buildings) and a minor beneficial impact from Vastern Road (mainly owing to the poor existing baseline).

6.2.27 In terms of cumulative impacts, the updated June 2020 submission provided a more detailed assessment, including consideration of the presently pending appeal VCRP scheme and recently allowed on appeal 55 Vastern Road scheme. In terms of the cumulative impact of the application proposal and VCRP, the impact from the Caversham Road roundabout is identified as having a major adverse cumulative effect. The TVRA reasonably concludes that this is largely owing to the VCRP proposal, given its closer proximity to the viewpoint (in comparison with the application proposal), its scale and massing. Bearing in mind the impact without the VCRP proposal is described in the TVRA as having a ‘lesser moderate adverse’ impact, it is accordingly considered that the proposed development should not be considered the major contributor at this point. In terms of 55 Vastern Road, no major adverse impacts have been identified when the application scheme and that proposal are considered.





Figure 32: A selection of proposed TVRA views: Caversham Road looking east and north-east; Victoria Recreation Ground looking north-east; Caversham Road roundabout looking south-east; De Montfort Road looking south; Christchurch Bridge looking south-west; Balmore Park looking south; Swansea Road looking south-east (note: Station Hill massing in the background is not the latest approved massing under 192032)

6.2.28 In short, officers concur with the applicant’s overall conclusion that the proposed buildings would complement the existing and potential future Reading town centre townscape. In particular, the latest approved (in comparison with the TVRA submitted) massing at Station Hill North (Ref 192032) reinforces this officer conclusion. The proposed massing, when considered against this backdrop, would in some instances assist in reducing the overall visual impact of the Station Hill site. Furthermore, in the majority of instances the separately proposed buildings would be discernible as individual forms, due to the spacing of buildings proposed, assisting in them adding to a sustainable cluster of buildings required by Policy CR10.

Effect on heritage assets

6.2.29 The proposals have been subject to input from both the Council’s (now former) Historic Buildings Consultant (see section 4.6 above) and Historic England - HE (see section 4.24). The Council’s Historic Buildings Consultant identified ‘less than substantial harm’ to the Grade II listed Station Building, based on View 20 of the TVRA submitted by the applicant (see figure 13 within section 4.6 of this report). Officers acknowledge this advice, but consider it pertinent that this specific

viewpoint is not explicitly identified in the RSAF. However, View 58 (from the junction of Station Road / Friar St looking north towards the station) does specifically focus on the listed station building and the application proposal will not be visible at this point, owing to existing buildings on the west side of Station Road. There is also a need to be mindful of this context at paragraph 6.13 of the RSAF, which recognises that:

“The approach to building massing should be dramatic, with a new cluster of taller buildings forming a new and distinctive skyline for the Station Area as a centrepiece of the centre”.

6.2.30 As such, it is inevitable that from some viewpoints the impact will be greater than others, with a reasonable approach being a focus on those specifically identified in the RSAF when reaching conclusions. It is also pertinent that HE did not focus on this heritage asset in their consultation response. Officers therefore consider that a very low degree of less than substantial harm is caused to the Grade II listed Station Building. This will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals (see section 6.11 of this report), given paragraph 202 of the NPPF states:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

6.2.31 It is recognised that the level of harm to the station building is in contrast to that reached in relation to the VCRP site to the north, which is subject to a current appeal (where a moderate degree of less than substantial harm was identified and has formed a reason for the Council seeking for that appeal to be dismissed). It is pertinent to identify the different contexts, in that the application site buildings will not be visible from view 58 of the RSAF (unlike the VCRP scheme), as shown in figure 33 below, and are not considered to offer bulky and overly dominant massing with no setbacks (again, unlike the VCRP scheme). Accordingly, officers are satisfied that a different approach in this instance is fully justified and that each application has been judged on its respective merits.



Figure 33 - View 58 of figure 7.2 of the RSAF & extract of view 10 from 200328 VCRP application at the neighbouring site (not part of this application) - From the junction of Station Road / Friar St looking north - the application site is NOT visible in this view, owing to the existing Station Road buildings and Thames Tower, whereas the VCRP is directly above the Grade II listed Station building - the wirelines are in relation to the VCRP scheme only and NOT the application proposal, but are provided here for information.

6.2.32 Both the Council’s Historic Buildings Consultant and HE identified less than substantial harm to the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area, with the upper most floors of Building A being seen at this point (see Figure 17 at section 4.24 for visual information). In addition, HE also identified less than substantial

harm on St Peter's Conservation Area (see Figure 17 at section 4.24 for visual information). In both instances, officers consider that a very low degree of less than substantial harm is caused. Again, these will be weighted against the public benefits of the proposals in the planning balance at section 6.11 of this report.

6.2.33 It is also recognised that Nos. 71-73 Caversham Road (the former Drew's building) is a locally listed building (non-designated heritage asset) and accordingly Policy EN4 applies. In this instance, whilst noting that the proposals on the western side of the application site (on the eastern side of Caversham Road opposite the locally listed building) would alter its setting in comparison with the existing arrangements, owing to their scale, the level of harm is considered to be limited and, moreover, the benefits of the development (as explained elsewhere) significantly outweigh this. It is considered that primary front and side elevations of the former Drew's building would continue to be appreciated as existing from viewpoints to the north and south. Furthermore, the proposed Avenue through the application site will also create new opportunities for the primary front elevation of the building to be viewed and appreciated, adding to its value and off-setting any limited harm from the west looking east towards the rear of Drew's, which would alter with the proposed development beyond it.

6.2.34 The significance of the other nearby locally listed building at 55 Vastern Road is, by virtue of the substantial distance involved (which includes the retail park in-between), considered to be unaffected by the proposed scheme. In a related matter, in terms of Policy CR9 (Terraced Housing in Central Reading) the proposals are considered too distant from Sackville Street, Vachel Road and Stanshawe Road (the nearest CR9 areas, all to the south of the site) to have a detrimental effect on the character of these areas.

Detailed design

6.2.35 As explained at section 2 of this report, the matter of Appearance is 'reserved' for later determination. Accordingly, it is not assessed as part of this application, despite the applicant submitting quite detailed 'indicative' elevation plans (provided solely for information on the final two pages of this report) and associated visual material within the DAS / Addendum DAS. Conditions are proposed to secure this.

3. Quality of accommodation for future occupiers

6.3.1 Generally, it is considered that a high standard of accommodation will be provided for future residential, office and other users of the proposed development. This section details the factors which collectively lead to this overriding conclusion.

Residential accommodation

6.3.2 Considering the residential accommodation first, the outline of each residential unit has been detailed on the plans, showing that the overall units are appropriately sized for the number of bedrooms proposed and are regular in shape, providing outlook in all cases, maximising dual aspect units and minimising single aspect north-facing units to under 3.5% of the total (1 unit per floor within Building E and 2 within Building G). As the full internal layout/location of bedrooms and living/dining/kitchen rooms has not been detailed on the floor plans submitted, this will be secured via condition as a Reserved Matter to ensure the future quality of accommodation. The protection of future amenity from separate future occupiers has also been carefully considered, with the layout of the buildings minimising

opportunities for overlooking between units at less than 20m distances (e.g. through a combination of inset and projecting balconies and generous spacing between buildings). There are some instances where the distance falls below this Policy CC8 referenced distance, but in such instances (e.g. inward face of Building E and the distance between Building D and Building F being 18m, reducing to 16m from balcony to balcony) overlooking would be at narrow angles or from balconies, thereby reducing the impact.

- 6.3.3 In terms of accessible and adaptable units, the applicant's addendum DAS has demonstrated that all residential units will be designed to allow for ease of adaptability to potentially meet M4(2) of the Building Regulations, as required by Policy H5e. This has been illustrated in the DAS and is therefore welcomed in principle, with a condition providing exact details prior to first occupation to ensure this occurs in practice. Moreover, in line with Policy H5f, the applicant details that 32 (14x studio/1-bed, 16x2-bed and 2x3-bed) wheelchair units (in line with Part M4(3)) will be provided. This equates to a 5.16% provision, in excess of the 5% policy requirement. Accordingly, this is welcomed too, although the exact location of the wheelchair units has not been specified, so exact details of the location and layout of these units will be secured via condition too.
- 6.3.4 Turning to consider water efficiency matters (as per Policy H5b) the applicant's Addendum Planning Statement identifies a series of measures, including grey water harvesting, green/brown roofs, SuDS measures and appliances to achieve the Building Regulations 36(3) standards. A variety of separate conditions (SAP assessments, landscaping details, SuDS) will ensure such measures are incorporated in practice. In light of the above, the proposals are considered to comply with the relevant Policy H5 criteria.
- 6.3.5 With regard to daylight matters, BRE has (as per section 4.17 above) confirmed that 152 of the 160 rooms analysed would meet the Average Daylight Factor test with the VCRP scheme in place. There are however some concerns regarding the methodology. In addition, no sunlight data has been provided, although BRE considers the layout will allow some sunlight and the VCRP scheme will have little impact as it is north of the site. In such circumstances, whilst based on the BRE advice it is clear that there is no scope to resist the proposals on this basis, officers consider it necessary to include a planning condition requiring a day/sunlight assessment of future residential units to be provided concurrently with the Reserved Matters application, given that the final Appearance details of the building (balconies, windows size and openings, window reveals, texture and colour of materials and any other protrusions) could all affect the ability of the rooms to receive light.
- 6.3.6 In terms of sunlight levels within the courtyard spaces and Station Square area, BRE detail (see figure 16 at section 4.17 above) that these areas will be relatively poorly served. This represents a shortfall of the proposed scheme, with BRE explaining it as a consequence of the high, closely spaced blocks. The applicant points to sunlight levels being far improved at the summer solstice, rather than the spring equinox commented on by BRE. As shown below in figure 34, 91.8% of the western courtyard receives at least 2 hours of sunlight on 21st June, with the eastern courtyard still being marginally below the 50% guide at 43.7%. The applicant considers the summer solstice as being a more appropriate measure, as the the spaces are more likely to be regularly used during the summer months. Officers accept that the amount of direct sunlight being received by the courtyards would be less than ideal, but not to an extent (when also considering the Station Square north public realm and significant financial contribution to open space

proposed) to resist the proposals on this basis; instead, in overall terms, the element of the scheme is considered to be adequate and the spaces would nevertheless fulfil their intended purpose.

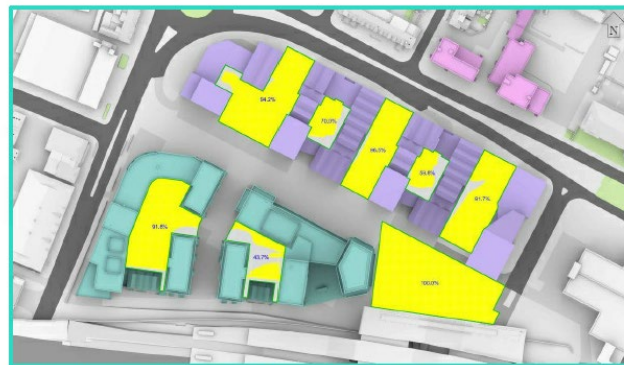


Plate 11 – Hypothetical massing and proposed Reading Metropolitan scheme – Available 21st June

Figure 34 - Extract from Point 2 daylight and sunlight assessment, received 28/09/2020

- 6.3.7 In terms of wind/microclimate considerations, BRE's independent reviews of the applicant's technical justification by the applicant's wind consultants, RWDI (see section 4.18 above) confirms that the methodology is robust. A series of amelioration measures are incorporated within the designs, such as screens, terraces, awnings and façade set-backs. These enable largely suitable ground level wind conditions to be produced around the base of the scheme buildings. There are some remaining questions regarding a localised area next to Building E (amongst other issues identified by BRE), so BRE and RWDI agree that further wind tunnel testing, secured via a planning condition (submitted concurrently with the Reserved Matters application), will provide more detail in due course to ensure the development provides acceptable living conditions for all future occupiers and users. However, the level and nature of information submitted to date is considered appropriate to generally demonstrate the proposals are policy compliant in this regard.
- 6.3.8 In terms of private amenity space for future occupiers, it is also relevant to note that a significant number of the residential units (at 2nd floor level and above) either include protruding or inset balconies, thereby providing small individual areas of private outdoor amenity space. Furthermore, two private courtyard amenity spaces are proposed, each including areas of play space as well as general amenity space for communal use (although there are some sunlight access concerns with the space, as noted earlier in this section). Further opportunities for shared public amenity space are provided across the development too, such as the Station Square North. Whilst such provision is generally welcomed (with play details secured via condition and public realm via s106), as per the RBC Leisure observations at section 4.11 above, the development fails to meet recommended benchmark guidelines for the provision of equipped/designated play space and other outdoor recreational activities which should be provided on site. Accordingly, an off-site financial contribution of £620,000 (equating to £1,000 per residential unit) towards public open space infrastructure improvements has been negotiated by officers with the applicant to offset this shortfall, to be secured via the s106 legal agreement.
- 6.3.9 Given the proximity of the site to the River Thames and Christchurch Meadows, this financial contribution could potentially contribute to the Local Plan Figure 10.2 (Appendix 2 - Infrastructure Delivery Schedule) Christchurch Meadows scheme, where a total capital cost and funding of £500,000 is specified to enhance sports

facilities including team sports, tennis and updated leisure facilities. The contribution could also potentially contribute towards a range of different boroughwide green infrastructure schemes, such as the Thames Parks Plan, Open Spaces Strategy or Play Requirements schemes. Accordingly, this contribution aligns with Policies EN9, CR11 and CC9 and will be secured via legal agreement.

- 6.3.10 With specific regard to the proposed townhouses, it is acknowledged that these appear somewhat diminutive adjacent to taller buildings and the railway retaining wall. However, a suitable quality of accommodation is still considered to be achieved within these dual aspect units, which include their own dedicated front/rear amenity areas. Although there will be a degree of overlooking into these units from the taller neighbouring blocks, none will be directly window-to-window and the neighbouring external terraces begin at second floor level, thereby ensuring none will be at the same level as the ground/first floor townhouses. Accordingly, a suitable standard of accommodation is provided for the future occupiers of the proposed townhouses.
- 6.3.11 A series of conditions will also seek to ensure that a suitable quality of residential accommodation is provided for all future occupiers. These include the transport-based vehicle parking, cycle parking, waste storage, travel plan and EV charging point conditions; the environmental protection-based sound insulation, plant/odours, contaminated land and air quality conditions; the crime prevention officer security strategy condition; and, Network Rail's glint and glare study condition. Furthermore, the removal of permitted development rights in terms of extensions and alterations to the commercial units proposed will also seek to manage any such proposal taking into account the amenity of residential occupiers at such a time. Hence, officers are satisfied that a satisfactory standard of residential accommodation will be achieved.

Office accommodation

- 6.3.12 In terms of the quality of the office floorspace provided, it is considered that the large open-plan floorplates, good levels of outlook and generous floor to ceiling heights would make them attractive to potential future occupiers. In addition, the location of the office spaces within the site, close to the north-east corner (the double height entrance is adjacent to the north station square and station entrance) and the south-west corner (with easy access onto both Caversham Road and to the station) are considered beneficial to their attraction. Furthermore, a series of supporting facilities are shown on the plans which give further indicators to the quality of the spaces. These include dedicated office cycle shower and changing spaces, generous reception spaces and roof terrace areas. Combined with the anticipated BREEAM Excellent sustainability level, as discussed elsewhere, the proposed office accommodation will be of a high standard. The provision of high-quality office accommodation as part of this accessible mixed-use redevelopment is considered to be a notable planning benefit of the proposed development.

Retail and community/health uses

- 6.3.13 With regards to the proposed retail and community/health uses, these are appropriately sized and shaped to be suitable for a variety of potential future occupiers. They are located on the key streets around the development, assisting in drawing passing trade. No definitive details of opening hours, mechanical plant, odour assessments, cycle parking, delivery and servicing and security details have been submitted, so will all be secured via condition. The public realm and CCTV

measures secured via legal agreement will also inherently assist the function of the retail and community /health uses proposed.

- 6.3.14 In terms of the community centre and health centre uses proposed, it has been agreed that these will be secured via S106 legal agreement, to provide a clear commitment that the units function for these specific purposes. The provision of such services (although the exact form of the health use is flexible - it could for example entail a GP surgery or dentist) is welcomed, given the significant increase in residential population at the site and in the central area as a whole. Whilst officers are mindful of the 2019 consultation response from the NHS clinical commissioning group (see section 4.27 above), which questioned the justification for a newly built 'health centre use', officers consider that the scale and nature of recently consented, under consideration and likely future development within central Reading means the likely need for such facilities is only going to increase and of a level which necessitates such facilities.
- 6.3.15 Furthermore, Policy OU1 supports such uses and paragraph 93 of the NPPF also requires planning decisions to plan positively for the provision of community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. Furthermore, the anecdotal evidence of public consultation responses to this application also demonstrate at least a perceived need for local healthcare facilities to be provided alongside large-scale developments such as this. As such, officers consider that the provision of both a health centre and a separate community centre, as secured in practice via the s106 legal agreement, are a tangible planning benefit of the proposals. Put simply, the units will incorporate uses which will support and benefit the local and wider community. As such, they are strongly supported by officers and considered to be a particular benefit of the proposed scheme.
- 6.3.16 In overall terms the quality of accommodation for all possible future occupiers is therefore considered to be of a high standard and is welcomed, subject to a range of conditions and obligations.

4. Amenity for nearby occupiers

- 6.4.1 With regard to privacy and overlooking matters, the distance of the proposed buildings to the boundary of the site means no significant detrimental impacts are anticipated to existing or future occupiers. To the west, Buildings G, H & J are set back from the Caversham Road highway and when the width of this dual carriageway is taken into account, window-to-window distances with existing non-residential uses to the west are over 26m, beyond the 20m back-to-back distance referenced in Policy CC8. The width of the proposed west-east Avenue spine road means that the closest building on the northern side of the site is 16m from the boundary to the north of the site, meaning no significantly harmful overlooking / loss of privacy impacts will be experienced between the two separate sites. To the east and south the station square and railway lines mean no privacy/overlooking issues arise at these points.
- 6.4.2 In terms of daylight and sunlight impacts for existing nearby occupiers, the independent review by BRE (see section 4.17 above) concluded a negligible or minor impact, which officers consider to be appropriate. In terms of the impact of the proposals on possible future occupiers at the VCRP site, BRE acknowledge that the development is likely to block significant daylight and sunlight to this site. The adjacent VCRP landowner objects to the proposals, partly on this basis. However, within a high-density urban environment, as Policy CR11 promotes, it is recognised

that daylight/sunlight levels may not meet all of the BRE guidance requirements. BRE considers that it should still be possible, with careful daylight and sunlight design, for a scheme at the neighbouring site to include adequate daylight to the rooms on the southern side facing the application site. In terms of sunlight provision to the open spaces within the VCRP scheme, BRE conclude that 2 of the 3 spaces meet the guidance, with the deficiency being owing to a combination of the proposed development and the layout of the VCRP site. In this regard officers are satisfied that the impact is not so significant to warrant refusal of the application on this basis. Based on these conclusions it is considered that the proposals in overall terms comply with the general thrust of Policies CC8 and CR11viii, in particular in not preventing the neighbouring site in fulfilling the Policy CR11 aspirations.

- 6.4.3 Turning to consider visual dominance, overbearing and outlook impacts, whilst it is acknowledged that the proposals will result in an altered relationship for the existing low-rise residential areas to the north and west (in comparison with existing), the location of the tallest elements of the scheme adjacent to the station demonstrates that these are sited in the furthest away locations from existing occupiers, so as to reduce the dominance of the scheme in the surrounding area. It is acknowledged that the changes in scale across the site in comparison with existing result in a degree of visual dominance and overbearing, but some such impacts would be anticipated on any development proposal which seeks to accord with the Policy CR11 vision and objectives. In overall terms it is considered that no visual dominance, overbearing and outlook impacts would be considered to occur to such an extent to warrant refusal of the scheme on this basis. In terms of possible future occupiers at neighbouring sites within the CR11e sub-area being subject to detrimental visual dominance, overbearing and outlook impacts from the proposed scheme, the setback of built form from the northern and eastern boundaries provides a suitable relief and 'breathing space' between any possible future relationships. In the context of the anticipated future high-density urban environment, this has led to your officers concluding that no significant adverse impacts would occur in these terms and the proposed scheme has been developed so as to not prevent the neighbouring sites from fulfilling Policy CR11 aspirations in these regards.
- 6.4.4 In terms of noise and disturbance, vibrations, artificial light, dust and fumes, smell, and crime and safety considerations, a series of planning conditions, as per the Recommendation box above (including specialist input from Environmental Protection, Transport Planning, Ecology, Network Rail, Thames Water, Environment Agency and the Crime Prevention Design Advisor, amongst others) all seek to ensure that the amenity of existing and future nearby occupiers will not be detrimentally impacted by the proposed development. In short, subject to these conditions being secured, the proposals are satisfactory in these regards.
- 6.4.5 With regard to wind/microclimate matters, BRE's independent reviews (see section 4.18) have also considered the impact on existing/future nearby occupiers, particularly analysing the impact of cumulative schemes in the area. BRE confirms that UK best-practice methodology has been used by the applicant's wind consultant, RWDI and a series of amelioration measures are included as part of the scheme. Both BRE and RWDI agree that some further wind tunnel testing is required to ensure that some relatively minor matters are further considered and therefore this will be secured via planning condition to ensure that amenity is safeguarded for both existing and future nearby occupiers.
- 6.4.6 Subject to a series of conditions, the proposals are therefore considered, in overall terms, to not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment or existing or future residential properties / occupiers. More specifically, in amenity terms the

proposals have demonstrated that they will not prevent neighbouring sites from fulfilling the Policy CR11 aspirations either.

5. Transport, including access

- 6.5.1 In line with the observations at section 4.1 and Appendix 2 of this report, from a transport perspective the proposals are considered to be acceptable. This is subject to a number of necessary conditions and s106 obligations, as listed within the Recommendation box at the outset of this report. For the purposes of brevity, each transport and access matter is not repeated here.
- 6.5.2 However, it is particularly pertinent to note, in the context of Policy CR11viii) where there is a need for the development to demonstrate that it is part of a comprehensive approach to the CR11e sub-area, that the applicant has demonstrated a willingness to engage with a process which prevents both the application site and the Vastern Court Retail Park (VCRP) site delivering separate east-west spine roads adjacent to one another. It is relevant to initially note that when RSAF figure 8.6 is overlaid with the proposed footprints of both sites (see Figure 35 below) that the route is largely within the application site.



Figure 8.6 Framework for the Northside area

Figure 35 - Extract of RSAF Figure 8.6 - application site & VCRP proposals overlaid

- 6.5.3 At present an east-west spine route is proposed along the 'Avenue' (northern edge of the site), connecting Caversham Road to Trooper Potts Way. In the VCRP proposal (Ref 200328, see relevant history above), a broadly similar arrangement is proposed close to the southern edge of that neighbouring site. Officers consider it unacceptable that two separate roads, virtually adjacent to one another, occur from the two sites. This would be poor urban design and an inefficient use of land, resulting in a vast area being given over to vehicle circulation that will act as a barrier to pedestrians crossing from one side of the Avenue area to the other and a general perception of dominance of vehicle movements over pedestrians.
- 6.5.4 Accordingly, the applicant has worked up two options. One is whereby the west-east Avenue spine road is delivered within the application site, with access points to the north linking in with the proposed highway network within the VCRP development proposals. A separate plan has been provided showing the opposite arrangement; detailing the VCRP east-west route, with this including an access point to the south to connect with Middle Road within the site and then merging into application site route to the east of Building A. Such an option has been shown not to alter on-street parking within the application site boundary. The applicant has agreed to the principle of whichever developer is first to construct the spine

road is agreeable to permit access to the adjacent site, avoiding the need for parallel service roads. Given the inherent complexities around such an arrangement, such details will be secured via the s106 legal agreement, with the principles detailed within the Recommendation and transport observations (see Appendix 2 to this report). Officers, mindful of the CR11viii) stipulations, consider that the approach agreed in principle by the applicant, is an appropriate mechanism to demonstrate that these proposals are policy compliant in this regard.

6. Trees, landscaping and ecology

- 6.6.1 As per the observations supplied throughout the application from the Natural Environment Officer, summarised at section 4.5 of this report, there were a number of concerns raised in respect of the originally proposed loss of a number of trees along Caversham Road. During the course of the application, a further category 'B' tree (T3) has been retained in the revised proposals. The development does not fully respect this tree in that future pruning will be required to allow for construction and thereafter repeat pruning will be required to maintain clearance from the building. Development should seek to allow space for the current canopy, and future growth, of retained trees and avoid pressure to prune or fell due to proximity and associated concerns, e.g. light, nuisance issues, direct damage from branches. However, in the case of this application, in overall terms it is considered that, although regrettable, the future pruning of this tree and the loss of other trees is outweighed by the wider planning benefits of the proposed development.



Figure 36 - HED.1354.100 Rev P7 - Caversham Rd
Illustrative Landscape Masterplan - as received 24/02/2022

- 6.6.2 The proposed soft landscaping arrangements across the site more generally are considered to be broadly positive although full details will be secured via condition. Of particular importance will be the hard/soft landscaping arrangements within the remodelled Station Square North, directly outside the station entrance. This existing area is somewhat basic in nature and was always anticipated to be improved by the proposed development. Whilst a proposed scheme has been worked up by the applicant (see figure 36 above), in light of there being a multitude of potentially conflicting interests to resolve, the exact details of the configuration and layout of the space will be secured via condition. A number of matters have arisen through the consultation responses from BRE wind/microclimate, the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police, RBC Emergency Planning, Network Rail and RBC Licensing, as well as the key CR11 objective to facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability on the key north-south route (also bearing in mind the CR11viii) requirement for the development being part of a comprehensive approach to the sub-area) which means the layout currently shown is likely to require further design development. To enable all competing demands to be taken into account it is considered both reasonable and

necessary for further/fuller details to be secured via condition. The delivery of the remodelled Station Square North will be a considerable public benefit of the scheme, given the considerable footfall and gateway location of the space. There are also a series of other conditions recommended by the Natural Environment Officer, which are all duly considered necessary and relevant to be secured as such.

- 6.6.3 The Council's Ecology consultant is satisfied with the proposals subject to a series of conditions, as detailed within the consultation response at section 4.9 of this report.

7. Sustainability and energy

- 6.7.1 In terms of energy and sustainability matters, Element Energy has reviewed the information submitted by the applicant on behalf of the local planning authority. As per section 4.10 of this report (which also summarises the strategy), following a series of revisions, Element Energy has confirmed that the proposals are policy compliant in these regards.
- 6.7.2 Most significantly, there was a fundamental change in approach from the originally proposed gas-fired CHP approach to an electrified heat supply via communal heat pumps approach. The scheme is anticipated to meet at least the minimum 35% reduction in carbon emissions over Part L, with a carbon offset payment secured via the s106 legal agreement. Based on the report submitted the financial contribution was estimated to be £190,800, but this is subject to possible change based on the two SAP assessment conditions required, whereby further detail will be provided to arrive at an accurate final figure (as per the Sustainability SPD approach). For example, the design stage SAP assessment will be pre-commencement (barring demolition) so the applicant can explore whether open-loop ground source heat pump (GSHP) and water source heat pump (WSHP) technologies can be used rather than the presently proposed air source heat pumps (ASHPs) serving a communal heat network, as per the Element Energy feedback.
- 6.7.3 It is also pertinent to note that the scheme has been designed to accommodate a future connection to a wider district heating scheme. This is particularly relevant given the site is part of a cluster area suitable for town centre heat network scheme. Furthermore, the Council is also presently progressing the feasibility of a scheme which will centre on sites north and east of the station, including the application site for a heat network, utilising heat from water in the River Thames. Accordingly, the scheme already being future-proofed in this manner is encouraging. Finally, it is noted that PV (photovoltaics) has been proposed during the course of the application, but is not shown on any of the plans submitted, so design details will be secured via condition. This series of conditions and s106 requirements ensures the proposals are fully policy compliant.
- 6.7.4 In terms of the BREEAM assessments for the non-residential components of the scheme, the pre-assessment ratings were increased during the application from 'Very Good' to 'Excellent', complying with Policy CC2. This will be ensured by the standard interim and final BREEAM certification process, secured via condition. Separate assessments will be required in relation to the office, retail and community/health uses within the relevant phase of development (in line with the Sustainability SPD and relevant policies).
- 6.7.5 Accordingly, in overall terms the sustainability and energy credentials of the proposals have been independently verified on behalf of the local planning

authority to be policy compliant, subject to conditions and s106 requirements. This is strongly welcomed as another tangible planning benefit of the proposals.

8. Flooding and SuDS

- 6.8.1 The application site is within Flood Zone 2 and the Policy CR11e site allocation specifically references that development should take account of mitigation required as a result of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). This specifies a series of mitigation measures proposed to ensure the development reduces flood risks, as required by Policy EN18. For example, all residential floor levels are proposed to be 300mm above the estimate flood level for an event with a probability of 1.0% + 25% allowance for climate change. The entrance level into the basement car park is also set at this level. As a consequence the proposals have reduced flood risk on site in this regard.
- 6.8.2 In addition, the proposals result in an increase in flood storage volumes across the site, in comparison with the existing situation, thereby reducing the risk of flooding as a consequence. Other measures include a flood management and evacuation plan being provided to residents and other users (the main evacuation route is to the east), with normal safe access to/from the site via the station underpass or Caversham Road. It is considered that the FRA has sufficiently demonstrated that the proposed development will reduce flood risk, with a compliance based condition securing the measures stated to be implemented in practice.
- 6.8.3 With regards to SuDS, the officer level response as the Lead Local Flood Authority are summarised at section 4.12 of the report. In short, whilst the principle of drainage strategy is accepted, given uncertainty regarding the precise access (e.g. the exact form of the west-east spine) and the submission itself noting elements which will be developed at detailed design stage, the exact SuDS strategy will be secured via a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition. This approach is also considered appropriate in light of the separate consultation responses from the Environment Agency (section 4.23), Network Rail (section 4.26) and Thames Water (section 4.30), who all provide comments on matters which could also filter into the final SuDS strategy for the site.

9. Other Environmental Statement matters

- 6.9.1 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES) which has been assessed as part of the submission and within this report. Furthermore, during the course of the application an addendum ES was submitted, reflecting changes made to the scheme and the altered local policy context, facilitating the submission of a series of update documents. It is confirmed that the ES is considered to be sufficiently comprehensive to allow assessment of the likely impact of the development on the site and its surrounds. The majority of the specific sections of the ES have been considered in earlier sections of this report.
- 6.9.2 An exception is directly detailing community and socio-economic impacts. This forms a specific chapter of the ES, where the applicant identifies the construction phase effects and the effects once the development is operations. Considering first the impacts during construction, the applicant has identified a range of benefits, such as direct job creation and trickle down effects through the extended supply chain. It is also identified that the greater local population during construction will result in local expenditure growth. Moreover, a series of long term social and economic effects are identified once the mixed use development is operational. This ranges from population, employment and expenditure growth, as well as the

provision of on-site affordable housing, health and community floorspace. Furthermore, the proposals will improve routes / access to the station, providing a positive amenity benefit to those living, working and visiting the area in this regard.

- 6.9.3 In overall terms, the information provided within the ES is considered to be robust, subject to the planning conditions and obligations referenced throughout this report.

10 Other matters - Archaeology, Fire, S106 matters & Equality

- 6.10.1 Archaeology - In line with the Berkshire Archaeology comments at section 4.15 of this report, an archaeological field evaluation will be secured via condition.

- 6.10.2 Fire Safety - In terms of fire safety and high-rise residential buildings, the proposals include a number of gateway 1 (18m / 7 or more storey) buildings. However, guidance requiring a fire statement and statutory consultation with the Health and Safety Executive only applies to full applications from 1 August 2021. As an outline application submitted prior to this date there was no statutory consultation requirement with HSE or submission of a Fire Statement. Nevertheless, the applicant submitted an outline Fire Strategy at the outset of the application in 2019. In addition, Berkshire Fire and Rescue was formally consulted on the application and a summary of the response received is detailed above at section 4.16.

- 6.10.3 Whilst it is considered that the outline strategy provides a good general level of detail, it does not cover all of the areas required of a fire statement had the application been submitted in full after 1 August 2021. Moreover, it is based on the initially proposed scheme, rather than the amended revised proposals. Finally, it is relevant to note that as Appearance matters are Reserved Matters, the choice of materials could have a significant impact on the fire strategy. With this context in mind, it is considered necessary for a fuller fire statement to be required via condition. At this point it will be anticipated for the HSE to be consulted as well as Berkshire Fire and Rescue, to ensure the consideration of fire safety matters as they relate to land use planning are incorporated at the planning stage for a scheme comprising a series of high-rise buildings.

- 6.10.4 S106 Legal Agreement - The vast majority of elements to be secured via s106 legal agreement, as per the Recommendation at the outset of this report, have already been detailed in earlier sections of this report. One matter not explicitly referenced is the requirement to secure an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) for the Construction and End User phases of the development. This is required in line with Policy CC9 and the Employment, Skills and Training SPD. The applicant has not yet indicated whether this will take the form of an actual ESP to be progressed by them on site, or payment of an equivalent financial contribution, as per the SPD formula. The legal agreement will be worded flexibly to enable either eventuality.

- 6.10.5 It is considered that each of the obligations referenced within the Recommendation section of this report would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that they would all be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. These Heads of Terms have been agreed in principle

by the applicant in February/March 2022 and therefore a S106 Legal Agreement is in the process of being prepared to secure these matters.

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

11 Overall Planning Balance

6.11.1 The application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

6.11.2 In this instance the harmful impacts of the proposed works need to be weighed against the benefits. On the basis of the assessment above harmful impacts include less than substantial harm caused to the Grade II listed Station Building, Market Place/London Street and St Peter's Conservation Areas, the loss of a number of existing street trees along Caversham Road, a lack of sunlight to the proposed private courtyard areas and an overall shortfall in the provision of open space, specifically equipped/designated play space and other outdoor recreational activity space.

6.11.3 The harmful impacts of the development need to be weighed with the benefits of the proposals. It is initially identified that the proposal seeks the redevelopment of an allocated site within a major opportunity area, located in a highly accessible and sustainable location immediately adjacent to Reading mainline railway station and bus stops. The site has been vacant for over 4 years and therefore presently fails to make efficient use of what is evidently an important site for the Borough.

6.11.4 The proposals would contribute towards providing a high-density mix of uses as Policy CR11 requires. More specifically, the policy promotes mixed-use redevelopment, to include ground floor retail and related uses, and offices and residential at upper floors, which the proposals align with. The proposed 620 residential units is recognised as a significant number equating to almost a whole year of future supply for the Borough. Nevertheless, it is also identified that the Borough has a five-year supply of housing and such a high quantum of housing is not essential to meet the future needs of the borough. More specifically however, the on-site provision of 98 affordable housing units and the negotiated deferred contribution mechanism, in the context of a challenging viability climate, is robust and strongly supported. Furthermore, the provision in excess of the guidance 5% 3-bed family units is another tangible benefit. Both the residential and office accommodation would be of a suitably high standard. Furthermore, the provision of both a health centre and a separate community centre, as secured in practice via the s106 legal agreement, are tangible planning benefits of the proposals by including uses which will support and benefit the local and wider community.

6.11.5 The proposals would also help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability as Policy CR11 requires. This is achieved through the east-west and north-south routes through the site, which will connect into the wider area and also the proposed remodelled Station Square North. The proposed uses will to 'activate' the streets and connect to the remodelled Station Square North, which provides a

significant area of public on-site open space. The development will successfully and positively knit into the existing and potentially future urban grain, movement patterns and infrastructure to deliver what is considered to be a proposal which in overall terms meets the NPPF objective of achieving sustainable development.

6.11.6 With specific reference to the less than substantial harm caused to the Grade II listed Station Building, Market Place/London Street and St Peter's Conservation Areas, mindful of paragraph 202 of the NPPF, it is considered that the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the heritage harm. These include the regeneration of the existing site, the remodelled Station Square North, the community and health centre uses and affordable housing contributions.

6.11.7 As such, officers conclude that the conflicts with the development plan are outweighed by the benefits of the proposals in this instance. Officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, outline planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of the S106 Legal Agreement.

Appendix 1 - summary of changes to the scheme since submission

- 1.1 To clarify and briefly summarise the changes made during the lifetime of the application, when the application was originally validated in April 2019, the description of development was as follows:

Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 - 25 storeys in height, providing 658 (79 x studio, 227x1, 335x2 & 17x3-bed) residential units, office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor Class A1-3 uses, a community centre (Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking, servicing, public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

- 1.2 In 2020, following officer feedback, the applicant submitted a revised proposal and submitted a range of documents in support of its altered proposal, including an addendum Environmental Statement. This facilitated a formal period of public re-consultation on the application in July 2020. In comparison with the original proposal, the main changes were summarised at the time as follows:

- A reduction in the number of residential units/houses from 658 to 620;
- Changes to the proposed residential mix, as shown in table A1 below:

Table A1 - changes in residential mix

Original proposal April 2019	Type of residential unit	Re-consultation scheme in July 2020
79	Studio	74
227	1-bedroom	194
335	2-bedroom	320
17	3-bedroom	32
658	Total number of residential units	620

- The removal of on-site affordable housing (original proposal included 97 on-site units; July 2020 proposal = 0), with viability information submitted.
- Building A reduced in height by 9 metres (from +123.18m AOD to +114.18m AOD). The building has been reduced from basement and 25 storeys, to basement and 24 storeys. The original proposal comprised a basement floor, 1 x retail, 6 x office and 18 x residential floors (basement and 25 storeys). The revised proposal substituted 8 x residential floors of 3 m (24m) for the previous 6 office floors (6 x 4m = 24m) i.e. no change in height. This results in only 1 floor difference when floors are counted.
- Relocation of office floorspace from Building A to Building C;
- Relocation residential floorspace from Building C to Building A;
- Building C reduced in part by 1 storey (from +74.18m AOD to +73.18m AOD) at its western end.
- Building C is increased in part by 1 storey (from +69.18m AOD to +73.18m AOD).
- The footprint of Building C has been slightly increased to the rear courtyard;
- The footprint of residential Building B has been slightly reduced at upper levels;
- The introduction of a double height office entrance at Building A, leading into the connected Building C at ground level;

- Revised locations for the proposed health facility (from fronting onto Caversham Road to fronting onto the northern boundary) and community space (vice versa);
- Phase 1 basement layout revised, including a cycle/service lift for all floors and basement cycle facilities with access now proposed from Middle Road;
- Changes to the overall floorspaces per use proposed, as shown in the comparison table A2 below

Original proposal April 2019	Type of residential unit	Re-consultation scheme in July 2020
58,544	Residential	55,451
16,574	Office	19,730
1,889	Retail	1,762
772	A1/2/3 or D1	706
2,347	Basement car park	2,300
80,126	Total	79,949

- The Avenues cycle lanes have been widened in each direction together with altered cycle connections to Caversham Road;
 - Tiger crossing (a Zebra crossing that also includes additional cycle crossing facilities) across the Avenue re-sited to align with the proposed Reading Station Park.
- 1.3 In late June 2021 a number of further revisions to the scheme were made, following further feedback and discussions with the applicant, summarised as follows:
- Re-introduction of on-site affordable housing, comprising 98 units within Buildings G & H
 - Whilst the number of residential units proposed did not alter, the mix was amended to alter two studio units into 1-bed flats, reducing the total number of studio units from 74 to 72 and increasing the number of 1-bed units from 194 to 196.
 - Alterations to the phasing plan
 - Altered access and location of cycle entrances to office Buildings C & J and Building A.
 - Revisions to the cycle lane along The Avenue.
 - Alterations to the emergency Network Rail access off Caversham Road.
 - Alterations to the proposed surface level disabled parking bays.
- 1.4 In February 2022 the 3.5m wide carriageway between advisory cycle lanes on 'The Avenue' was increased to 4m to reflect changes between the design standards in LTN 02/08 (now superseded) and LTN 1/20 (the latest design standards).
- 1.5 The revisions to the scheme in 2021 and 2022 were not considered to be of a nature which required formal public re-consultation, although comments could continue to be made during this time (and were received in 2021).

Appendix 2 - RBC Transport Development Control observations in full

- 2.1 The Transport Development Control section has provided a series of comments throughout the lifetime of the application, with the comments below being the final version of comments, as received in February 2022. The scheme has been amended to take into account various transport-based comments during the application, which accounts for various references to revised plans below. It is initially advised that the proposal is a comprehensive redevelopment of the site which was the subject of a previous outline permission in 2012. It is noted that the proposal includes changes to the land located adjacent to the railway line and the red line plan was revised to include all the land in question (an appropriate approach).
- 2.2 Given the scale of the proposal, a Transport Assessment (TA) has been submitted to accompany the application. This is acceptable and the Transport Development Control Manager comments on this as follows:
- 2.3 Pedestrian links - The site is currently impermeable for pedestrians. Pedestrians wishing to travel between the north side of Reading station and roads to the west of Caversham Road are required to detour via Vastern Road. There is pelican crossing on Caversham Road, on the western boundary of the site immediately south of Northfield Road.
- 2.4 The improvements to Reading railway station that were completed in 2014 have enhanced connectivity between the area north of the station and Reading town centre towards the south of the station, through the provision of a new [pedestrian] underpass and overbridge through the station. This has significantly reduced the journey time for pedestrians since the 2012 consented scheme for accessing the town centre area, as previously pedestrians were required to walk via A329 Vastern Road and Forbury Gardens or under the IDR Caversham Road railway bridge.
- 2.5 The public realm outside the railway station's northern entrance along Trooper Potts Way has also been significantly improved since 2012, with footway provision on both sides of the carriageway along Trooper Potts Way commensurate with dropped kerbs and tactile paving at all informal pedestrian crossing points. This will benefit site users accessing the new bus stops (NA, NB, NC, ND and NE) for the station and those travelling towards northern destinations including the Thames Path and Christchurch Bridge (for Caversham).
- 2.6 There have also been significant improvements to the A329 Vastern Road / Trooper Potts Way junction, which previously did not provide a pedestrian crossing over the A329 due to the presence of a central reservation. As part of the Reading railway station northern entrance completion, a signalised pedestrian crossing has been provided across Trooper Potts Way and across the A329 east of the junction, with dropped kerbs and tactile paving. This has enhanced the safety of pedestrians leaving the site's eastern access point and crossing the dual carriageway which experiences high traffic volumes.
- 2.7 Christchurch Bridge was completed in September 2015 and provides a pedestrian link over the River Thames between the Thames Path near Lynmouth Road and Christchurch Meadows. This will reduce the journey time for site users to reach Caversham than the 2012 Outline Permission from the site's eastern access, via Trooper Potts Way and Norman Place.

- 2.8 The Council's adopted Policies requires improved pedestrian /cycle links between the Town Centre Area and to the north via Christchurch Bridge. It had previously been identified that the internal site layout includes the provision of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing, and to promote the north / south link this should be provided as a controlled crossing i.e. a tiger crossing to help promote walking and cycling. A revised drawing has been submitted that identifies an indicative tiger crossing that would secure this link which in principle is acceptable. However, to ensure that the crossing is suitably positioned the applicant has suggested that the detailed design of the tiger crossing and the on-site public realm, taking into account design development of the Aviva site, is dealt with by way of a condition. The Transport Development Control Manager is content with this approach. In addition a further tiger crossing is proposed in the centre of the site which in principle is acceptable subject to the future development to the north. Again, this would be subject to a detailed design, controlled via condition.
- 2.9 It is noted that a revised landscape masterplan has been submitted that illustrates the planting along Caversham Road to be within the application site and not on the Public Highway. Submitted plans also illustrate doors opening outwards; however, this is not in accordance with Section 153 of the Highways Act 1980. The Transport Assessment Addendums have stated that this has been addressed however the revised drawing still illustrates doors that open outwards. However, this detail can be secured via condition.
- 2.10 Pedestrian ramps are provided from ground floor level to the podium amenity areas, it has been confirmed that none of the ramps will exceed 1:20 and revised plans have been submitted. However, the gradients for all the ramps is still not confirmed on these plans and therefore a condition will ensure this.
- 2.11 All proposed trees have been positioned so as not to obstruct the footways. They are positioned close to the carriageway edge, but the stems of the trees will have a clear stem height of 3.5m when planted, which after 5 years will be a clear stem of circa 4.5m and is therefore deemed acceptable.
- 2.12 Cycle Links - Within the town centre and in the vicinity to the site, there are several signed cycle routes, the closest of which being on Vastern Road and Caversham Road.
- 2.13 There was a cycle hire scheme located to the north of the station building and the ability for this should be retained. Revised drawings were submitted to identify their relocated position and this has been deemed acceptable. The completed Christchurch Bridge across the River Thames is appropriate for cyclists and forms part of the North Reading designated cycle route, enabling a shorter journey time to reach Caversham and other northern suburbs of Reading. It links to National Cycle Network Route 5.
- 2.14 A signalized pedestrian crossing is located on Caversham Road adjacent to the site south of Northfield Road. The proposals include an upgrade to the current pedestrian crossing to include signal controlled crossings for cyclists. The principle of this is deemed acceptable given that this will improve access to the north and west for cyclists. A revised design has also been submitted (drawing ref 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-01011, sheet 8 of 11) which shows the full extent of the crossing and the applicant has stated that the details of the proposed changes can be controlled as part of the S278 /38 highways agreement. Accordingly, this will be specified within the legal agreement.

- 2.15 The site is currently surrounded by cycle routes that mainly provide routes to and from the West and the North. The proposal includes a cycle route at the western boundary linking to the signalized crossing on Caversham Road. However, to ensure that the proposal provides joined up connections with the existing cycle network, a dedicated east - west cycle link through the site should be provided that connects Caversham Road / Northfield Road crossing facility with the proposed indicative tiger crossings within the application site that provides the north - south link.



Figure A - Extract of figure 11.11 of the RSAF - indicating the potential east-west cycle link

- 2.16 The applicant has previously stated that they are satisfied that the low volume of expected traffic and associated speeds does not require dedicated provision for cyclists within the site apart from the contra-flow lane at the western end. However, new dedicated cycle facilities are required to fit together existing parts of the cycle network to make it a comprehensive network that allows residents of Reading to utilize cycling as an alternative mode of travel. This is also an important aspect for the development given that the vast majority of residents will be reliant on alternative modes. The modal share of trips highlights that the development will generate 581 cycle movements and 3,701 pedestrian movements per day and this does not account for the 3,149 movements that would be by train and would require pedestrian movements to the station to the south. It should also be stressed that these figures are solely generated by the development and do not include movements that would only be travelling through the development. An east / west dedicated cycle link through the site would provide connectivity to the north / south link to the east of the site connecting access to the town centre to the south and Christchurch Meadows to the north as well providing access to the west and north via the Northfield Road crossing connecting the site with schools, leisure, Caversham Centre, commercial buildings.
- 2.17 The applicant has now submitted revised drawings illustrating an advisory cycle lane for east and west flows. These drawings leave an available carriageway width of (following revisions in February 2022) 4m complying with DfT document Local Transport Note 1/20, which is the National design standard. This states that the minimum central carriageway should be provided at 4m with 2m wide cycle lanes provided where they would run alongside parked vehicles. The proposal complies with these guidelines, which will also aid in reducing traffic speeds through the development. The 4.0m central carriageway width is accepted only where Annual Average Daily Traffic flow <4000 vehicles and/or peak hour <500 vehicles with

minimal HGV/Bus traffic. The development would generate 377 daily vehicle trips, with 33 vehicles movements in the AM Peak and 48 in the PM Peak, with minimal HVG movement throughout the day; this is significantly fewer than the threshold.

- 2.18 The Transport Development Control Manager is therefore satisfied that the central carriageway width complies with Policy. The design of the road and cycle lane is now compliant with Local Transport Note 1/20 and the Sustrans Design Manual within Section 9 of Streets and Roads and is therefore acceptable.
- 2.19 Drawing 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-00108 Rev P03 (see figure B below) illustrates an extended internal cycle route on the northern side of the internal spine road so that it now connects with the Caversham Road carriageway and an additional connection between this on carriageway facility and the north south shared cycleway provided on the Caversham Road footway. This drawing is considered acceptable.

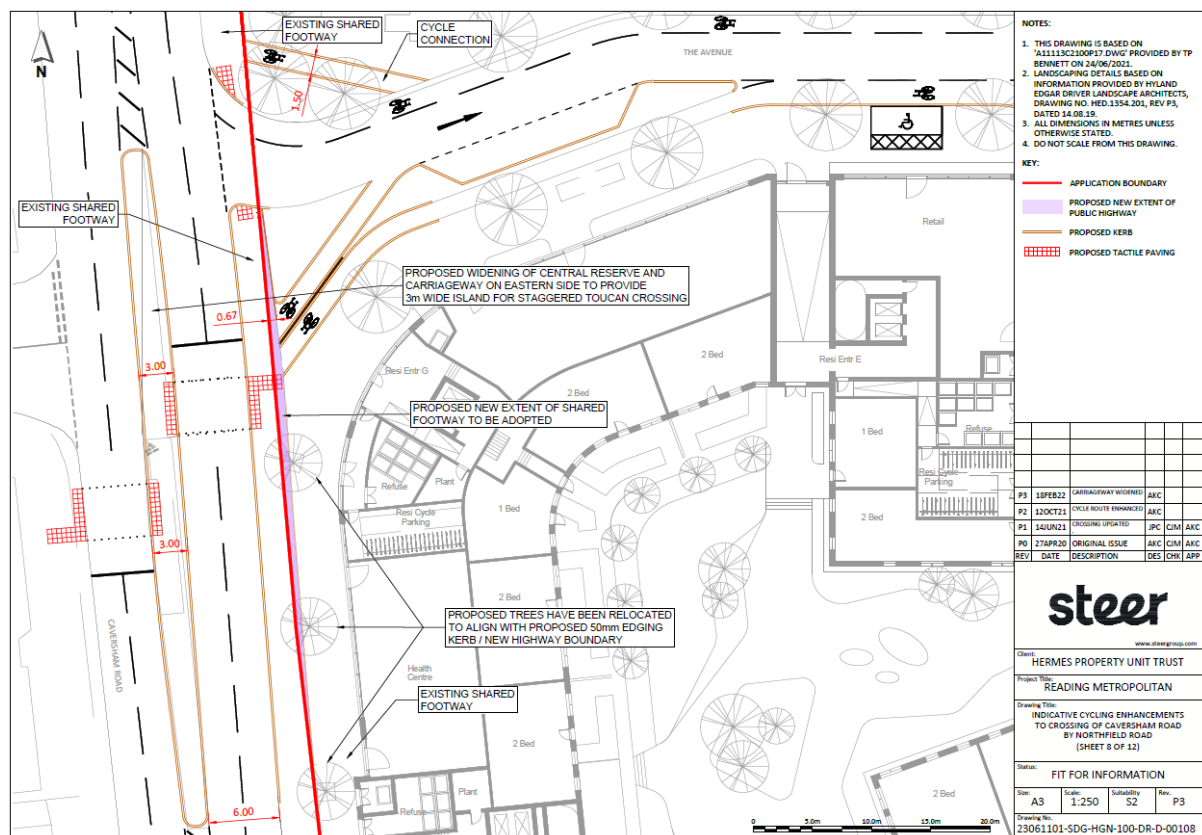


Figure B - Transport drawing 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-00108 Rev P03, as received 28/02/2022

- 2.20 Public Transport - The site is located within the Town Centre and adjacent to Reading Railway Station, the site is therefore highly accessible.
- 2.21 Site Access - At present, access to the site is possible from the A329 (Caversham Road) and Trooper Potts Way. The vehicle entrance from the A329 (Caversham Road) southbound provides access to a small on-site car park running along the western border of the site, and to a larger on-site car park on the site's southern side; this is accessible via an access route between the existing buildings. An additional entrance is taken from Caversham Road immediately north of the railway viaduct and is used by Network Rail to access and maintain the viaduct.

- 2.22 The vehicle access from Trooper Potts Way provides access to a small on-site car park and onsite servicing yard to the rear of the development. Trooper Potts Way's main carriageway also provides access to Reading station's northern entrance, associated drop-off and car parking facilities. Trooper Potts Way operates a left-out / left-in only arrangement due to the central reservation along the A329 Vastern Road.
- 2.23 A separate two-way carriageway is also provided along Trooper Potts Way's eastern side. This carriageway is restricted to bus and cycle use only and supports a series of bus stops, which form part of the Reading station transport interchange. This carriageway connects to the priority junction with Bagnall Way, and forms a loop with the main carriageway of Trooper Potts Way, permitting buses to leave in forward gear without turning.
- 2.24 The A329, which is referred to as Caversham Road to the site's west and as Vastern Road to the site's north, forms part of the Inner Ring Road. This route acts as a local distributor road for traffic moving to/from different areas of Reading. The junction between the A329 (Caversham Road) and the A329 (Vastern Road) has been signalised since the 2012 consented scheme.
- 2.25 The vehicular access to the site is proposed to remain as per the arrangements agreed for the 2012 outline permission. These access arrangements are designed to eliminate vehicular 'rat-running' through the site. These arrangements are detailed as follows:
1. western access - priority junction with A329 Caversham Road, which will operate as left in only for vehicles, and contra-flow westbound cycle lane; and
 2. eastern access - vehicular traffic for both left-in / left-out movements will be directed to the signalised junction with the A329 Vastern Road via Trooper Potts Way, via the existing access point adjacent to Station Square.
- 2.26 The western access was previously the subject of a safety audit, given the close proximity to the access to the adjacent site. Given that the junction design has not altered, the flows generated by the development and the surrounding Highway flows have reduced the Transport Development Control Manager is content that another safety audit at this stage would not be required. If the application were to be implemented further safety audits would be required in accordance with National Guidance as part of the detailed design and Highway Agreements.
- 2.27 The design of the access onto Caversham Road is accepted in principle and the applicant has provided a plan, 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02004 Rev P2 (figure C below), which allows for access to be gained to the adjacent Aviva site to the north. In addition, drawing 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02101 Rev P4 (figure D below) has also been provided that identifies that access to this development can be gained from the Aviva site. This arrangement has been agreed in consultation with the applicant to ensure that only a single point of access is agreed for both sites and that the development of the two adjoining sites does not result in the creation of two parallel roads.

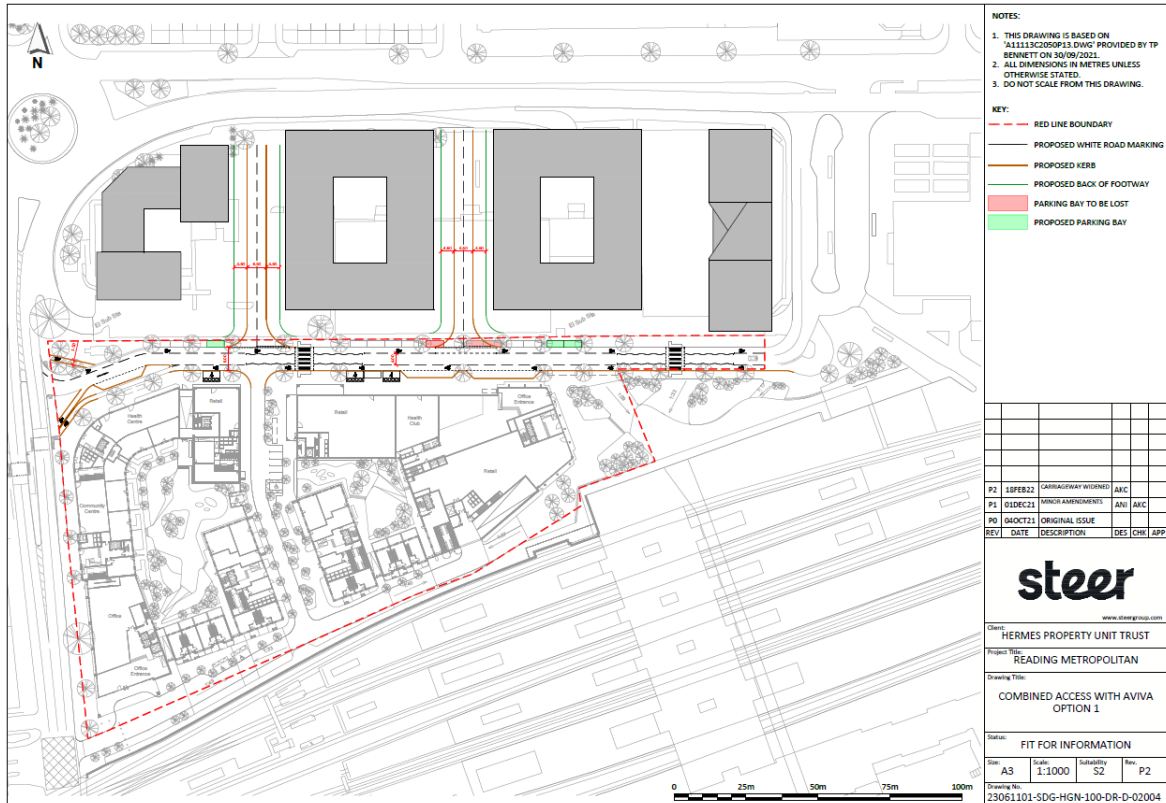


Figure C - Transport drawing 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02004 Rev P2, as received 28/02/2022, showing possible access into the neighbouring Aviva development (see paragraph 3.10)

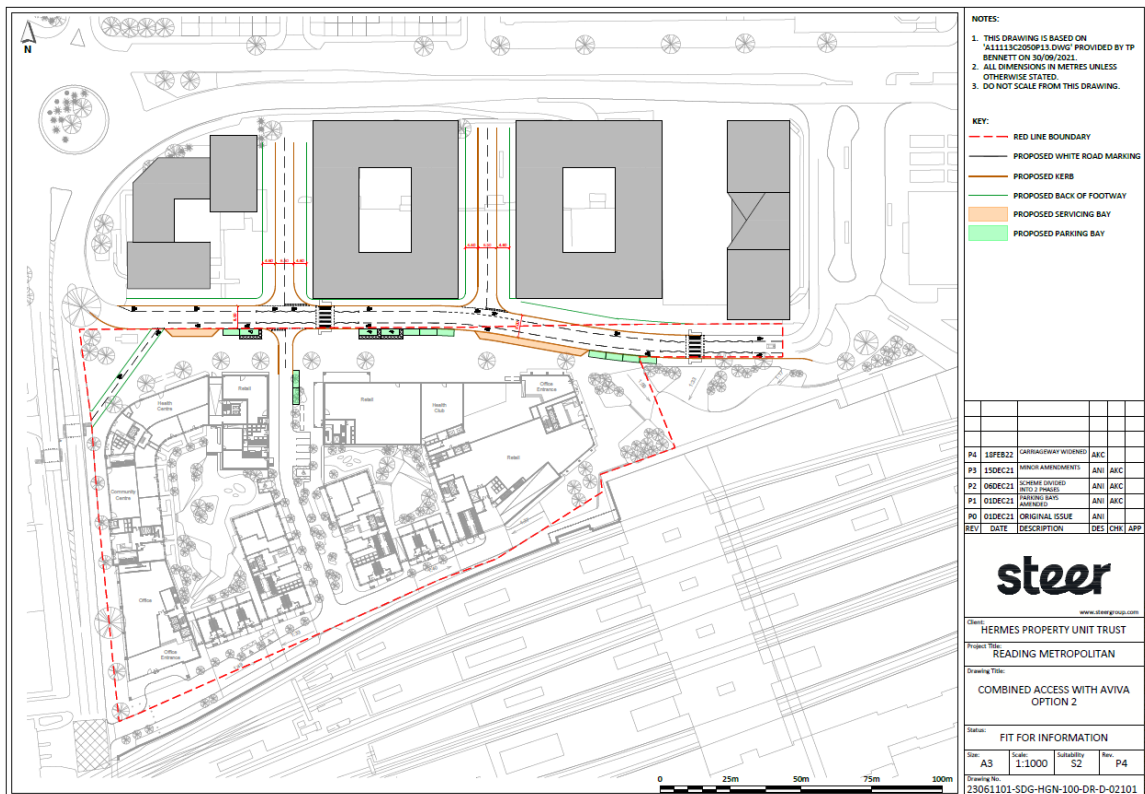


Figure D - Transport drawing 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02101 Rev P4, as received 28/02/2022, showing possible access from the neighbouring Aviva development into the application site

- 2.28 This approach has been agreed in principle with the applicant to ensure an effective use of land and provide improved permeability through the site for pedestrians and cyclists. This will be dealt with by way of a clause in the S106 Agreement.
- 2.29 No changes are proposed to the recently-installed signalised T-junction between Trooper Potts Way and A329 Vastern Road, which will remain left-in / left-out only for general traffic. There will also be no amendments to either taxi rank located at Reading railway station's northern entrance (Station Square North).
- 2.30 Vehicular traffic to all plots can enter the site by either junction, at the most convenient point to that plot. However, they will be restricted to exiting the site via the eastern access only. The internal access through the site to connect the eastern and western junctions will permit the two-way flow of traffic east of the north-south internal access road. The internal access roads will provide direct access to all buildings and the basement car park entry. Tracking diagrams have been submitted that confirm that vehicles will be able to enter and exit the site in forward gear and this is deemed acceptable. In addition, revised drawings satisfactorily illustrate the tracking of a 10m rigid accessing the site from A329 Caversham Road. As a consequence the Transport Development Control Manager is satisfied that the junction design is also acceptable.
- 2.31 It was identified at the pre-application stage that conflict could occur at the eastern boundary of the site and the service area for the adjacent retail park, located to the north. It was requested that the Transport Assessment should provide a detailed review of the visibility associated with the proposed Trooper Potts Way access and the service road. The visibility at the service access has been identified as being 2.4 x 9m to the south which would equate to a speed of 10mph, which the developer has identified would be implemented.
- 2.32 The applicant has now submitted trip rate information and this has been assessed. This identifies that the vehicle trips to the development will reduce when compared against the previous use on the site and therefore the Transport Development Control Manager is content that the relationship between these two accesses is acceptable.
- 2.33 The internal road running north to south has been widened to 4.8m and is now in accordance with manual for Streets.
- 2.34 The gradient to the basement car park has now been stipulated as 1:8 and confirms that it meets standards.
- 2.35 An existing access currently exists to the south west corner of the site and this is to be retained as an access to Network Rail, but will be restricted access through bollard control. It has been confirmed that access to this road from Caversham Road will only be provided to Network Rail vehicles as and when required. The bollards have been set back a sufficient distance to allow a 13m long vehicle to be off the Public Highway while the bollards are removed to allow access. This has been deemed sufficient.
- 2.36 Trip Rate and Traffic Impact Assessment - To assess the trip generation of the development the applicant has submitted data from the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS). TRICS is the national standard system of trip generation and analysis in the UK and Ireland, and is used as an integral and essential part of the Transport Assessment process. It is a database system, which allows its users to

establish potential levels of trip generation for a wide range of development and location scenarios, and is widely used as part of the planning application process by both developer consultants and local authorities and is accepted by Inspectors as a valid way to ascertain likely trip generation.

- 2.37 The TRICS data that has been submitted has been deemed acceptable and therefore accurately assesses the proposed trip generation, apart from that relating to the Health Care / Community Centre use. Updated information has been provided for both the Health Care and Community uses so that the most robust assessment can be undertaken. This identifies that the Community use is the most robust and therefore the proposed trip generation has been updated to include the increased trip rates. The Transport Development Control Manager is satisfied that the overall trip generation for the proposed development is acceptable.
- 2.38 The mode share assessment has been undertaken utilising census data. This methodology has been accepted in this instance given that the sites included within the trip rate data from TRICS have much higher car parking ratio than that proposed. Although car parking does not ultimately increase car use it could result in a slightly higher trip rate given the reduced parking provision on the site. The census data includes Abbey Ward which has a lower provision of parking and therefore would provide a comparable assessment. It is however noted that this has also been reviewed and car use factored down with increases in cycling, bus use, car passenger and train use to compensate for the reduction in car parking. I am happy with this proposed methodology.
- 2.39 The proposed development has during the course of the application been assessed against updated trip rate information for the existing use on the site. The changes between the existing and proposed uses can be identified in the table below:

Table 5.15: Net change in vehicle trips between the Existing Use and 2020 Proposed Development

Scenario	AM Peak (08:00 - 09:00)			PM Peak (17:00 - 18:00)			Daily (07:00 - 19:00)		
	Arr	Dep	Total	Arr	Dep	Total	Arr	Dep	Total
Existing lawful use	23	68	91	56	49	106	486	505	990
Proposed scheme	7	25	32	31	15	46	179	183	362
Difference	-17	-53	-59	-26	-34	-60	-307	-322	-628

- 2.40 This confirms that the proposed development will result in reduced vehicle trips in the AM and PM peaks and following a review the proposal will also result in a reduction in trips over the course of a full day. The principle of the development is therefore deemed acceptable.
- 2.41 Parking - The TA Addendum states that the Proposed Development will provide 94 parking spaces across all land uses taking account of enhanced public transport improvements local to the site. Of these 94 car parking spaces 2 of which will be the proposed car club spaces for the site. 70 spaces are located in the basement and these have been allocated to residential use, with the remaining 24 on street parking divided up for office, retail, community uses and the 2 car club spaces.
- 2.42 This provision and parking layout has been deemed acceptable and complies with both Local and National Policy. A compliance condition will ensure the parking is provided in practice. As the plan submitted allocating the car parking spaces to the

different uses is only indicative, a further condition will secure precise details of the breakdown in due course. In addition, to ensure that there is no impact on the surrounding Highway network a planning condition will also be required ensuring residents do not have a right to a parking permit for the surrounding area.

- 2.43 The 2 car club spaces provided at street level allow residents to have access to a vehicle, without the responsibility of owning one. This complies with the Council's adopted parking standards and will be secured through the S106. In accordance with RBC's parking standards, a maximum of 4 car parking spaces will be allocated to the office use and is deemed acceptable.
- 2.44 8 disabled parking spaces are available on the site. Amended plans have been submitted to identify these spaces to be separated with 4 spaces identified on street and 4 provided within the basement car park. These are suitably located and provided in a layout that is acceptable. However, the Highway Authorities initial concern related to the health/community use not being allocated any of the disabled parking as part of the car park allocation plan. This has been addressed by way of an updated car park allocation plan to identify the distribution of this parking which is deemed acceptable. Again, the compliance condition will ensure the parking spaces are provided in practice.
- 2.45 The applicant has provided a draft Travel Plans for residential and commercial uses for the site and as such these will be formally secured through planning conditions to aid the reduction of car use by residents, staff and visitors of the development.
- 2.46 Electric charging points have been included within the proposed development at a provision of 10% of the proposed car parking number and these are distributed between the ground floor and basement parking areas. This is in line with the Local Plan, is deemed acceptable and will be secured via condition.
- 2.47 In recognition of the low levels of car parking provided on the site, the Applicant proposes to provide in excess of RBC's minimum cycle parking standards for residential development. The amended application includes a reduction in the number of residential units below that previously assessed and that specified in Table 4.5 of the latest TA Addendum. Having reviewed the latest accommodation schedule the Highway Authority are happy that a cycle parking provision in excess of the Councils standards has been provided and the cycle parking locations and layouts are also acceptable. This will be secured via a compliance based condition.
- 2.48 Indicative cycle parking locations have been provided for the retail and D1 uses. These are acceptable in principle, albeit the amount of cycle parking has not been confirmed. It is therefore necessary for these details to be secured via condition.
- 2.49 An indicative location for short-stay cycle parking spaces has also been identified on-street and is deemed acceptable. The type of cycle parking is still to be confirmed but this can be dealt with by way of a condition.
- 2.50 Servicing - Deliveries will be undertaken from dedicated on-street loading bays provided within the site's boundary, accessible via the internal access route. Delivery vehicles will be able to use either access to enter the site, but will exit the site via the eastern access only.
- 2.51 Swept path analysis has been undertaken and included within the TA for a delivery vehicle and this is for a 7.5 tonne vehicle. However, point 7.8 of the TA stipulates that '*Servicing and delivery vehicles (<7.5 tonne and/or 10m Rigid HGV vehicles)*

are proposed to enter the site via access junctions at Vastern Road (Plots 1 and 2) and Caversham Road (Plot 3 and the western service yard for Plot 2)'. Given this additional tracking diagrams have been provided to incorporate the larger anticipated vehicles. The Transport Development Control Manager is content that adequate on site turning facilities are provided to ensure vehicles can enter and exit in forward gear without excessive reversing with adequate access provided to the loading bays proposed.

- 2.52 Point 4.30 of the TA states that '*No servicing will be undertaken from nearby public highways, such as Caversham Road*'. However, refuse stores and commercial units are accessed directly from Caversham Road, which will only encourage on street servicing. The closest bay would be between 26m and 54m on The Avenue, located to the north of blocks G and H. A secondary servicing bay has been provided at the southern end of the proposed building adjacent to the office unit and this is deemed acceptable. However, the Highway Authority still have concerns regarding the potential for on street servicing along Caversham Road. It is therefore considered necessary for the applicant to contribute £5,000 towards a Traffic Regulation Order and implementation of such order to upgrade the restriction so that no loading / unloading can take place. This will be secured via the s106 legal agreement.
- 2.53 Irrespective of the above the applicant has stated that in order to ensure that no servicing will take place on Caversham Road, refuse stores that are accessed directly from Caversham Road will be subject to a waste management strategy, where refuse is moved to the closest servicing bay prior to collection times.
- 2.54 The building to the east of the site also proposes to have extensive refuse stored within the basement. It would therefore need to be confirmed how this would be collected. It would seem logical that the service lift to the rear of the building would be used and as such tracking diagrams have been provided that confirm a refuse vehicle would be able to serve the area.
- 2.55 It had previously been requested that revised drawings be provided that identifies the refuse storage areas for all the commercial units, as these do not appear to have been illustrated on the submitted plans. It has been stated that this has been addressed on the submitted plans, but the refuse storage areas still only appear to be for the residential and not for the commercial, as they are located within or adjacent to the residential access cores. The applicant has suggested that this can be dealt with by way of a condition. Subject to securing the contribution towards the on street parking controls the Transport Development Control Manager is content with this approach. would be happy to accept this.
- 2.56 The Transport Development Control Manager is therefore content that subject to the above points any other issues can be addressed by the submission of a Servicing Management Plan, which will be secured through a planning condition.
- 2.57 Some generic comments have been made within the Environmental Statement with regards demolition and construction. However, full details on this will be required within a demolition and construction method statement, which can be secured through a pre-commencement condition.
- 2.58 In overall terms there are no transport objections to the proposal subject to the following conditions and s106 legal agreement requirements:

Conditions

- Pre-commencement demolition and construction method statement
- Pre-occupation of dwelling/building in relevant phase door opening details
- Gradient of pedestrian and cycle ramps (compliance condition)
- Pre-occupation (of relevant unit) cycle parking for retail/health/community uses
- Pre-occupation of any residential unit short stay visitor cycle parking details
- Vehicle Parking provision (compliance condition)
- Pre-occupation of phase 4 details of parking allocation between different uses
- Cycle parking as specified for residential and office uses
- Pre-occupation of relevant phase refuse and recycling details to be approved
- Access closure with reinstatement (compliance)
- Travel Plan (within 5 months of first occupation of Buildings A & C)
- Annual review of travel plan
- No parking permits - details submitted prior to first occupation of relevant phase
- Delivery and servicing plan for retail/community/health unit prior to occupation of relevant unit
- Pre-commencement of any residential unit within phase 4 details of EV Charging Points

S106 Legal Agreement

- Arrangements concerning the interaction between the application site and the Aviva site in terms of access and seeking to ensure the delivery of a single vehicular route: No development shall commence on site until a phasing strategy explicitly detailing the vehicular access arrangements for each sub-area of the CR11e allocation ensuring a comprehensive approach to access as indicatively indicated on drawings 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02004 Rev P2 and 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02101 Rev P4 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Phasing Strategy will define:
 - i) The development to be delivered within each sub-phase of the development;
 - ii) Timescales for i);
 - iii) Details of the coordination of access and junction infrastructure delivery including triggers for delivery and the arrangements to prevent interruption of delivery across i).
 - The information to be provided shall include the following onsite access infrastructure:
 - a. The coordinated delivery of primary and secondary roads within the CR11E allocation;
 - b. Improvements to existing highways including new/improved access junctions, crossings, and upgraded pedestrian and cycling infrastructure;
 - c. Footpath and cycle links within the site and connecting to the external network including the provision of tiger crossings;
 - d. Coordinated means of treatment of hard surfaces areas for crossover between north-south spine road and east west vehicular route and the north station square.
 - e. Any resulting alterations to soft landscaping
 - The vehicle access phasing strategy will come into force following the discharge of all pre-commencement planning conditions for phase 1 and on commencement of the development. The vehicle access, internal road network, cycle provision and footway shall

thereafter be constructed in accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation.

- Secure a S278/38 Agreement to upgrade the signalized pedestrian crossing located on Caversham Road adjacent to the site south of Northfield Road to a toucan crossing (to allow cyclists as well as pedestrians) as illustrated on drawing ref 23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-01011.
- £5,000 towards a Traffic Regulation Order for alterations to the parking / loading restrictions along the Caversham Road frontage of the site.
- £200,000 towards upgrading / improving the underpass beneath Reading Station so that it is suitable for cyclists. The underpass does not currently permit cyclists as it does not meet design standards and therefore improvements are required to ensure the underpass forms part of the north - south link as indicated in Local Policy. The modal share of trips highlighted in the Transport Assessment identifies that the development will generate 581 cycle movements and 3,701 pedestrian movements per day; this is a significant increase in flows through the underpass and therefore contributions are sought to upgrade / improve this facility.
- To provide and fund the 2 car club spaces identified on the submitted plans.

Appendix 3 - List of drawings and documents (as supplied by the applicant on 02/02/2022 and 22/02/2022):

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Outline Planning Application Drawing and Document List (2022)

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Drawing No.	Revision	Drawing Title	Issued Date DD-MM-YYYY
Architectural Drawings - C Series (Application Material)			
A11113C2001	P1	Existing Site Location Plan with ownership boundary	14-12-2018
A11113C2002	P2	Existing Site Location Plan with application boundary	04-02-2019
A11113C2003	P4	Proposed Site Location Plan with application boundary	22-02-2022
A11113C2010	P2	Development Plot and Height	04-06-2020
A11113C2023	P3	Proposed Phasing	22-02-2022
A11113C2025	P7	Illustrative Scheme - CIL Area Plan	24-06-2021
A11113C2040	P4	Indicative Allocation of Car Parking Spaces	22-02-2022
A11113C2050	P14	Illustrative Scheme GA - Site Plan Ground Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2099	P11	Illustrative Scheme GA - Basement Plan	24-06-2021
A11113C2100	P18	Illustrative Scheme GA - Ground Floor Plan	22-02-2022
A11113C2101	P8	Illustrative Scheme GA - 1st Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2102	P8	Illustrative Scheme GA - 2nd Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2103	P8	Illustrative Scheme GA - 3rd Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2104	P8	Illustrative Scheme GA - 4th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2105	P8	Illustrative Scheme GA - 5th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2106	P8	Illustrative Scheme GA - 6th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2107	P8	Illustrative Scheme GA - 7th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2108	P9	Illustrative Scheme GA - 8th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2109	P8	Illustrative Scheme GA - 9th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2110	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - 10th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2111	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - 11th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2112	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - 12th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2113	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - 13th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2114	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - 14th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2115	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - 15th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2116	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - 16th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2117	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - 17th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2118	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - 18th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2119	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - 19th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2120	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - 20th Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2121	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - 21st Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2122	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - 22nd Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2123	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - 23rd Floor	22-02-2022
A11113C2124	P3	Illustrative Scheme GA - 24th Floor (Roof Plan)	22-02-2022
A11113C2200	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 1	24-06-2021
A11113C2201	P4	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 2	04-06-2020
A11113C2202	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 3	24-06-2021
A11113C2203	P4	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 4	04-06-2020
A11113C2204	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 5	24-06-2021
A11113C2205	P4	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 6	04-06-2020
A11113C2206	P3	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 7	04-06-2020
A11113C2207	P3	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 8	04-06-2020
A11113C2208	P3	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 9	04-06-2020
A11113C2209	P3	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 10	04-06-2020
A11113C2210	P3	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 11	04-06-2020

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Drawing No.	Revision	Drawing Title	Issued Date DD-MM-YYYY
A11113C2211	P2	Illustrative Scheme GA - Elevation Sheet 12	04-06-2020
A11113C2300	P7	Illustrative Scheme GA - Section Sheet 1	24-06-2021
A11113C2301	P5	Illustrative Scheme GA - Section Sheet 2	24-06-2021
A11113C2302	P6	Illustrative Scheme GA - Section Sheet 3	24-06-2021
A11113C2303	P3	Illustrative Scheme GA - Section Sheet 4	04-06-2020

Architectural Drawings - Z Series (Application Material)			
A11113Z0001	P2	Demolition Plan	28-05-2019
A11113Z0010	P1	Demolition Plan - Ground Floor	28-05-2019
A11113Z0011	P1	Demolition Plan - First Floor	28-05-2019
A11113Z0012	P1	Demolition Plan - Second Floor	28-05-2019
A11113Z0013	P1	Demolition Plan - Roof	28-05-2019
A11113Z0020	P1	Demolition Plan - Elevations	28-05-2019
A11113Z0030	P1	Demolition Plan - Sections	28-05-2019

Existing survey drawings (Application Material)			
LS1368_G/01		Existing Ground Floor Plan	19-03-2019
LS1368_1/01		Existing First Floor Plan	19-03-2019
LS1368_2/01		Existing Second Floor Plan	19-03-2019
LS1368_R/01		Existing Roof Plan	19-03-2019
LS1368_E/01		Existing Elevations	19-03-2019
LS1368_E/02		Existing Elevations	19-03-2019
LS1368_E/03		Existing Elevations	19-03-2019
LS1368_E/04		Existing Elevations	19-03-2019
LS1368_E/05		Existing Elevations	19-03-2019
LS1368_E/06		Existing Elevations	19-03-2019
LS1368_E/07		Existing Elevations	19-03-2019
LS1368_E/08		Existing Elevations	19-03-2019
LS1368_S/01		Existing Sections	19-03-2019
LS1368_S/02		Existing Sections	19-03-2019
LS1368_S/03		Existing Sections	19-03-2019
LS1368_S/04		Existing Sections	19-03-2019
LS1368_S/05		Existing Sections	19-03-2019
LS1368_S/06		Existing Sections	19-03-2019
LS1368_S/07		Existing Sections	19-03-2019
LS1368_G/A/01	A	Existing Ground Floor Area Plan Gross Internal Area (GIA)	10-05-2019
LS1368_1/A/01	A	Existing First Floor Area Plan Gross Internal Area (GIA)	10-05-2019
LS1368_2/A/01		Existing Second Floor Area Plan	19-03-2019

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Drawing No.	Revision	Drawing Title	Issued Date DD-MM-YYYY
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Landscape Drawings (Application Material)			
HED.1354.100	P7	Illustrative Landscape Masterplan	22-02-2022
HED.1354.200	P3	Landscape General Arrangement Plan (Showing Indicative Aviva Site)	22-02-2022
HED.1354.201	P10	Landscape General Arrangement Plan (Existing)	22-02-2022

Arboricultural Drawing (Info Only)			
19177-BT1		Tree Protection Plan	05-07-2019

Highway Drawings (Application Material)			
23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-01012	P0	Road details plus tracking analyses (12 Sheets)	06-02-2020
23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-00108	P3	Road details plus tracking analyses (7 Sheets)	22-02-2022
23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02004	P2	Combined Access with Aviva Option 1	22-02-2022
23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02101	P4	Combined access with Aviva Option 2	22-02-2022

Documents (Application Material)			
A11113AS0002	P11	Area Accommodation (Unit count, GEA & GIA)	24-06-2021
A11113AS0003	P4	Area Accommodation (NIA, Building GIA, unit mix & area)	24-06-2021
		Transport Assessment: Reading Metropolitan	18-12-2018
		First Transport Addendum	19-07-2019
		Second Transport Addendum	16-08-2019
		Third Transport Addendum	03-10-2019
		Appendix A9.1 – Updated Transport Assessment Reading Metropolitan	06-2020

Documents (Info Only)			
A11113GR0020	P2	Design & Access Statement	28-05-2019
A11113GR0021	P2	Design & Access Statement Addendum Rev 1	03-07-2020
19177-AA-AN		Arboricultural assessment & method statement	05-07-2019

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Document Title	Revision	Issued Date DD-MM-YYYY
Acoustic		
Noise impact assessment	R01	13-12-2018
Affordable Housing & CIL		
Viability information - Housing Expectations Appraisal Model		03-01-2019
Affordable Housing Financial Viability report		03-07-2020
Currie & Brown cost estimate		03-01-2019
BNP Residential, Office and retail market report		03-01-2019
Affordable Housing Statement		11-02-2019
Reading Affordable Housing Financial Viability Report		11-02-2019
EUV report prepared by "Knight Frank"		18-02-2019
Air quality		
Air Quality Assessment AQ104162	R1	02-01-2019
Archaeological & Heritage		
Heritage Desk Based Assessment 770652-18405	1	02-01-2019
Heritage Response		17-06-2019
Construction		
Construction Methodology - Galliford Try		03-01-2019
Day light and Sun light		
Daylight and Sunlight Report P1368	V3	28-09-2020
Ecological & Environmental		
Preliminary Ecology Appraisal	1.0	02-01-2019
Environmental statement		03-01-2019
Environmental Statement Addendum		10-06-2020
EIA Scoping Report – OXF10985		02-01-2019
Geo-environmental ground investigation – Arup (REP/10-2012-001/RO)	RO	02-01-2019
Final Factual Ground Investigation Report - 20958		03-01-2019
Energy & Sustainability		
Energy Statement – CHBS-PB-17022-4-B	B	02-02-2021
Energy and Sustainability Statement – CHBS-PB-17022-3-C (11/12/20)	C	04-06-2020
Office Fully-fitted Assessment	D	02-11-2020
BREEAM 2018 Pre-Assess – CHBS-PB-17022-2-D		
Retail Shell Only Assessment	B	02-01-2019
BREEAM 2018 Pre-Assess – CHBS-PB-17022-1-B		

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Document Title	Revision	Issued Date DD-MM-YYYY
Flood Risk & Drainage		
Flood Risk assessment - 181017/FRA/JR/RS/01	01	02-01-2019
Drainage strategy - 181017/DS/JR/RS/01	01	03-01-2019
Fire		
Outline Fire Strategy – OF-2191-OFS-01-A	A	02-01-2019
Microclimate		
Pedestrian Level Wind Tunnel Assessment RWDI #1900850 (January 21 st 2020)	Final	22-01-2020
Pedestrian Level Wind Tunnel Assessment– Amended Scheme RWDI #1900850 (May 22 nd 2020)	B	22-05-2020
Open Space		
Proposed Open Space - HED.1354.SK004	C	27-02-2019
Public Realm - Proposed Open Space Strategy (26/02/19)		27-02-2019
Planning		
Statement of Community Engagement		03-01-2019
Socio-economic Statement - Dec 2018		03-01-2019
Town Planning Statement - February 2019		05-04-2019
Planning Report Addendum - July 2020		03-07-2020
Townscape & Verified Views		
Amened Scheme : Addendum to Townscape & Visual Resources Assessment JSL2990_175 (29 May 2020)	1.0	04-06-2020
Utilities		
Superfast Broadband Strategy - January 2019 - 181017/SB/MK/KL/01	First	05-02-2019
Utilities Strategy- January 2019 - 181017/US/MK/KL/01	First	05-02-2019
Retail Unit Ventilation Summary – IJ/cw/9410 – 12.02.19		18-02-2019
Reading External Lighting - External Lighting Plots – 9140 - 15.02.2019		18-02-2019

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Drawing No.	Revision	Drawing Title	Issued Date DD-MM-YYYY
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Landscape Drawings (Application Material)

HED.1354.100	P6	Illustrative Landscape Masterplan	24-06-2021
HED.1354.200	P2	Landscape General Arrangement Plan (Showing Indicative Aviva Site)	24-06-2021
HED.1354.201	P9	Landscape General Arrangement Plan (Existing)	24-06-2021

Arboricultural Drawing (Info Only)

19177-BT1		Tree Protection Plan	05-07-2019
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Highway Drawings (Application Material)

23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-01012	P0	Road details plus tracking analyses (12 Sheets)	06-02-2020
23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-00108	P02	Road details plus tracking analyses (7 Sheets)	12-10-2021
23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02004	P1	Combined Access with Aviva Option 1	15-12-2021
23061101-SDG-HGN-100-DR-D-02101	P3	Combined access with Aviva Option 2	15-12-2021

Selection of other plans, documents and visuals submitted with the application:

		GEA (m ²)		
		PHASE 4 (Building A, B, C, D & TH1)	Phase 6 (Building E,F,G,H,J & TH2)	Total
Residential		32,543 m ²	23,162 m ²	55,705 m ²
Office		13,220 m ²	6,509 m ²	19,729 m ²
Retail		1,547 m ²	205 m ²	1,752 m ²
Health and community centre		268 m ²	509 m ²	777 m ²
Car Park		2,303 m ²		2,303 m ²
		49,881 m ²	30,385 m ²	
		80,266 m ²		

		GIA (m ²)		
		PHASE 4 (Building A, B, C, D & TH1)	Phase 6 (Building E,F,G,H,J & TH2)	Total
Residential		31,072 m ²	22,115 m ²	53,187 m ²
Office		12,691 m ²	6,215 m ²	18,906 m ²
Retail		1,516 m ²	196 m ²	1,712 m ²
Health and community centre		266 m ²	486 m ²	752 m ²
Car Park		2,211 m ²		2,211 m ²
		47,756 m ²	29,012 m ²	
		76,768 m ²		

NB: All numbers of apartment have been measured from current drawings and are approximate at this stage of the design. They may vary because of (eg) survey, design development, construction tolerances, statutory requirements or re-definition of the areas to be measured. Refer to Phasing plan C2023.

Area breakdowns, as received 28/06/2021

Above by use/phase (both GIA and GEA figures provided)

Below - block by block (also detailing residential number of bedrooms per unit)

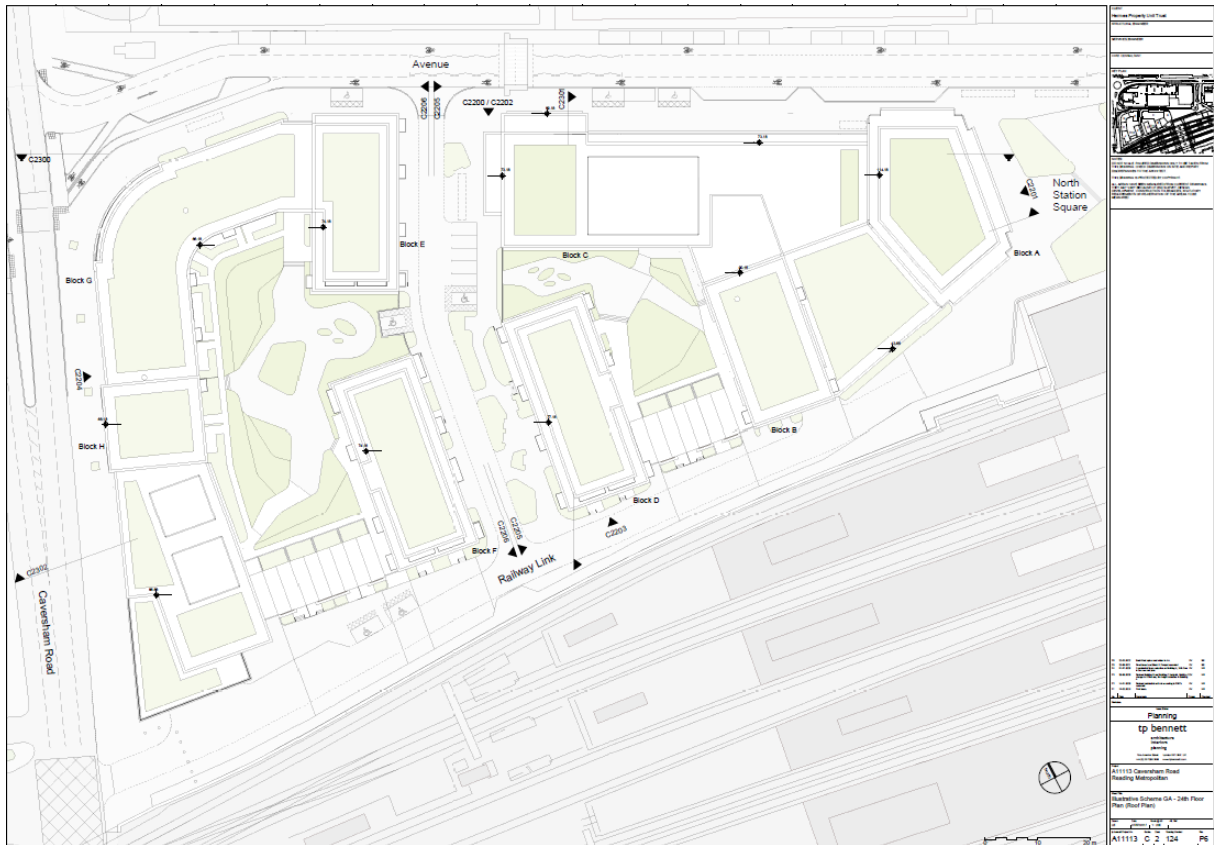
Reading Metropolitan

Area Accommodation

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A11113AS0003P4
23rd June 2021

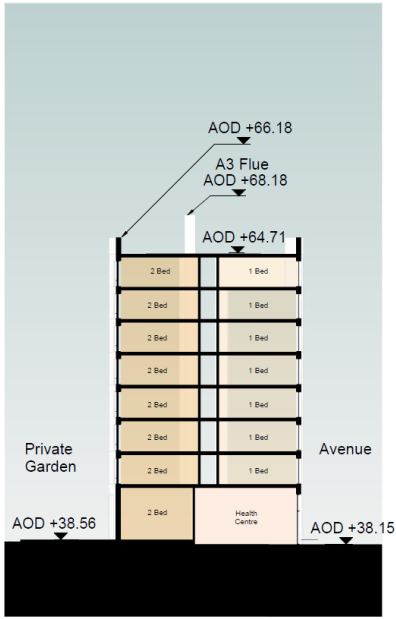
		Building A Residential	Building B Residential	Building C Office	Building D Residential	Building E Residential	Building F Residential	Building G Residential	Building H Residential	Building J Office	Total
Total Office Net (m ²)				9,688						4,932	14,620
Total Office Terrace Area (m ²)				531						227	758
Total Commercial Net (m ²)											
		Retail		Health Club		Retail		Health & Community Centre			
		1,431		266		185		442			
											1,616
											708
Units Mix	Studio	12	30		14	3	13				72
	1 Bed	74	15		13	49	12	11	22		196
	2 Bed	87	45		46	35	42	42	23		320
	3 bed	10			7	2	6				25
	3 bed Terrace House	3				4					7
	Unit Mix Sub Total	186	90		80	93	73	53	45		620
Phase Unit Total		276		80		264					
Average Area (m ²)	Studio	46	44		45	40	45				
	1 Bed	55	51		50	51	50	52	51		
	2 Bed	75	72		70	70	70	70	74		
	3 bed	80			98	78	99				
	3 bed Terrace House	93				93					
	Total Residential Net (m ²)		12,264	5,350		5,175	5,528	4,705	3,489	2,840	
Total Building GIA (m ²)		20,681	7,731	12,691	6,653	8,165	6,239	5,027	3,366	6,215	76,768



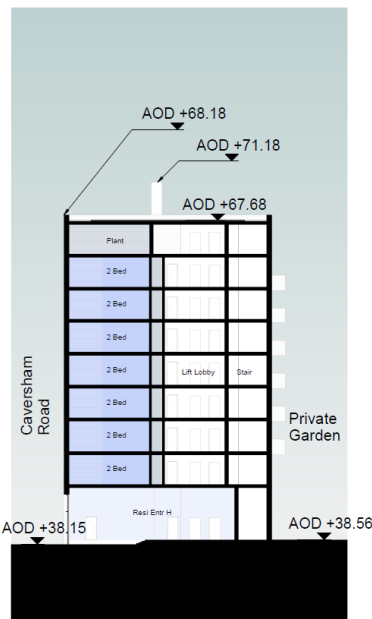
A11113C2124 Rev P6 Illustrative Scheme GA - 24th Floor Plan (Roof Plan), as received 22/02/2022



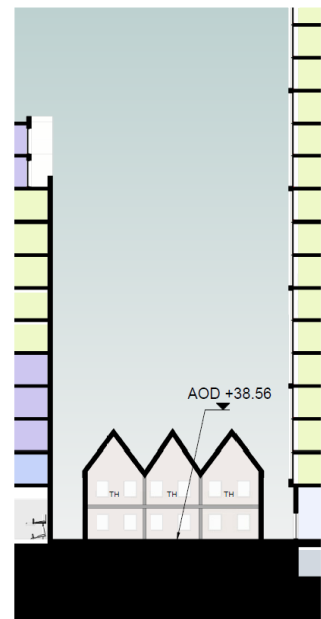
A11113C2201P5 Illustrative Scheme GA Sections Sheet 2, as received 28/06/2021 - Section through Buildings C and D looking east



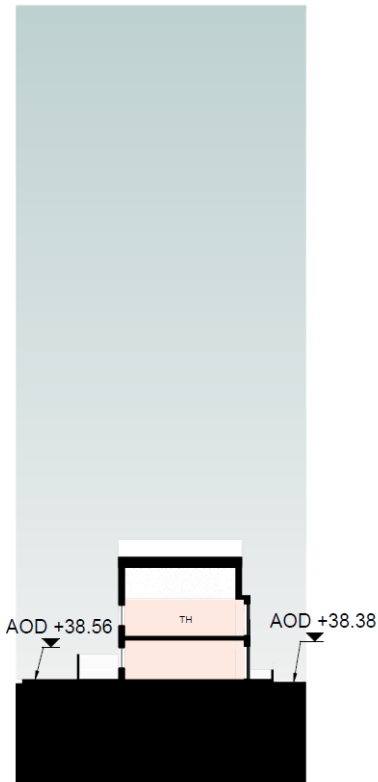
1 Building G Section
1:200



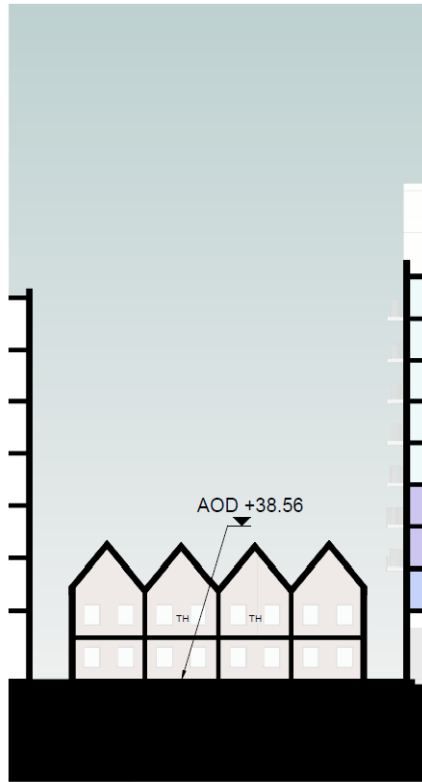
2 Building H Section
1:200



3 Building TH1 Section
1:200



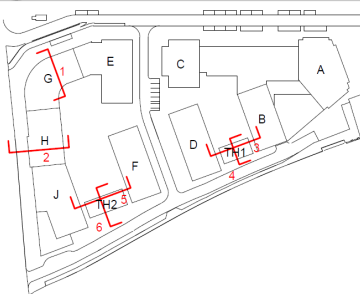
4 Building TH1 Section
1:200

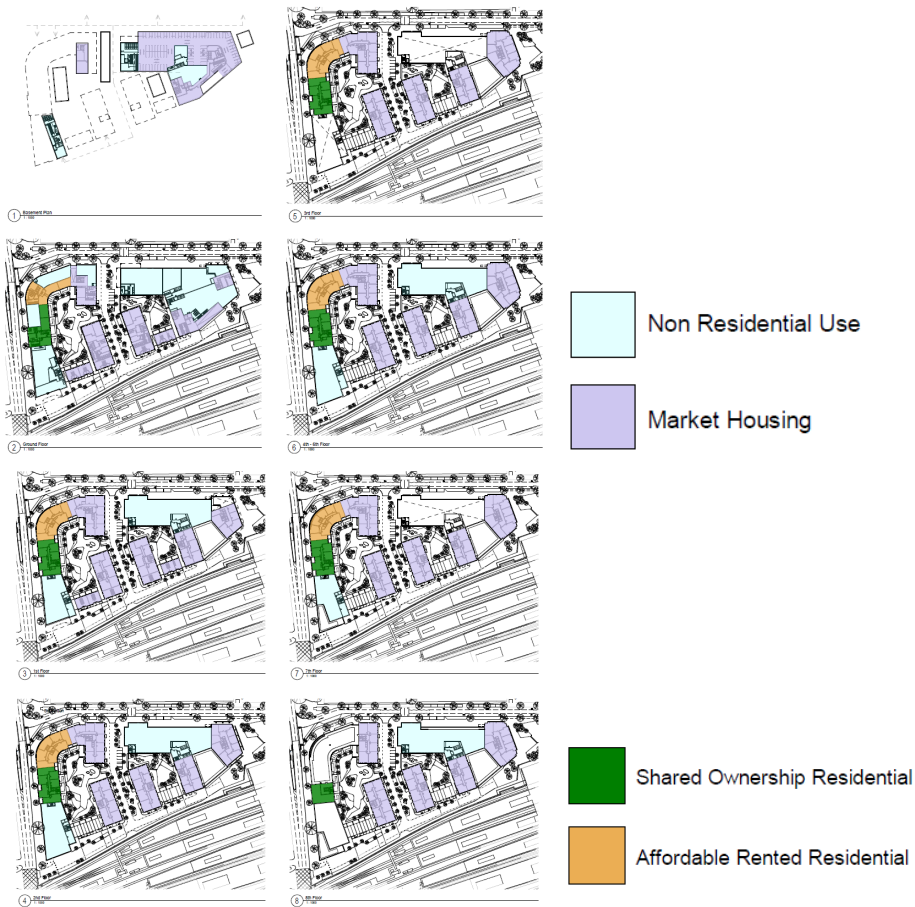


5 Building TH2 Section
1:200

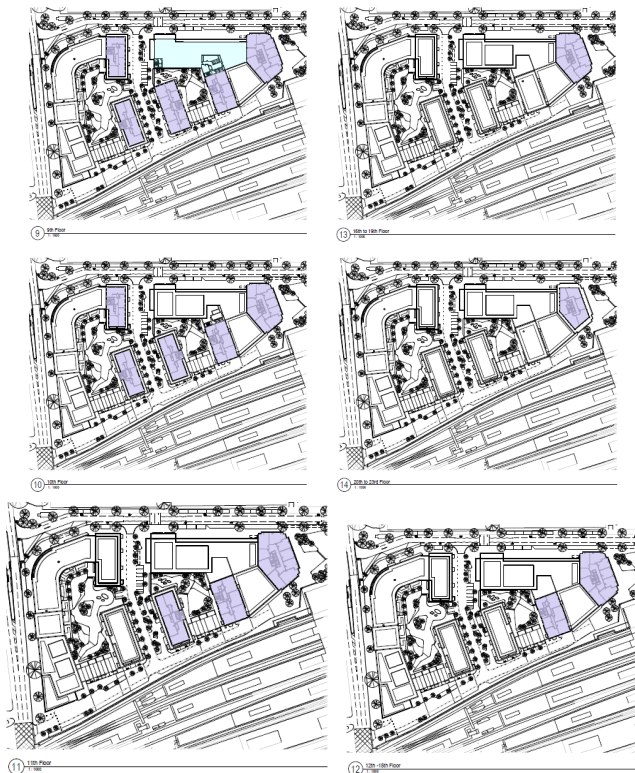


6 Building TH2 Section
1:200



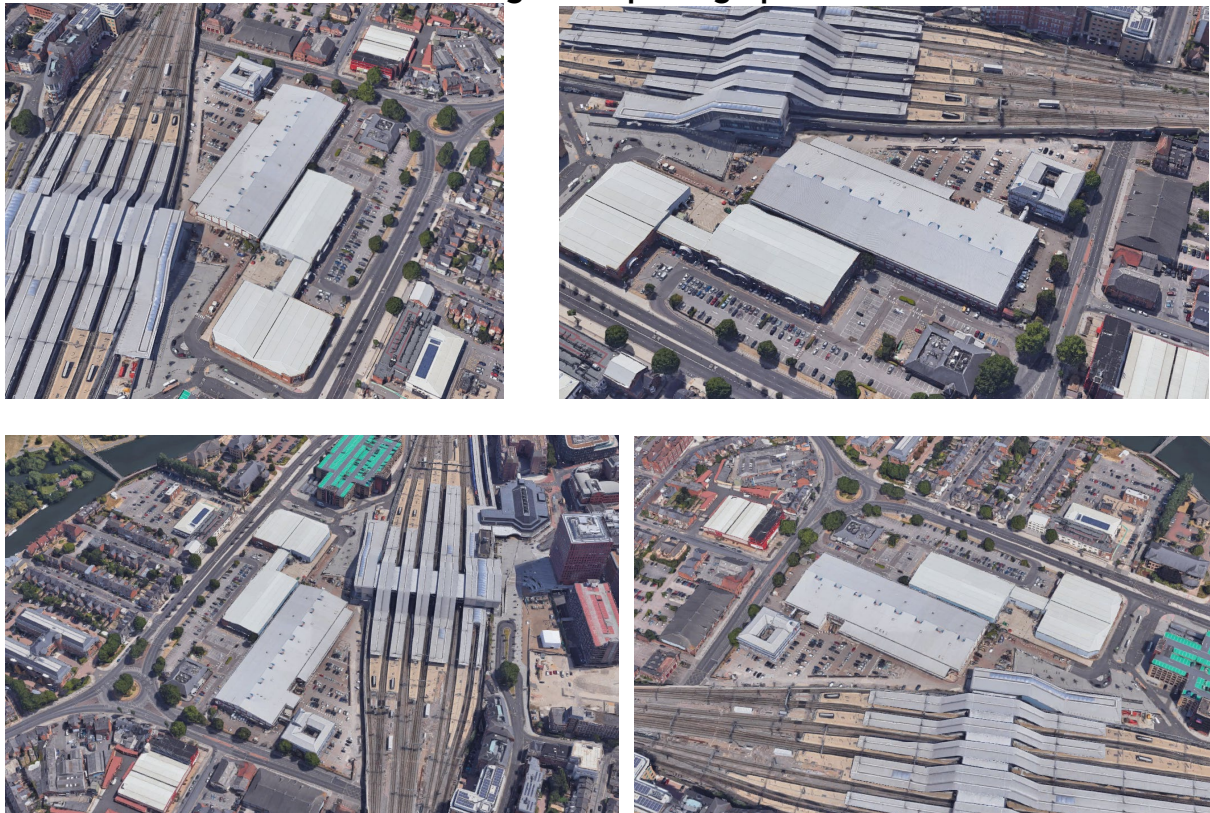


Affordable housing locations

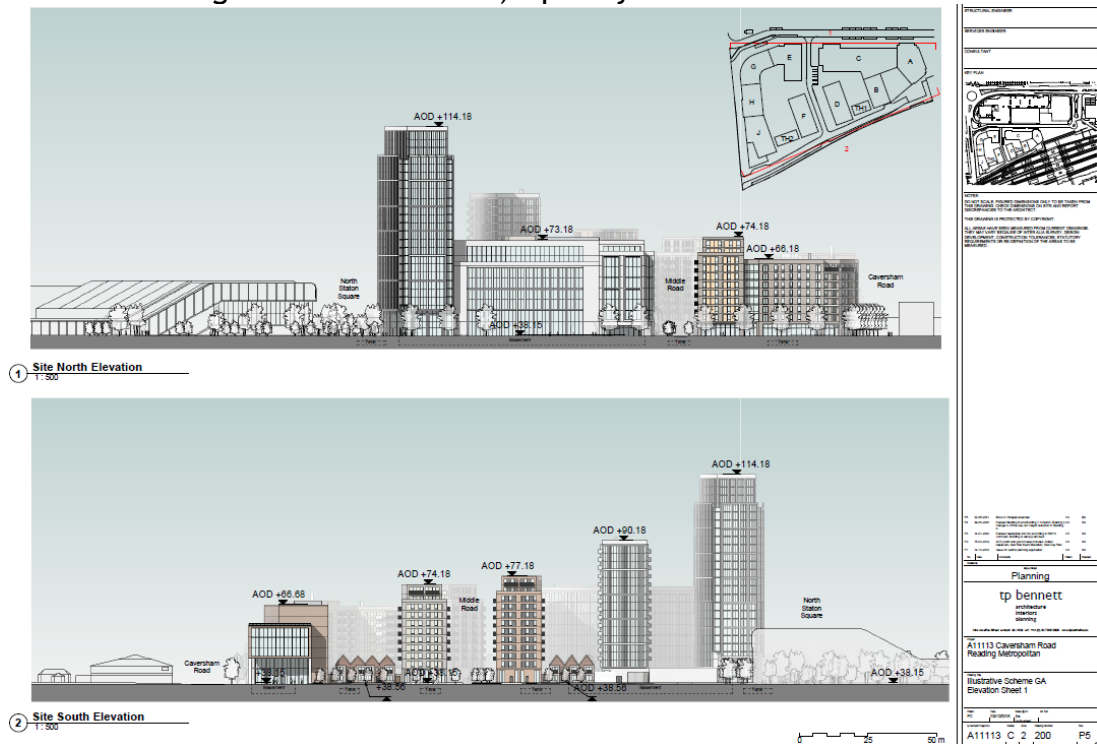


Further extract of A11113 C 2 025 Rev P7 to show layout/location of upper floors

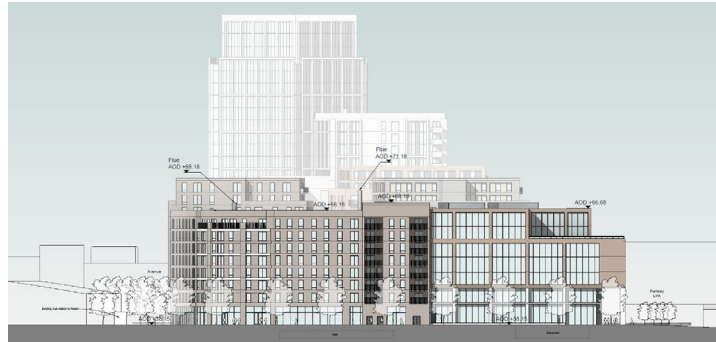
Existing aerial photographs



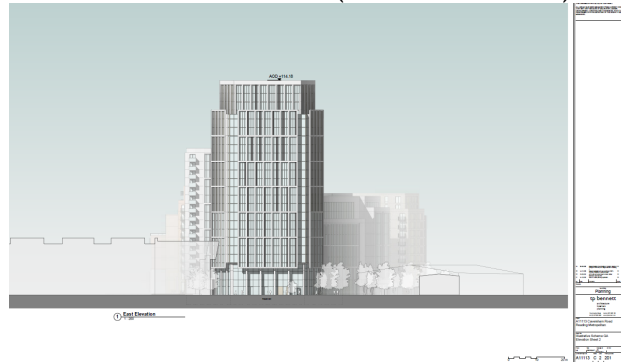
Selection of **ILLUSTRATIVE** elevation plans (not approved plans, with Appearance being a Reserved Matter) - purely shown for information



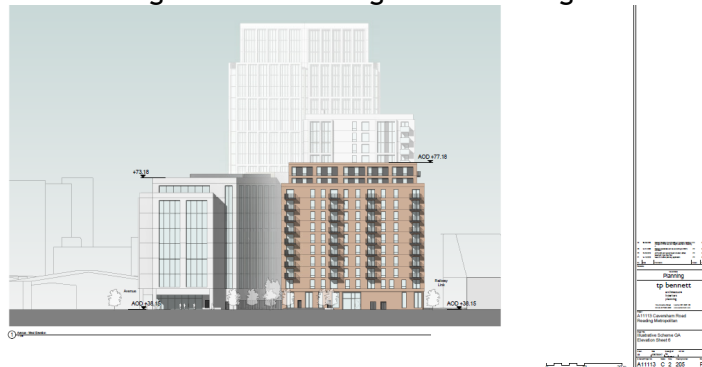
A11113C2200 Rev P5 Illustrative Scheme GA Elevation Sheet 1, as received 28/06/2021
Site North (illustrative) elevation and Site South (illustrative) elevation



A11113C2204 Rev P6 **Illustrative** Scheme GA Elevation Sheet 5, as received 28/06/2021
West Site Elevation (Caversham Road)



A11113C2201 Rev P4 **Illustrative** Scheme GA Elevation Sheet 2, as received 03/06/2020
Looking west at Building A in the foreground



A11113C2205 Rev P4 **Illustrative** Scheme GA Elevation Sheet 6, as received 03/06/2020
From Middle Street looking east with Buildings C and D in the foreground



A11113C2206 Rev P3 **Illustrative** Scheme GA Elevation Sheet 7, as received 03/06/2020
From Middle Street looking west with Buildings F and E in the foreground

Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 220294

Address: Bedford Road, Reading, RG1 7EU

Proposal: Installation of Interpretation Board on temporary hoarding on boundary to former Central Swimming Pool site facing the Bedford Road.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council Corporate Property Services

Deadline: 26/04/2022

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant

Conditions

Approved plans

3 years to implement

Materials as proposed

Standard advertisement conditions

Informatives

Terms and conditions

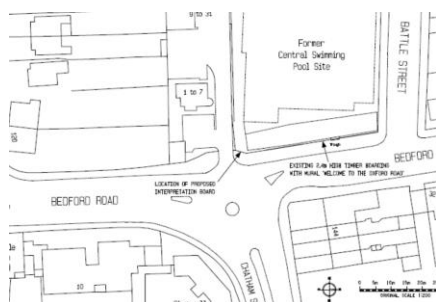
Positive & Proactive

Section 59 Highways Act advice

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site is just outside the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area on the existing timber hoarding erected on the site boundary of the former Central Swimming Pool facing Bedford Road, Reading, RG1 7EU.

1.2 The application is to be determined by Planning Applications Committee as the applicant is Reading Borough Council.



Site Location Plan



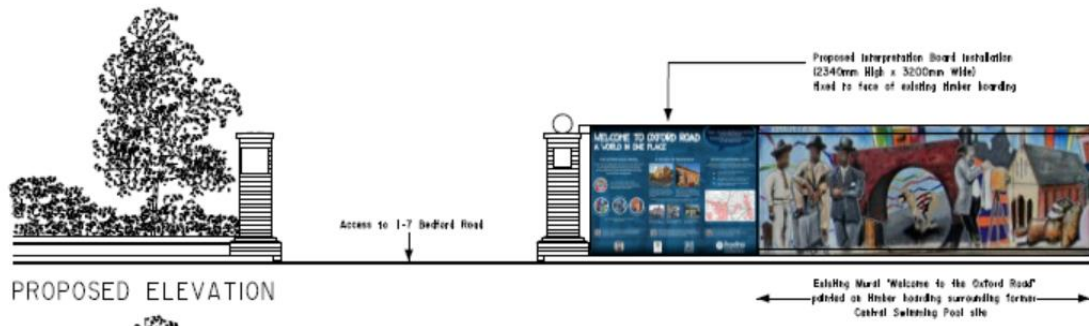
Site photo



Aerial View

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is for an Interpretation Board which will be printed onto three 3mm thick ACM (Aluminium Composite Material) Di-bond panels, to be secured to the existing timber hoarding using suitable fixings to be located on existing hoardings. It would measure 3.20m wide and 2.34m high.



- 2.2 Submitted Plans and Documentation:
ECD/22/002/01 Elevations viewed from Bedford Road
ECD/22/002/02 Site plan
ECD/22/002/03 Side elevations from access to 1-7 Bedford Road
Location Plan
Block Plan
Planning Statement, 17 February 2022
- 2.3 The Planning Statement explains that in connection with the High Street Heritage Action Programme running in parts of the town centre, including this town centre end of Oxford Road the Council was awarded £9,231 from Historic England to initiate a cultural pilot project in the area.
- 2.4 The purpose of the proposed Interpretation Board is to provide details of the existing graffiti mural painted on the Bedford Road hoarding and also the other Artwork Installations, which were produced as part of the Oxford Road High Street Heritage Action Zone. The installation will be on display for at least until the end of the Oxford Road HSHAZ project, which would be March 2024.”
- 2.5 The application site is on the boundary of the former Central Swimming Pool site. The pool has been demolished and the site is to be redeveloped for residential use.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant to this application.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Statutory: A site notice was displayed on site.

Non-statutory:

Conservation and Urban Design Officer: No response received at the time of writing this report.

Valuations: No response received at the time of writing this report.

Transport: No response received at the time of writing this report.

Public

Neighbouring properties were notified by letter. No objections have been received at the time of writing this report.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 apply.
- 5.2 The development plan for this Local Planning Authority is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:
 - CC7: Design and the Public Realm
 - CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
 - EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
 - EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
 - TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
 - OU4: Advertisements

6. APPRAISAL

- (i) Legal context
 - 6.1 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.
 - 6.2 Factors relevant to public safety include highway safety and whether the advert would hinder security or surveillance devices, including speed cameras.
- (ii) Main Issues
 - 6.3 The main issues are considered to be:
 - a) The effect upon visual amenity and the public realm.
 - b) The effect upon public safety.
 - a) The effect upon visual amenity and the public realm**
 - 6.4 The nature of the proposal is one of a clearly defined advertisement scheme to provide information and direction to members of the public regarding the local High Street Heritage Action Zone and other artwork installations. As such the proposed signage would not be comparable to, or open the way for, similar levels of signage outside of such a defined advertisement scheme. Whilst land ownership is not usually a planning consideration, it is relevant to note that the land and structures to which this application relates are controlled by the Council and as such there is an additional level of control of signage.

- 6.5 Policy OU4 of the Reading Local Plan (2019) states that 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 detrimental impact on public safety.
- 6.6 The principle of providing the Interpretation board in the selected location has been considered in the context of the site forming part of the public realm and as discussed further below raises no policy concerns and so the structures are therefore acceptable in principle. The site is 80 metres away from the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area and therefore not considered to detract from the conservation area.
- 6.7 The Interpretation board would complement the existing graffiti mural and the appearance would brighten up the corner of the hoarding, providing an interesting and eye catching explanation of other artwork initiatives and located in a position where it would be seen by many members of the public, which is the objective of the scheme. The proposed location on existing hoarding would replace a temporary car park sign to the Battle Street Car park on a plain white background and would be a benefit to the character and appearance of the area. The Interpretation board, being provided on an existing functional structure, makes it an object of interest and fun so would also contribute to the vitality of this area.

b) The effect upon public safety

- 6.8 The siting of the proposed advertisement has been considered by the case officer and is being reviewed by transport development control officers. None of the proposed advertisements or associated structures results in any detrimental impact on sight lines and would ensure sufficient footway is retained for pedestrians. The proposals do not seek to introduce additional illumination and are not considered to represent a distraction to road users.
- 6.9 When assessed for their impact on amenity and public safety, the proposed signage is found to be acceptable and complies with national and local policy.

Impact on neighbours

- 6.10 Officers are satisfied that given the distance from closest residents or occupiers the Interpretation board will not lead to any harm to amenities. Therefore, there is no breach of Policy CC8.

Highway matters

- 6.11 No transport or highways related concerns have been raised, the sign will be flush against the hoarding, should not cause a distraction to drivers and it will not be illuminated. However, an informative is recommended to advise on the need to consider the Highways Act when works are being carried out to install the works to ensure pedestrians and road users are not obstructed and any damage caused is repaired.

Equalities Impact

- 6.12 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected

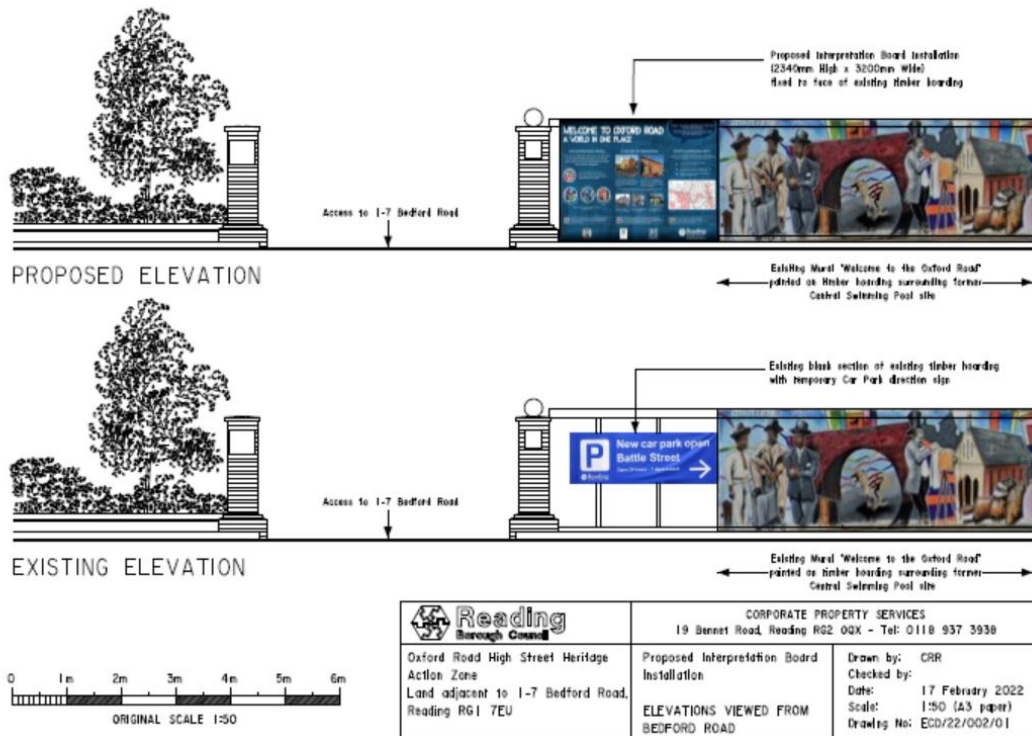
characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Overall the conclusion is that the proposed works would not harm or detract from the character of the public realm. The Interpretation board will not be visible from the Conservation area or have any detrimental impact on any historic features or other elements of the historic environment. It would be an improvement in that respect to the public realm and would make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The proposal is therefore compatible with the aims of Policy OU4, TR3, CC7, EN1 and EN3. It is also clearly relevant that the project is supported by Historic England as part of the local High Street Heritage Action Zone. This proposal has been carefully considered in the context of national and local policy and is recommended to be approved.

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

Proposed Plan



Final design Interpretation board

WELCOME TO OXFORD ROAD A WORLD IN ONE PLACE

"Hang on... the mural is called 'Welcome to Oxford Road' but this is Bedford Road!"
 "Good point. When we say 'Oxford Road' we mean the whole neighbourhood."

THE OXFORD ROAD MURAL

This mural celebrates the history and diversity of the Oxford Road community and shows local people from past and present amongst Oxford Road landmarks.

Arnon Lowe (also known as Arnon) painted 'Welcome to Oxford Road' in 2021. Arnon developed the idea with local people, including passers-by who suggested details as he was painting.

What sports can you see?
 How many different foods can you spot?
 How many jobs are pictured on the mural?

Take a selfie with your favourite part of the mural.
 #HS04Z #A27AGS

A HISTORY OF BEGINNINGS

In 1800 this area was open fields on the edge of town. As Reading's population grew, developers built large family homes along Oxford Road, creating a popular new suburb.

In the 1860s the railway came. The speedy connection to London and the west kickstarted a new industrial era. Factory workers rented homes on terrace streets either side of Oxford Road.

Newcomers have been settling here ever since. Every generation makes a mark with new shops, restaurants, businesses and places of worship.

Jewish families are among the earliest in Reading. Synagogues and houses arrived in the 19th century.

Young people from Ireland and the West Indies came looking for work in the 1930s and 1950s.

More recently Oxford Road has seen more people from the Middle East and Europe.

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

Oxford Road, along with St Mary's Bulbs/Castle Street and Market Place/London Street, is one of more than 60 Heritage Action Zone projects across England. It's funded by Historic England and Reading Borough Council. We are:

- Consulting with local people to find out what improvements they want to see
- Restoring historic buildings and shop fronts to improve our surroundings and preserve them for the future
- Commissioning artworks, like the mural, to share the stories of these historic areas.

Find out more about other artworks. Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit www.reading.gov.uk/readinghighstreet-cultural-programme

During 2020 Reading Museum, the University of Reading and other partners collected local people's memories of Oxford Road. To explore their stories scan the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit www.readingmuseum.org.uk/oxford-road-stories

Find out more about the Heritage Action Zones by scanning the QR code with your smartphone camera or visit www.reading.gov.uk/haz

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Kentwood

App No: 220190/REG

Address: Various Addresses, 5 Bramshaw Road, Reading, RG30 6AT

Proposal: Property improvement works and Thermal efficiency upgrades to 31 RBC properties. Works to each property will consist of fitting new External Wall insulation, new triple glazed windows and doors, minor roof adaptations, fitting of Air Source Heat pumps, central heating upgrades and associated works. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Addresses include 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 42, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 83, 87, 89 Bramshaw Road. 1, 4, 8 Wimborne Gardens. 158 Thirlmere Ave. 13 Ringwood Road. 61 Lyndhurst Road. 67 Lyndhurst Road. (Part Retrospective)

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Date validated: 11/02/2022

Target Date: 08/04/2022

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives

Conditions to include

1. Approved plans
2. Materials - as specified
3. Locations and specifications of proposed Air Source Heat Pumps as approved and ongoing maintenance

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 and semi-detached houses along Bramshaw Road, Wimborne Gardens, Thirlmere Avenue and Ringwood Road. 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, with the exception of 158 Thirlmere Avenue which consists of red brick external walls. 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.

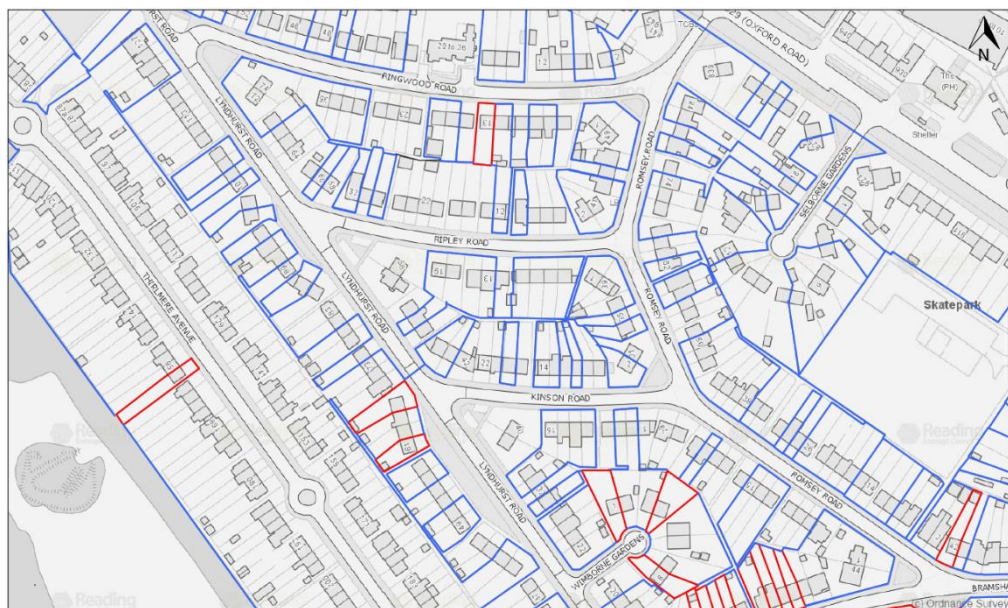
- 1.4 At the time of writing this report, some works to the properties have commenced that do not require planning permission. The works which are the subject of this application cannot commence until the new windows are installed. The application is referred to Committee owing to it being for works to Council owned (Regulation 3) property.

Site Location Plan 1



NOTE: The 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.

Site Location Plan 2



NOTE: The 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 include 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 42, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 83, 87, 89 Bramshaw Road; 1, 4, 8 Wimborne Gardens; 158 Thirlmere Ave; 13 Ringwood Road; 61 Lyndhurst Road and 67 Lyndhurst Road.

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
- The fitting of Air Source Heat pumps to the side of properties. These would likely be considered Permitted Development provided they comply with the relevant criteria in terms of size, location and standards.

- 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.

3. PLANS AND DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED:

The following plans and documents were received on 11th February 2022:

- Location Plan 1 (Including Council owned properties demonstrated in blue)
- Location Plan 2 (Including Council owned properties demonstrated in blue)
- Site Plan - 5 to 28 Bramshaw Road
- Site Plan - 42 to 66 Bramshaw Road
- Site Plan - 50 to 89 Bramshaw Road
- Site Plan - 13 Ringwood Road
- Site Plan - 1 to 8 Wimborne Gardens
- Site Plan - 158 Thirlmere Avenue and 61 to 67 Lyndhurst Road
- Existing Elevations - PM/01-8 BRAM
- Existing Elevations - PM/01-8 WIM
- Existing Elevations - PM/01-6 BRAM
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-8 BRAM
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-8 WIM
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-6 BRAM
- Retained Window and Sill (Flush Frame) - EWI System with PPC Aluminium Oversill - W-RET-P-003 Rev 1
- Overhanging Eaves - Ventilated Soffit Board (1) - RFS002A
- PermaRock Silicone^{Ultra} K & R Finishes - Datasheet

The following plans and documents were received on 10th March 2022:

- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-8 BRAM (amended to include Air Source Heat Pumps on all elevations)
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-8 WIM (amended to include Air Source Heat Pumps on all elevations)

- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-6 BRAM (amended to include Air Source Heat Pumps on all elevations)
- Ecodan Heating - f8cb4445
- PUZ-WM50VHA(-BS) Ecodan R32 Monobloc Air Source Heat Pump Data Sheet
- Reading Borough Council Requirements for Heat Pump Installation

The following plans and documents were received on 16th March 2022:

- PUZ-WM85VAA(-BS) Ecodan R32 Monobloc Air Source Heat Pump Data Sheet

4. PLANNING HISTORY

210904 - 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). - Application Permitted on 10/09/2021 (Committee Decision)

The site photos of application 210904 are provided in appendix 3 of this report to provide a visual representation of the end result of the development proposed under this application. Please note that Air Source Heat Pumps were not proposed under application 210904.

5. CONSULTATIONS

Internal Consultations

5.1 *Environmental Protection*

Concerns have been raised by the Environmental Protection Team with regards to noise arising from the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP). Further information has been requested as to the exact location of the ASHPs to determine the impact of any noise generated on neighbouring residents.

Public consultation

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

6 Bramshaw Road	53 Bramshaw Road
7 Bramshaw Road	57 Bramshaw Road
9 Bramshaw Road	58 Bramshaw Road
13 Bramshaw Road	62 Bramshaw Road
14 Bramshaw Road	63 Bramshaw Road
21 Bramshaw Road	81 Bramshaw Road
22 Bramshaw Road	7 Kinson Road
25 Bramshaw Road	9 Kinson Road
29 Bramshaw Road	11 Kinson Road
30 Bramshaw Road	6 Lyndhurst Road
40 Bramshaw Road	8 Lyndhurst Road
48 Bramshaw Road	10 Lyndhurst Road
52 Bramshaw Road	12 Lyndhurst Road

22 Lyndhurst Road	16 Ripley Road
24 Lyndhurst Road	1 Rockbourne Gardens
26 Lyndhurst Road	14 Rockbourne Gardens
28 Lyndhurst Road	The Kiln, 16A Romany Lane
30 Lyndhurst Road	2 Romsey Road
59 Lyndhurst Road	7 Romsey Road
63 Lyndhurst Road	5 Romsey Road
65 Lyndhurst Road	11 Romsey Road
69 Lyndhurst Road	19 Romsey Road
337 Norcot Road	21 Romsey Road
339 Norcot Road	23 Romsey Road
343 Norcot Road	25 Romsey Road
345 Norcot Road	27 Romsey Road
367 Norcot Road	155 Thirlmere Avenue
369 Norcot Road	156 Thirlmere Avenue
373 Norcot Road	157 Thirlmere Avenue
375 Norcot Road	159 Thirlmere Avenue
387 Norcot Road	160 Thirlmere Avenue
389 Norcot Road	163 Thirlmere Avenue
395 Norcot Road	165 Thirlmere Avenue
397 Norcot Road	2 Wimborne Gardens
399 Norcot Road	3 Wimborne Gardens
11 Ringwood Road	5 Wimborne Gardens
15 Ringwood Road	7 Wimborne Gardens
14 Ripley Road	

Eight site notices were erected on 24th February 2022, expiring on 17th March 2022. No responses have been received.

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 Adaptation to Climate Change

CC4 Decentralised Energy

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

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.

7.6 The application also proposes a decentralised energy solution in the form of Air Source Heat Pumps. Therefore, the proposed development is subject to Policy CC4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Paragraph 4.1.15 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that Air Source or ground source heat pumps should be considered in the first instance, as these methods are less carbon intensive than Combined Heat and Power (CHP). The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019) expands on this further and states that in general Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP) should be investigated as a priority over Air Source Heat Pumps, as GSHPs enable greater seasonal efficiencies. This however normally applies for new developments, whereas this application seeks thermal efficiency improvements to existing dwellings. Therefore, the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps are acceptable.

ii) **Design**

- 7.7 The properties subject to this application are two storey terraced rows of houses and semi-detached pairs. 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.
- 7.8 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 appendix 2 for photos of existing properties, and appendix 3 for properties that have benefited from the development under application 210904.
- 7.9 The render and finish at the depth that has been proposed/implemented will alter 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 proposed adapted roofline is not considered a significant change or harmful to the character and appearance of the proposal sites or the surrounding area.
- 7.10 The proposed replacement of the existing uPVC windows with triple glazed uPVC windows are considered like for like, whilst again improving energy efficiency to these dwellings. The roof adaptations proposed are for the eaves to be extended to accommodate the depth of the render.
- 7.11 It is noted that there will be a loss in some of the detailing of some of the properties. 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. The resultant appearance of the dwellings would not look out of place within the surrounding area, particularly given the presence of the works done to the dwellings under application 210904.
- 7.12 It is acknowledged that these improvement works are also proposed to more isolated dwellings and not part of a cluster, for instance 158 Thirlmere Avenue and 13 Ringwood Road. The area surrounding 158 Thirlmere Avenue consists of terraced rows with a mix of red brick walls and painted brickwork. The proposed changes to the appearance of 158 Thirlmere Avenue will not be intrusive to the street scene. This is also considered the case for 13 Ringwood Road.
- 7.13 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.
- 7.14 The Air Source Heat Pumps proposed are small and compact in stature, at 1m in height, 0.5m in depth and width of 1m (0.5m³). These small units will be located either to the side or rear of the respective property, as a result the inclusion of these units is not considered harmful to the character and appearance street scene or host dwelling.

7.15 Overall, in terms of the appearance of the refurbished and altered properties along Bramshaw Road, Wimborne Gardens, Thirlmere Avenue and Ringwood Road the changes are considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policy CC7.

iii) Safeguarding Amenity

7.16 The physical alterations 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 or appear visually dominant.

7.17 Concerns have been raised from the Environmental Protection Team as to the impact of noise arising from the Air Source Heat Pumps on neighbouring properties. A data sheet has been provided for the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps which states that the sound pressure level at 1m is 45dBA. The Air Source Heat Pump proposed has been revised from a model that previously generate a sound pressure level at 1m of 47dBA. It is also confirmed within the Tender Specification that the Air Source Heat Pumps will sit on antivibration FIX-IT FOOT or equivalent when mounting the units.

7.18 Whilst the sound pressure level is relatively low, there is a concern of a cumulative impact of the noise arising from the units based on the number of units proposed. Especially where units are proposed to numerous dwellings along Bramshaw Road. It is therefore considered appropriate to confirm the exact locations of the proposed ASHP units to ensure that the impact of any noise is minimised.

7.19 The location of the ASHP units as demonstrated on the proposed plans and elevations is to the side and rear of each dwelling at the ground floor. Further information has been requested as to the exact location of each ASHP and noise mitigation to assess its potential impact on neighbouring properties and officers advise that it would be reasonable to request this as a planning condition which will also secure the maintenance of the ASHP to prevent nuisance.

7.20 Overall, 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.

7.21 Therefore, the proposed works are considered in accordance with policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, subject to the details of the locations of the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps for each dwelling being provided and approved via condition. Should more details be provided before the Committee meeting on 30/03/2022, they will be provided in an update report.

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

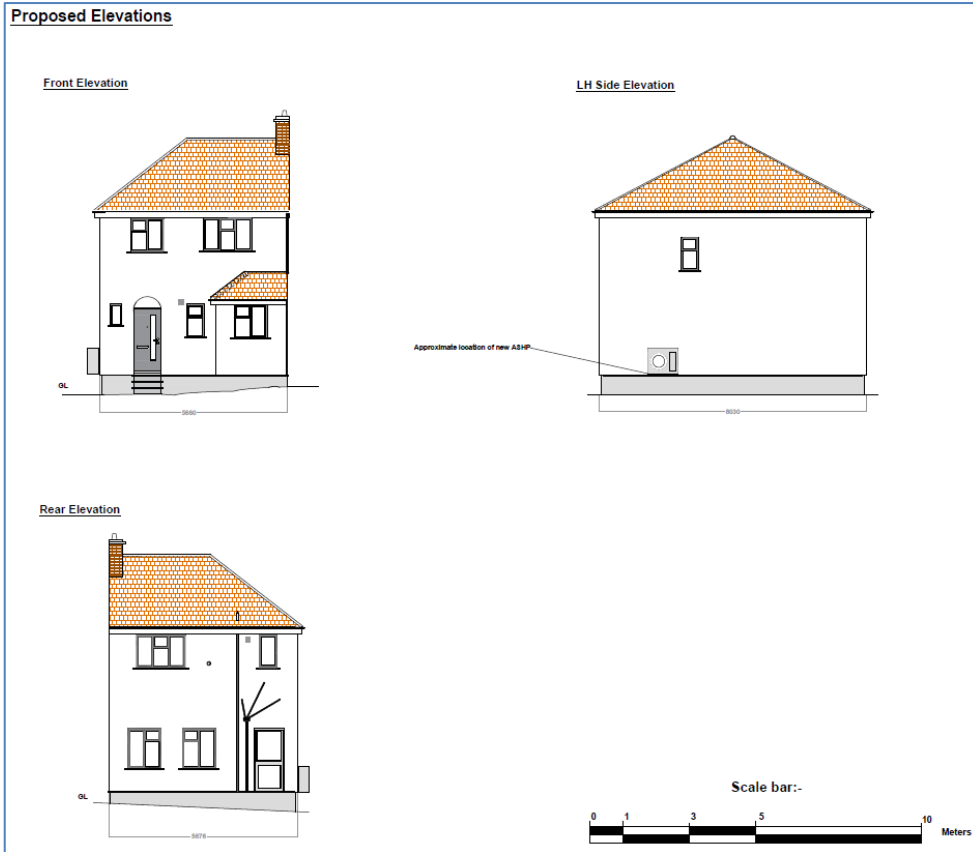
- 9.1 In addition to being accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4, CC7 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, the development is considered to suitably improve the thermal efficiency of the respective Council owned properties, whilst not harming the character and appearance of the properties 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

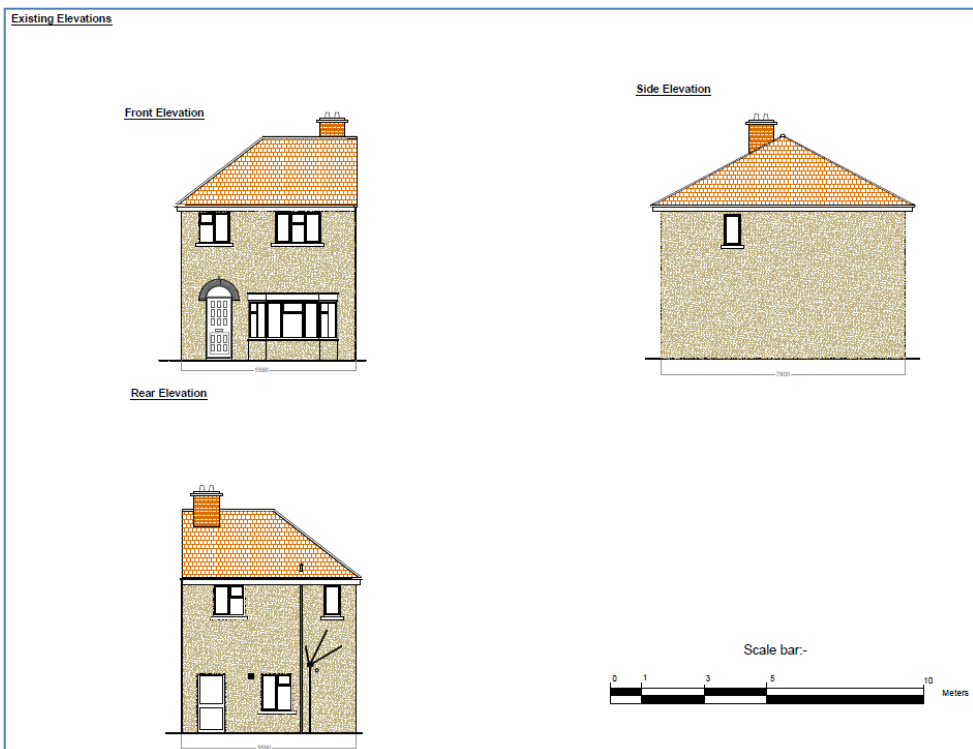
Appendix 1: Plans



Existing Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 5 Bramshaw Road) is found at the following addresses:- 7, 11, 23, 27, 51, 55, 59, 61, 83, 87 & 89 Bramshaw Road, Reading.

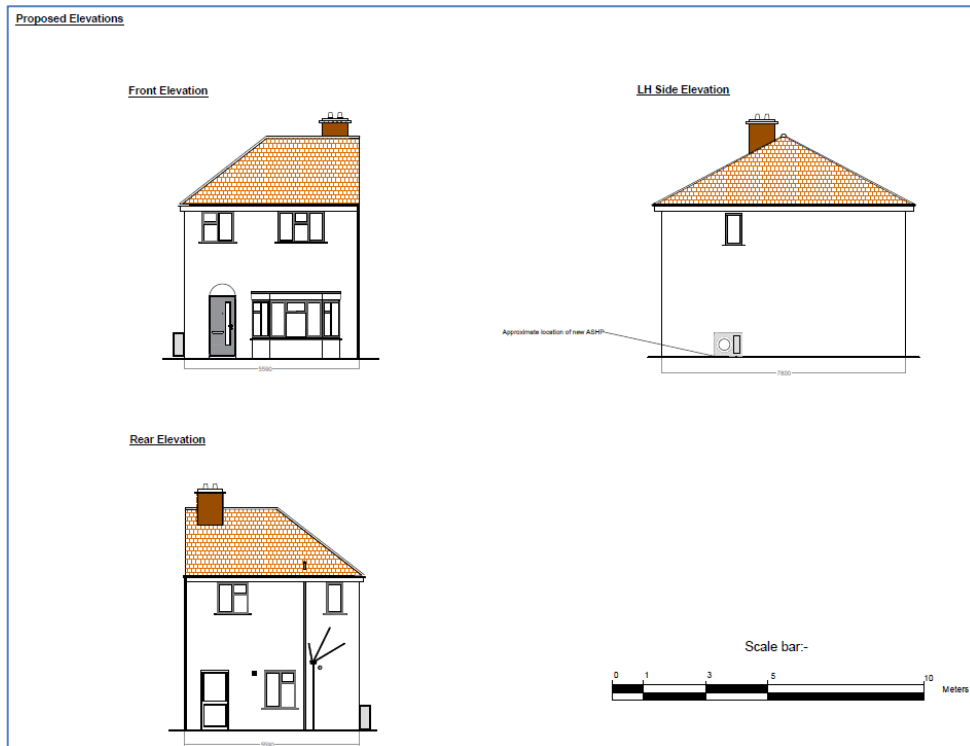


Proposed Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 5 Bramshaw Road) is found at the following addresses:- 7, 11, 23, 27, 51, 55, 59, 61, 83, 87 & 89 Bramshaw Road, Reading.



Existing Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 8 Bramshaw Road) is found at the following addresses:- 10, 12, 24, 26, 28, 40, 42, 50, 54, 56, 60, 64, 66 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AT,

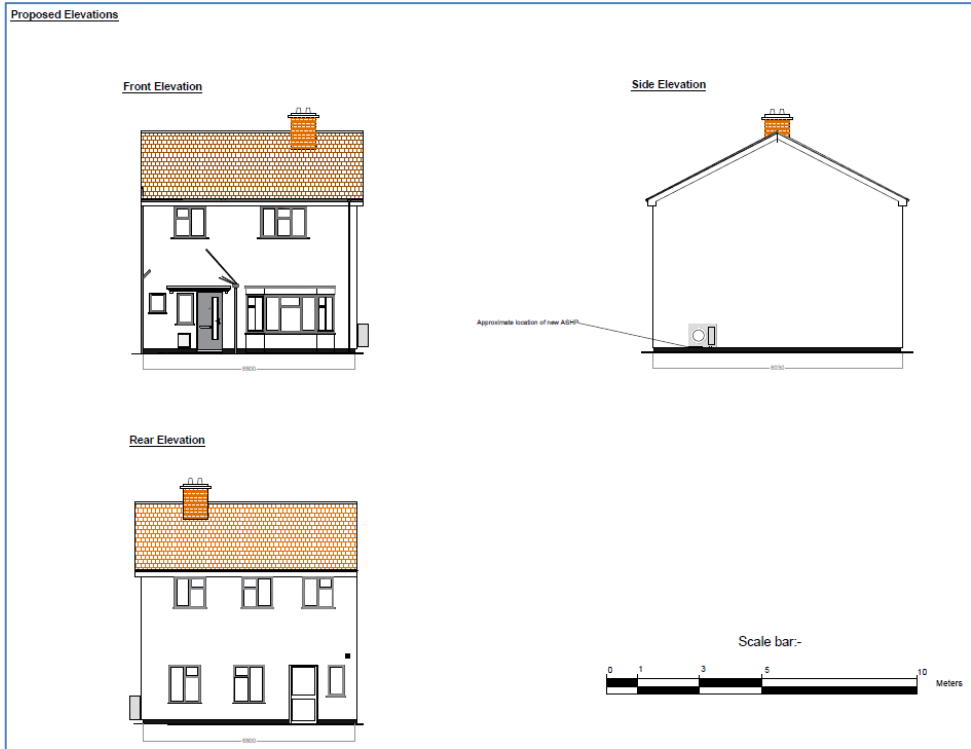
158 Thirlmere Road, RG30 6XJ and 13 Ringwood Road, Reading RG31 6TY



Proposed Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 8 Bramshaw Road) is found at the following addresses:- 10, 12, 24, 26, 28, 40, 42, 50, 54, 56, 60, 64, 66 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AT, 158 Thirlmere Road, RG30 6XJ and 13 Ringwood Road, Reading RG31 6TY



Existing Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 8 Wimborne Gardens) is found at the following addresses:- 1 & 4 Wimborne Gardens, Reading.



Proposed Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 8 Wimborne Gardens) is found at the following addresses:- 1 & 4 Wimborne Gardens, Reading.

Appendix 2: Typical Site photos taken by Case Officer on 24/02/2022.





Appendix 3: Site photos taken by Case Officer on 18/08/2021 of completed Phase 1 properties (Planning Application 210904).



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



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

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30th March 2022

Ward: Norcot

App No.: 211127

Address: Ranikhet Academy Primary School, Tilehurst, Reading

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

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Deadline: Originally 06/10/2021, an extension of time agreed.

RECOMMENDATION:

Delegate to the Assistant Director, Planning, Transport & Public Protection to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to completion of a S106 unilateral undertaking legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the unilateral undertaking legal agreement not be completed by the 30th June 2022 (unless officers on behalf of the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The unilateral undertaking legal agreement to secure the following:

1. To provide an Employment Skills and Training Plan (construction phase only) or a payment in lieu in accordance with the Council's adopted Employment, Skills and Training SPD.
2. Provision of MUGA, STP and School Hall no later than first occupation of the school (unless otherwise agreed) and to make these available for community use in accordance with the submitted Community Use Agreement (CUA). For the lifetime of the development.

And the following conditions to include:

1. Three years for implementation
2. Approved plans/documents
3. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) details of all external materials to be submitted to the LPA (and sample details to be provided on site) and approved in writing with the LPA
4. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) finished floor levels
5. Pre-commencement (including demolition) submission of demolition and construction method statement, including transport, environmental protection (dust, dirt and other airborne pollutants; noise; pest control) and phasing of all works.
6. Pre-commencement submission of construction details of emergency vehicle access route
7. Vehicle parking spaces to be provided in accordance with the approved details (prior to first occupation)
8. Cycle parking to be provided in accordance with the approved details (prior to first occupation)
9. Refuse and recycling to be provided in accordance with the approved details (prior to first occupation)
10. Travel Plan (prior to occupation)
11. Annual review of Travel Plan

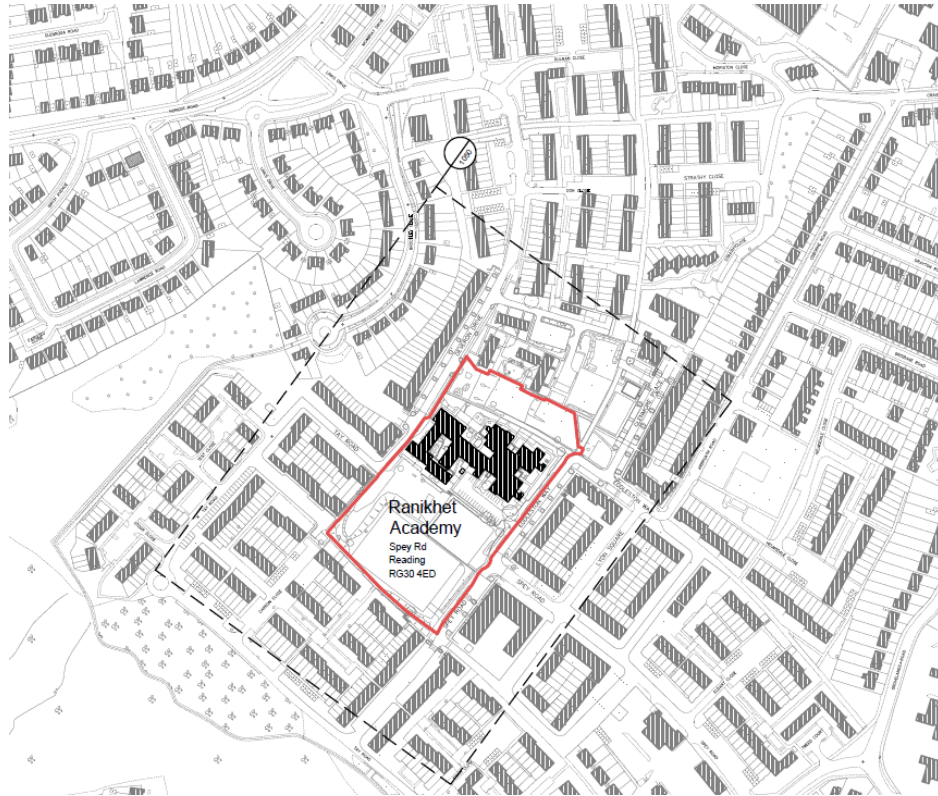
12. EV Charging points - details of the design and specification to be submitted to and approved by the LPA (provision in accordance prior to first occupation)
13. Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land assessment
14. Pre-commencement (including demolition) contaminated land remediation scheme
15. Pre-construction contaminated land validation report (implementation and verification of remediation scheme)
16. Reporting of unexpected contamination at any time
17. Hours of demolition/construction works
18. No burning of materials or green waste on site
19. Details of all means of enclosure (prior to first occupation) - to include new access gates and adherence to Secure by Design principles and including mammal gaps - to be installed prior to first occupation.
20. Pre-commencement sustainable drainage -detail (prior to commencement barring demolition) - to include timetable for provision
21. Sustainable drainage provided as specified in accordance with timetable
22. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) hard and soft landscaping scheme to be submitted and approved. Implementation prior to occupation (or alternative timetable later agreed). Replacement of any planting which dies within 5 years.
23. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan - construction in accordance.
24. Full details of all external lighting, including floodlighting, to be submitted for a approval prior to commencement (barring demolition). No lighting to be provided other than in accordance.
25. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) details of biodiversity enhancements to be submitted and approved.
26. Site clearance outside of bird nesting season (compliance)
27. Scheme for relocation of Bee orchids (to be relocated under supervision of qualified ecologist) to be submitted for approval (prior to commencement).
28. Pre-commencement BREEAM 'Excellent' to be achieved: Pre-assessment estimator
29. Pre-occupation BREEAM 'Excellent' to be achieved: Post-construction review
30. No plant or other equipment to be installed except in accordance with noise report submitted and approved in writing.
31. No ventilation/extraction to be installed except in accordance with odour measures/mitigation submitted and approved in writing.
32. Hours of use of the MUGA - no use outside hours of 08:00 to 20:00 at any time.
33. The hours of use of the floodlights for the MUGA 08:00 to 20:00 at any time.
34. No megaphones, loud speakers or other amplified sound shall be used on or used in connection with the use of the MUGA
35. Hours of use of the STP and School Hall - no use outside hours of 08:00 to 22:00 at any time.
36. Removal of PD rights for enlargement, extension or provision of school buildings
37. Security strategy to include boundaries, access controls including zoning, lighting, CCTV to be submitted for approval prior to commencement barring demolition.

Informatives:

1. Terms
2. Legal Agreement/Unilateral Undertaking
3. Positive and proactive working
3. Pre-commencement conditions explained and agreed by applicant
4. Highways works
6. Building Control
7. Complaints about construction
8. Encroachment
9. CIL

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site relates to the Ranikhet Academy Primary School, located to the north of Spey Road and Eddleston Way. The school forms part of the wider Dee Park estate.
- 1.2 The site is largely rectangular in shape with a site area of c1.73ha. There is a change in site levels across the site which is oriented south west to north east, with 3 distinct tiers dividing the site. The current school building sits within the lower tier. The site is divided by a number of walls, fences, ramps and steps between tiers.
- 1.3 The site is bound by housing to the north west, south west and south east of the site, with a parcel of undeveloped land to the north east to include the siting of a Community Centre approved under planning permission 172312/FUL.
- 1.4 In December 2009 outline planning permission (09/01454/OUT) was granted to regenerate the Dee Park estate. Provision of a new 2FE Primary School to replace the existing school formed part of the proposals (as then varied in 2013 (131058/VARIAT). The permission has now expired, and this current proposal is considered as a separate standalone application.
- 1.5 The site forms part of the WR1: Dee Park site allocation within the Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2019.
- 1.6 The application site is wholly within Flood Zone 1.
- 1.7 The application is referred to committee owing to it being a Council's own (regulation 3) development, as well as being a 'major' development and the site area being over 1 hectare.
- 1.8 The existing site in relation to the wider area is shown below.



Site Location Plan (not to scale)



Aerial View

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application is seeking full planning permission for a complete redevelopment of Ranikhet Academy Primary School comprising a two storey 2 form entry primary school building (including nursery provision) to replace the existing school. The proposals include a repositioned multi use games area and car park and soft landscaping.
- 2.2 The new school will accommodate 420 pupils, including a 26 place nursery. The school will employ 40 no. Full Time and 12 no. Part Time members of staff.
- 2.3 The existing school building lies on the lower tier of the site to the north east and would remain in occupation during the construction period of the new school. The new school is proposed to be sited within the middle tier of the site where the current multi use games area (MUGA) lies and a new MUGA and carpark is proposed to be sited on the lower tier, in the place of the current school.
- 2.4 The existing synthetic turf pitch (STP) will remain on the upper tier, to the south west of the site, and will remain open during construction.
- 2.5 Once the new school has been constructed, the old building will be demolished and works will commence on the repositioned MUGA car park and other landscaped areas.
- 2.6 The current access to the school from Eddlestone Way will be retained and a new access proposed onto Spey Road for emergency access only.
- 2.7 46 no. vehicle parking spaces are proposed, including 3 no. accessible parking spaces and 6 no. electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) will be provided.
- 2.8 40 no. cycle storage spaces are proposed, and bin stores are proposed within the new car park.
- 2.9 The proposals incorporate significant hard and soft landscaping to the north, east and south boundaries and 85 trees are proposed. It is proposed to fell 11 trees.

2.10 Submitted Plans and Documentation:

Location Plan Existing E04759-HCC-ZO-XX-DR-A-1001-P1
Location Plan Existing E04759-HCC-ZO-XX-DR-A-1001-P1
Location Plan Existing E04759-HCC-ZO-XX-DR-A-1002-P1
Existing Site Block Plan E04759-HCC-ZO-XX-DR-A-1050-P1
Existing Landscaping Plan E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1000-P1
Open Spaces Existing Areas E04759-HCC-ZO-XX-DR-A-1055-P1
Existing Site Sections E04759-HCC-ZO-XX-DR-A-3050-P1
Location Proposed Site Block Plan E04759-HCC-ZO-XX-DR-A-1501-P1
Site Plan E04759-A-1513
Site Plan Proposed E04759-A-1510
Site Plan Proposed Community Use E04759-A-1512
Open Spaces Proposed Areas E04759-HCC-ZO-DR-1056-P1
Future Housing Option E04759-A-1630
Proposed Elevations 1/2 E04759-HCC-ZO-XX-DR-A-3000-P1

Proposed Elevations 2/2 E04759-HCC-Z0-XX-DR-A-3001-P1
Proposed Site Elevations 1/2 E04759-HCC-Z0-XX-DR-A-3002-P1
Proposed Site Elevations 2/2 E04759-HCC-Z0-XX-DR-A-3003-P1
Proposed Site Sections E04759-HCC-Z0-XX-DR-A-3051-P1
Ground Floor Plan Proposed E04759-HCC-ZA-00-DR-A-2000-P1
First Floor Plan Proposed E04759-HCC-ZA-01-DR-A-2010-P1
Roof Plan Proposed E04759-HCC-ZA-RL-DR-A-2020-P1
Landscape Sections Proposed E04759-HCC-XX-Sk-L-1203-P1
Landscape Sections Proposed E04759-HCC-XX-Sk-L-1203-P1
Contractors Compound Phase 1/2 E04759-HCC-ZA-XX-DR-A-1601-P1
Contractors Compound Phase 2/2 E04759-HCC-ZA-XX-DR-A-1602-P1
Received 6th July 2021

Design and Access Statement Part 1 of 2
Design and Access Statement Part 2 of 2
Appendix A Archaeological Assessment
Appendix B - 1 Part 1 Land Survey
Appendix B - 1 Part 2 Land Survey
Appendix B - 2 Land Survey
Appendix B - 3 Land Survey
Appendix C Ecological Survey and Report
Appendix D Pt 1 of 2 Energy/Sustainability/BREEAM
Appendix D Pt 2 of 2 Energy/Sustainability/BREEAM
Appendix E External Lighting
Appendix F Flood Risk Assessment
Appendix G Levels Survey and Utilities Information
Appendix H Noise Impact Assessments
Appendix J Planning Statement
Appendix K - 1 Transport Statement
Appendix K - 2 Transport Statement Appendices
Appendix L Travel Plan
Appendix M Tree Survey
Appendix N Utilities Proposals
Appendix P Air Quality Assessment
Appendix R Crime Prevention Advice
Appendix S Heads of Terms: CUA
Appendix T Design and Access Strategy
Received 6th July 2021

Acoustics ref Environmental Protection Rev 0 24 Acoustics
Received 13th January 2022

Arboricultural Method Statement P-ReBC-RanikhetAc-AMS-SK-1.0
Arboricultural Impact Assessment SS RBC RhnktAc AIA SK1.4
Tree Protection Plan SS RBC RhnktAc TPP SK2.0
Site Tree Impact/Work Schedule SS RBC RnkhtAcTreeData 1.2
Landscape General Arrangement Plan Proposed E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1200-P3
Landscaping General Tree Planting Plan E04759-HCC-XX-Sk-L-1205-P1
Landscaping General Shrub Planting Plan E04759-HCC-XX-Sk-L-1206-P1

Landscape General Root Space Pavement Support System E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1207-P1
Proposed Utility Service Route E04759-HCC-E-8000
External Lighting E04759-HCC-E-8100
Proposed CCTV E04759-HCC-E-8200

Proposed Drainage General Arrangement E04759-ECH-XX-XX-DR-C-7501 P04
Proposed Drainage General Arrangement E04759-ECH-XX-XX-DR-C-7502 P03
Received 2nd February 2022

Appendix 4a Map of accidents
Pupil Postcodes
Ranikhet Academy Walking Routes Map
Received 9th February 2022

- 2.11 Additional information was received during the course of the application. To clarify, none of the further information was of a nature whereby it was considered necessary (within the context of the nature of the original proposals) to require formal public re-consultation.
- 2.12 The applicant undertook detailed pre-application advice with RBC officers, which has helped to inform this submission.
- 2.13 The submission also details that the scheme has also been subject to public consultation with the local community.
- 2.14 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):
The proposal is CIL liable; however, education is not a chargeable use, as set out in the Council's CIL Charging Schedule.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

09/01454/OUT (Civica Ref: 091606). Outline application for the phased regeneration of Dee Park Estate with access comprising demolition of 376 dwellings and replacement with 281 houses and flats for affordable rent and sale and 482 houses and flats for private sale (763 total), with new community centre, shops, school, and environmental improvements to the regeneration area. Permitted 23/12/2009.

09/01514/FUL (Civica Ref: 092084) - Demolition of 40 dwellings (including one Public House), erection of 261 houses and flats including 60 Extra Care flats, alterations to Tay Road, Deveron Drive, formation of new streets off Tay Road, Deveron Drive and Osborne Road, new car parking, improvements to Brockley Close and Tay Road, landscaping, including phase 1 school sports pitches and associated lighting and enclosure. Permitted 10/12/2009.

11/01625/REM (110612) - Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Consent 09/01454/OUT for Phase 2A of the regeneration masterplan. Phase 2A comprises the development of 106 residential units with associated infrastructure and landscaping. Approval sought for details of access, appearance, layout and scale. Permitted 13/01/2012.

12/00551/REM (Civica Ref: 121113) - Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Consent 09/01454/OUT for Phase 2A of the regeneration masterplan. Phase 2A comprises the development of 106 residential units with associated infrastructure and landscaping. Approval sought for details of landscaping and civil engineering proposals. Permitted 09/10/2012.

131056/REM - Reserved matters application pursuant to outline consent 09/01454/OUT (as varied by 131058/VARIAT) for Phase 2B of the regeneration master plan comprising the development of 145 residential

units and 4 commercial units (comprised of a mix of A1, A5 and B1 uses). With associated infrastructure, landscaping and environmental improvements to the remainder of the phase. Permitted 28/11/2013.

131058/VARIAT - Application for variation of conditions 6, 7 and 22 following grant of planning permission 09/01454/OUT. Permitted 06/11/2013.

140618/NMC - Non Material change to reserved matters permission 131056 pursuant to outline consent 09/01454/OUT (as varied by 131058/VARIAT) for the alteration of the commercial units at Site 6B. Agree 20/08/2014.

141662/FUL - Erection of a temporary facility consisting of six portakabin units (2 for temporary police facility relocation and 4 for temporary youth centre relocation accommodation) as part of previously approved development at Dee Park (Phase 2) in Reading (110612). Permitted 29/01/2015.

172313/FUL - Provision of the Dee Park Community Centre comprising of a Children's Centre, secure outdoor amenity space, community hall, offices and cafe with associated landscaping and disabled parking. Permitted 26/02/2018. Under construction.

201807/APC - Discharge of condition 3 (Materials) of planning permission 172312. Discharged 11/1/2021.

201808/APC - Discharge of condition 10 (Ground Investigation) of planning permission 172312. Discharged 04/02/2021.

201809/NMC - Non-material amendments to permission 172312 (Provision of the Dee Park Community Centre, as granted on 26/02/2018) to alter the trigger point for submission/approval of conditions 3 (Materials), 5a (Cycle Parking), 6a, 6c & 6d (Landscaping), 7 (BREEAM) and 8 (Ecological Enhancements) from pre-commencement of any development to pre-commencement of any development beyond the construction of the damp proof course of the building. Agree 11/01/2021.

201839/APC - Discharge of condition 6b (functional services in relation to landscaping) of planning permission 172312. Discharged. 11/02/2021.

211133/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3 (External Materials) of application 172312. Discharged 06/08/2021.

211720/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 5 (Cycle Parking), 6 (Hard and Soft Landscaping), 7 (BREEAM), 8 (Ecological Enhancements) of application 172312. Pending Consideration.

211992/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 3 (Materials) of application 172312. Discharged 06/01/2022.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal

4.1 Transport Development Control

Original comments

“The school is presently operating as a one-form entry (1FE) school with the Published Admission Number (PAN) set at 236 pupils (maximum 210 pupils Reception-Y6 and 26 nursery places). The current full time equivalent (FTE) of staff is 28. The new build school facility would cater for a 2FE capacity. The current PAN would have to be adjusted to accommodate this, increasing the schools capacity to 420 pupils plus 26 nursery places.

The proposed site layout includes:

- Existing Synthetic Turf Pitch on the western side of the site retained, with existing access retained;
- New school building at the centre of the site, with new pedestrian access from Spey Road and the eastern boundary;
- Car park (46 car parking spaces, including 3No wheelchair accessible spaces and 6 electric charging points) accessed from Eddleston Way;
- Replacement two court MUGA on the eastern side of the school site near to the Community Centre and its related external public space, and pedestrian access to the MUGA access from the eastern perimeter of the site;

Location and accessibility;

The School site is situated on Spey Road/Eddleston Way, within the Dee Park estate. The roads surrounding the School site are all street lit, single carriageway residential style roads. The Dee Park Estate is subject to a 20mph speed zone. Residential parking is present throughout, either in the form of laybys or unregulated on-street parking bays.

Bus stops are located along Spey Road and close to Lyon Square. The closest bus stops are within approx. 120m of the School site entrance. These stops cater for the number 15 and 15a services, which run regularly (every 15 mins at peak times) throughout the day (05:00 to 23:20). This service links Reading town centre and the main rail station with the areas west of Reading, including Churchend and Calcot, as well as the Tilehurst area.

Vehicular Access;

The main vehicular access points to the school are via Links Drive / Deveron Drive to the north and Tay Road and Spey Road to the south. These access points are not linked and there is therefore no through vehicular route linking the north and south of the estate.

The existing vehicular access of Eddleston Way is retained leading into the new school car park. This will generally be for car use only, plus visitor, refuse lorry and delivery lorry access. The carpark gates will be controlled via CCTV / intercom to Reception and access control as existing (fob / push button key etc). The carpark gates are set back 9m from the carriageway to enable vehicles to wait off the highway while gates are opening. Delivery and refuse access will continue to buzz reception and take direction, as per existing arrangements.

It appears that a new vehicular access is proposed onto Spey Road for fire/maintenance access, however, no plans illustrate the location of the dropped kerbs. A vehicle crossing should be a minimum distance of 10m away from a junction, however, it appears that the maintenance access will

be located on the bend of Spey Road where buses turn through the estate. I am concerned that this is likely to conflict with pedestrians accessing the school and impact on bus services given that gates will need to open to enable access into the school. Therefore, the applicant is requested to address the points above.

Pedestrian access to Site:

A good network of footways is present along all the roads surrounding the School site. The main pedestrian entrance into the school is from Eddleston Way. Two pedestrian footways are present to the north and south-west boundaries of the site. These footpaths provide access to the northern residential areas of Dee park and beyond towards Norcot Road.

There are currently four entrances to the school site, one vehicular and three for pedestrians only. The main pedestrian entrance is accessed from Eddleston Way. Another gated pedestrian entrance is present, leading directly to the School's sports pitches, off Spey Road (that leads to Eddleston Way) to the south of the site and a gated pedestrian only entrance on the northern boundary used by Nursery and Reception.

There is an existing dropped kerb and tactile paving providing pedestrian crossing facilities at the junction of Spey Road/Eddleston Way in close proximity to proposed pedestrian entrance, however, this is currently uncontrolled. There is also a pedestrian barrier.

Google image showing existing crossing arrangements.



A walking audit was completed to help identify any potential desire line crossing improvements, from the School site, to the local residential area. The assessment identified that there appeared to be a desire line to cross across the top end of the Spey Road / Eddleston Way junction.

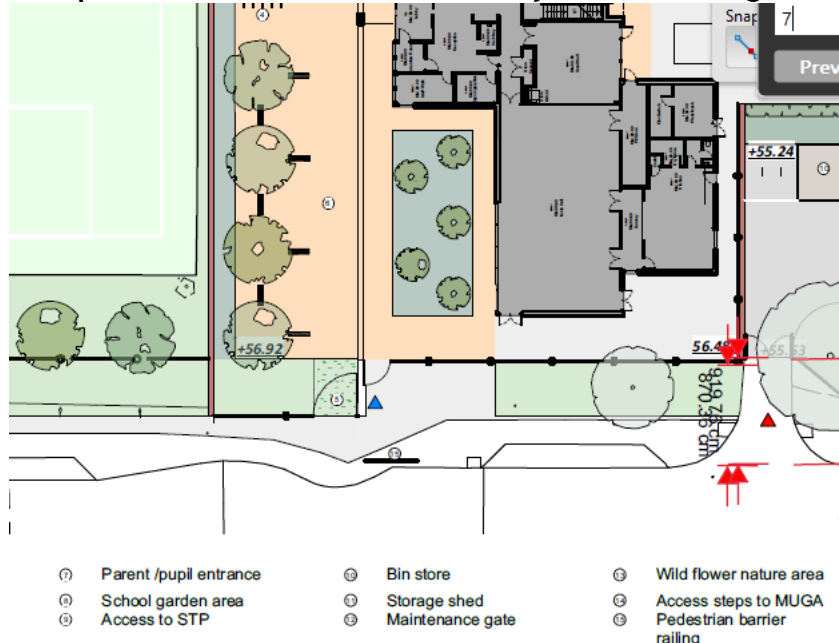
Figure 2 - Illustrated in the walking audit



Figure 2 – Spey Road / Eddleston Way Junction Desire Line Crossing.

However, a new pedestrian entrance (access gate) is to be relocated closer to the junction of Spey Road/Eddleston Way, along the eastern boundary to serve the new semi public entrance zones. Therefore, pedestrian desire lines are likely to change as a result of the new position of the entrance. Pedestrians approaching from the west of the estate along the southern footway on Spey Road are more likely to cross diagonally on the bend for a direct route into the school entrance. As the walking audit suggests, this junction is where buses turn though the estate and there is a restricted field of vision due to the 90 degree bend and on-street parking bays. Therefore, I am concerned that the proposed location of the new pedestrian entrance will encourage pedestrians to cross Spey Road in potentially dangerous location without any formal crossing facilities.

New pedestrian entrance illustrated by the blue triangle



Further, the applicant was requested at pre-application stage to identify a location for a formal crossing point within the audit and include drawings of potential options. However, it does not appear that any preliminary drawings have been submitted for review as referenced in paragraph 2.2.9 of Transport Statement.

Therefore, the applicant is requested to address the points above. It should be also be noted that any gates must open into the site away from the footway.

Parking

The site is located in Zone 3 of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. The car parking provision for the site is a maximum of 1 space per Full Time Equivalent.

There will be a full staffing level of 40 Full Time staff and 12 Part Time (equivalent to 6 FT) at the school equating to a total of 46 Full Time Staff.

46no. staff parking spaces (three of which would be accessible bays) are proposed as part of the new development, in accordance with the standard. This will provide an extra 19 spaces above the current provision of 26 standard bays and one accessible. 2no. powered two-wheeler spaces are also being provided.

As part of the development proposals all staff car parking requirements will be accommodated within a new car park area, to be constructed in the north-eastern corner of the site. The access to this car park will still utilise the existing entrance, off Eddleston Way.

In line with Policy TR5 of the Local Plan, 10% of any newly constructed staff parking spaces will provide electric charging points. In terms of layout, the staff car parking spaces comply to the standard dimensions of 2.5m x 5m and are provided with adequate manoeuvrability to the rear but all spaces.

The School currently has a dedicated area that has a covered cycle stand with space for 10 bicycles. To meet the Council's adopted cycle parking requirements, cycle storage provision will increase to accommodate a total of 40 cycle parking spaces - 30 spaces for pupils and 10 cycle spaces for staff. This cycle storage will move from its current location to the new MUGA area close to the School's gated entrance off the northern footpath, with an additional five spaces located at the School building's main entrance. However, the location of the cycle storage provision is fairly remote from the school building if entering from the main pedestrian entrance off Eddleston Way. Therefore, the applicant is requested to review whether the level of covered cycle storage spaces can be increased (provision evenly split) within the vicinity of the main entrance in a more direct and convenient location.

Trip Generation

Trip generation methodology was agreed through the scoping document. It is agreed that existing school travel mode share data would provide a more accurate and robust baseline data given that the school is operational. The baseline data was obtained from a 'hands-up' style survey carried out in December 2020, by the School Travel Planning Officer, as part of the Framework Travel Plan.

The baseline data has been 'scaled up' to reflect a 2FE capacity primary school proposed as part of this application. The travel survey of the school has shown that 76% of the pupils either walk, cycle or bus to school and 3% car share.

Table 2 within the Transport Statement illustrates the number of anticipated daily peak hour multi-modal pupil trips based on data from the

travel survey. The baseline data was then scaled up to reflect a 2FE capacity primary school.

Table 2: Current and anticipated pupil mode share for travel to school

Trip generation by mode for pupils (2020)	Walk	Cycle	Scoot	Public Bus	Car Share	Car Alone	Total
Current number on roll – 176 pupils & 27 nursery							
Pupil modal split (%)	63%	4%	5%	4%	3%	21%	100%
(number of pupils per mode)	117	7	9	8	5	39	185
2FE Capacity – 420 pupils & 26 nursery							
Pupil modal split (%)	63%	4%	5%	4%	3%	21%	100%
(number of pupils per mode)	282	17	24	17	13	93	446

The proposal will result in an increase in the number of trips to and from the site during the drop off and pick up periods. It is anticipated that the development would generate an increase of 62 vehicular trips (car alone and car share combined) above the current levels.

The combined staff and pupil vehicle trips from the proposed two-form entry school development will result in a net increase in trips when compared to the trips associated with the existing school. However, it is stated that the school opening and closing times for different Key Stages are staggered (by 15 mins) at the start and end of each day. In addition, the school offers before or after school clubs and activities. This will help spread out any peak time traffic movements away from peak periods. The School Travel Plan will also continue to aim in the reduction of the overall mode share by private car alone, post development.

Overall, it is considered that the highway road network within Dee Park would not experience a significant adverse impact on their operation as a result of the increased flows.

Travel Plan

A Travel Plan has been produced to sustain, and where possible, encourage a greater use of more sustainable modes of travel for journeys to and from school and reduce the impact of car trips as the school expands. School travel surveys have been undertaken to establish existing travel behaviour to the school. The Action Plan within Section 5 sets out the SMART targets of the Travel Plan. The school should commit to a review of the Travel Plan upon occupation of the new school building and should commit to annual pupil/parent surveys to establish whether the SMART targets are being met.

Deliveries and Waste Collection;

The new school will include a secure storage area for collection and sorting of waste. It is located adjacent to the building in the car park accessible to refuse vehicles from Eddleston Way. On site tracking to represent the anticipated largest vehicle to enter the site (large refuse truck) has been undertaken to demonstrate the swept path for a large refuse vehicle to enter, exit and manoeuvre within the site.

Construction

The applicant should be aware that there would be significant transport implications constructing the proposed development within the existing urban area of Reading. One of the key concerns of planning is to ensure that new development does not reduce the quality of the environment for others, particularly where it would affect residential properties. Therefore, any full application would be conditioned to ensure a Construction Method Statement is submitted and approved before any works commence on-site to regulate the amenity effects of construction. As well as demonstrating a commitment to ensuring the number of HGV movements are managed and controlled, the CMS must demonstrate that appropriate measures will be implemented to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on the road network around the construction site. The agreed measures included in the CMS become a formal commitment and will be approved by the Local Highway and Planning Department separate to the determination of this outline application.

The applicant is requested to review the comments above and address them accordingly before determining this application.”

4.2 Officer note: Further to additional information being submitted by the applicant, revised advice was provided by Transport Development Control in respect of the pedestrian crossing:

Pedestrian access to Site:

A new pedestrian entrance (access gate) is to be relocated closer to the junction of Spey Road/Eddeston Way, along the eastern boundary to serve the new semi public entrance zones. Therefore, pedestrian desire lines are likely to change as a result of the new position of the entrance. The applicant has confirmed that a new pedestrian gate will limit access to fewer pedestrians entering here, as it will be for Visitors, Nursery and Reception years only at this point. The other years (1-6) will not be able to physically access their areas from this new entrance, they will use the new entrance on the north/east boundary.

Initially, the applicant was requested to identify a location for a formal crossing point to accommodate the increased capacity at the school. However, the applicant has stated that the school was previously run as a two-form entry school up to the academic year 2015/16, without any need for a formal crossing at that location. The applicant has reviewed the Personal Injury Collision (formally accident) data in proximity to the school, which identifies that there were no recorded accidents on the local roads surrounding the school site during the assessment period.

Furthermore, as part of the School Travel Plan, a school travel survey was circulated to parents at the school. No concerns were raised by parents that specifically mentioned crossing Spey Road within the survey. Postcode plots of where pupils are travelling from (home) to the school were obtained as part of the School Travel Plan which identified that the vast majority of pupils live to the east and north of the school site. Given that years (1-6) will not be able to physically access their areas from the Spey Road entrance, the main pedestrian entrances into the school for pupils in Y1 to Y6 are located on the north/east boundary. Therefore, the applicant determines that it is unlikely that a crossing in the proposed location would be widely used by pupils/parents given the postcode data and the new location of the pedestrian entrances.

In view of the additional information provided by the applicant regarding previous capacity of the school, Personal Injury Collision data, postcode plots to the school and the location of the new pedestrian entrances for pupils in Y1 to Y6, the redevelopment of the existing school would not increase pedestrian movements to a level sufficient to justify a full contribution towards the cost of a new crossing.

Conditions and informatives were recommended (as set out above).

4.3 Natural Environment

Original comments

“The site was subject to pre-application ref. 201264 exploring the suitability of a similar proposal, on which occasion natural environment pointed out the importance of landscaping, tree planting and tree retention with any future application. It also hinted that SUDs can and should be mutually inclusive with landscaping design, as should the tree planting be compatible with the security scheme (lighting, visibility, CCTV lines of sight).

The nature of (re)development warrants that tree cover is increased as a result of development, in line with the 2019 Local Plan’s EN14 Policy and the Tree Strategy objectives. Therefore, it is expected that valuable trees are retained, replacement planting for those that cannot be retained is provisioned and landscaping is improved overall.

Existing trees

With reference to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment Ref. SS WI PLAN RhnktAc AIA 1.3 dated 1.02.2021, the Landscape General Arrangement Plan Proposed Drg. No E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1200-P1 and the Landscaping Existing Plan Drg. No. E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1000-P1, the following are noted:

Of the 18 existing trees on site, 3.1 of the AIA states that 11 trees are to be removed, including one ‘B’ category tree, however the table in 3.2 and the TPP only include 10 trees, 9 of which are ‘C’ category and one a ‘U’. I assume the info in 3.1 is incorrect as all 3 ‘B’ category trees are shown as retained on the TPP. It is important that the retained trees are protected during demolition and development and that their future relationship with the development is sustainable.

Although a Tree Protection Plan is attached, the only protection measures it provisions are Construction Exclusion Zones for each individual tree retained, which are not realistic - demolition and/or landscaping works must take place within some of the tree’s CEZ for development to finalize/take place (i.e. T17 Crab apple - demolition within CEZ; T13 False acacia - resurfacing and works within CEZ to implement parking provisions & fencing installation; T18 Maple - resurfacing of hard to soft and fencing installation).

Given the advanced stage of the application and detailed documents so far submitted, I wonder why an Arboricultural Method Statement and a Demolition Method Statement were not submitted - or at least a more detailed AIA to deal with likely works within their RPAs and potential pruning, e.g. for fencing installation. These are necessary to demonstrate

lack of harm to retained trees, both below and above ground, during demolition and construction works - it is preferred these are submitted prior to a decision, and whilst an AMS could be secured via condition, a more detailed AIA is required prior to a decision. For future reference, some of the details we will be expecting are: protection against works within RPA of the retained trees, such as demolition, ground level changes, resurfacing works, pruning (amount and extent), ground protection against soil compaction, service lines routes in relation to trees. Given that the development is proposed in Phases, the tree protection measures and plans should also cover the phases (this could be included within the more detailed AIA being requested now).

Landscaping.

It is worth noting that the proposed layout allows for tree planting effectively all around the site boundary and also throughout the site, which is positive.

Section 3.4 of the AIA mentions that 'around 80' new trees are proposed for planting. The Landscape General Arrangement Plan shows 84 new trees to be planted. A planting schedule was not submitted to confirm either of these 2 numbers, but the scheme demonstrates landscaping principles to an acceptable degree. The planting schedule details can be secured via condition, although, as above, it is preferred that these are submitted prior to a decision.

With reference to the Landscape Diagrams, Planting and Fencing Strategy Drg. No. E04759-HCC-XX-SK-L-1201-P1, the following are noted:

This plan serves as a (insufficient) place holder for a planting schedule and it gives insight to the species proposed for the new trees, which are not ideal or clearly stated (i.e. numbers of each tree species, size).

Our Tree Strategy (paragraphs 3.37 and 3.4) identified the *Tilia* and *Prunus* genera as being over represented in the Borough, therefore the standing advice is to avoid planting of new trees from these genera. The plan provisions 18 *Prunus* spp. new trees and 2 *Tilia* spp. new trees. The Limes are located in the northern part of the site, intended as a parkland/woodland area and comprising other large crown species, and are, on balance, acceptable. However, the high number of *Prunus* spp., some of which are located together (1 group of 6 and 1 group of 9) are not acceptable and should be replaced by other native or biodiversity friendly species, in a mixed layout. I also note that 11 *Betula nigra* (non-native) are proposed, which should be substituted for one, or preferably a combination, of our two native Birches. Similarly, 8 *Acer capillipes* (non-native type of Snakebark maple) are proposed which are planted (as stated) for ornamental value - to meet with the biodiversity aims of our tree strategy, this should be substituted with a native maple or wildlife friendly species.

Secondly, without a planting schedule it is not possible (or too time consuming) to assess whether the proposed planting follows the Tree Strategy's guidelines of species diversity. 'The aim is to work towards a tree stock containing only 30% of any one Family, 20% of any one Genus and 10% of any one species.' (paragraph 3.38 of Tree Strategy). The applicant will be expected to provide this diversity information alongside final landscape proposals. This 30:20:10 ratio will be familiar to HCC.

In relation to tree pit details, those provided are generally acceptable, however further submissions should confirm the soil volume provision for trees within hard landscape areas and consider root barriers for those in soft beds adjacent to hard surfacing / structures and services.

The hedging throughout the site will consist exclusively of Hornbeam, but the plan/legend does not indicate clearly (or at all on the legend) where hedging is provisioned, which it should. If hedging is provisioned in more than one place, I wonder whether using different species for each location would be appropriate? It would definitely help with species diversity, thus enhancing biodiversity (both of hedge species and of the habitat, shelter or food for invertebrates, mammals and birds).

A planting schedule and a 5 year maintenance plan must be submitted before the proposal can be properly and entirely assessed with regards to trees and landscaping, however this could be secured via condition along with finer landscape details (L2 & L4).

Service lines

With reference to the Electrical & Mechanical Engineering Services Proposed Utility Service Routes Drg. No. E04759-HCC-00-DR-E-8000, the following are noted:

New service lines are provisioned near existing tree T13 and the proposed trees along the Eddleston Way, albeit the proposed locations could be adjusted to allow for this service route. The AIA does not address the installation of services within RPAs, as it should.

Details of other services will also be required and should ideally avoid RPAs and new tree locations.

'Secure by design' matters

With reference to the External Floodlighting plan Drg. No. UKS17841 (part of DAS appendix E External Lighting), I note that an analysis is done only on part of the site, excluding the entire south-west side - notably, the circular path running through the woodland/parkland-like part of the site. I understand that this analysis does not have safety and security as its focus, but Anne Chalmers' (of Thames Valley Police) comments at pre-app seem to require just that - that the relationship between trees (existing, size at planting and potential size) and site lighting sources is assessed. It appears that the position of lighting columns in the car park has not considered the proposed tree locations. Columns must be located to reduce future conflict, e.g. mid way between trees. Further electricity route drawings should include cable routes to lighting.

I also note that no relationship is shown between the trees and the CCTVs lines of sight, a matter which was brought up as well by Anne Chalmers.

Please let me know if you see fit that this information is necessary before a decision. I would like to lower as much as possible the risk of proposed tree planting being deemed unsuitable due to security concerns.

SUDs

If the planting schedule to be submitted confirms planting for 80 or 84 trees on site, I am confident that their canopies will successfully function as rainwater retention and will delay runoff throughout the site, to a lesser

extent during young age and increasingly high as they grow, therefore the scheme is positive.

In relation to Proposed GA plans E04759-ECH-XX-XX-DR-C-7501 P02 and E04759-ECH-XX-XX-DR-C-7502 P02 (within DAS Appendix F- Flood Risk assessment), I note the attenuation tank is in the car park, so no landscape led SUDs have been included as suggested at pre-app. There are multiple drainages routes across the site including very close to retained tree T13, which is of concern, and numerous potential conflicts with proposed trees. The landscape architect should work closely with all service providers to avoid conflicts as far as it possible.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposal will lead to an increased tree cover in the area which is positive, and whilst finer details can be secured by condition (as indicated), there is an insufficient level of detail at the moment to demonstrate acceptability in relation to retained trees; to demonstrate a feasible relationship between trees (existing and proposed) and services / CCTV, and landscape principles are unclear. Further information is therefore required prior to a decision as detailed above”.

- 4.4 **Officer Note:** Subsequent to this, discussions were held resulting in revised information being provided and the conclusion that the latest submitted documents demonstrate tree protection and landscaping in principle and the proposal could be supported in terms of natural environment. Any remaining matters can be suitably dealt with by condition. As such, the application is supported subject to conditions L2 (landscaping etc), L7 (submission of an AMS) and L3 (boundary treatment).

4.5 Ecology

“The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Hampshire County Council Ecology Team, February 2021) has been carried out to an appropriate standard (although it does not specify the methodology for the preliminary bat roost assessment of the buildings) and concludes that the proposals are unlikely to affect any protected species, priority habitats or sites of importance for nature conservation. It does however state that the trees and scrub could be used by nesting birds and that there are bee orchids (a rare plant) on the site. It is recommended that conditions are set to ensure that these features are protected, wording is given below.

In addition, in accordance with paragraph 180 of the NPPF, which states that “opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged” a condition should be set to ensure that enhancements for wildlife are provided within the new development. Wording is given below.

Furthermore, the landscaping scheme details appear to be outline only and the standard landscaping condition L2 should be set to ensure that full details are agreed with the council.

Conditions

Condition: All trees, hedges and shrubs or similar vegetation where birds may nest which are to be removed as part of the development, are to be

cleared outside the bird-nesting season (March - August inclusive) or if clearance during the bird-nesting season cannot reasonably be avoided, a suitably qualified ecologist will check the areas to be removed immediately prior to clearance and advise whether nesting birds are present. If active nests are recorded, no vegetation clearance or other works that may disturb active nests shall proceed until all young have fledged the nest.

Condition: The population of bee orchids identified in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Hampshire County Council Ecology Team, February 2021) is to be relocated to a nearby suitable site under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist.

Condition: Prior to the occupation of the development, details of biodiversity enhancements, to include bird and bat boxes, tiles or bricks on and around the new buildings and native and wildlife friendly landscaping (including gaps at the bases of fences to allow hedgehogs to traverse through the gardens), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The biodiversity enhancements shall thereafter be installed as approved”.

4.6 Environmental Protection

Original comments

“Noise impact on development

This has been considered in the assessment and no mitigation deemed necessary to protect the classrooms from external noise (except for any specialist rooms that may be required).

Noise generating development

A noise assessment has been submitted regarding the MUGA. Further clarification is sought regarding the role of the proposed mesh fence and how it reduces noise levels from ball impacts. Is this because the fence does not vibrate much when the ball hits it? Were high noise levels from shouts and whistle blowing considered as well, as no mitigation are proposed for those noises. It would be helpful to have a more detailed, direct comparison between the current and proposed new situation regarding location, use and design of the MUGA so that we can consider how the noise experienced may change - or not - for the residents.

Has noise from the outdoor play areas been considered? How does the location and size of these differ from the current situation?

Has the noise from these external areas (MUGA and play grounds) been considered in terms of the design of the site?

Once further details have been submitted and if satisfactory, then a condition will be required restricting the hours of use of the MUGA. Suitable hours have been proposed in the acoustic assessment.

If any noise generating mechanical plant is to be installed as part of the redeveloped school then a noise assessment will be required (kitchen extraction, air conditioning etc.).

A noise assessment has not been submitted with the application (for any noise generating mechanical plant) and therefore I cannot determine the likely noise impact of the proposal and whether the proposals are acceptable. I therefore recommend refusal unless a noise assessment can be submitted and considered by us before the application is determined.

Kitchen Extraction - odour

In addition to concerns about noise (as discussed above), cooking odour is often a significant problem in commercial kitchens and therefore the applicants must provide an assessment of the likelihood of odours based on the proposed cuisine and a statement of how the proposals will ensure that odour nuisance will be prevented. Reference must be made to the Defra Guidance on the Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems (January 2005).

The following condition could be attached to any consent, however it is possible that the criteria cannot be met with the plant specifications proposed in this application and a new application may need to be made at a later date for alternative plant / location.

Air Quality - Increased exposure

The proposed development is not located within a pollution 'hot spot' therefore assessment regarding exposure of school occupants to poor air quality is not required.

Air Quality - Increased emissions

The air quality assessment concludes that likely increase in pollutants due to extra journeys to and from the redeveloped school are below the significance threshold therefore no further assessment is required. This is acknowledged, although it would be advisable for an updated green travel plan to be put in place for the enlarged school in order to minimise any increase in traffic pollutants.

Contaminated land

The desk study/phase I assessment concludes that further investigation is necessary therefore the following conditions are recommended.

Light

I am content with the information submitted regarding the proposed flood-lighting for the MUGA.

Conditions will be required to formalise the proposals for reducing light overnight for the school in general, and switching off the MUGA floodlights, once times of use have been confirmed.

Bin storage - rats

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

- 4.7 **Officer Note:** Subsequent to this, discussions were held resulting in revised information and with the conclusion that concerns raised could be suitably addressed by conditions as follows:

CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT (TO BE SUBMITTED)
HOURS OF CONSTRUCTION/DEMOLITION
NO BONFIRES
DETAILS OF BIN STORES TO INCLUDE VERMIN CONTROL
HOURS OF OPERATION (EXTERNAL LIGHTING)
CONTAMINATED LAND ASSESSMENT (TO BE SUBMITTED)
REMIEDIATION SCHEME (TO BE SUBMITTED)
REMIEDIATION SCHEME (IMPLEMENT AND VERIFICATION)
UNIDENTIFIED CONTAMINATION
HOURS OF OPERATION (EXTERNAL LIGHTING)
MECHANICAL PLANT (NOISE ASSESSMENT REQUIRED)
VENTILATION & EXTRACTION (TO BE SUBMITTED)

4.8 **Reading UK CIC**

Reading UK CIC, which acts as the Economic Development Company for Reading, advise that under the Council's Employment Skills and Training SPD the applicant is required to commit to a local Employment and Skills Plan (ESP), or financial contribution for employment and training projects in the borough. Whether this is a formal plan or a financial contribution, it shall be secured via unilateral undertaking/legal agreement. This is in respect of the construction phase only, owing to the nature of the proposed scheme (education provision).

4.9 **Berkshire Archaeology**

"Having reviewed the application documentation I am content that no mitigation is required. From the geotechnical report it would appear that topsoil and, likely, upper parts of bedrock deposits, have been truncated during earlier development and levelling of the site. As a result, there would be very little potential for intact deposits to be preserved. Previous Berkshire Archaeology comments given that there may be Palaeolithic potential from possible gravel deposits on the site would also appear to be ruled out by the geotechnical investigations which found no gravel deposits present.

As such, I would recommend that there are no grounds for archaeological mitigation and nothing further needed with respect to archaeology."

External

4.10 **The Environment Agency**

Advised that there was no requirement for them to be consulted on the application.

4.11 **Sport England**

"It is understood that the proposal prejudices the use, or leads to the loss of use, of land being used as a playing field or has been used as a playing field in the last five years, as defined in The Town and Country Planning

(Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 595). The consultation with Sport England is therefore a statutory requirement.

Sport England has considered the application in light of the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular Para. 97), and against its own playing fields policy, which states:

‘Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of:

- all or any part of a playing field, or
- land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or
- land allocated for use as a playing field

unless, in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions.’

Sport England’s Playing Fields Policy and Guidance document can be viewed via the below link:

https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/planning-for-sport#playing_fields_policy

The Proposal and Impact on Playing Field

The proposal is for the 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.

Assessment against Sport England Policy

This application relates to the loss of existing playing fields and/or the provision of replacement playing fields. It therefore needs to be considered against exception 4 of the above policy, which states:

‘The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:

- of equivalent or better quality, and
- of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- in a suitable location, and
- subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.’

I have therefore assessed the existing and proposed playing fields against the above policy to determine whether the proposals meet exception 4.

The artificial grass pitch (AGP) is to remain in-situ whereas the adjacent Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) are to be relocated. It is because of the proximity of the MUGAs we are assessing this application under our E4 planning policy exception.

I was invited to carry out a pre-application assessment by the Architect Nick Collet last October, 2020 as I was made aware this application several months ago. The application in principle has not changed, since I fed back to Nick. I did suggest sport lighting for the relocated MUGAs, which I am pleased to see has been taken on board.

Because the MUGAs are to be replaced, this meets our planning policy exception E4. To my mind because the relocated MUGAs will have 200 lux LED lighting, this is an enhancement which is to be welcomed as it will be more efficient than the existing lighting scheme serving the MUGA in its current location.

Conclusions and Recommendation

Given the above assessment, Sport England does not wish to raise an objection to this application as it is considered to meet exception 4 of the above policy.”

4.12 RBC Education and Children’s Services

No comments received as a Reg 3 application made on their behalf

Public consultation responses

Neighbour letters were sent to nearby properties and site notices were displayed. No neighbour letters of representation have been received.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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

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

National Planning Policy Framework 2021
National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards

The relevant sections of the NPPF are:

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
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

Reading Borough Council 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
 EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
 EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space
 EN8: Undesignated Open Space
 EN9: Provision of Open Space
 EN10: Access to Open Space
 EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
 EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
 EN15: Air Quality
 EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
 EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
 EN18: Flooding and Drainage
 H14: Suburban Renewal and Regeneration
 OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities
 TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
 TR2: Major Transport Projects
 TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
 TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
 TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
 WR1: Dee Park

WR1: DEE PARK

The Dee Park area, as identified on the Proposals Map, will continue to be regenerated to provide a sustainable community including the following:

- *New and improved housing, which increases the overall density of the site, and provides a greater mix of size, type and tenure, including a higher proportion of family housing than at the outset of regeneration;*
- *A new Local Centre including a range of facilities, integrated with housing development;*
- *Improved community facilities, which would be multi-functional and serve a range of groups, and may include sports facilities; and*
- *Improved quality of open space provision, including greater usability of recreational space, and an area of public realm in the centre.*

Development will be integrated with surrounding areas, provide a safe and secure environment, and enhance transport links to and from the estate. Development will take account of potential surface water flooding.

Development will maintain and enhance the role of Ranikhet Primary School in serving the local and wider community.

5.3 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Dee Park Planning Brief 2008
 Employment, Skills and Training SPD (2013)
 Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
 Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
 Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

5.4 Other relevant documentation:

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main matters to be considered are:

- Principle of development and wider regeneration
- Layout / scale / massing and design considerations
- Transport and parking
- Trees, landscaping and ecology
- Impact on existing nearby residential amenity
- Sustainability, energy and SuDS
- Other Matters - flooding, archaeology, pre-commencement conditions
- Unilateral Undertaking Legal Agreement
- Equalities impact

Principle of development and wider regeneration

6.2 Policy CC1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) requires a positive approach to development proposals that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which lies at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6.3 It goes on to state that *“Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan (including, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.”*

6.4 The proposed site is a specific allocation under the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) Policy WR1: Dee Park:

“The Dee Park area, as identified on the Proposals Map, will continue to be regenerated to provide a sustainable community including the following:

- *New and improved housing, which increases the overall density of the site, and provides a greater mix of size, type and tenure, including a higher proportion of family housing than at the outset of regeneration;*
- *A new Local Centre including a range of facilities, integrated with housing development;*

- *Improved community facilities, which would be multi-functional and serve a range of groups, and may include sports facilities; and*

- *Improved quality of open space provision, including greater usability of recreational space, and an area of public realm in the centre.*

Development will be integrated with surrounding areas, provide a safe and secure environment, and enhance transport links to and from the estate. Development will take account of potential surface water flooding.

Development will maintain and enhance the role of Ranikhet Primary School in serving the local and wider community.”

- 6.5 Further to the above, the Dee Park Planning Brief notes that the vision for the estate is:

“To create a safe, inclusive and sustainable community, economically, environmentally and socially, as part of the wider Reading, where people want to live and work, and which will inspire a sense of pride.”

- 6.6 The application site is located at the centre of the Dee Park Estate, which has undergone regeneration over the past ten years and which is continuing. This follows the adoption of the Dee Park Planning Brief in 2008, outline planning consent granted in 2009 and s.73 permission granted in 2013. The outline permission approved the phased regeneration of the Dee Park Estate comprising demolition of 376 dwellings and replacement with 281 houses and flats for affordable rent and sale and 482 houses and flats for private sale (763 in total), with new community centre, shops, school and environmental improvements to the regeneration area. In general terms, the Dee Park Estate is subject to a Masterplan secured under the 2009 permission which seeks to regenerate Dee Park Estate through provision of new housing, educational and community facilities. Under the 2009 outline approval, three principle phases of work were proposed, with each phase to deliver certain aspects of the Masterplan. The 2013 section 73 application subsequently approved changes to the Masterplan, to amend the phasing of the proposal to ensure viability. Phases 1 and 2 have been completed.
- 6.7 The Masterplan originally proposed the new school to the north east of the existing (off the existing school site) as per the extract below:



6.8 However, the current proposals relocate the school to the centre of the site, in place of the existing multi use games area (MUGA). In turn, the MUGA will be relocated to the current school position. There is no change proposed to the location of the existing synthetic turf pitch (STP), to the south west of the site. The change in layout from the original Masterplan is shown below:



- 6.9 The applicant has submitted a detailed explanation as to why the relocation of the school to the original masterplan location is no longer the most appropriate. These include the relationship to the newly permitted Community Centre, the degree of risk to the school in terms of taking on new land, the reduced impact on neighbours and an improved layout and design in general.
- 6.10 The developer's reasoning for the new approach to redevelopment of the school is noted. Nevertheless, wider planning considerations apply, including the permitted Phase 3 masterplan layout which also includes other surrounding development as part of that phase and which has not yet been constructed. It is important to be satisfied that the provision of the school and its proposed relocation will not prevent, disrupt, or otherwise prejudice the remaining elements of the permitted Phase 3 from being delivered.
- 6.11 The original Masterplan shows a new school building moving to land beyond the current school boundary immediately to the north east and provides housing on land freed up within the school site that is currently occupied by the synthetic turf pitch. It is apparent that the current proposal shows a different approach to this by limiting all changes to the school to within the existing school site and this would therefore prevent the housing on the masterplan being provided on the school land. Given the wider regeneration of the area and the need to ensure sufficient housing is provided, it is necessary to consider the extent to which this previously permitted housing could be provided elsewhere.
- 6.12 The applicant has submitted indicative layouts to show how alternative provision of housing could be accommodated within Phase 3 on the land to the north east which would otherwise have been occupied by the school.

Whilst it is not possible to give absolute certainty in terms of the acceptability of this alternative approach until planning permission is granted for such development, nevertheless this would appear to be a relatively simple swapping of sites and there is no evidence to suggest that this would be particularly problematic. On this basis it is considered that the proposal would fit with and not prejudice the planned regeneration of the area in accordance with Policy WR1 and the wider aims of the Dee Park Planning Brief 2008.

6.13 Finally, Policy OU1 (New and Existing Community Facilities) supports proposals for new, extended and improved community facilities and on-site intensification of schools. The policy also addresses loss of sports pitches and playing fields. Whilst the proposal would result in some small open areas within the site, the sports facilities are maintained in new locations and the proposal can reasonably be described as a re-arrangement of existing open space rather than its overall loss or degradation.

6.14 As the comparison plans below show, it is evident that the reconfiguration allows for a similar quantum of open space/play space as existing with no significant reduction.



6.15 It is considered that the reconfiguration would not affect the overall way in which the school play space is used and appears to rationalise this with an improved layout. The proposal would result in an existing community facility being redeveloped to facilitate its Academy status.

Community Use

- 6.16 The site provides an existing community facility in the form of the multi use games area and synthetic turf pitch. These are available for community use out of school hours and are subject to an existing Community Use Agreement. The proposal is considered to provide a more appropriate provision of facilities in terms of quantity and quality. The community benefits of this will need to be secured through a new Community Use Agreement. A draft has been provided on similar terms to the existing and this is recommended to be secured by S106 agreement, as set out in the recommendation at the head of this report.
- 6.17 Further to the above, due regard should be had to any comments received from Sport England as a statutory consultee. Sport England. Based on information provided by the applicant Sport England are content that the proposal meets Planning Policy Exception E4. This exception criteria states:

'The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:

- *of equivalent or better quality, and*
- *of equivalent or greater quantity, and*
- *in a suitable location, and*
- *subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.'*

Sport England also welcome the applicant's inclusion of sport lighting for the relocated MUGA.

- 6.18 On the basis of the above assessment, it is considered that the principle of the redevelopment is acceptable on the basis of the proposed layout which would fit with and not prejudice the wider regeneration of the area; would maintain and improve open space and enhance community facilities. The proposals are considered to comply with Policies OU1, WR1 and guidance contained within the Dee Park Planning Brief.

Layout / scale / massing and design considerations

- 6.19 Section 12 of the NPPF 'Achieving well-designed places', reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high-quality places. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF includes the need for new design to function well and add to the quality of the surrounding area, establish a strong sense of place, and respond to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 6.20 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) sets out the local requirements with regard to design of new development and requires that all developments must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in which it is located. The aspects of design include: layout; urban structure and urban grain; landscape; density and mix; scale: height and massing; and architectural detail and materials.
- 6.21 Further to the above, the Dee Park Planning Brief also provides a number of objectives which relate to the design and layout of the new school which

includes (but is not limited to) improvements to the fabric of the school, the playground area and play equipment.

- 6.22 The existing school buildings are in a poor state of repair and are not considered to be of any specific architectural value to warrant their retention in design terms and as such there is no objection to the demolition of the existing school.

Layout

- 6.23 It is noted that the current layout is disjointed with no real cohesion across the site as a whole and with little relationship to the main frontage - and no real frontage to Spey Road/Eddlestone Way as a result of the topography of the site, the layout of parking areas and the somewhat sporadic arrangement of buildings.

- 6.24 It is considered that the proposals successfully take the opportunities available for the school to read and feel like a more consolidated development as a whole and helping to ensure that a better sense of place is created. The design strikes an appropriate balance between achieving a high quality layout and built form whilst accommodating the phasing required during construction (the school needs to stay open during the works).

- 6.25 As above, the topography restricts the site to a series of tiers, with its lowest tier to the north, where the current school building sits. The phasing and continued use of the existing school restricts any meaningful development into the middle tier and with this in mind, the new school building will be positioned centrally within the site, within this middle tier, with the existing synthetic turf pitch (STP) remaining to the south west and the re-positioned MUGA proposed to the north east.

- 6.26 The proposed layout will align the main school building with the top of Spey Road. This will allow the proposed building to capture views along its length and act as a clear and legible destination, improve its presence to the street and provide a focal point for the site as a whole. The layout also seeks to improve pedestrian routes through the site, with links created to assist movement in a clear and legible manner including the new entrance which aligns with new layout. In overall terms, the proposed layout is considered to be an improvement on the current situation and will fit in successfully to the surrounding context.

- 6.27 The revised layout also allows for increased planting around the site, which provides a greater and better-designed landscaped setting for the school. The landscape improvements are considered to be a positive and overall significant benefit to the site and wider area.

New Building

- 6.28 The new school will be contained within one building, and in a more linear form than currently exists, and this would result in a more consolidated form of development. The form of the building has been designed to articulate the function of the building, placing emphasis on key areas such as the main entrance and legibility of the site. The building would be greater in height than the existing school buildings, at two storeys, and although a change from existing, it is considered that the massing, height and form responds appropriately to the prevailing character of buildings in the area as well as responding appropriately to the physical characteristics

and constraints of the site. Accordingly, the design of the building is considered to be acceptable.

- 6.29 Turning to consider the appearance and detailed design of the proposed building, the principle building material will be red brick which will be complemented by a patterned brick feature on sections of the building to add detail and visual interest. There is consistency in the material choices throughout the proposed building giving a coherence to the scheme. Brick is a prominent material in the wider surrounding area and reflects the heritage of the locality and as such the use of brickwork will help connect the site to the locality.
- 6.30 To ensure the design quality depicted in the submission is followed through when implementing the development, it is considered necessary for precise details of all external materials to be secured via condition, including the provision of sample panel details being erected on site prior to approval.
- 6.31 The design and layout of the school has been designed specifically for the school as occupier and the specific educational standards will be a matter for the school as developer. In overall terms, the design approach is considered to comply with Policy CC7 and WR1 as well as guidance contained within the Deep Park Planning Brief.

Highways and Parking

- 6.32 Policies TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway related matters), TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking-related matters relating to development.
- 6.33 The site is in a sustainable location, easily accessible by foot, cycle paths and public transport. There are also a number of bus routes within the vicinity which provide access to Reading town centre and surrounding residential areas.
- 6.34 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan and the Council's Transport Officer has considered this proposal and amended information, received during the course of the application, in detail.
- 6.35 Highway Authority comments are set out in the consultation section above. Based on this advice it is considered that the proposals will provide an appropriate amount of vehicle and cycle parking for all users, including EV charging facilities and disabled parking bays. The proposal would retain the existing vehicular access from Eddleston Way which will lead to the new car park. Whilst a new vehicular access is proposed onto Spey Road, this is for emergency and maintenance access only and any disruption to traffic flow considered to be minimal and is acceptable in highway safety terms Bin storage and servicing arrangements are considered to be acceptable. Where details are required in terms of precise design and specifications of the above facilities these are recommended to be secured by condition.

Pedestrian Crossing

- 6.36 The applicant was originally asked to provide a contribution towards a new pedestrian crossing but has justified why they have declined to do so. As discussed in detail in the Transport Development Control observations at

section 4 above, this position has been supported by the Highway Authority on purely highway safety grounds.

- 6.37 However, taking a broader view, the proposals will increase capacity at the school and there are currently no formal crossing facilities on the Spey Road/Eddleston Way frontage although these streets appear well used by vehicles. There is the probability of additional family housing in the surrounding area (Dee Park Phase 3 and other infill development) which is likely to increase child pedestrian footfall further.
- 6.38 Whilst existing and previous highway data, and the fact that the school previously operated at a higher two-form entry capacity, could be used to argue that the proposal would not worsen the situation purely in highway safety terms, it is considered that good design and good planning would indicate that a crossing should be provided where key desire lines exist to cater for existing and planning future users of the site. This would be particularly the case given the increased capacity and the vulnerable nature of those users (children). There is a clear desire line in this location and urban design policy, such as CC7 (Design and the Public Realm), sets out requirements in this regard including seeking to:
- ensure that development makes a positive contribution to:*
- *Ease of movement and permeability*
 - *create safe and accessible environments*
 - *Address the needs of all in society and are accessible, useable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily.*

This is further supported by Policy WR1 which seeks to integrate development within a safe and secure environment.

- 6.39 For the reasons set out above, it is considered that failure to provide suitable accessible routes to the school would be harmful in terms of meeting the accessibility, and arguably safety, needs of existing and future users of the site and the aim of providing high quality and well laid out development. This matter therefore needs to be weighed against the benefits of the scheme in the overall planning balance.
- 6.40 In summary, the proposals are generally considered acceptable in highway terms in accordance with Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5, with the exception of the wider integration with the area in respect of suitable crossing facilities.

Trees, Landscaping and Ecology

- 6.41 Policy CC7 (Design and Public Realm) states that all new development should be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area including by way of landscaping. Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) seeks that individual trees, groups of trees and hedges will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and that Reading's vegetation cover is extended. The policy seeks that new development should make provision for tree retention and planting to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) states that planning permission will not be granted for developments which would negatively impact on the 'green network' and that on all sites development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and provide for a net gain in biodiversity where possible.

- 6.42 It has been shown that in total there will be 11 trees felled as part of the proposed development, as detailed in the table below extracted from the Arboricultural Impact Assessment. One of these is a Category B tree and the remaining eight are Category C and U trees:

Tree loss due to the proposal				
	Groups	Trees	Total tree count	Percentage of category lost
A	0	0	0	0
B	0	T17	1	33%
C	0	T1, T4, T5, T9, T11, T12, T14, T15, T16	9	82%
U	0	T3	1	50%

- 6.43 Whilst Category B trees should normally be retained, due to the position of the tree in relation to the new sports facilities, it is apparent, given all other constraints that its retention is not feasible, as it would compromise the proposed layout. As detailed at section 4 above, the Council's Natural Environment Officer is satisfied that the Category B tree is not suitable for retention in this instance. The loss of the lower quality trees (Category C) or unsuitable for retention (Category U) is not objected to. The tree removals overall directly facilitate the provision of new facilities, which is duly noted by officers.
- 6.44 Although some tree removal is necessary in this instance, it is expected that this should be balanced with significant and high quality replacement planting and that landscaping is improved overall. To achieve this and to provide a net gain in tree cover across the site, 85 new trees are proposed, covering 19 species, 12 genera and 8 families. This is welcomed, as is the incorporation of a wider variety of tree species and in greater numbers than currently on site.
- 6.45 The applicant has also provided sufficient detail to confirm that existing trees to be retained can be suitably protected during construction and afterwards. Full details are recommended to be secured by condition.
- 6.46 Ultimately, whilst the loss of the trees is regrettable, when this is considered within the context of the proposals as a whole, the wider planning benefits of the scheme (as discussed elsewhere in this submission) and particularly the significant tree planting proposed, are considered to outweigh any harm caused in this specific instance. In accordance with Policies CC7 and EN14.
- 6.47 Turning to ecology matters, the RBC Ecology consultant is satisfied with the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal assessment, as detailed at section 4 above. Subject to requested protection measures being included within the pre-commencement demolition and construction method statement, the proposals are unlikely to affect protected or priority species, priority habitats or local wildlife sites. Ecological enhancements at the site, including features such as bird and bat boxes, tiles or bricks on and around the new buildings, will be secured via condition. The proposals are considered acceptable from an ecology perspective. In accordance with Policy EN12.

Impact on Residential Amenity

- 6.48 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to ensure development does not cause harm to the living environment of existing properties, in terms of loss of privacy, overlooking, visual dominance and noise. Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect surrounding occupiers from the impact of pollution, including noise and light.
- 6.49 The school use is existing, including and existing MUGA and STP. This is a significant consideration although it remains important that the new development does not introduce new areas of concern due to the reconfiguration of the site.

Privacy and Overlooking

- 6.50 The relocated school would look across the existing synthetic turf pitch (STP) to the south west of the site and across the new car park and multi use games area (MUGA) to the north east of the site. Given the distance of c40m to the neighbouring properties to the north west and c25m to the neighbouring properties to the south east, combined with the nature and position of openings on the building, this would be a sufficient separation distance to ensure that no significant detrimental overlooking on the living environment of existing residential properties would occur.

Overbearing effects

- 6.51 Turning to consider whether the proposed development is visually dominant, overbearing or harms outlook to existing nearby properties, it is acknowledged that for some the context will change as a result of the proposed redevelopment. For occupiers of properties along Spey Road to the south east, and to some extent Tay Road to the north west, the context will alter with the replacement of the current MUGA with the new school building itself. It is acknowledged that for some this will be a more visually dominant change and will impact on outlook. However, given the position of the relocated school building within the site combined with its height and flat roof design, distance to site boundaries and proposed soft landscaping, the proposed building is not considered to be so visually dominant as to result in any significant harmful effects. For similar reasons, it is considered that nearby occupiers will not be significantly impacted by the proposed development in daylight, sunlight and overshadowing terms.
- 6.52 For neighbouring properties along Deveron Drive to the north west and Eddleston Way to the south east the new views of the car park and MUGA will be appropriately screened by new soft landscaping to soften the impact visually.
- 6.53 It is important that the design does not prejudice the future redevelopment of land to the north east due to amenity concerns. In this regard it is considered that the relationship between the school facilities and the potential new housing beyond the school boundary would be similar to existing arrangements in the vicinity and would be unlikely to prevent the appropriate regeneration under Phase 3.

Noise and disturbance

- 6.54 Given the proposed relocation of the multi-use games areas (MUGA) to the north east of the site, a noise assessment has been submitted with the application.

- 6.55 The consultation response from the Council's Environmental Protection team (detailed at Section 4) originally raised concern about the impact of noise on nearby residential properties. In particular, the impact on properties at Deveron Drive and also potential future development to the north east under Phase 3.
- 6.56 Additional information has been provided, which provides more detail on noise mitigation measures, focused on controls on hours of use, with the MUGA limited to no later than 8pm. The arrangement of the proposed MUGA will not be too dissimilar to the existing MUGA in terms of relationship to residential properties. The school has confirmed that in relation to the existing MUGA, no complaints have been received by the school about its use. The existing synthetic turf pitch (STP) has longer operational hours (closing at 22:00) and is closer to existing residential properties than the new MUGA will be.

Artificial Lighting

- 6.57 The existing lighting to the STP will be retained and new lighting is proposed for both the car park and the MUGA as well as building-mounted external lighting and pathway lighting. A Lighting Strategy report has been submitted with the application.
- 6.58 The applicant has sought to use the floodlights for the MUGA for hours up to 8pm weekdays and weekends, tied to the hours of use and they are considered to operate within sociable hours.
- 6.59 In respect of the STP, the proposed hours of use up to 10pm weekdays and weekends is the same as the current situation.
- 6.60 Importantly, no objection has been raised by Environmental Protection Officers (or indeed local residents) who considers that the lux (light intensity) levels would be within guidance levels, that any light spillage would be contained with the grounds of the site. Further mitigation of nuisance light would be achieved through the inclusion of a condition limiting the hours of use of the floodlights.
- 6.61 On the basis of the above assessment it is considered that the proposals would not be harmful in respect of noise and light. This is particularly the case given the similarities with the existing situation (a STP and MUGA are already in place on the site albeit in different locations to proposed) and with suitable controls on hours of use.
- 6.62 Conditions requiring the submission of a Construction Method Statement and restricting hours of construction work and prohibiting bonfires are also recommended to protect neighbouring amenity.
- 6.63 The Council's Environmental Protection officer also advises that no mechanical plant shall be installed until a noise assessment of the proposed mechanical plant (in relation to prevailing background noise levels) has been submitted and approved. This is recommended to be secured by condition.
- 6.64 In overall terms, the proposals are not considered to give rise to noise, light pollution and disturbance to such a degree that would warrant a refusal of planning permission. Furthermore, it is considered that the positioning of the proposed building, together with the separation

distances and provision of soft landscaping means that the relocation of the school building and relocated MUGA are not considered to cause any harmful detrimental impact on the living environment of the nearby residential properties. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with policies CC8 and EN17 in particular.

Impact on Air Quality

- 6.65 Policy EN15 (Air Quality) requires developments to have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality. The site is located outside of an Air Quality Management Area (c500m south of designated AQMA). However, the capacity of the school is doubling (210 1FE to 420 2FE) and with regard to the thresholds in the Environmental Protection UK (EPUK) guidance, the proposal technically takes this over the threshold of requiring an Air Quality Statement.
- 6.66 An Air Quality Statement has been submitted with the application. The consultation response from Environmental Protection (detailed at Section 4 above) concurs with the conclusions of the report that the impacts of the operational scheme would not be significant. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required in this instance, in accordance with Policy EN15.

Contaminated Land

- 6.67 Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) requires that development *“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.”*
- 6.68 A phase 1 contaminated land assessment has been submitted with the application. The consultation response from Environmental Protection (detailed at Section 4 above) concurs with the conclusions of the report that further investigation is required. The standard four-stage conditions to ensure that the possible presence of contamination is thoroughly investigated and removed/mitigated if necessary (3 of the conditions are pre-commencement) are recommended and the proposal is considered to accord with Policy EN16 in this respect.

Sustainability and Energy

- 6.69 Policy CC2 ((Sustainable Design and Construction) seeks that new development should reduce the consumption of resources and materials. Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) seeks that developments of over 1,000m² should consider the inclusion of combined heat and power plant (CHP) or other form of decentralised energy provision unless demonstrated that this is not suitable, feasible or viable for the type of development proposed. The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD provides further clarification on this point.
- 6.70 A sustainability and energy statement has been submitted with the application which highlights a number of sustainability measures which are

welcomed. This includes - but is not limited to - reuse of existing PV panels, centralised mechanical ventilation heat recovery (MVHR) for toilets and ancillary areas, natural ventilation heat recovery (NVHR) to classrooms, ventilation control, high efficiency gas condensing boilers, variable speed pumping, led lighting, daylight and occupancy link lighting controls, water management strategies, waste and recycling strategies and energy efficiency lower carbon and renewable energy strategies/technologies. The overall carbon emissions are forecast to improve on current Building Regulations by 25% which is particularly welcomed given that RBC has declared a climate emergency.

- 6.71 Further to the above, as a major application for non-residential development Policy CC2 seeks that the proposals meet a BREEAM 'Excellent' standard where possible, albeit the supporting text (Para 4.1.4) to this policy accepts that *"some types of development, such as industrial uses, warehouses and schools might find it more difficult to meet these standards. In these cases, developments must demonstrate that the standard to be achieved is the highest possible for the development, and at a minimum meets the BREEAM 'Very Good' standard"*.
- 6.72 A BREEAM Pre-Assessment has been undertaken and the proposals are projected to achieve an 'Excellent' rating and this is recommended to be secured by condition.
- 6.73 In overall terms, officers are satisfied that the proposals demonstrate a good standard of sustainability and carbon off-setting is considered to be a positive benefit of the scheme. To ensure that these sustainability credentials are achieved in practice, a BREEAM design stage assessment will be secured by condition, with a separate second condition securing written verification prior to first occupation. With these standard conditions secured, it is considered that the proposal will demonstrate suitable compliance with the Policies CC2 and CC3.

Archaeology

- 6.74 Policy EN2 (Areas of Archaeological Significance) seeks to protect areas of archaeological potential. Whilst the site is identified as an area of archaeological interest, the consultation response from Berkshire Archaeology (detailed at Section 4 above) concurs with the conclusions of the report submitted. Specifically, that there will be no significant archaeological implications as a result of the proposals with no further archaeological investigation required.

Flooding and SuDs

- 6.75 Policy EN18 (Flooding and Drainage) requires that planning permission will not be granted for development that would increase risks arising from flooding. The policy also requires all major developments to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) with runoff rates aiming to reflect greenfield conditions or be no worse than existing.
- 6.76 The site is within Flood Zone 1, with a low risk of flooding. However, it is recognised that there is a noticeable change in land levels across the site from 8m in height south west to north east and 6m in height north to south.

The Environment Agency have confirmed that they do not wish to comment on this application. Notwithstanding, a Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy Report has been submitted with the application.

- 6.77 With the above context in mind, the Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy details the impact the proposed development will have on the site itself and the area surrounding to ensure there are no adverse effects. In particular, the applicant has demonstrated that the proposed development will discharge the surface water to the existing drainage systems at no greater than the existing run-off rates and the hard-paved area of the site will be reduced, thereby also resulting in a reduction in the volume of run-off. The proposed SuDS strategy will assist in this regard and as confirmed by the Local Flood Authority (detailed at Section 4 above). In conclusion, it is considered that the applicant has submitted sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposals will comply with Policy EN18 in terms of flooding. The final details of all elements of the SuDs strategy will be secured via condition.

Pre-commencement conditions

- 6.78 Pre-commencement conditions - In line with section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) discussions are ongoing with the applicant regarding pre-commencement conditions and will be confirmed in an update report to committee.

Unilateral Undertaking Legal Agreement

- 6.79 A S106 unilateral undertaking legal agreement will be required to secure the Community Use Agreement and Employment Skills and Training Plan.
- 6.80 The applicant has indicated that they intend to produce an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) in support of the development. As is standard practice and fallback financial contribution will also be secured. As per the SPD formula, £2500x Gross internal floor area 2,180 (m²) \ 1000m² = **£5,450**
- 6.81 It is considered that all obligations would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that they would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Equalities Impact

- 6.82 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

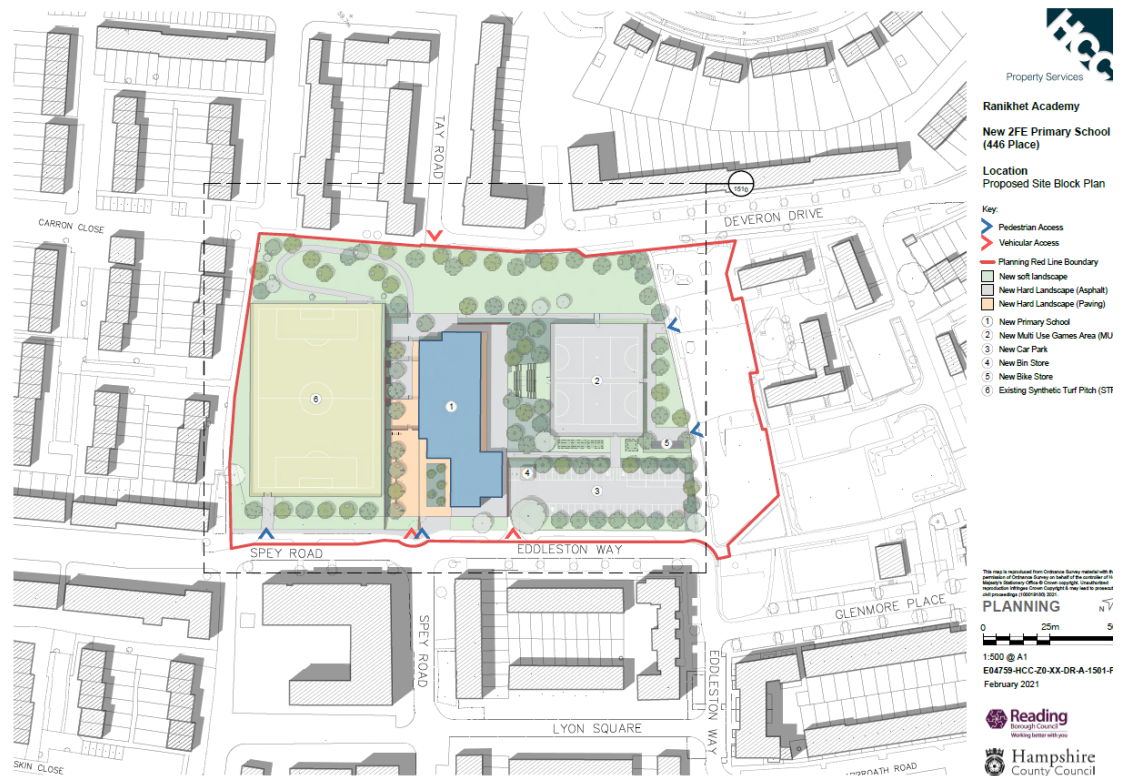
- 7.1 The application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. On the

basis of the assessment above, a degree of harm has been identified due to the failure to secure suitable formal crossing facilities in the Spey Road area. This harm needs to be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and the confirmed commitment for pedestrian crossing facilities to be come forward as part of the Phase 3 proposals for Dee Park Estate.

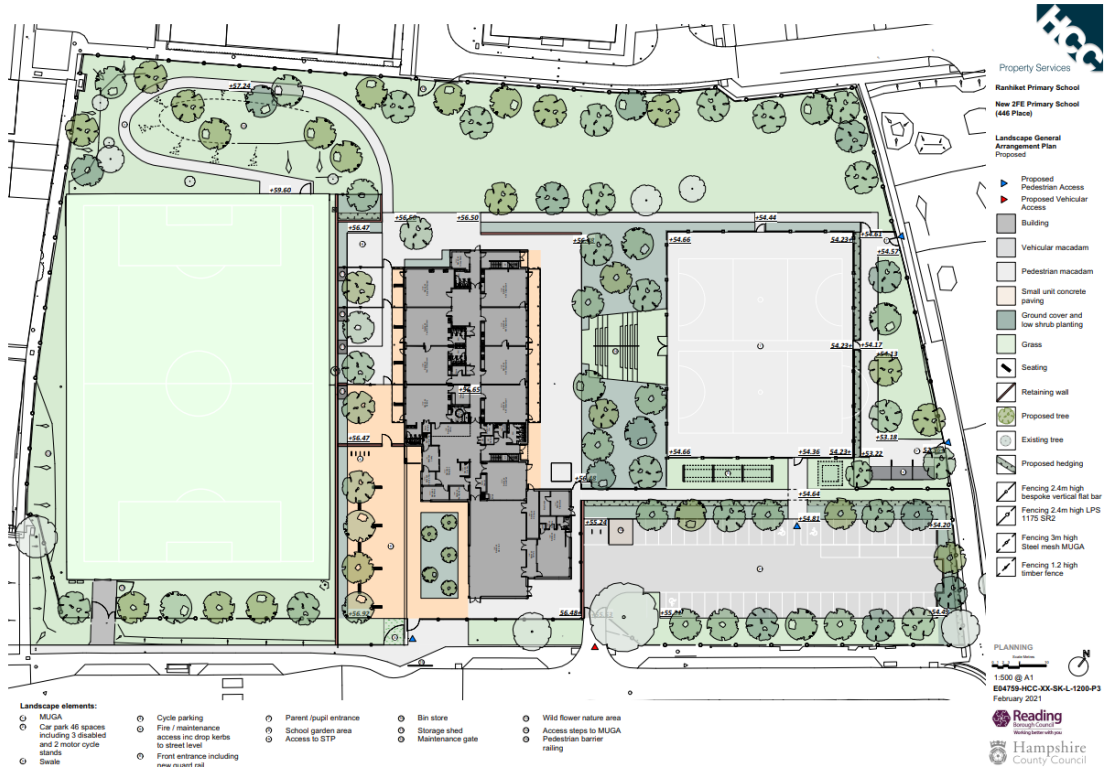
7.2 The scheme provides a wide range of public benefits in terms of additional educational facilities to meet existing and future needs, the improved layout and design of the facilities to serve the school and an overall improvement in the appearance of the site when viewed from the surrounding area. The substantial landscaping and tree planting and the wider community benefits arising from access to the improved sports facilities is another clear benefit. It is considered that in this particular instance the multiple benefits of this regeneration scheme, when applying an overall critical planning balance of all material considerations, are sufficient to outweigh the harm identified above.

7.3 The proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, the granting of planning permission is therefore recommended subject to conditions and the completion of a unilateral undertaking legal agreement.

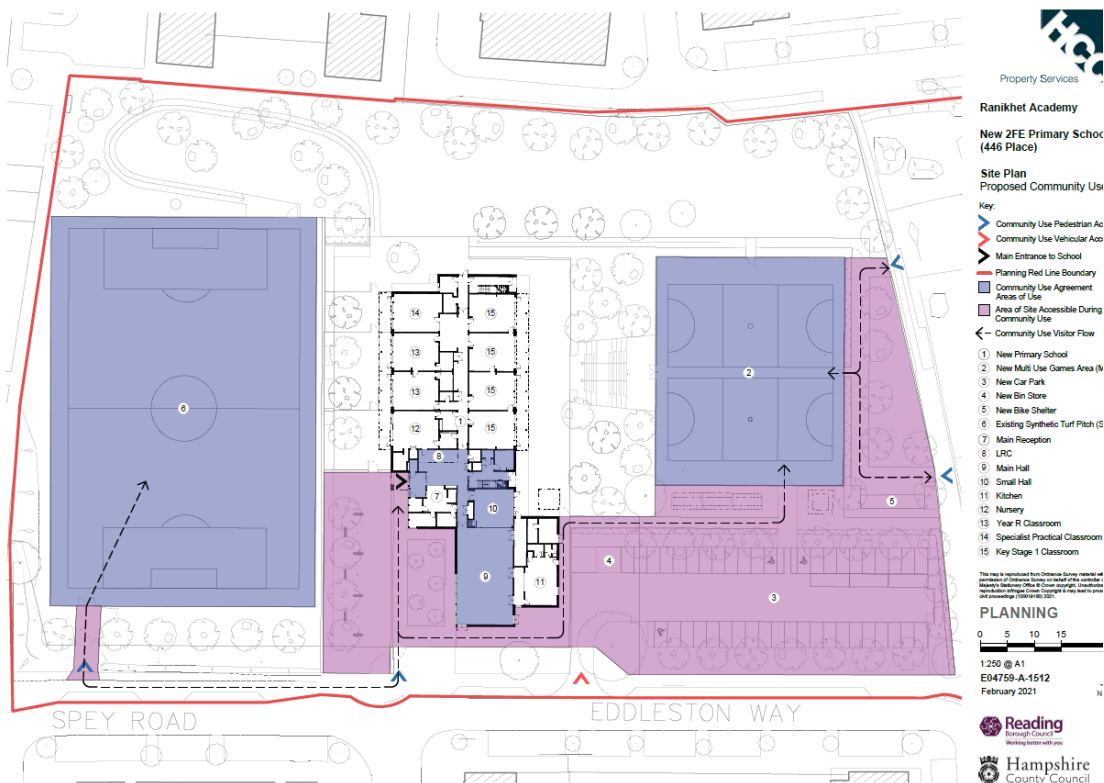
Case Officer: Miss Ethne Humphreys



Proposed Site Block Plan



Landscape General Arrangement Plan



Proposed Community Use



Property Services

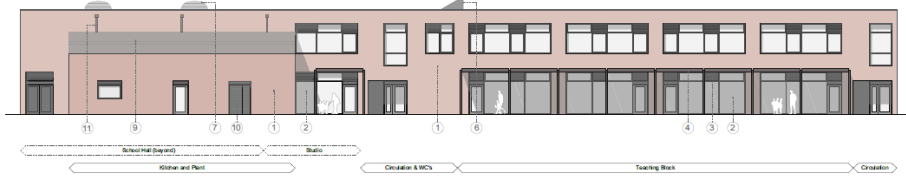
Ranikhet Academy
New 2FE Primary School
(446 places)

Proposed Elevations 1 of 2



1. Proposed South-West Elevation

- Key:
- 1 Brick Cladding
 - 1A Patterned Brick Feature Cladding
 - 2 Glazing System
 - 3 Metal Louvre
 - 4 Free-standing Canopy
 - 5 Brise Soleil
 - 6 Northlight
 - 7 Roof Ventilation Terminal
 - 8 Timber Brise Soleil
 - 9 Louvre Screening
 - 10 Louvre Plantroom Doors
 - 11 Hopper and Rain Water Pipe

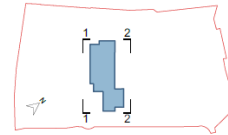


2. Proposed North-East Elevation

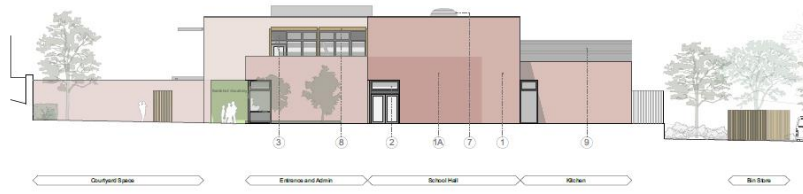
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March 2021



Proposed Elevations

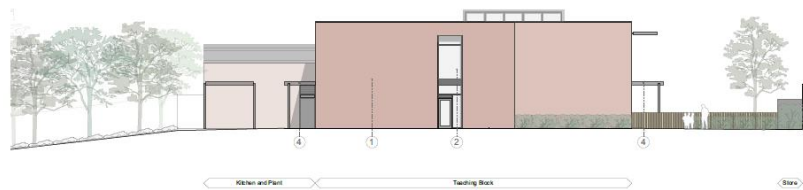


3. Proposed South-West Elevation

Ranikhet Academy
New 2FE Primary School
(446 places)

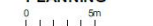
Proposed Elevations 2 of 2

- Key:
- 1 Brick Cladding
 - 1A Patterned Brick Feature Cl
 - 2 Glazing System
 - 3 Metal Louvre
 - 4 Free-standing Canopy
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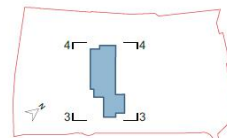


4. Proposed North-East Elevation

PLANNING



1:100 @ A1
E04759-HCC-Z0-XX-DR-A-3001
March 2021



Proposed Elevations



Proposed Aerial View from Spey Road

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