

To: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)
Councillors Leng, Carnell, Emberson, Ennis,
Gavin, Hornsby-Smith, Moore, Page,
Robinson, Rowland, J Williams and Yeo

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30 August 2022

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NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 7 SEPTEMBER 2022

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 7 September 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
1. MINUTES	-		7 - 20
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-		
3. QUESTIONS	-		
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	Decision	BOROUGHWIDE	21 - 24
5. PLANNING APPEALS	Information	BOROUGHWIDE	25 - 28
6. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL	Information	BOROUGHWIDE	29 - 34

PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE DETERMINED

7.	201138/FUL - 12-18 CROWN STREET	KATESGROVE	35 - 60
	Proposal	Change of use of building from 44 serviced apartments (Class C1) to 44 flats (C3) comprising of 4no studios, 27 x one bedroom and 13 x two bedroom units with associated parking	
	Recommendation	Permitted subject to Legal Agreement	

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|-----|---------------------------------------|---|------------|-----------|
| 8. | 211636/FUL - 75-81 SOUTHAMPTON STREET | Decision | KATESGROVE | 61 - 88 |
| | Proposal | Removal of existing building and construction of a four-storey building to comprise 19 dwellings and associated works | | |
| | Recommendation | Permitted subject to Legal Agreement | | |
| | | | | |
| 9. | 220463/FUL - UNIT 8 STADIUM WAY | Decision | KENTWOOD | 89 - 102 |
| | Proposal | Change of use of vacant unit to use as an indoor climbing centre (Use Class E(d)), minor amendments to building elevations/entrances, provision of cycle/bin storage and associated works | | |
| | Recommendation | Application Permitted | | |
| | | | | |
| 10. | 220637/FUL - SCOURS LANE, TILEHURST | Decision | KENTWOOD | 103 - 126 |
| | Proposal | Proposed development a Drive-Through restaurant (Use Class E (a,b) and Sui Generis Hot Food Take Away, Car Parking, enhanced landscaping and Access Arrangements | | |
| | Recommendation | Application Refused | | |

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GUIDE TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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 Leng (Vice-Chair), Carnell, Ennis, Gavin, Hornsby-Smith, Moore, Page, Robinson, Rowland, J Williams and Yeo
- Apologies:** Councillor Emberson

RESOLVED ITEMS

21. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 1 & 22 JUNE 2022

The Minutes of the meetings held on 1 June and 22 June 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22. QUESTIONS

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

1. Heritage buildings owned by the Council

Will the Chair please tell us what heritage buildings owned by the Council fall into the following categories:

Locally listed buildings

Grade 2

Grade 2*

Grade 1?

2. Care and preservation of Council owned heritage buildings

Will the Chair please tell us what Statutory Duties (if any) the Council has to maintain, care, preserve and conserve the heritage buildings that it owns?

If those Duties differ, please could those statutory duties be listed separately for:

Locally listed buildings

Grade 2

Grade 2*

Grade 1?

REPLY to both Questions 1 and 2 by the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee (Councillor Lovelock):

In response to your first question **Heritage buildings owned by the Council**

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A list of the Heritage Buildings owned by the Council is at Appendix 1 with the locally listed (LL) reference (ie. those not Statutorily Listed); or otherwise Listed Grade II, Grade II*, or Grade I. There are 5 locally listed buildings, 47 Grade II Listed Buildings, 3 Grade II* Listed Buildings and one Grade I Listed Building.

In response to Question 2 **Care and preservation of Council owned heritage buildings**

The duties upon the Council as landowner are the same as any other landowner. While Listed Buildings are recognised as being of National importance there is no Statutory duty to proactively maintain them and keep them in good order.

However, there are measures or powers that allow the LPA (Local Planning Authority) to intervene when a property is at risk of redevelopment or is being harmed through unacceptable alterations. Below is an overview and is divided into under the headings of Locally Listed Buildings, and (Statutory) Listed Buildings.

Locally Listed Buildings

Of the 22 locally listed buildings (and structures) currently on the Council's Local List, five are Council-owned. LL buildings are not statutorily protected from demolition or alterations, and their legal heritage status is described in policy as Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs). However, the special (local) importance of the Asset will be a material consideration to any relevant planning proposal (planning application, seeking Prior Approval to demolish, etc.) and would principally be considered under Local Plan Policy EN4, *Locally Important Heritage Assets*.

Statutory Listed Buildings

The majority of controls which LPAs have for preserving Listed Buildings are from primary legislation contained within the **Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990** (the LBCA). Under the LBCA, the LPA can serve the following Notices:

- A Listed Building Enforcement Notice under Section 38(1) to put right any damaging works
- A notice of Compulsory Purchase of listed buildings in need of repair under section 47
- A Repairs Notice under section 48; or
- An Urgent Works Notice under sections 54 and 55 specifying those works it considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building

Other controls available are:

- A Section 215 ('untidy site') Notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. To be used when the condition of a building or land is adversely affecting the amenity of an area, including Listed Buildings or LL buildings, where required, but cannot relate to structural or substantial restoration.
- Powers under Section 77 and 78 of the Building Act 1984 are relevant in relation to dangerous buildings/structures - a Magistrate's Court order can be obtained by the LA to take such steps necessary for making the building safe (however the LA must first consider taking action under sections 47 and 48 or section 54 of the LBCA above).

Appendix 1 Heritage buildings/assets owned by Reading Borough Council

Locally listed buildings owned by the Council:

- LL9 Arthur Hill Pool, Kings Road
- LL16 Attwells Drinking Fountain
- LL17 Kings Road Garden, Kings Road
- LL20 Palmer Park Pavilion (and associated building and entrance gates)
- LL21 40 Christchurch Road

Statutory Listed Buildings (and structures) owned by the Council:

2 AND 4, BRIDGE STREET, READING	Listing	II
2 AND 4, LONDON STREET, READING	Listing	II
6-10, BRIDGE STREET, READING	Listing	II
BUILDING ON SOUTH EAST CORNER, Yield Hall Lane	Listing	II
Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance, Market Place	Listing	II
KINGS MEADOW SWIMMING POOL, Kings Meadow Road	Listing	II
KITCHEN GARDEN WALLS AND GARDENER'S COTTAGE AT COLEY PARK FARM	Listing	II
Mansion House, Prospect Park, Liebenrood Road	Listing	II
NEWTOWN (Primary) SCHOOL, School Terrace	Listing	II
THE PUMP AND TURBINE HOUSE, Gas Works Road	Listing	II
THE SCREENS HOUSE, Gas Works Road	Listing	II
BATTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL INCLUDING CARETAKER'S HOUSE, FORMER COOKERY SCHOOL, MANUAL INSTRUCTION BLOCK AND BOUNDARY RAILINGS AND GATES, Oxford Road	Listing	II
KEEP AND ATTACHED WALLS AND GATEWAY, BROCK BARRACKS, Oxford Road	Listing	II
ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH HALL, St. Bartholomew's Road	Listing	II
CAVERSHAM COURT STABLES, Caversham Court, Church Road, Caversham	Listing	II
Nos. 29 AND 31, CAVERSHAM ROAD, READING	Listing	II
Nos. 47-48, KENAVON DRIVE, READING	Listing	II
ANDREWS AND BARRETT FAMILY MONUMENTS, Reading Cemetery	Listing	II
ANGLIAN CROSS, Forbury Gardens	Listing	II
ARCHWAY CONNECTING FORBURY GARDENS TO ABBEY RUINS. INCLUDING RETAINING WALLS FLANKING PATH TO ABBEY RUINS	Listing	II
CAVERSHAM COURT, Church Road, Caversham	Park and Garden	II
CAVERSHAM FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY, Church Street, Caversham	Listing	II
Caversham War Memorial, Christchurch Meadows, Caversham	Listing	II
CULVERT ON HOLY BROOK RUNNING SOUTH WESTWARDS FROM SU71441/73234 TO 71327/73133 (Bridge Street area)	Listing	II
ENTRANCE LODGES AND GATES TO CEMETERY, Cemetery Junction	Listing	II

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Former School of Art (part of the Town Hall buildings), Blagrove Street	Listing	II
GARDEN WALL TO NORTH AND EAST OF THE ACACIAS, London Road/Redlands Road		
WALL TO GARDEN OF THE ACACIAS, London Road/Redlands Road	Listing	II
MAIWAND MEMORIAL, Forbury Gardens	Listing	II
MONUMENT TO BERNARD LAURENCE HEATT, Reading Cemetery	Listing	II
OXFORD ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL, Oxford Road	Listing	II
PROSPECT PARK	Park and	
Queen Victoria Jubilee Fountain, St. Mary's Butts	Garden	II
RAILINGS TO GEORGE V MEMORIAL GARDEN, Eldon Square	Listing	II
Reading Abbey Ruins	Listing	I
Reading Abbey: a Cluniac and Benedictine monastery and Civil War earthwork.	Scheduli	
	ng	
	Park and	
READING CEMETERY	Garden	II
Reading Museum, part of Town Hall, Blagrove Street/Valpy Street	Listing	II
RETAINING WALLS OF AXIAL EAST WEST GARDEN TERRACE WALK AT CAVERSHAM COURT	Listing	II
RETAINING WALLS TO RAISED WALK TO RIVERSIDE GARDEN PAVILION AT CAVERSHAM COURT	Listing	II
RIVERSIDE GARDEN PAVILION AT CAVERSHAM COURT	Listing	II
SARCOPHAGUS MONUMENT AT READING CEMETERY	Listing	II
SCREEN WALL AT NORTH EAST END OF CAVERSHAM COURT RECREATION GROUND	Listing	II
Shelter at north-east corner of Forbury Gardens	Listing	II
ST ANNE'S WELL HEAD AND DRINKING BOWL, Priest Hill/St. Anne's Road, Caversham	Listing	II
STATUE OF GEORGE PALMER, Palmer Park	Listing	II
The Concert Hall, Blagrove Street	Listing	II
	Park and	
THE FORBURY GARDEN	Garden	II
THE HENRY BUILDING AT KATESGROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL INCLUDING BOUNDARY WALL AND FORMER CARETAKER'S COTTAGE, Katesgrove Lane	Listing	II
THE STATUE OF KING EDWARD VII, Station Road/Forbury Road	Listing	II
		II
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBER AND OFFICES WITH CLOCK TOWER	Listing	*
West Branch Library (now Battle Library), Oxford Road	Listing	II
YEOMANRY HOUSE, Castle Hill/Coley Avenue	Listing	II

23. 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, and a list of previously agreed site visits.

Resolved -

That application 212037/FUL - Land adjacent to Reading Sewage and Treatment Works, Island Road, together with any additional applications which the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services might consider appropriate, be the subject of unaccompanied site visits.

24. PLANNING APPEALS

(i) New Appeals

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a schedule giving details of notification received from the Planning Inspectorate regarding three 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 for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted details of four decisions that had been made by the Secretary of State, or by an Inspector appointed for the purpose, which were attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

(iii) Reports on Appeal Decisions

There were no reports on appeal decisions.

Resolved -

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

25. 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 13 applications for prior approval decided, between 8 June and 8 July 2022.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

26. WORKS TO PROTECTED TREES AT ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD, ST MARY'S BUTTS

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The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval for proposed works to Council-maintained trees within and adjacent to St Mary's Churchyard, which were subject to Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 10/06. A copy of the TPO plan was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and a copy of the decision notice for the tree works application 181487/TPO was attached at Appendix 2.

The report explained that, whilst the trees were not owned by the Council, the Council inspected and maintained them under a historic agreement. The works proposed, set out in paragraph 4 of the report, were not considered to be harmful to the trees' appearance or future health and were reasonable works in order to appropriately manage the trees. Paragraph 4 of the report also sought approval to renew the element of the tree works approval for 181487/TPO to allow the specified works to relevant trees within the TPO on a regular basis for the next five years.

No objections or comments had been received as a result of the public notice, but the notice period would not end until 27 July 2022 and it was therefore recommended that the works be approved subject to no substantive objections being received by 27 July 2022.

Resolved -

That the proposed tree works be approved subject to no substantive objections being received by 27 July 2022.

27. REVIEW OF EXTENDED DELEGATED AUTHORITY INTRODUCED AT START OF COVID-19

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval to make permanent the extension of delegated powers to officers to determine planning applications, as introduced as an interim measure at the start of the Covid 19 pandemic episode.

- Appendix 1 provided the delegations as preceding April 2020
- Appendix 2 provided a copy of Appendix B as it had appeared in the Policy Committee papers for 27 April 2020, showing the existing delegations and the changes to them agreed as an interim measure for online meetings
- Appendix 3 provided the delegations now proposed

The report explained that a report had been presented at Policy Committee on 27 April 2020 to explain that the Coronavirus Act and associated Regulations from 2020 had enabled Council meetings to take place online during the Covid-19 pandemic. The report had provided revised protocols for running meetings to help manage online events and had included a proposal to extend the delegated authority for making decisions on planning applications and confirming Tree Preservation Orders to reduce the work handled by Planning Applications Committee (PAC), which had been agreed by the Policy Committee. The report explained the changes which had been made.

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With committee meetings being run mainly in person once again, officers had been considering if the amended delegations should continue to apply. The purpose of the extension, to help to reduce the number of cases needing to be decided by PAC, remained valid as it reduced the burden of work on case officers preparing and presenting reports for committee.

The report stated that, in practice, officers had welcomed being able to use the delegated authority to refuse major applications or to determine amendments in their negotiations to good effect and had exercised common sense by bringing the more controversial cases to committee. Between June 2020 and July 2022, 13 Major applications had been refused planning permission with four coming to PAC for a decision. The ability to deal with Variations to permissions without first clearing the approach with Councillors had also been effective.

Councillors could still call those and other applications to committee for a decision and were aware of the need to justify why. Officers had welcomed this and the way that Councillors had been pragmatic and willing to work with officers to confirm if a call in was still needed as the case had been progressed.

The report clarified that the section on Section 73 Variations - regarding applications to develop land without compliance with conditions attached by Committee - had been deleted, in line with the interim arrangement that those decisions be delegated to officers. However, it was considered appropriate to ask for a PAC decision when an objection to a Tree Preservation Order had been received or where the proposal had been submitted by or on behalf of the Council, so this was no longer proposed to be delegated.

An update report was tabled at the meeting which explained that, when the extended delegations had been agreed, it had been requested that a report on the applications affected by the change in delegations should be presented to PAC. Such a report had been presented up to September 2020 but had been omitted since then. Appendix 1 to the update report listed the major decisions for refusal from June 2020 to July 2022 and the report stated that officers would provide a similar table as appropriate in future.

Resolved -

That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services is not authorised to exercise delegated powers in respect of the following:

Applications “called -in” by a Councillor, including those in adjacent authorities.	Councillors need to explain why a decision by PAC is required, in consultation with the Planning Manager and Chair of PAC.
Planning Applications Committee re-referral	When Planning Applications Committee has resolved that a matter should be referred back to PAC.
Applications submitted by serving	Applies to applications for planning permission, approval of reserved matters, variations of conditions, variations of

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councillors and employees of the Council on Corporate Management Team and any person employed or engaged by Planning and Legal Services or their close family.	legal agreements or planning obligations, advertisement consent, listed building consent, works affecting trees covered by tree preservation order and certificates of existing or proposed lawful use or development made by serving councillors or their close family and any member of the Corporate Management Team and any person employed or engaged by Planning and Legal Services or their close family.
Council developments	Power to determine an application for planning permission made by the Council alone or jointly with another person under Section 316 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (S.I. 1992/1492) (Para 6) and the determination of applications made by the Council for listed building consent.
Departures from the Development Plan.	Any development which is considered by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services to be a departure from the provisions of the adopted development plan and recommendation is for approval.
‘Major’ Applications within the Borough where the officer recommendation is to grant planning permission.	Major development, i.e.: Building or engineering work involving new development or change of use comprising: residential development of 10 or more dwellings or residential development on an application site of 0.5 ha or more, or (ii) in the case of other development those comprising 1,000 sq. m or more of gross floorspace, or an application site of 1ha or more.
Listed building consent	Only when forms part of a proposal that also requires planning permission in any of the above categories.
Tree Preservation Orders / Trees in conservation areas	Where an objection to a Tree Preservation Order has been received or where the proposal has been submitted by or on behalf of the Council

28. THE BUGLE, 144 FRIAR STREET - PROPOSAL TO ADD TO THE LIST OF LOCALLY IMPORTANT BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on a proposal to add the Bugle Public House, 144 Friar Street 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

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- Appendix 4: Nomination form
- Appendix 5: Representation by landowner
- Appendix 6: Representation by Conservation Area Advisory Committee

The report set out details of consultation on the proposal and an assessment 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 a typographical error in paragraph 3.4 of the original report and provided more clearly visible versions of the census information provided in Appendix 3 to Appendix 4 of the report.

Objector David Owens, on behalf of the owners of the Bugle PH, and Evelyn Williams, on behalf of the Conservation Area Advisory Committee, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this item.

Resolved -

That the Bugle Public House, 144 Friar Street be added to the list of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

29. 220567/FUL - 109B OXFORD ROAD

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

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which corrected an error in the original report and explained that the applicant had submitted an additional noise report and recommended that consideration of the application should be deferred to allow the further information to be fully assessed and the implications reported to the Committee.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

That consideration of application 220567/FUL be deferred to allow the further information from the applicant to be assessed.

30. 211416/FUL - 4 DOWNSHIRE SQUARE

Erection of 1 x detached and 2 x semi detached dwellings following demolition of the existing bungalow and detached garage.

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which gave details of an additional letter of representation regarding car parking and officer

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 20 JULY 2022

comments on the matters raised. It also included further drawings from the agent to provide clarity over the impact on neighbouring amenity and the parking layout.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Ward Councillor Liz Terry attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

Resolved -

That application 211416/FUL be refused for reasons based on the following issues, with the detailed wording for the reasons for refusal to be finalised by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Ward Councillors:

- a) the scale and siting in close proximity to side windows of 6 Downshire Square would result in overbearing effects, loss of daylight and loss of privacy harmful to neighbouring amenity (contrary to Policy CC8)
- b) the scale and siting in relation to neighbouring dwellings and private gardens would result in overlooking and loss of privacy causing harm to neighbouring amenity (contrary to Policy CC8)
- c) the scale, plot coverage and layout would represent cramped development failing to accommodate buildings, parking area and landscaping that would be harmful to spacious character of the area, street scene and the Downshire Square conservation area (contrary to Policies CC7, EN1 and EN3)
- d) lack of a Section 106 agreement to secure contribution towards provision of affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough (contrary to Policy H3)

31. 211485/FUL - 9 COLEY AVENUE

Extension to the existing Berkshire Record Office and associated site works.

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

That planning permission for application 211485/FUL be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report, with amendments to Condition 7 to require the provision of areas of green or brown roof where feasible and Condition 8 to require provision of photovoltaic panels to supply electrical energy to the site.

32. 220304/REG3 - 30 LOWFIELD ROAD, CAVERSHAM

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 20 JULY 2022

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).

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

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the carrying out of the development 220304/REG3 be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended.

33. 220204/FUL & 220245/LBC - 75-77 LONDON STREET

Proposed demolition of buildings to rear (Olympia Hall) and erection of 12 flats with associated parking, landscaping and courtyard garden and conversion of ground floor of Nos. 75-77 to 3 flats

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above applications. An update report was tabled at the meeting which gave an update on the affordable housing contribution and amended the recommendation accordingly. It also had appended further information submitted by the applicant giving details of alternative event venues for the customer base.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

220244/FUL

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 22 September 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 amendment as 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;

220245/LBC

- (4) That listed building consent for application 220245/LBC be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report.

34. 221009/VAR - HAMILTON CENTRE, 135 BULMERSHE ROAD

Deed of Variation to approved application 191634 - Conversion of Hamilton Centre into 2 storey Special Educational Needs College for 11 - 18 yr olds. Project also includes a 500m2 new build extension, car parking, landscaping and multi use sports area.

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

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved -

That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to agree a Deed of Variation to the S106 Legal Agreement associated with planning permission 191634 and dated 14 October 2020 as follows:

- Playing Pitch Improvements Sum of £25,000 (subject to indexation, calculated from the date of first occupation) to be paid towards physical improvements within three years of first occupation of the development; and
- If the Playing Pitch Improvements Sum is not paid within three years of first occupation, the clause reverts to the obligations in the original agreement being carried out within six further months (ie on-site improvements to the original grassed playing pitches themselves).

35. 220145/FUL - UNITS 4 AND 5 BRUNEL RETAIL PARK, ROSE KILN LANE

Continued use of Units 4 and 5 within use class E(a)

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

Comments were received and considered.

It was reported at the meeting that there was an error in paragraph 6.15 of the report and the area for sale of food and drink would be no greater than 840 square metres, as set out in the proposed condition, not 280 square metres as set out in paragraph 6.15.

Resolved -

That planning permission for application 220145/FUL be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended.

36. 220761/ADJ - HENLEY ROAD, CAVERSHAM

Change of use of an established lake for recreation and sports purposes

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting on a further representation received from a member of the public.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

- (1) That South Oxfordshire District Council be informed that Reading Borough Council raised an objection to the proposal on the transport grounds set out in the report;
- (2) That South Oxfordshire District Council be sent a copy of the report for their information and use.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.21 pm)

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READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	7 SEPTEMBER 2022		
TITLE:	POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS		
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams	TEL:	0118 9372461
JOB TITLE:	Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)	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(s) 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 if the site(s) agreed to be visited will be accompanied by officers or unaccompanied.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Appended to this report (appendix 1) 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 will help if the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans and supporting material or where concerns raised by objectors need to be seen to be better understood.
- 3.3 While officers try to make site visit recommendations before a report comes to Committee sometimes, during consideration of an application, Councillors may request a deferral to allow a visit to be carried out to assist in reaching the correct decision.
- 3.4 Accompanied site visits are appropriate when access to private land is necessary to view the site and to appreciate matters raised. These visits will be arranged and attended by officers on the designated date and time. Applicants and objectors may observe the process and answer questions when asked but

lobbying is discouraged. A site visit is an information gathering opportunity to inform decision making.

3.5 Unaccompanied site visits are appropriate when the site can be easily seen from public areas and allow Councillors to visit when convenient to them. In these instances, the case officer will provide a briefing note on the application and the main issues to assist when visiting the site.

3.6 It is also possible for officers to suggest, or Councillors to request, a visit to a completed development to assess its quality.

3.7 Appendix 2 sets out a list of application sites that have been agreed to be visited at previous committee meetings but are still to be arranged.

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). 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.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reading Borough Council Planning Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX 1

Potential Site Visit List:

Ward: Battle

Application reference: 220452

Application type: Full Planning Approval

Site address: 816 Oxford Road, Reading

Proposal: Demolition of the existing light industrial buildings and the erection of two new residential buildings up to 6 storeys in height to provide 24 new residential dwellings. Provision of associated private and communal landscaped amenity areas, parking spaces, refuse and cycle storage facilities.

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

Ward: Thames

Application reference: 220922

Application type: Full Planning Approval

Site address: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8JA

Proposal: Partial demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 29 residential units, 318 sqm of retail floorspace (Use Class E(a)) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping.

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

Ward: Whitley

Application reference: 212037

Application type: Full Planning Approval

Site address: land adjacent to Reading Sewage and Treatment Works, Island Road

Proposal: A gypsy and traveller transit site intended for short-term use while in transit. It will comprise 7 pitches, bin store, outdoor seating area, play area, and a new access onto Island Road. Each pitch comprises a kitchen/toilet block and space for two caravans and two cars

Reason for Committee item: RBC Application

APPENDIX 2

Previously Agreed Site Visits:

- 220189 - 205-213 Henley Road
- 220409 - Caversham Park
- 211714 - 70-78 Wokingham Road
- 220123 - 9 Eldon Square

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READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	7 SEPTEMBER 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 planning appeals made against planning decisions contributes to producing a sustainable environment and economy within the Borough and to meeting the 2018-21 Corporate Plan objective for “Keeping Reading’s environment clean, green and safe”.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

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

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

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

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

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

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

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Planning Appeal Forms and letters from the Planning Inspectorate.

APPENDIX 1

Appeals Lodged:

WARD: REDLANDS
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3298800
CASE NO: 210714
ADDRESS: The Abbey School, 17 Kendrick Road
PROPOSAL: Variation of conditions 6 (hedge height and density) and 13 (hours of floodlighting) of planning permission 120948 (for Development of an all-weather playing field with floodlights and fencing), namely to remove section of hedge and replace with railings, pillars and brick wall and to increase the hours of use of floodlighting
CASE OFFICER: Beatrice Malma
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 20th July 2022

WARD: BATTLE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3298149
CASE NO: 211986
ADDRESS: 36a Wantage Road, Reading
PROPOSAL: Conversion of loft space with front and rear dormers to form additional bedroom and bathroom
CASE OFFICER: David Brett
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 27th July 2022

WARD: THAMES
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3298606
CASE NO: 210530
ADDRESS: 141-145 Caversham Road, Reading
PROPOSAL: Installation of door at first floor and external staircase to rear
CASE OFFICER: Beatrice Malma
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED: 3rd August 2022

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

WARD: CHURCH
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3286980
CASE NO: 210125
ADDRESS: 357 Basingstoke Road, Reading
PROPOSAL: Removal of existing workshop and the erection of a new workshop
CASE OFFICER: Connie Davies
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED: 3rd August 2022

WARD: KATESGROVE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3291067
CASE NO: 210526
ADDRESS: 220 Elgar Road South
PROPOSAL: Residential redevelopment comprising demolition of existing single storey building and erection of 18 dwellings together with associated works
CASE OFFICER: Claire Ringwood
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: DISMISSED
DATE DETERMINED: 9th August 2022
APPEAL FOR COSTS: DISMISSED

WARD: KATESGROVE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3290997
CASE NO: 210069
ADDRESS: 30 Essex Street, Reading
PROPOSAL: Change of use of dwelling (Class C3) to house in multiple occupation (Class C4)
CASE OFFICER: David Brett
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: DISMISSED
DATE DETERMINED: 8th August 2022

APPENDIX 3

Address Index of Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

None available this time.

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

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	7 SEPTEMBER 2022		
TITLE:	APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams		
JOB TITLE:	Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the types of development that can 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 There are a range of development types and changes of use that can be carried out as permitted development but are subject to the developer first notifying the planning authority of the proposal, for it to confirm that “prior approval” is not needed before exercising the permitted development rights. The matters for prior approval vary depending on the type of development and these are set out in full in the relevant Parts in Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order. A local planning authority cannot consider any other matters when determining a prior approval application.
- 3.2 If the decision is that approval is required, further information may be requested by the planning authority in order for it to determine whether approval should be given. The granting of prior approval can result in conditions being attached to the approval. Prior approval can also be refused, in which case an appeal can be made.
- 3.3 The statutory requirements relating to prior approval are much less prescriptive than those relating to planning applications. This is because seeking prior approval is designed to be a light-touch process given that the principle of the development has already been established in the General Permitted Development Order. The government is clear that a local planning authority should not impose unnecessarily onerous requirements on developers should not seek to replicate the planning application system.
- 3.4 However, this means that large development schemes, often involving changes of use to residential, can proceed without meeting many of the adopted planning policies; such as making no contribution towards affordable housing, and the application fees for these “light touch” applications are significantly less than the equivalent planning application fee.
- 3.5 For this reason, at the Planning Applications Committee meeting on 29 May 2013, it was agreed that a report be brought to future meetings 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. It was also requested that an estimate be provided for the “loss” in potential planning fee income.

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 now estimated to be £1,838,858.

(Class E (formally office) Prior Approvals - £1,679,436:
Householder Prior Approvals - £87,822:
Retail Prior Approvals - £16,840:
Demolition Prior Approval - £5,795:
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 - £14,667.

Figures since last report

Class E (formally office) Prior Approvals - £1810:
Householder Prior Approvals - £220:
Demolition Prior Approval - £1098.

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

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

Table 1 - Applications received since 8th July 2022 to 24rd August 2022

Type:	How many received since last report:	Loss in possible fee income:
Householder Prior Approvals	2	£220
Class E Prior Approvals	2	£1810
Demolition Prior Approval	3	£1098
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	0
Prior Notification	0	n/a
Shop to Assembly & Leisure Prior Approval	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	1	n/a
Dwellings on detached block of flats	0	0
Householder Additional Storey	0	0
New dwellinghouses on terrace/detached buildings	0	0
TOTAL	8	£3,128

Table 2 - Applications decided since 8th July 2022 to 24rd August 2022

Type:	Approved	Refused	Not Required	Withdrawn	Non Determination
Householder Prior Approvals	0	1	4	1	0
Class E Prior Approvals	1	0	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	1	1	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
New dwellings on detached building in commercial or mixed use	0	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	3	4	1	0

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7 September 2022

Ward: Katesgrove

App No.: 201138/FUL

Address: 12-18 Crown Street, Reading

Proposal: Change of use of building from 44 serviced apartments (Class C1) to 44 flats (C3) comprising of 4no studios, 27 x one bedroom and 13 x two bedroom units with associated parking

Applicant: Shall Do Crown Street Limited

Major Application: 13 week target decision date: 14th October 2020

Extended of time date: 28th September 2022

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (AD PTPPS) to (i) **GRANT** full planning permission subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement or (ii) to **REFUSE** permission should the legal agreement not be completed by 28th September 2022 (unless officers, on behalf of AD PTPPS, agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The legal agreement to secure the following:

Affordable Housing

Late Stage Deferred Payment Review Contribution mechanism to be triggered when 75% of all the flats (i.e. 33 units) have been sold or let to cover the remaining shortfall to include 60%/40% profit share (in favour of the Council) on all profits over 10% profit on GDV up to a policy compliant cap equivalent to 30% provision.

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

1. TL1 - Full - time limit - three years;
2. Approved Plans;
3. Construction Method Statement (pre-commencement)
4. Parking Permits 1 (notification to LPA);
5. Parking Permits 2 (notification to occupants);
6. Cycle Parking (as specified);
7. Landscaping (to be submitted);
8. Noise Assessment & Mitigation (pre-commencement);
9. Air Quality Assessment & Mitigation (pre-commencement);
10. Unidentified contamination;
11. Hours of construction/demolition;
12. No burning on site;
13. Details of bin stores (to be submitted);
14. External lighting (if proposed, details to be submitted); and
15. Conversion to comply with Energy and Sustainability Statement regarding sustainability (in accordance with).

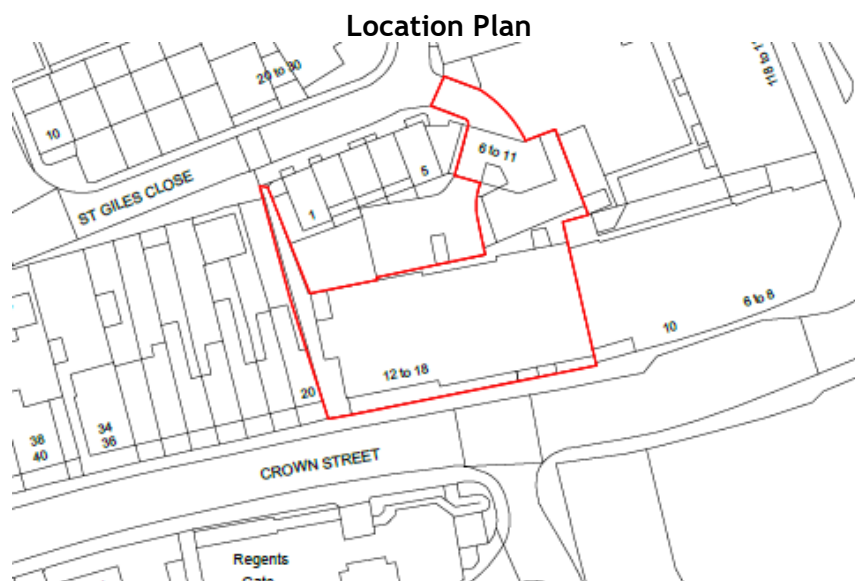
INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

- Positive and Proactive;
- Pre-commencement conditions agreed by agent;
- S106;
- Terms and Conditions;

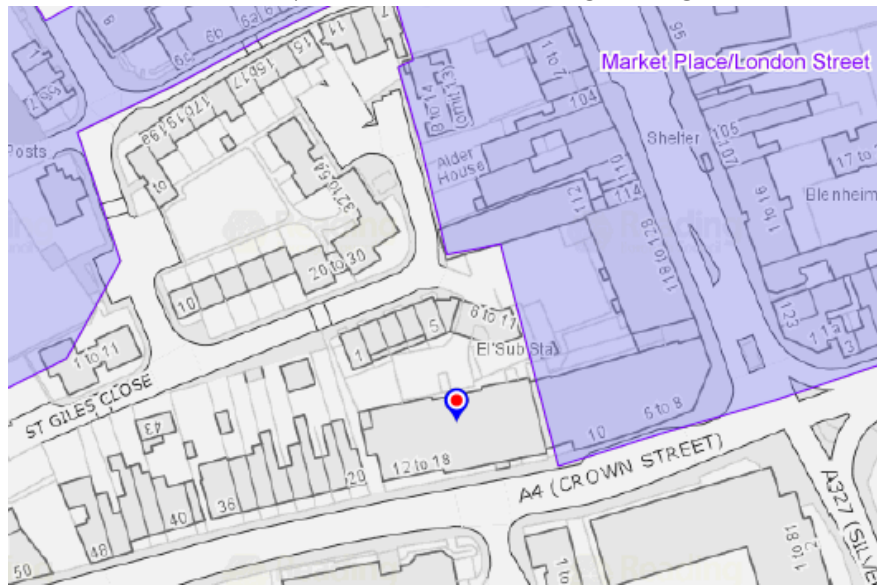
- Building Regulations;
- Complaints about construction;
- Contamination;
- Noise between residential properties;
- CIL; and
- No entitlement to parking permits.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site was originally an office block but was granted planning permission for its current use as a part 4, part 5 storey building for 44 one and two bedroom serviced apartments. The building has been extended upwards to create additional accommodation (see planning history below). There are 8 car parking spaces (including 2 disabled parking bays) to the rear accessed from St Giles Close. The building currently provides 10 covered and secure parking spaces within a store at ground floor level. As part of the original permission for the serviced apartments a coffee lounge is at ground floor level.
- 1.2 The site is located on the busy Crown Street with residential properties to the north on St Giles Close (Nelson Mews) and to the south and west on Crown Street. Student accommodation is attached in a separate building to the east.
- 1.3 The site borders the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area as shown on the plan below and the surrounding area is a mixture of residential, commercial and retail. The site is also within an Air Quality Management Area.
- 1.4 The application is brought to Planning Applications Committee as it is a major scheme.



Location in relation to Market Place/London Street Conservation Area



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The proposal is for the change of use of the 44 apart-hotel/serviced apartments (C1 use) to 44 residential flats (C3 use). Internally only minor modifications are proposed, in particular the 4th floor level to ensure the flats achieve minimum space standards. Reconfiguration of the common areas at ground floor are also proposed to facilitate an enlarged cycle store in order to accommodate 44 bicycles.
- 2.2 No external changes are proposed and car parking will remain as existing. Refuse collection will continue to be undertaken by a private company as the undercroft restricts the height to the rear of the building which means standard bin lorries would not be able to enter the site.
- 2.3 The following plans and supporting documents were submitted on 15th October 2020:

Drawing No: E19-029/-SIT001 - Site Plan

Drawing No: E19-029/-SIT002 - Location Plan

Drawing No: E19-029/-EXP000 - Ground Floor Existing Drawings

Drawing No: E19-029/-EXP001 - First Floor Existing Drawings

Drawing No: E19-029/-EXP002 - Second Floor Existing Drawings

Drawing No: E19-029/-EXP003 - Third Floor Existing Drawings

Drawing No: E19-029/-EXP004 - Fourth Floor Existing Drawings

Drawing No: E19-029/-EXA001 - Area Schedule Existing

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRA001 - Area Schedule Change of Use Scheme

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP000 - Ground Floor Change of Use Scheme

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP001 - First Floor Change of Use Scheme

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP002 - Second Floor Change of Use Scheme

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP003 - Third Floor Change of Use Scheme

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP004 - Fourth Floor Change of Use Scheme

Planning Statement incorporating a Design & Access Statement

Transport Note

Energy and Sustainability Statement

Environmental Noise Survey and Acoustic Design Statement Report

The following amended plans were submitted on 13th May 2020:

Drawing No: E19-029/SIT001 Rev A - Site Plan

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP004 Rev A - Fourth Floor

The following amended plans were submitted on 30th June 2022:

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP000 Rev A - Ground Floor

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP001 Rev A - First Floor

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP002 Rev A - Second Floor

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP003 Rev A - Third Floor

Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP004 Rev B - Fourth Floor

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

04/00097/FUL (Civica Ref: 040727) - 3,4 and 5 storey building providing 11 no. residential units (comprising a mix of flats and townhouses and 2 no.1 bed, 6 no.2 bed and 3 no.3 bed) with associated parking, amenity space and retention of office parking for 9 vehicles. Permitted 28/04/2004.

05/00776/FUL (Civica Ref: 051137) - Change of use from Offices (B1) to 34 serviced apartments as part of a n Apart-Hotel (Use class C1) comprising 22 x 1 bedroom units and 12 x 2 bedroom units with associated parking. Permitted 24/10/2005.

05/00777/FUL (Civica Ref: 051138) - Change of use from Offices (B1) to 28 residential units comprising 19 x 1 bedroom flats, 4 x 2 bedroom flats, 5 x 3 bedroom flats, associated parking and landscaping. Permitted 24/10/2005.

06/01116/FUL (Civica Ref: 060409) - Roof extension to provide an additional 10 serviced apartments. Permitted 20/12/2006.

211742/FUL - Change of use of cafe used by existing C1 serviced apartment residents to Class E(b) sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises (no cooking proposed) by members of the public. Refused 23/08/2022.

(This application refers to the existing coffee lounge on the ground floor associated with the existing serviced apartments and this area is not included within the application being brought to committee).

211743/ADV - Projecting sign. Refused 23/08/2022.

Other Relevant Planning History at 23-27 London Road

201221/FUL - Change of use of The Faculty from 16 serviced apartments (Use Class C1) to 15 residential flats (Use Class C3). Refused 02/03/2021 and allowed at appeal on 09/12/2021.

23-27 London Road is to the east of 12-18 Crown Street and was for a similar scheme. Officers refused this scheme for a number of reasons namely 1) lack of affordable housing (no viability submitted during the course of the application); housing mix (proposal dominated by one bedroom units); internal layout (a number of units were below the nationally described space

standards); and failure to demonstrate an adequate parking layout. The Planning Inspectors decision is appended to this report for reference.

This appeal decision is relevant to the application brought to planning applications committee as some of the matters raised are similar to those at 23-27 London Road and which will be highlighted through the assessment of the application below.

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory

4.1 None.

(ii) Non-statutory

Transport

No objection subject to conditions and informatives, discussed further below.

Environmental Protection

A noise assessment has been submitted but the detail of the window specification has not been provided, and in addition the ventilation strategy is not compliant with our requirements. The site is also within an Air Quality Management Area that has been identified as being a pollution hotspot (likely to breach the EU limit value for NO₂) and introduces new exposure / receptors. An assessment and/or mitigation measures should be provided as part of the application. These matters can be dealt with by way of conditions relating to the submission of a Noise Assessment, an Air Quality Assessment along with other conditions and informatives as detailed in the recommendation above.

Natural Environment Trees

The site sits within the AQMA, within a low canopy cover ward (ref Tree Strategy) and directly adjacent to the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area, with a small part of the site being within the conservation area. As such, the need for 'greening' as part of development proposals is very important to meet both policy aims and those of our adopted Tree Strategy.

However given the nature of the application - a change of use - I suspect that opportunities for securing greening will be limited.

The small soft landscape strip along the Crown Street frontage has always looked poor - mostly weeds - hence provided little benefit / softening to the frontage. There is scope to improve this through planting. However I noted when passing the site recently that seating pods had been placed on this strip which would prevent soft landscaping being implemented. It does not seem that this strip is a desirable 'amenity' space for residents given the stationary traffic often directly adjacent to it, and indeed they may be no requirement to provide amenity space on this site. If it is required to be deemed as such, seating would, I assume, take priority over planting. However, planting would have a wider benefit and help the development meet the green policy aims, in particular in providing pollution filtration through planting, given the site's location in the AQMA.

It is worth noting that planning approval 05/00776 (051137) required, via condition 6, a scheme of hard and soft landscaping to be submitted and specifically mentions the frontage. The DAS submitted for that application specifically mentions provision of a landscape strip along the frontage to 'add visual interest', with the proposed layout showing planting.

The request to reinstate this is therefore wholly reasonable and should be secured by L1.

(iii) **Public/ local consultation and comments received**

4.7 Nelson Mews 1-11 (all) and Crown Street 6-8 and 20 were notified of the application by letter. A site notice was also displayed at the application site.

4.8 No neighbour letters of representation have been received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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.

Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 "Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development". The relevant sections of the NPPF are:

National Policy - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 4 - Decision Making

Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

CC1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)

CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction)

CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change)

CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage)

CC6 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

CC9 (Securing Infrastructure)

EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)

EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas)

EN9 (Provision of Open Space)

EN15 (Air Quality)

EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources)

H1 (Provision of Housing)

H2 (Density and Mix)
H3 (Affordable Housing)
H5 (Standards for New Housing)
H8 (Residential Conversions)
H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)
TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)
CR1 (Definition of Central Reading)
CR2 (Design in Central Reading)
CR6 (Living in Central Reading)

Supplementary Planning Document

Affordable Housing (July 2013)
Revised Parking Standards and Design (Oct 2011)
Planning Obligations under S106 (April 2015)
Sustainable Design and Construction (Dec 2019)
Tree Strategy (March 2021)

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- i) The principle of development;
- ii) Affordable Housing;
- iii) Housing Density & Mix;
- iv) Impact on living environment for future residents and amenity of neighbouring properties;
- v) Traffic generation and parking;
- vi) Landscaping; and
- vii) Other Matters

i) Principle of development

- 6.1 The NPPF states (para. 10) that *“at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development”*. The overarching objectives are economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states *“the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development planning permission should not usually be granted.”*
- 6.1.1 Policy CC1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) of the Reading Borough Local Plan states *“applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise....Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*
- 6.1.2 The proposal is for the change of use of serviced apartments to 44 residential flats. There are no specific policies in the Reading Borough Local Plan which protect apart-hotel/serviced apartments and therefore there is no in-principle policy conflict with the loss of these units. Provision of housing is welcomed, providing the development is suitable in terms of other material considerations discussed below.
- 6.1.3 Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) of the Reading Borough Local Plan states *“Provision will be made for at least an additional 15,847 homes in Reading*

Borough for the period of 2103-2036.” This is in line with the NPPF section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes. The provision of housing would contribute to meeting the need for additional housing within the Borough in accordance with Policy H1.

ii) Affordable Housing

6.2 Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) states that residential development will make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading:

- On sites of 10 or more dwellings, 30% of the total dwellings will be in the form of affordable housing.

6.2.1 The policy continues that for sites of 10 or more dwellings, provision should be made on site in the first instance with a financial contribution being negotiated to make up the full requirement as appropriate.

6.2.2 In all cases where proposals fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open-book approach will be taken and the onus will be on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.

6.2.3 Policy H3 also states that priority needs are currently for housing with two or more bedrooms that can house families and the following types of residential development will be exempt from the requirement to provide affordable housing:

- Replacement of a single dwelling with another single dwelling; and
- Conversion of a dwelling to self-contained flats where there is no new floorspace.

6.2.4 Paragraph 5.3.27 of Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) states that “Reading has seen a marked increase in proposals for serviced apartments, particularly in the centre. These uses fall halfway between hotels and housing, providing basic facilities for self-sufficient living but also the amenities of a hotel.....However, these uses should not be seen as a way of introducing flats by the back door and therefore avoiding the need to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing”.

6.2.5 There is nothing in Policy H3 that exempts the change of use of C1 serviced apart-hotels to C3 residential from contributing towards affordable housing and the proposal would be required to make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing unless it can be demonstrated that this would make the scheme unviable.

6.2.6 The applicant has submitted a Viability Assessment which has been reviewed by the Council’s Valuers. The Council’s Valuers have concluded that the scheme cannot afford to deliver any affordable housing. The Council’s policy is that an appropriate contribution to affordable housing will be made. It is therefore considered that a mechanism be included within a S106 Agreement that ensures that a proportion of increased profits are secured for affordable housing. This is referred to as a planning deferred contributions mechanism.

- 6.2.7 There are a number of options for the form of such a mechanism but the standard approach is the ‘profit share’. This is based on an Open Book assessment at a key stage of delivery (usually when 75% of the units have been sold or let) whereby all scheme costs including land value and agreed profit are deducted from the GDV and any surplus shared between the Developer and the Council on an equal basis.
- 6.2.8 The Council’s Valuers have applied the formula set out in Appendix 4 of the SPD and this will be used at the point that 75% of the units are sold or let.

iii) Housing Density & Mix

6.3 The application site is located within the boundary of the Reading Central Area and Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) of the Reading Borough Local Plan is applicable. Policy CR6 states that *“all proposals for residential development within the central area will be required to contribute towards a mix of different sized units within the development. This will be measured by the number of bedrooms provided within individual units. Ideally, a mixture of one, two and three bedroom units should be provided. As a guide, in developments of 15 dwellings or more, a maximum of 40% should be 1 bed/studios, and a minimum of 5% of units should be at least 3 bed, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable.”*

6.3.1 The scheme proposes:

- 4 x studio apartments
- 18 x 1 bedroom / 1 person apartments
- 9 x 1 bedroom / 2 person apartments
- 4 x 2 bedroom / 3 person apartments
- 9 x 2 bedroom / 4 person apartments

6.3.2 31 x 1 bedroom/studio flats are therefore proposed which equates to 70.45% which significantly exceeds the maximum of 40% in policy CR6. The Planning Statement submitted by the applicant states that more substantial changes to the existing layout than those already proposed (to ensure space standards can be met) would make the scheme unviable. A Viability Assessment has been undertaken (see Affordable Housing section ii) above) and the conclusion is the scheme is not viable.

6.3.3 In a recent appeal decision (dated 9th December 2021) at 23-27 London Road (application ref: 201221 - for the change of use from 16 serviced apartments to 15 residential flats) the Inspector stated:

In this case, the scheme is not a new build or a conversion where there is readily a scope for the provision or reconfiguration of the floorspace to provide a new layout with a different mix of bedroomed units. The scheme combines a studio and a one bedroom flat on the ground floor to provide a 2 bedroom unit and in the other cases the units are already laid out and operational with each unit having a kitchen/lounge area, bathroom(s) and bedroom(s). The scheme with the proposed number of units has already been shown to be unviable to deliver affordable housing and seeking to alter the layout with the movement of some walls, doorways and provision of combined units would add cost, reduce the number of units on the site and, it seems to me based on the information available, render the scheme unviable.....

Furthermore, the policy states that ideally (my emphasis added) there should be a mix of one, two and three bed units. In this case, while it may be ideal, it would not be reasonable given the existing layout which, with the exception on the ground floor, is not intended to or could easily be changed.....

In summary, Policy CR6 of the Local Plan allows for some flexibility in the mix of the units in schemes and for the viability of a scheme to be taken into account. In the circumstances of this case, I conclude that the scheme would provide a satisfactory mix of unit sizes. Accordingly, the development would comply with Policy CR6 and H2 of the Local Plan which seek amongst other things, to provide an appropriate density of residential development having regard to the need to maximise the efficiency of land.

- 6.3.4 23-27 London Road is just to the east of 12-18 Crown Street and taking the above comments from the Inspector into consideration, although the proposed scheme is dominated by one bedroom flats, the findings of the Inspector and the fact the scheme is not viable are material considerations. As such, in this instance, and on balance, the proposed mix is considered satisfactory and complies with Policies CR6 and H2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

iv) Impact on living environment for future residents and amenity of neighbouring properties

- 6.4 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that:

Development will not cause a significant detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to daylight and sunlight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- Harm to outlook;
- Noise and disturbance;
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Dust and fumes;
- Smell;
- Crime and safety; and
- Wind where the proposals involve new development of more than 8 storeys.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

- 6.4.1 There is likely to be some noise and disturbance from the internal works proposed however this would be short term whilst the development was being undertaken and there are no external changes proposed. There are residential properties directly to the rear at Nelson Mews which are between approximately 10-16m from the rear of 12-18 Crown Street which is below the 20m back-to-back distance stated in Policy CC8. However, a residential use is not dissimilar to the use as an apart-hotel and therefore the impact of

a residential use should not be any greater in terms of overlooking or loss of privacy and this situation has been established since the granting of planning permission for the use as an apart-hotel in 2005. As such the proposal is not considered harmful to the living environment of neighbouring properties.

Amenity of proposed flats

- 6.4.2 Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires flats to be provided with outdoor space such as communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens. Paragraph 4.4.83 of this policy however states that “flats in central Reading will not require the same amount of outdoor space as houses in other parts of Reading, and the sites are usually constrained in any case.” The proposed scheme does not introduce any communal outdoor space however there is none existing and due to its central location it is not considered that the provision of outdoor space is necessary in this instance. There are a number of local parks and Forbury Gardens which are easily accessible.
- 6.4.3 Although Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) is not applicable for new dwellings in the town centre, developments in the town centre would still be expected to achieve the nationally-described space standards (NDSS) (or at least close to these) as part of achieving good design and standards of amenity. A schedule of room sizes has been provided and the proposed flats meet or exceed the nationally-described space standards.
- 6.4.4 The internal layouts and stacking are acceptable with good circulation space. All habitable rooms have windows with some rooms being dual aspect and a studio unit on the fourth floor having triple aspect, there is adequate space for a combined lounge, dining and kitchen area and each unit has a separate and reasonably sized bathroom/shower room.
- 6.4.5 A noise assessment has been submitted but the detail of the window specification has not been provided and in addition the ventilation strategy is not compliant with the Council’s requirements. Policy CC8 requires that there should be no unacceptable impact on living conditions for new residential properties in terms of noise and disturbance. The proposal would introduce permanent residential accommodation and some of the flats have their windows facing the busy Crown Street. Therefore, a condition requiring the submission of a noise assessment is recommended to ensure the windows provide sufficient sound proofing and that if required to be open the internal noise levels would be satisfactory.
- 6.4.6 The site lies close to Crown Street and is within an Air Quality Management Area. Policy EN15 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure the effects of any poor air quality are mitigated. An Air Quality Assessment and any mitigation required to address any identified poor air quality is necessary to accord with Policy EN15 and in the interests of the living conditions of future permanent residents of the development. This can be secured by way of a condition requiring the submission of an Air Quality Assessment.
- 6.4.7 Officers are satisfied that the proposal provides acceptable living accommodation for permanent occupation within a Central Reading location and the proposal is in accordance with Policies CC8, H5 and H8.

v) Traffic generation and parking

- 6.5 In terms of parking standards, the site is located within the Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of Zone 1, the central core area, which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs. The site is well connected and is within walking distance to the town centre and the Oracle shopping centre. There is good access to public transport accessibility to public car parks.
- 6.5.1 In accordance with the Parking Standards and Design SPD, 1 parking space for each of the units and visitor spaces at a ratio of 1 space per 10 units would normally be required (i.e. 48 spaces in total) however, there are 8 existing car parking spaces which includes 2 disabled spaces and these are proposed to be retained for residents of the development.
- 6.5.2 No additional parking is proposed however, Crown Street and Southampton Street and the surrounding road network all have parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. Given the site's location to the town centre and the ability to monitor unauthorised on street parking via the parking restrictions and CPZ that operates in the area, a lower provision is considered acceptable in this instance and appropriate conditions and informatives are recommended to prevent any future occupants of the new flats from obtaining residents or visitor permits for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure.
- 6.5.3 In accordance with the Councils current cycle parking standards 1 storage space for each unit should be provided. The submitted Ground Floor Plan Drawing No: E19-029/-PRP000 Rev A identifies 2 storage areas, one to the east and one to the west of the building, one utilizing a 2 tier Josta style stand for 12 cycles and 16 Sheffield type stands providing storage for a further 32 cycles. The submitted plan shows doors opening outwards which is acceptable as the doors do not open on to the public highway however the cycle store to the west is next to the bin storage and it would be important that the bin store does not block the entrance to the cycle store. A condition requiring details of the bin store is recommended and this will include ensuring that the bin storage does not block the entrance to the cycle store.
- 6.5.4 The submitted Transport Note and Planning Statement state that the existing use is serviced by a private refuse collection company utilizing smaller vehicles that are able to access the site, it is proposed that a similar arrangement will serve the residential development which is considered acceptable.
- 6.5.5 Given the location and size of the development a construction method statement will be required.
- 6.5.6 As such, in transport terms the proposal is considered in accordance with Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) subject to the recommended conditions above.

vi) Landscaping

- 6.6 The site is within an Air Quality Management Area, within a 'low tree canopy cover ward' and directly adjacent to the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. There is limited availability on site for any meaningful planting however there is a small soft landscape strip along the Crown Street frontage which is currently mostly weeds and this could be improved through planting. Given the stationary traffic often directly adjacent to this strip of land it is not considered desirable amenity space for future residents and planting would have a wider benefit and help the development meet the green policy aims, in particular in providing pollution filtration through planting, given the site's location in the AQMA.
- 6.6.1 A previous planning approval 05/00776 (051137) required, via condition 6, a scheme of hard and soft landscaping to be submitted and specifically mentions the frontage. It is therefore not unreasonable to provide planting along the site frontage and this can be secured by way of condition.

vii) Other Matters

Sustainability

- 6.7 Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) requires all major non-residential developments or conversions to residential to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards and this would normally be dealt with by way of conditions.
- 6.7.1 The submitted Planning Statement highlights that the proposal is for a change of use only with minimal changes to the layout which is inherently sustainable in that it minimises the potential for construction waste. An Energy and Sustainability Statement has been submitted which demonstrates the measures incorporated into the scheme. The energy statement has been developed by following the national energy hierarchy and the inclusion of energy efficiency measures has been discussed to minimise on-site energy use compared to a building regulation compliant design, including high efficiency gas heating, efficient lighting and efficient water fittings.
- 6.7.2 It should also be noted that the Inspector on the appeal at 23-27 London Road stated:
- Policy CC2 of the Local Plan sets out the approach to the sustainable design and construction of new development and includes that conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM "excellent" standards, where possible. In this case, however, the development is fairly recently built, and appears to be constructed to a high standard and would not be a conversion but a change of use because of the very limited physical changes to the fabric. In these circumstances, I am not persuaded that the evidence demonstrates that the policy should apply to this scheme and therefore that it is necessary or appropriate to apply the requirements of the BREEAM approach in this case.*
- 6.7.3 With the Inspectors comments in mind and the findings within the Energy and Sustainability Statement Officers are satisfied that in this specific instance and with regard to the site context and nature of the scheme, that the proposal will allow the building to perform in an improved way to meet current sustainability policy expectations and the improvements will be secured by condition. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies CC2 and CC3.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.7.4 The proposed development would be CIL liable.

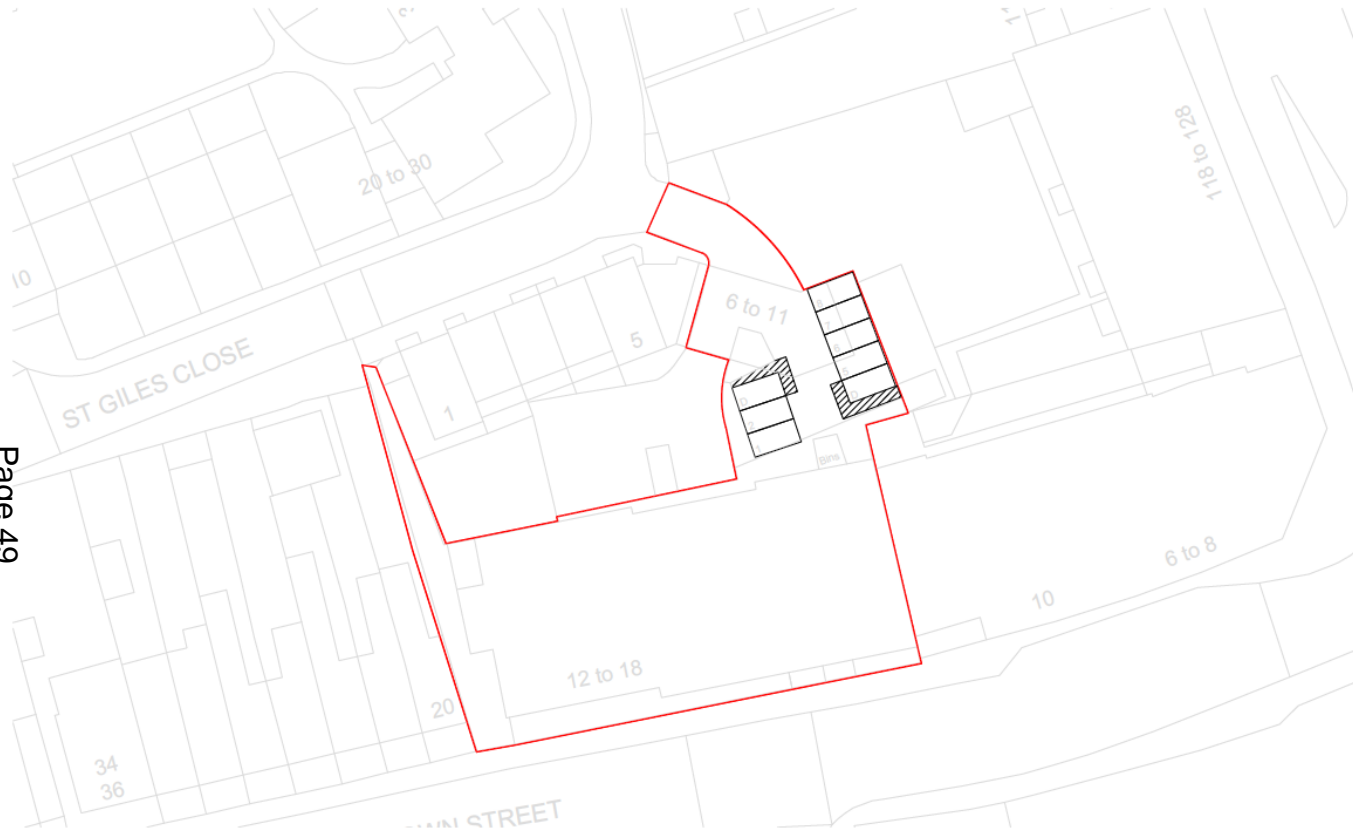
SUDs

- 6.7.5 With no external alterations, there is no change in surface water run-off and no issues to attend to or other mitigation required.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal has been considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 7.2 The proposal to change the use of the building from 44 serviced apartments to 44 flats is considered acceptable, the proposal will not have any detrimental impact on the amenity of future residents or existing residents of nearby properties and it is therefore recommended for approval subject to the conditions and informatives as set out above.

Case Officer: Claire Ringwood



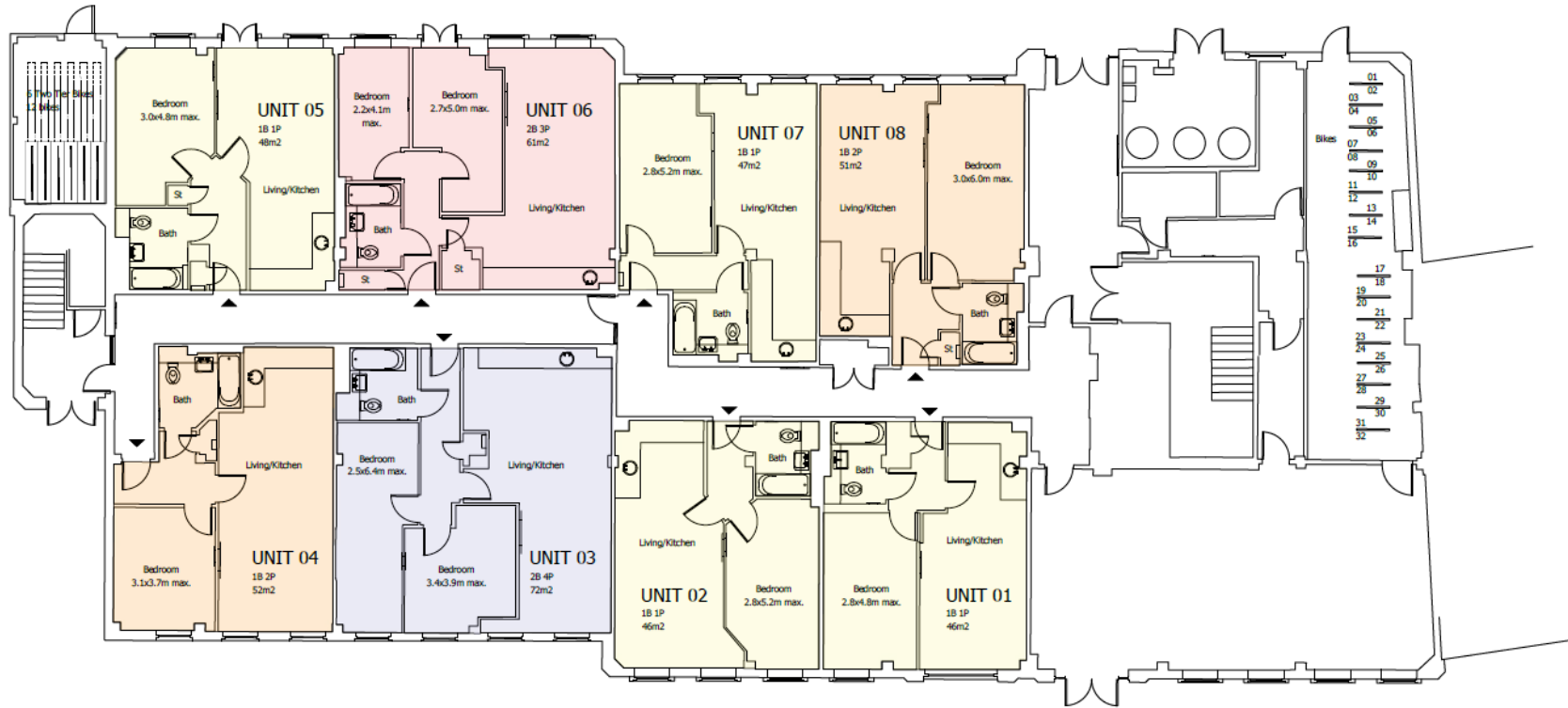
UNIT KEY

- 1B 1P
- 1B 2P
- 2B 3P
- 2B 4P
- Studio

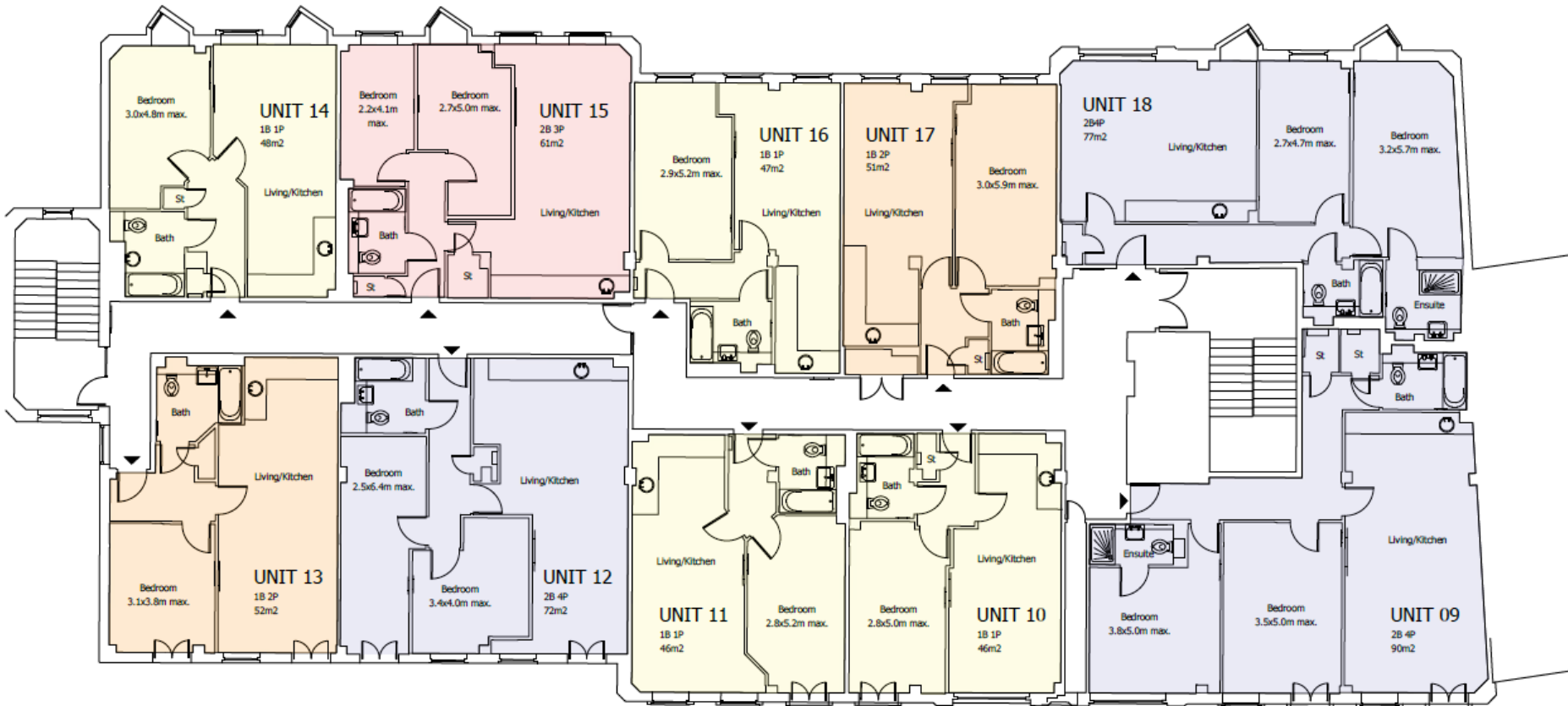
TOTAL UNITS

18no	1B 1P
9no	1B 2P
4no	2B 3P
9no	2B 4P
4no	Studio
44no	TOTAL

FOR INFORMATION

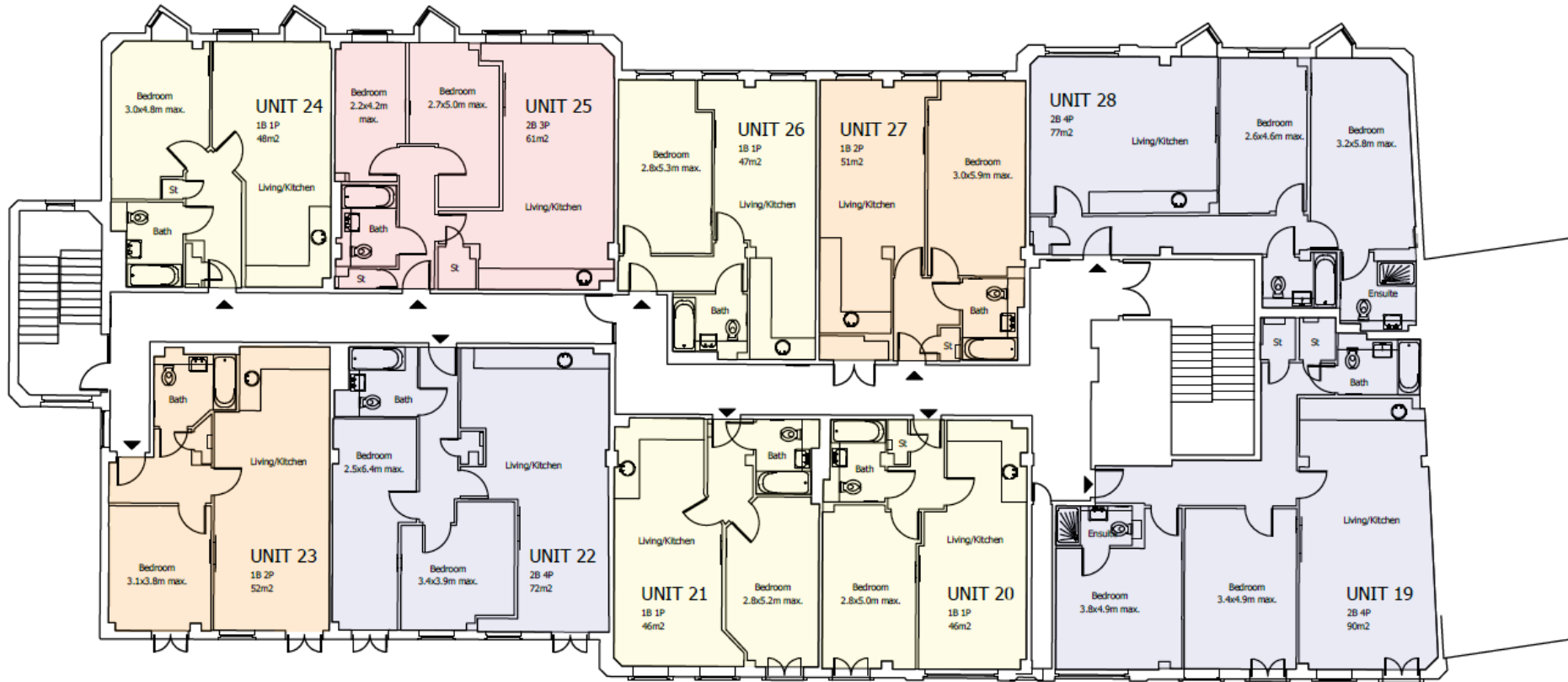


01 Ground Floor Plan
Scale 1:200



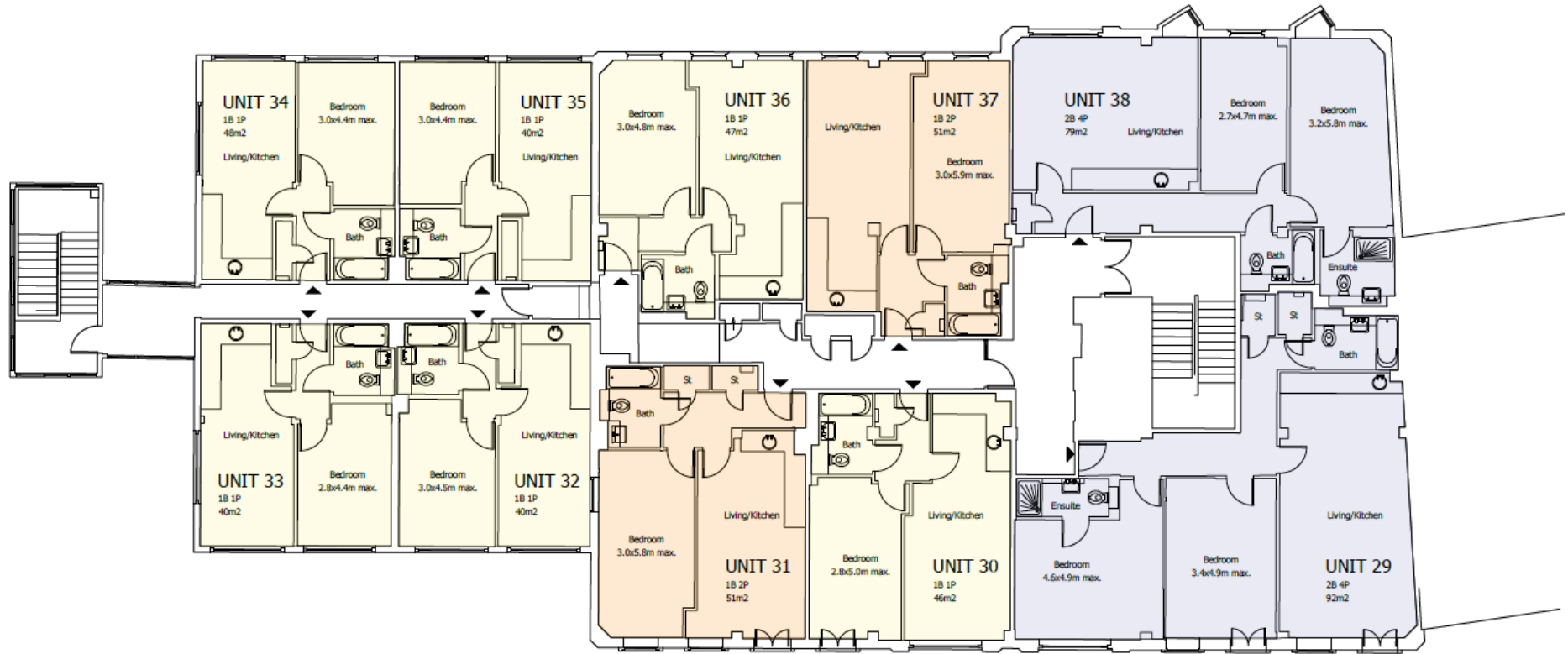
01 First Floor Plan

Scale 1:200

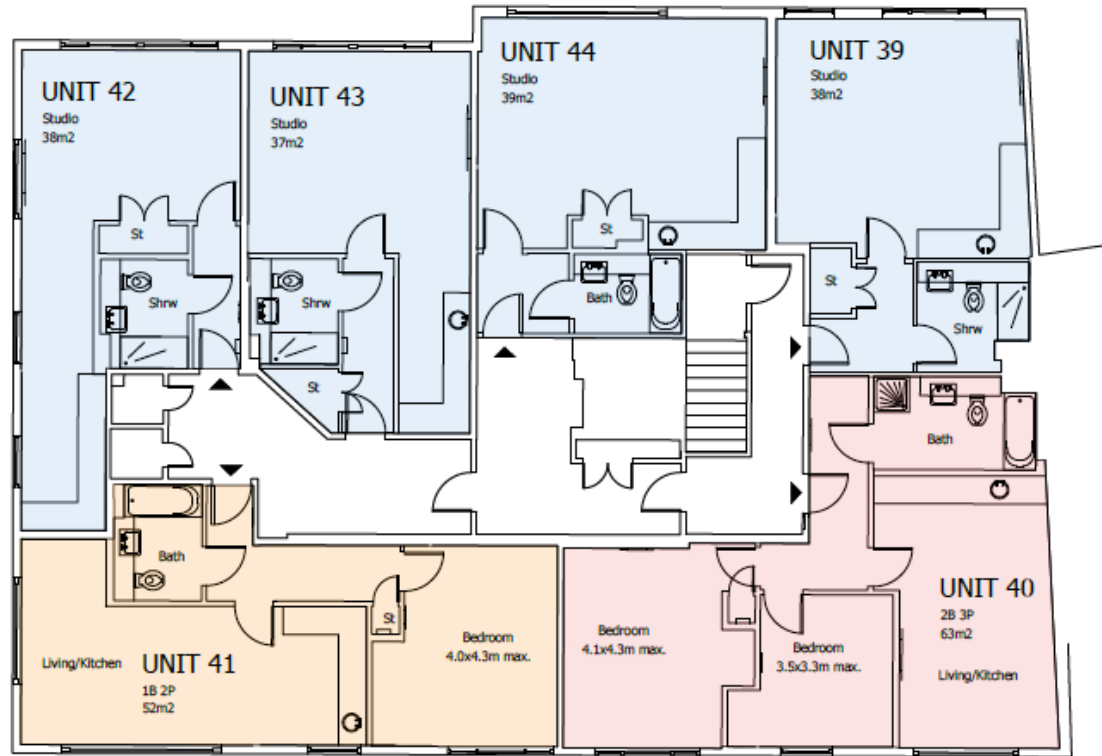


01 Second Floor Plan

Scale 1:200



01 Third Floor Plan
Scale 1:200



01 Fourth Floor Plan
Scale 1:200



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 8 November 2021

by David Wyborn BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 December 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/21/3277248

The Faculty, 23-27 London Road, Reading RG1 5BJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by The Faculty Ltd against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 201221, dated 26 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is the change of use of The Faculty from 16 serviced apartments (Use Class C1) to 15 residential flats (Use Class C3).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the change of use of The Faculty from 16 serviced apartments (Use Class C1) to 15 residential flats (Use Class C3) at The Faculty, 23-27 London Road, Reading RG1 5BJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 201221, dated 26 August 2020, and subject to the following conditions in the attached schedule.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs has been made by Reading Borough Council against The Faculty Ltd. This application is the subject of a separate Decision.

Preliminary Matters

3. The application was refused for four reasons. The Council has confirmed in its appeal statement, following the further information on parking provision and cycle storage, that this matter could be addressed by conditions in any approval and it does not wish to maintain the fourth reason for refusal. I have found no reason to disagree with the Council on this matter.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are whether or not:
 - a contribution is necessary to provide affordable housing in the area,
 - the scheme would provide a satisfactory mix of unit sizes, and
 - the internal layout and overall space within Flats 13, 15 and 16 would provide adequate living conditions for future occupants.

Reasons

5. The Faculty is a four storey building, including accommodation in the roof, which is used as an apart-hotel. It consists of 16 serviced apartments with a courtyard parking area. The building was originally permitted in 2000 as a new

build development of residential flats. In 2009, an application was approved for the existing building to be used as serviced apartments. A subsequent approval allowed the reconfiguration of the ground floor to provide an additional studio flat. The present proposal seeks to change the use of the building back to residential flats and reconfigure the ground floor to incorporate the studio flat into the adjoining unit. Effectively the use and layout would revert to a flatted development on along the lines of the scheme approved in 2000, although that layout provided 3No 3 bedroom flats.

6. Policy H3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) (the Local Plan) sets out the policy requirements for the provision of affordable housing in development schemes. The policy explains that for a proposal of 10 or more dwellings, 30% of the total dwellings will be in the form of affordable housing. In those cases which would fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open book approach will be undertaken and the onus will be on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.
7. Notwithstanding the history of the site, as 15 new residential flats would be provided from a building used within a different use, I am satisfied that Policy H3 of the Local Plan applies and that there is a need to provide the required affordable housing contribution unless viability demonstrates otherwise. The Reading Borough Council Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (adopted March 2021)¹ provides background to the provision of affordable housing and the approach to viability assessments. I attribute this document substantial weight. I have also had regard to the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance, especially the sections on viability and decision taking.
8. At the appeal stage, the appellant has submitted a detailed Viability Assessment from an appropriately qualified practitioner. The Assessment is comprehensive and I attach this information substantial weight. After calculating the Benchmark Land Value of the site, even taking into account a sensitivity analysis for the effects of the covid pandemic, the Assessment leads to the clear conclusion that a scheme which sought an affordable housing contribution would not be viable. The existing development is a modern building provided to a high standard, in an accessible location with on-site car parking and with a lease that sets a return on the present investment. I can therefore understand why the Benchmark Land Value has been found to be at a relatively high level and this effectively precludes the provision of an affordable housing contribution.
9. The Council has engaged consultants at the appeal stage to examine this Assessment. The Council has not sought to introduce substantial further evidence at the appeal stage to comply with the Procedural Guidance². I note that the comment in the Council's appeal statement that the scheme's viability is particularly limited by the Benchmark Land Value of the site, taking into account the existing lease. Nevertheless, following the Council's consultants involvement an agreement was reached between the main parties for a contribution of £25,000 to be made by the appellant towards affordable housing, subject to the Council withdrawing all the reasons for refusal.

¹ The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2013 was extant at the time of the decision and referenced in the first reason for refusal.

² Procedural Guide: Planning appeals – England

Ultimately, a planning agreement was not signed to provide this contribution. These discussions were without prejudice to the case made by both parties. While I have had regard to this background, I have little substantive information which demonstrates the requirement for such a payment when considering the analysis and conclusions of the Viability Assessment.

10. Drawing these matters together, the findings of the appellant's Viability Assessment is clear and no detailed and persuasive criticism has been made of any substantive element of the Assessment to cast material doubt on its findings. I therefore conclude that the appellant has discharged the policy duty to demonstrate the circumstances which justify that no affordable housing contribution should be made.
11. Accordingly, I conclude, for the reasons explained above, the case has been demonstrated why a contribution is not necessary to provide affordable housing and thereby the scheme would accord with Policy H3 of the Local Plan which sets out the approach to affordable housing across the plan area.

Housing mix

12. At my site visit I visited Flat 16 and saw all the rooms in this unit, including the smaller second bedroom. This room accommodated a single bed and I am satisfied that there is also room for some furniture and circulation space. I therefore consider that Flat 16 can be considered a two bedroom flat. The scheme would, therefore, provide 10 No one bedroom flats and 5 No 2 bedroom flats.
13. Policy CR6 of the Local Plan establishes the approach for residential development in Central Reading, in which the appeal site is located. This policy, as a guide, requires that residential development contributes to a mix of different sized units with including a maximum of 40% one bedroom units, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable.
14. In this case, the scheme is not a new build or a conversion where there is readily a scope for the provision or reconfiguration of the floorspace to provide a new layout with a different mix of bedroomed units. The scheme combines a studio and a one bedroom flat on the ground floor to provide a 2 bedroom unit and in the other cases the units are already laid out and operational with each unit having a kitchen/lounge area, bathroom(s) and bedroom(s). The scheme with the proposed number of units has already been shown to be unviable to deliver affordable housing and seeking to alter the layout with the movement of some walls, doorways and provision of combined units would add cost, reduce the number of units on the site and, it seems to me based on the information available, render the scheme unviable.
15. Furthermore, the policy states that *ideally* (my emphasis added) there should be a mix of one, two and three bed units. In this case, while it may be ideal, it would not be reasonable given the existing layout which, with the exception on the ground floor, is not intended to or could easily be changed. The Council accept that the provision of three bedroom units is not required to be sought and the mix of one and two bedroom units, based on the existing and largely unchanged layout, would provide a reasonable mix of accommodation in a sustainable location close to the town centre.

16. In summary, Policy CR6 of the Local Plan allows for some flexibility in the mix of the units in schemes and for the viability of a scheme to be taken into account. In the circumstances of this case, I conclude that the scheme would provide a satisfactory mix of unit sizes. Accordingly, the development would comply with Policy CR6 and H2 of the Local Plan which seek amongst other things, to provide an appropriate density of residential development having regard to the need to maximise the efficiency of land.

Living conditions

17. The Council is concerned with the internal layout and overall space within Flats 13, 15 and 16 and identifies conflict with two development plan policies, CC8 and H5 of the Local Plan. Policy CC8 lists amenity issues which are to be examined and met by development. However, space standards for the units is not one of the amenity issues that is referenced. In these circumstances, I am not persuaded by the evidence that the policy would be breached in this respect.

18. In the case of Policy H5 of the Local Plan, this concerns new build housing. The appeal scheme is predominantly the change of use of a building and not new build housing. In any case, criterion (a) of the policy says that it is only (new build) housing outside the Central Area which is required to comply with the nationally-described space standards and the appeal site is within this Central Area. Indeed, the Planning Report confirms that Policy H5 of the Local Plan is not applicable to the appeal development and therefore for these reasons the proposal would not conflict with this policy.

19. Nevertheless, paragraph 4.4.42 of the Local Plan explains that, even where the space standards do not apply, they provide a useful point of reference and the Framework requires that all development creates places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Furthermore, while not referenced in the reason for refusal, attention has been drawn to Policy H8 of the Local Plan which requires residential conversions should provide adequate internal floorspace and headroom for residents.

20. At my site visit I was able to enter a number of the units, including Flats 13, 15 and 16. I consider that the size and circulation space of these units are not unduly affected by being located in the roof space. This is because the angle of outside walls are quite steep and it is only about the upper half of the walls in these flats that are sloping. Accordingly, the headroom available is not especially an issue that materially affects the living conditions for occupants, either at the present time or in the future if the flats were to be used as permanent accommodation.

21. The flats are well laid out with good natural light. They have adequate space for a combined lounge, dining and kitchen area and each unit has a separate and reasonably sizeable bathroom in each case. The bedrooms for the two one-bedroom flats provided a decent sized double room with space for furniture. Flat 16 has a good sized double bedroom and a small single. As I have commented above, while this second bedroom is small, it is adequate to operate as a bedroom and provides, in conjunction with the rest of the flat, a satisfactory standard of accommodation.

22. These three units may fall below the space standards but having undertaken an internal viewing and considered all the evidence, I am satisfied that they would

provide acceptable living conditions for permanent occupation within a Central Reading location. I note the commentary in paragraph 4.4.41 of the Local Plan which explains that the expectations of those choosing to live in the centre of Reading, in terms of both internal and external space, as well as issues such as noise, tend to be different to those in other parts of the Borough. I therefore conclude that the internal layout and overall space within Flats 13, 15 and 16 would provide adequate living conditions on a permanent basis for future occupants. The scheme would not conflict with Policies CC8, H5 and H8 of the Local Plan and the Framework which seek, amongst other things, adequate internal floorspace and headroom for residents.

Conditions

23. I have had regard to the conditions suggested by the Council and the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance. I have amended the wording where necessary in the interests of clarity or to meet the six tests in the Guidance. The statutory time limit is required and a condition specifying the approved plans is necessary in the interests of certainty.
24. A condition is necessary to ensure that the car parking spaces are provided and thereafter maintained in the interests of the amenities of residents and highway safety. A condition is necessary for details to be submitted, approved and then implemented for cycle parking in the interests of providing sustainable transport opportunities.
25. A condition requiring the details of the refuse and recycling store to be agreed and implemented is necessary in the interests of highway safety and the amenities of the area.
26. The Council has recommended two conditions which seek to restrict the ability of residents to apply for on-street car parking permits. However, the policies in justification of this approach, which the Council has brought to my attention, do not directly require such a restriction. Furthermore, the analysis from the appellant's highway consultant explains why the provision of the seven car parking spaces on the site would be adequate to serve the development without displacing car parking elsewhere. With this evidence and the site located within walking distance of the town centre and other local services and facilities, including bus routes, the information before me does not demonstrate a necessity for the recommended conditions regarding parking permits or that without such conditions the development would be contrary to the development plan.
27. Policy CC8 of the Local Plan requires that there should be no unacceptable impact on living conditions for new residential properties in terms of noise and disturbance. The proposal would introduce permanent residential accommodation and some of the flats have their windows facing the busy London Road. I appreciate that windows are triple glazed, nevertheless, without confirmation that they provide sufficient sound proofing, and that if required to be open the internal noise levels would be satisfactory, there is the potential that future permanent occupants could be unduly disturbed by the wider noise environment. A condition is therefore necessary for noise levels to be assessed and appropriate action taken as required.
28. Policy EN15 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure the effects of any poor air quality are mitigated. The site lies close to London Road and details through an Air

Quality Assessment and any mitigation required to address any identified poor air quality is necessary to accord with Policy EN15 of the Local Plan and in the interests of the living conditions of future permanent residents of the development.

29. Policy CC2 of the Local Plan sets out the approach to the sustainable design and construction of new development and includes that conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM "excellent" standards, where possible. In this case, however, the development is fairly recently built, and appears to be constructed to a high standard and would not be a conversion but a change of use because of the very limited physical changes to the fabric. In these circumstances, I am not persuaded that the evidence demonstrates that the policy should apply to this scheme and therefore that it is necessary or appropriate to apply the requirements of the BREEAM approach in this case.
30. Conditions regarding the noise and air quality requirements are necessary as pre-commencement conditions because they may require some information and design alterations that are required to be undertaken from the outset and could be impractical to consider at a later stage.

Conclusion

31. For the reasons given above, the scheme would comply with the development plan when considered as a whole and other material considerations do not indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, and taking all other matters into account, I conclude that subject to the specified conditions, the appeal should be allowed.

David Wyborn

INSPECTOR

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7 September 2022

Ward: Katesgrove

Application No.: 211636/FUL

Address: 75-81 Southampton Street

Proposal: Removal of existing building and construction of a four-storey building to comprise 19 dwellings and associated works

Date valid: 15th October 2021

Target Decision Date: 14th January 2022 **Extension of Time Date:** 7th October 2022

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services (HPDRS) to i) **GRANT** full planning permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of a s106 legal agreement or ii) Refuse full planning permission if the legal agreement is not completed by 7th October 2022 (unless officers on behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement)

The legal agreement is to include the following heads of terms:

1. Affordable Housing deferred payment mechanism to ensure Council receives 50% of any surplus developer profit above 17.5% of Gross Development Value of the development (GDV) to go towards off-site affordable housing provision within the Borough
2. Prior to commencement of development the developer to enter into a Section 278 Agreement with the Highway Authority in order to provide the vehicular accesses serving the proposed servicing bay to the Southampton Street frontage. The vehicular accesses shall be completed prior to occupation of the development and retained as such thereafter
3. Employment Skills and Training contribution of £3,380. Payable prior to commencement of development.
4. Zero Carbon Offset as per Sustainable Design and Construction 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). Payable within 6 months of first occupation of the development
5. All Contributions Index Linked from date of permission

Conditions:

1. Time limit - standard three years for implementation
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans only
3. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of materials
4. Pre-Occupation implementation of cycle parking
5. Pre-Occupation submission and approval of details of bin storage (including pest control measures)
6. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of Construction Management Plan (including measures for control of noise and dust)
7. Pre-Occupation implementation of vehicular accesses
8. Pre-Commencement submission and approval - Contaminated Land 1: site characterisation report

9. Contaminated Land 2: remediation scheme
10. Contaminated Land 3: implementation of remediation scheme
11. Contaminated Land 4: reporting any unexpected contamination
12. Pre-occupation submission and approval of a noise mitigation measures (glazing and ventilation specifications)
13. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of an air quality mitigation scheme
14. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of details of bat and swift boxes
15. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of details of green/brown biodiverse roofs
16. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of details of hard and soft landscaping
17. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of a design stage SAP assessment
18. Pre-Occupation submission and approval of an as built SAP assessment
19. Pre-Occupation - notification to residents of no automatic access to parking permits
20. Control of construction hours (0800-1800 Mon-Fri, 0900-1300 Sat & not on Sundays or Bank Holidays)
21. No burning of waste on site
22. No fixing or installing of miscellaneous item to the external faces or roof of the building without the prior approval from the LPA
23. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of an archaeological written scheme of investigation
24. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of piling method statement
25. Pre-Commencement submission and approval of scheme to protect the existing strategic water main during construction

Informatives:

1. Positive and proactive working
2. Section 106 agreement applies
3. Community Infrastructure Levy applies
4. Terms and conditions
5. Pre-commencement conditions
6. Highway Regulations requirements for works affecting the Highway
7. Fee required for conditions discharge
8. Building Regulations - noise insulation between residential units
9. No parking permits
10. Complaints about construction noise
11. Potential contaminated land
12. Access Construction

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Co-Operative Funeral care building at 75-81 Southampton Street is located on the east side of Southampton Street close to the junction with Crown Street to the north. The site comprises a vacant single storey building that was previously occupied by Co-operative Funeral Care with associated access and parking. The A327 Southampton Street is a busy one-way major distributor road leading into the town centre.
- 1.2 The site is located within the Reading Central Area as defined by the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, within an area of archaeological potential, an air quality management area and within an area of potentially contaminated land.

- 1.3 The adjacent land to the north on the corner of Southampton Street and Crown Street is a vacant and cleared site that is currently overgrown with vegetation which is allocated for residential development under Policy CR14j of the Reading Borough Local Plan with an indicative site capacity of between 13 and 19 dwellings. The adjacent land to the south consists of 3 x three storey buildings (no.s 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street). No.s 85 and 87 are located close to the application site. No. 87 is in office use but has been granted prior approval (ref. 220204) for an additional storey to provide 1 x two-bedroom flat. No. 85 has been converted to residential use and 6 x one-bedroom flats under prior approval consent ref. 151145.
- 1.4 To the rear (east) of the site is the rear of the part five, part six storey Indigo Apartments building which fronts on to Crown Street (no. 43-47) and a single storey data storage building and service yard which also incorporates an open-air roof top car park (Land to the rear of no. 9 Upper Crown Street).
- 1.5 To the west, on the opposite side of Southampton Street are terraces of properties of between two and three storeys in mixture of commercial and residential uses a number of which are Grade II listed (no.s 92 to 100 and 106 Southampton Street). Further north along Southampton Street, at and beyond the junction with Crown Street and Pell Street is the two-storey Grade II listed former Red Cow pub (no. 63 Southampton Street and no. 50 Crown Street) which has been converted to flats and the three-storey Grade II* listed terrace of properties at no. 72-86 Southampton Street.
- 1.6 The London Street/Market Place Conservation Area is located 70m to the north of the application site beyond the junction with Crown Street.
- 1.7 The view north down Southampton Street from Whitley Street towards the Grade II listed St Giles Church past the pre-application sites is identified as a significant view with heritage interest within the Borough in the Local Plan. Policy EN5 (Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest) seeks that the new development should not harm and where possible should make a positive contribution to views of acknowledged historical significance.
- 1.8 The Applicant sought pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority prior to submitting the planning application.
- 1.9 The Application is on the Planning Applications Committee agenda because it is for a major category development (for 10 or more new dwellings).



Location plans (red line area)



Existing building



View of application site looking south along Southampton Street



View of application site looking north along Southampton Street

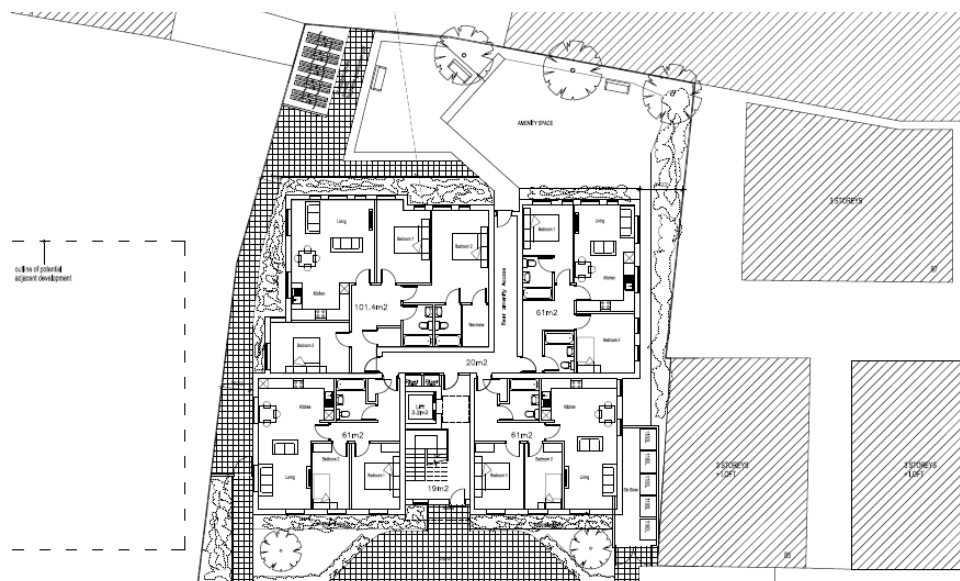
2. PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 140483FUL - Installation of canopy to rear and replacement of existing gates to front elevation with new roller shutter - Granted

2.2 900575FUL - Rebuild front elevation and creation of pitch roof on part of building - Granted

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for demolition of the existing single storey former COOP funeral care building and construction of a four-storey building to comprise 19 dwellings (C3 dwellinghouse use) and associated works.
- 3.2 The proposals would provide 7 x one-bedroom flats, 11 x two-bedroom flats and 1 x three-bedroom flat spread across four floors with a central lift and stair core accessed from the Southampton Street frontage. The development includes a communal garden and cycle store to the rear accessible from with the rear of the building and from gated pedestrian access from Southampton Street, frontage landscaping, bin storage accessible from Southampton Street and a single servicing bay for vehicles to the site frontage.
- 3.3 The proposed building would be finished with rendered ground floor elevations with red brick above and mansard-roof style top floor finished in slate.



No. 75-81 Southampton St (application site) No. 85 No.87
Proposed site plan



No. 75-81 Southampton St (application site) No. 85 No. 87
Proposed Southampton Street-Scene elevation



Proposed visual looking south along Southampton Street

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Environmental Protection

- 4.1 No objection, subject to conditions to secure implementation of the submitted glazing and ventilation scheme, submission, approval and implementation of an air quality mitigation scheme, contaminated land assessment and remediation schemes, construction method statement and bin storage details and to control hours of construction to standard working hours (0800 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1300 hours Saturdays only).

RBC Transport

- 4.2 No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission, approval and implementation of a construction method statement, provision of the proposed vehicular access, cycle storage and bin storage facilities as well as a condition to notify future occupants that they would not be automatically entitled to a parking permit.

RBC Natural Environment Trees

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

RBC Ecological Consultant

- 4.4 No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission, approval and implementation of a detailed specification for the proposed green roof and swift bricks.

RBC Conservation and Urban Design Officer

- 4.5 No objections.

Berkshire Archaeology

- 4.6 No objection, subject to a condition to secure submission, approval and implementation of a written scheme of archaeological investigation, including archaeological monitoring during demolition and trial trench evaluation.

Thames Water

- 4.7 No objection, subject to a conditions to secure submission, approval and implementation of a piling method statement prior to any piling taking place on site and a condition to secure details of a scheme to prevent damage to the existing strategic water main during construction of the development.

Public Consultation

- 4.8 A site notice was displayed at the application site on 28th October 2021. The following nearby properties were notified of the application by letter:

- Flats 1 to 17 Indigo Apartments 45 Crown St
- The Studio Indigo Apartments 45 Crown St
- 53 Crown St
- 87, 89, 92, 94, 96 98, 100 Southampton Street
- Ground Floor, First Floor and Second Floor 89 Southampton St
- Flats 1 to 10 Thompsons Yard 106 Southampton St
- Flats 1 to 6 Ibex House 85 Southampton St
- 9 Upper Crown St

- 4.9 Six letters of objection have been received raising the following matters:

- Loss of light to no.s 85 and 87 Southampton Street
- Implications in terms of the depth of the proposed development, provision of insufficient communal amenity space and overlooking in relation to the neighbouring development proposed under planning application ref. 211614FUL (planning permission since refused on 20th June 2022) on adjacent land to the rear of the application site at 9 Upper Crown Street (for 'Demolition of existing buildings and structures, associated reuse of frame with basement level used for car parking & servicing, erection of 3 no. residential blocks containing 46 no. dwellings above, associated parking (including replacement), access works and landscaping, relocation of substations & associated works to rear of indigo apartments to facilitate pedestrian access).
- Insufficient affordable housing provision.
- Loss of privacy, overlooking and daylight/sunlight for occupiers of the offices at no. 87 Southampton Street. The building also has prior approval consent for change of use from offices to residential so the development would prejudice this future change of use of the building to residential.
- Proposed windows so close to the boundary with no. 87 would prejudice any future development of this site.
- Overdevelopment
- Insufficient parking provision and increased pressure on on-street parking in the surrounding area
- Loss of light to no. 106 Southampton Street

- 4.10 In addition to the above, an objection has also been received from the RBC Asset Management Team as landowner of the adjacent land to the north on the corner of Southampton Street and Crown Street in respect of the impact of the proposed development on the development potential of adjacent allocated site. The following issues have been raised:

- Proposed 2m separation of the proposed development from the shared boundary is insufficient
- The daylight/ sunlight report submitted with the application assesses the internal daylight levels on the basis of clear glazed side facing windows above ground floor level whereas the proposed plans show all side facing windows above ground floor level to be obscurely glazed therefore overestimating the daylight that would be received to the flats.
- Impact on surrounding properties would be worsened if/when development of the allocated site take place.
- Development of the allocated site would worsen the availability of daylight/sunlight to the proposed development given the side facing windows are reliant upon light from the north
- The proposed development would limit light availability to future development of the adjacent allocated site and result in overshadowing.

4.11 Two letters of observation have been received raising the following matters:

- Insufficient affordable housing provision.
- Unimaginative design
- A cohesive development of the site together with surrounding sites should be brought forward instead

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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

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

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

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

5.5 Reading Local Plan 2019

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

CC4: DECENTRALISED ENERGY

CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE

CC6: ACCESSIBILITY AND THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

CC9: SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT
 EN2: AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFIANCE
 EN5: PROTECTION OF SIGNIFIACANT VIEWS WITH HERITAGE INTEREST
 EN6: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT
 EN9: PROVISION OF 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
 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
 CR1: DEFINITION OF CENTRAL READING
 CR2: DESIGN IN CENTRAL READING
 CR6 LIVING IN CENTRAL READING

5.6 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Supplementary Planning Document: Affordable Housing (2013)
 Supplementary Planning Document: S106 Planning Obligations (2014)
 Supplementary Planning Document: Parking Standards and Design (2011)
 Supplementary Planning Document: Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
 Supplementary Planning Document: Employment, Skills and Training (2013)

6. APPRAISAL

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

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

Principle

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) and seeks that all housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The accessibility of the site, located within the Reading Central Area as defined by the Reading Local Plan 2019, is considered acceptable for the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC6 (Accessibility and Intensity of Development) whilst the provision of new housing

would align with the broad objectives of Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) in assisting in meeting the annual housing targets.

- 6.2 The loss of the existing use of the site must also be considered. The site and building have been vacant since 2019 when Co-operative Funeral Care left the site. The previous funeral care use of the site was more akin to funeral sales as opposed to a funeral parlour use. This former use of the building is therefore considered to be Class E a (Retail). The site is located within the Reading Central Area as defined by Policy CR1 (Definition of Central Reading), but it located outside of the Central Core, Primary Shopping Area and is not located with a designated Primary Frontage (Policy CR7). Therefore, there is no specific policy restriction upon loss of E uses in this location and as such there is no policy objection to the principle of the loss of a Class E land use on this site.
- 6.3 The loss of existing building must also be considered. Policies CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and CR2 (Design in Central Reading) seeks that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area within which it is located. Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) seeks that historic features including their settings are protected, Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) seeks that in areas characterised by heritage assets the historic environment will inform and shape new development. Whilst the existing building is not considered to be of any architectural or historic interest of itself, it is nonetheless modest in scale such that it does not harm the setting of the surrounding heritage assets. However, subject to a proposed replacement building being of high design quality and which preserves and enhances the setting of the surrounding heritage assets, there is no objection from officers to the removal of the existing building.

Design, Character and Heritage Matters

- 6.4 As referred to in the Introduction section of this report and within the Heritage Statement submitted by the Applicant with the application, the site is located within the setting of a number of Grade II and Grade II* Listed Buildings and within the more distant setting (i.e. Affecting views into) of the of the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The view north down Southampton Street from Whitley Street towards the Grade II listed St Giles Church past the pre-application sites is identified as a significant view with heritage interest within the Borough. Policy EN5 (Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest) seeks that the new development should not harm and where possible should make a positive contribution to views of acknowledged historical significance.
- 6.5 The Market Place / London Street Conservation Area is located 70m to the north of the application site. The submitted Heritage Statement states that the significance of the Conservation Area principally stems from the historic buildings contained within it and the appreciable character and authenticity they afford but that there are specific elements of Southampton Street which are located beyond the Conservation Area boundary which make a positive contribution to its setting. These include the series of Grade II and II star terraced listed buildings located around the application site on Southampton Street. As also outlined within the Council's Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal, there are also a range of detracting elements beyond the Conservation Area boundary, which adversely impact its setting, including the very high heavy level of traffic on Southampton Street and a high density of street and traffic signage.
- 6.6 In terms of nearby listed buildings, the submitted Heritage Statement identifies a number along Southampton Street of which the application site forms part of their

setting. Most notably this includes the two and three storey grade II listed terraces opposite the site at no.s 92-100, Thompsons Yard at no. 106 Southampton Street, the Former Red Cow pub (no. 63 Southampton Street and no. 50 Crown Street) which has now been converted to flats and the three-storey (with basement) grade II star listed terrace of properties at no.s 72-86 Southampton Street, 40m to the north along Southampton Street. The predominant scale of the listed buildings nearby the site is between two and three storeys and the majority are red brick, stucco or partially plain white rendered. The Heritage Statement identifies that the significance of these buildings in all instances stems from their architectural value and broader contribution to the historic character of the area and that they contribute to each other's setting by providing a degree of visual coherence.

- 6.7 The submitted Heritage Statement concludes that the existing site, containing a disused building of no architectural or historic interest, makes no positive contribution to the setting of these designated heritage assets or the historic character of the area. Officers and the Council's Conservation and Urban Design Officer agree with this assessment, adding that that the modest scale of the existing single storey building means that it does not impose itself or appear visually prominent in the context of the setting of the nearby heritage assets.
- 6.8 The predominant scale of buildings in the area immediately surrounding this part of Southampton Street and to the corner with Crown Street is buildings of between 2 to 3 and a half storeys. The proposed four storey building would present itself to the street-scene as three storeys with the upper fourth storey in the form a recessed and visually subservient mansard style roof level of accommodation. As a result of the change in levels along Southampton Street which slopes upwards from north to south, the height of the flat mansard roof of the proposed building would, even at four storeys, be set below the height of the flat mansard roof to the adjacent buildings fronting Southampton Street to the south at no.s 85, 87 and 89.
- 6.9 Whilst the existing single storey building is sited directly on the Southampton Street frontage, the siting of the proposed building would provide a 4m set back from the back of the pavement. The set-back area would provide for a dedicated off-street servicing bay for the development as well as frontage landscaping, including space for planting of two trees. The introduction of the set back and small area of landscaping to the frontage is reflective of other buildings nearby and is considered to help soften the integration of the building's scale and massing within the narrow character of Southampton Street. The general height and scale of the building would also be reflective of other properties within the street and together with the set-back from the street frontage it is considered that the proposed massing would be appropriate for the site and in-keeping with its surroundings and respectful to the setting and scale of the three-storey Grade II listed terrace buildings on the opposite side of Southampton Street at no. s 92-100 as well as the Grade II listed part two, part three storey Thompsons Yard building at no. 106 Southampton Street and to the longer range views into and out of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area which is located some 70m away to the north along Southampton Street.
- 6.10 In terms of spaciousness to surrounding properties, the existing single storey building maintains an 8.5m gap to the closest adjacent building to the south at no. 85 Southampton Street where an existing vehicular access/parking area is located but is sited directly on the boundary of the adjacent cleared site to the north where historically a terrace of buildings continued around the corner on to Crown Street. As set out in the Introduction section of this report the site on the corner of Crown Street is allocated for residential development under Policy CR14j. It is therefore important that the development of the application site does not fetter the ability of the adjacent allocation site to come forward in a suitable manner at a later date.

- 6.11 The general character of the street is mixed albeit terraced properties are predominant so spaciousness and gaps between properties within the street is limited. The proposed building would remove the gap to no. 85 to the south and would directly adjoin this building, but at single storey level only, providing an entrance to the proposed bin store and removing the vehicular access. This single storey element would be set closer to the site frontage than the rest of the building albeit still retaining a 2m set back from the pavement and a 1m set back from the front elevation of no. 85 and as such would still demonstrate a good level of visual subservience to the existing adjacent building. Above ground floor level it is proposed to provide a separation of 2m to the blank flank wall of the frontage building of no. 85. This separation, combined with the proposed set back of the building from the street frontage and reduced massing of the proposal in this area, is considered to provide a level of spaciousness appropriate to that found elsewhere within the street. Whilst the existing building is set directly on the boundary with the cleared site to the north, this is in the context of a single storey building. The proposed building would have staggered north flank elevation but at its closest would be set 1.6m from the boundary.
- 6.12 In terms of siting and separation to adjacent buildings the proposals are, combined with the proposed set back of the building from the street frontage and level of massing proposed, considered to provide a level of spaciousness appropriate to that found elsewhere within the character of the street.
- 6.13 The view north down Southampton Street from Whitley Street towards the Grade II Listed St Giles Church past the application site is identified as a significant view with heritage interest within the Borough (see photograph below).



Designated View of Heritage Significance looking north down the hill along Southampton Street towards to St Giles Church from Whitley Street

- 6.14 Policy EN5 (Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest) seeks that the new development should not harm and where possible should make a positive contribution to views of acknowledged historical significance. The scale and siting of the proposals set back 4m from the Southampton Street pavement would not impact upon the designated significant view with heritage interest.
- 6.15 In terms of detailed design the proposals adopt many of the design themes of the adjacent buildings at no. 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street with white rendered finish to the ground floor level with red brick finish to upper floors and slate roof. White render and red brick also form the predominant character of the wider street-

scene and that of the series of listed buildings located close to the site on Southampton Street and around the junction with Crown Street and Pell Street. The development also includes further detailed design elements reflecting the character of nearby listed buildings including brick window header detail and string line brick course below the first and second floor level front and rear windows. The proposals also incorporate a small central step/recess in the profile of the front elevation of the building up to roof level which assists in breaking up the width of the front elevation of the building.

- 6.16 The proposed frontage landscaping within the area created by the set back of the building from the Southampton Street frontage is also considered a positive feature of the scheme in terms its contribution to the visual amenity and greening of the street-scene and also softening view of the proposed built form. The landscaping indicated on the proposed plans show low level shrub and hedge planting to the site frontage either side of the central servicing bay and in front of the ground floor windows to the front of the building which also helps to provide defensible spaces in front of the ground floor front facing habitable room windows of the development. Planting of two new trees is also indicated either side of the servicing bay. Katesgrove Ward within which the application site is located is designated as being an area of low tree canopy cover within the Reading Tree Strategy (2021), whilst the Strategy also identified Southampton Street as a designated Treed Corridor and within an AQMA and therefore the addition of trees in this location is welcomed in terms of reinforcing the Treed corridor and increasing canopy cover in central Reading. Furthermore, the planting of three more trees is also indicated within the proposed landscaped communal rear garden.
- 6.17 Overall it is considered that the proposals are of suitable design quality and would contribute positively to the character of the surrounding area, setting of adjacent listed buildings and conservation area and preserve their settings. It is considered that the proposals would represent an enhancement to the area when compared to the existing building and would accord with policies CC7, EN1, EN5 and EN6.

Unit Mix and Affordable Housing

- 6.18 Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) that residential development in the Central Area is required to contribute towards a mix of different sized units and that ideally this should be in the form of a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom units. The policy goes on to state that as a guide, in developments of 15 dwellings or more, a maximum of 40% of units should be one bed and studios and a minimum of 5% of units should be at least three bed. The proposed unit mix of 7 x one-bedroom flats (37%), 11 x two-bedroom flats (58%) and 1 x three-bedroom flat (5%) would be policy compliant in this respect.
- 6.19 Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) states that development proposals of ten or more dwellings are required to provide 30% of the total number of dwellings as affordable housing which in this instance is 5.7 dwellings, which would equate to 5 dwellings with an equivalent financial contribution to make up the full policy requirement. Policy H3 goes on to state that in all cases where proposals fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open-book approach will be taken and the onus will be on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.
- 6.20 The Applicant has submitted a viability appraisal as part of the application which concludes that it is not viable for the development to provide or contribute towards affordable housing. The viability appraisal has been independently reviewed by the both the Council's external viability consultant and in house Valuer who both

confirmed that they concur with the findings of the viability appraisal and agree that it is not viable for the development to provide any on-site affordable housing units nor an upfront financial contribution. However, the Applicant has agreed to provide a contribution, in the event that the development realises a profit which was not foreseen in the projected overall future value of the scheme. This would be a deferred payment mechanism to be secured by way of a section 106 legal agreement which would ensure that the Council would receive an equal share of any surplus developer profit above 17.5% of the Gross Development Value of the development.

- 6.21 Subject to completion of a section 106 legal agreement as outlined above the proposals are considered to comply with the requirements of Policy H3.

Amenity of Surrounding Occupiers

- 6.22 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to protect the amenity of existing surrounding occupiers. Policy EN15 (Air Quality) and Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect surrounding occupiers from the impact of pollution.
- 6.23 The closest existing occupiers to the application site are nos 85 and 87 Southampton Street located adjacent to the site to the south. No. 87 is in office use but has been granted prior approval (ref. 220204) for an additional storey to provide 1 x two-bedroom flat. No. 85 has been converted to residential use and 6 x one-bedroom flats under prior approval consent ref. 151145. A daylight/sunlight report has been submitted with the application which assess the impact of the proposed development on these adjacent properties. The report has been independently reviewed by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, who have concluded that loss of daylight to most of the existing properties would be within the BRE guidelines. Whilst there are some lower floor windows at 85 and 87 Southampton Street that would not meet the BRE guidelines for vertical sky component, these are to non-domestic spaces. All windows to residential rooms appear to have met the BRE guidelines for vertical sky component. As such, any loss of daylight to existing nearby dwellings is classed as negligible.
- 6.24 In terms of sunlight BRE conclude that sunlight to all neighbouring south facing windows would be within the BRE guidelines and that overall, there would be a negligible impact on sunlight. In addition, adjacent outdoor amenity areas have also been assessed and BRE confirm sunlight to these spaces would meet BRE guidelines and class any loss of sunlight to these spaces as negligible.
- 6.25 No. 85 Southampton Street which contains six flats is located directly on the boundary with the application site and presents a blank three storey brick façade with no side facing windows. The flats to no. 85 have windows to the front and rear elevations of the building only. The proposed development would project 8m beyond the rear of no. 85. Whilst the proposals may result in a degree of visual overbearing impact to the rear windows of no. 85 the rear of this building is already compromised by the presence of no. 87 located only 4m away directly to the rear. The proposed building would also retain a separation to the shared boundary of between 1.6m and 2.4m and the flats whilst retaining outlook to the rear as existing. Furthermore, it is not reasonable for no.85 to rely on outlook from across neighbouring land.
- 6.26 The proposed development does include side facing flank windows facing towards the site of no. 85 however these are high level windows located above 1.7m from the internal floor levels of the flats such that no undue overlooking or loss of privacy is considered to result. In addition, and as discussed above, BRE have confirmed that

impact on neighbouring properties in terms of daylight and sunlight would be negligible and over Officers conclude that the development would not result in any significant adverse impact on the residential amenity of no. 85.

- 6.27 No. 87 Southampton Street is located to the rear of the adjacent site behind nos 85 and 89. The building is in office use, but as discussed above it has prior approval consent for a single storey roof extension to provide two residential flats, albeit the lower floors do not have consent and would remain as office accommodation. No. 87 has office windows to its south facing elevation looking towards the site of no. 95-107 Southampton Street, to its west elevation looking towards no. 85 and to its north elevation looking towards the application boundary. The windows to the north elevation looking towards the application site are positioned 3.5m from the shared boundary and would be located 6m from the south flank wall of the proposed application building.
- 6.28 Whilst, similar to the relationship with no. 85, the proposed building may result in a degree of visual overbearing to the facing windows of no. 87 the lower floors which would be most impacted are currently in office accommodation and therefore amenity considerations are not material. Furthermore, the proposed building would project in front of around half of the north flank window of no. 87 with the other half retaining outlook past the rear of the proposed development in the part of the site where the communal amenity space is proposed to be located. The separation of the proposed north flank windows to the site boundary and proposed development is also a very similar relationship to the existing relationship of no. 87 to the opposite south elevation which has windows which face on to the five-storey building at no. 95-107 Southampton Street.
- 6.29 In terms of privacy and overlooking impacts the relationship of the proposed building with no. 87 is also very similar to that with no. 85 with high level windows only facing towards the adjacent site such that no undue overlooking or loss of privacy is considered to result. BRE also note that, again as with no. 85, the impact of the proposals in terms of daylight sunlight would be negligible and overall, Officers conclude that the development would not result in any significant adverse impact on the residential amenity of no. 87.
- 6.30 As discussed in the Introduction section of this report the adjacent vacant and cleared site to the north on the corner of Southampton Street and Crown Street is allocated for residential development for an indicative 13 to 19 dwellings under Policy CR14j. Therefore, it is important to assess the impact of the proposed development on this adjacent allocated site to ensure that any future development in line with the site allocation policy would not be prejudiced. In this respect, the proposed building would present a staggered north flank elevation located 1.6m from the shared boundary at its closed point. Areas of soft landscape planting are proposed on the boundary close to the front of the site with Southampton Street and off the boundary but along the proposed building's edge further to the rear of the flank elevation along the boundary. Officers note comments submitted by RBC Asset Management that the proposals would adversely impact on daylighting to any future development on the adjacent allocated site. However, it is considered that the proposed development would provide an appropriate level of spaciousness for any development on the adjacent site which would be reflective of spaciousness and gapping that forms the character of Southampton Street and that to which is expected within a town centre location where daylight and sunlight receipt may not be as optimal as in lower density more suburban locations.
- 6.31 Whilst series of upper floor side facing windows are proposed which would face towards the adjacent site these would be high level windows with each rooms served by such a window also served by a front or rear facing window. In this respect it is

considered that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable overlooking or privacy impacts upon future development of the adjacent site.

- 6.32 The site to the rear (east) of the application site at no. 9 Upper Crown Street was recently subject to a planning application to demolish the existing data storage building and roof top car park and replace this with a three-storey building to provide 46 residential units. This application was refused for a variety of reasons but nonetheless, Officers are satisfied that the proposed development provides sufficient separation to the rear (east) boundary of the site (9m) such the residential amenity of future occupiers of the development would not be unduly impacted by any future development to the rear.
- 6.33 Whilst the proposed residential use of the site for nineteen dwellings would likely be an intensification above the former funeral care sales use, it is not considered that the number of units proposed, particularly given the development would be car free, would result in an overall unacceptable level of associated noise and disturbance in terms of comings and goings to and from the site and on-site activities associated with a residential use.
- 6.34 Conditions are also recommended to secure a construction method statement including noise and dust control measures and adherence to the Councils standard working hours for construction activities to ensure surrounding occupiers are not unduly impact by proposed construction activities.
- 6.35 In terms of the amenity of surrounding occupiers the proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC8, EN15 and EN16.

Standard of Accommodation for Future Occupiers

- 6.36 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to protect the amenity of future occupiers. Policy EN15 (Air Quality) and Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect future occupiers from the impacts of pollution. Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) sets out the standard to which all new build housing should be built. In particular new housing outside of the defined Reading Central Area should adhere to national prescribed space standards. Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) seeks that residential developments are provided with adequate private or communal outdoor amenity space.
- 6.37 Policy H5 requires all new building housing located outside the Central Area to comply with the nationally prescribed space standards. Whilst the application site is located within the Central Area it is welcomed that all of the proposed flats would accord with the space standards. All proposed habitable rooms are served by at least one front or rear facing window and are considered to be served by suitable outlook.
- 6.38 A daylight/sunlight assessment has been submitted with the application which has been independently reviewed by BRE who conclude that 75% of the rooms proposed within the development would achieve the target level for receipt of daylight (Average Daylight Factor). BRE also notes that the majority of kitchens within the development would have their own window which is often not the case in many modern developments of flats. BRE have also assessed receipt of sunlight to the proposed flats and concluded that of the nineteen flats proposed, twelve have a living room window facing within 90 degrees of due south. Eight of these units would meet target sunlight levels noting that the existing buildings to the south of the south (no.s 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street) are significant in restricting the site's access to the sunlight which is not uncommon for development within the town

centre. Overall, it is considered that receipt of daylight/sunlight to the development would be adequate.

- 6.39 As discussed above, no. 87 Southampton Street, located 6m away to the south adjacent to the application site, has prior approval consent for a fourth storey upward extension to create two residential flats. At the time of writing this report the prior approval consent has not been implemented. Given all rooms within the proposed development are reliant upon front and rear facing windows for outlook and their main source of daylight and sunlight, Officers are satisfied that if the prior approval consent for the additional storey was built then this would not unduly impact upon the residential amenity of future occupiers of the proposed development.
- 6.40 As discussed above the adjacent vacant and cleared site to the north on the corner of Southampton Street and Crown Street is allocated for residential development for an indicative 13 to 19 dwellings under Policy CR14j. BRE notes the future development of this adjacent site could further reduced receipt of daylight and sunlight to the proposed development. However, Officers note that whilst there are side facing windows within the proposed development these are small high-level windows (for privacy purposes to the adjacent site to prevent direct overlooking) with each rooms served by a high-level side facing window also served by a rear facing window. Therefore, Officers are satisfied that future development of the adjacent on the level of that envisaged by the site allocation policy would not result in unacceptable level of impact upon receipt of daylight and sunlight to the proposed development. Officers note comments received from RBC Asset Management who identify that the daylight sunlight report assessment submitted with the application is done so on the basis of all side facing windows above ground floor level being clearly glazed when these are shown as obscure glazed on the proposed plans. It is confirmed that amended plans have been submitted confirming that the side facing windows would be clear glazed. As discussed above, given the high-level nature of the side facing windows to the upper floors (located above 1.7m from the internal floor levels) this would be sufficient to prevent any undue overlooking or loss of privacy to and from the proposed development.
- 6.41 Policy H10 requires that residential development is served by the adequate private or communal amenity space that is reflective of the provision and character of such spaces in the surrounding area. Many flatted developments nearby are served by no or limited levels of amenity space, whilst the proposed development would be served by a good sized 200sqm area of landscaped communal amenity space to the rear. Policy H10 acknowledges that flats located close to the town centre may not be able to provide high levels of dedicated amenity space and given the site's central location close to public recreation and leisure facilities, Officers are satisfied that the communal amenity space proposed is sufficient to serve the development.
- 6.42 In terms of noise impacts the development is located within close proximity to Southampton Street which is one of the main vehicular routes into the town centre and therefore traffic noise is particular issue. A noise assessment has been submitted with the application and Environmental Protection Officers are satisfied that the glazing specification and mechanical ventilation proposed demonstrates that future occupiers of the flats would subject to acceptable internal noise levels. The site is also located within an AQMA (Air Quality Management Area) and an air quality assessment has been submitted with the application which concludes that the air quality levels measured nearby by are below the limit values which would trigger the need for further mitigation. However, Environmental Protection Officers have advised that the recorded levels are only slightly below the limit value and therefore, as a precaution a condition is recommended to scheme a scheme of air

quality mitigation to be submitted and approved by the LPA. Given the air quality levels are technically within the limit, it is likely that such mitigation could be achieved via filters to the proposed mechanical ventilation system.

- 6.43 An integral secure ground floor bin store is proposed to the front of the building on the south flank elevation accessible from Southampton Street. A condition is recommended to secure details of vermin and pest control measures for the bin store.
- 6.44 The adjacent site to the north at no. 9 Upper Crown Street which is currently in use as a data storage facility and roof top car park is on the site of a former factory and therefore conditions are attached to secure submission and approval of a contaminated land assessment and remediation scheme prior to commencement of development on the application site.
- 6.45 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies H5, H10, EN15, EN16 and CC8. Sustainability
- 6.46 Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy H5 (Standard for New Housing) seeks that all major new build residential development is built to zero carbon homes standards, which as per the adopted Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019) requires development to achieve a minimum 35% improvement above the dwelling carbon emission rate target defined in Building Regulations with a financial contribution to off-set the carbon performance of the development to zero. Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) states that developments of 10 dwellings or more where there is existing decentralised energy provision present within the vicinity of the site, will be expected to link into the existing decentralised energy network or demonstrate why this is not feasible.
- 6.47 The application is accompanied by an Energy and Sustainability Statement which sets out the development is projected to achieve a 45.5% improvement above the dwelling carbon emission rate target defined in the 2013 Building Regulations which would accord with the requirements of Policy H5. Submission and approval of a design stage assessment confirming the development has complied with the projected carbon performance would be secured by way of condition whilst the Applicant has agreed to a s106 obligation to secure a financial contribution to off-set carbon emissions to zero.
- 6.48 The submitted Energy and Sustainability Statement sets out that a key part of the projected carbon performance of the development is the incorporation of new on-site decentralised energy provision in the form of air source heat pumps (ASHP's). Whilst Policy CC4 only stipulates that on-site decentralised energy provision is required to be provided for larger schemes of more than twenty new residential units the provision of the on-site ASHP's is welcomed and is a benefit of the proposed development which would also accord with the Council's adopted Sustainable Design and Construction SPD which states that ASHP's are one of the preferred forms of decentralised energy provision within new development. Whilst the SPD does set out that ground source heat pumps (GSHP's) are preferred over ASHP's, Officers are welcome ASHP's in this case, given there is not a policy requirement to provide such decentralised energy in this instance and, as discussed above, given ASHP's are still a supported approach to reducing energy demand. It is noted in the Applicant's Energy and Sustainability Statement that the relatively modest size of the application site may be a barrier to use of GSHP's.

- 6.49 It is also proposed that the development would incorporate a range of design measures to in response to Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change) including being car free and providing dedicated cycling parking, a SuDS scheme to improve drainage conditions across the site, landscaping scheme incorporating native species planting and building materials with high thermal efficiency.
- 6.50 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies CC3, CC4 and H5.

Transport

- 6.51 Policies TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway related matters), TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking relates matters relating to development.
- 6.52 Southampton Street (A327) is a one way (South to North) main transport corridor and the application site is located within Zone 2 of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, i.e. the primary core area but on the periphery of Zone 1, the central core area, which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs. The site is well connected with a high level of public transport accessibility and access to public car parks.
- 6.53 In accordance with the Borough's Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development requires car parking provision of 1 space per 1-2 bed flat, and 1.5 spaces per 3 bed flat. Visitor parking is usually also required at a ratio of 1 space per 10 dwellings. However, in this instance the development is proposed to be car free. Southampton Street and the surrounding road network all have parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. Double yellow lines run along the front of the development preventing on street parking and a residential parking permit scheme operates in roads in close proximity to the site. A planning condition would be applied to the planning permission to prevent any future occupants of the proposed flats from obtaining residents and visitor parking permits for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure. Given the above and the sites proximity to the town centre and public transport links a car free development is considered to be acceptable in this instance.
- 6.54 Whilst the proposals would be car free, servicing and delivery provision for the development needs to be considered given the parking restrictions in place on Southampton Street. In this respect it is proposed to provide a single servicing bay in front of the development access via separate 'in' and 'out' dropped kerbs from Southampton Street which is a one-way road. RBC Transport Officers are satisfied with the servicing bay and accesses proposed. An obligation for the developer to enter into a section 278 agreement for works to the highway is proposed to upgrade the full length of the footway outside the development to be able to withstand heavy goods vehicles that are likely to utilise the servicing bay.
- 6.55 In accordance with the Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development is required to provide 1 cycle parking space per one- or two-bedroom flats and 1.5 cycle parking spaces per three-bedroom flats which equate to a required total provision of 19.5 cycle parking spaces for the development. The proposals include provision of 20 cycle parking spaces within a covered and secure building located to the rear of the development within the communal garden. The cycle storage would be accessible via a pathway along the north boundary of the site as well as through the central communal core of the building. The cycle parking provision of the development is acceptable and provision of this would be secured by condition.

- 6.56 The development also includes a secure and covered dedicated bin store and collection area located to the south of the site at the front of the building. This is located conveniently in relation to the proposed front servicing bay for the development and is considered to be acceptable. Provision of the bin store would be secured by way of condition.
- 6.57 A condition is also recommended to secure submission, approval and implementation of a construction method statement prior to commencement of development to mitigate the impacts of the construction of the proposed development on the surrounding highway network.
- 6.58 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5.

Natural Environment

- 6.59 Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) seeks that development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and should provide for a net gain of biodiversity wherever possible by protecting, enhancing and incorporating features of biodiversity on and adjacent to development sites and by providing new tree planting and wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements wherever practicable. Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) states that individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading's vegetation cover will be extended. Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) sets out that good design should incorporate appropriate landscaping.
- 6.60 This site is located within the Air Quality Management Area and Southampton Street is a designated Treed Corridor as set out in the RBC Tree Strategy (2021). The Tree Strategy also identifies Kategrove Ward, within which the site is located, as a ward of low tree canopy cover. There are no existing trees on the site.
- 6.61 The proposed plans show planting of two trees, hedge and shrub planting to the site frontage on Southampton Street as well as planting of three trees, shrubs and grass within the proposed rear amenity space. A biodiverse green/brown roof is also proposed to the main roof to the building as well as to the cycle store within the rear amenity space.
- 6.62 The RBC Natural Environment Officer is satisfied with the tree species proposed to be planted. To the site frontage, two 'heavy standard' sapling trees are proposed (*Carpinus betulus* 'Frans Fontaine' which are a narrow tree species related to a Hornbeam. Given the location of the frontage trees within the set back of the building from Southampton Street either side of the proposed servicing bay, this narrow/upright species is considered an appropriate choice. The tree species proposed to be provided within the rear amenity space are also considered to be acceptable (*Amelanchier lamarckii* and *Pyrus calleryana* 'Chanticleer') which whilst non-native are 'bee-friendly' trees and provide wildlife value as well as being an appropriate size for the available space. Details of tree pits as well as a detailed specification of all planting and maintenance management arrangements are to be secured by way of condition. The proposed landscaping and tree planting is considered acceptable in the context of the site's location within a treed corridor and area of low tree canopy cover as set out in the Reading Tree Strategy (2021).
- 6.63 The application is accompanied by a bat survey report which concludes that the current building does not host roosting bats. The survey has been reviewed by the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) Ecological Adviser who is satisfied with the

conclusions of the report and agrees that the survey has been carried out to an appropriate standard. Whilst the site does not have any current biodiversity value, Policy EN12 sets out that development should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. In this respect the application proposes to provide eight swift boxes and integrated bat boxes within the development as well as green/brown biodiverse roofs to the main building and cycle store and native landscape planting. The LPA's Ecological Adviser is satisfied with these proposed measure and that they would provide for a biodiversity enhancement on the site, full details of the bird and bat boxes, green/brown roofs and landscaping are to be secured by condition.

6.64 The proposals are considered to accord with Policies EN12, EN14 and CC7.

Archaeology

6.65 Policy EN2 (Areas of Archaeological Significance) requires that developments proposals should identify and evaluate sites of archaeological significance and remains should be either preserved in situ or if not possible, excavated, investigated and recorded.

6.66 An Archaeological Statement was submitted with the application which sets out that the site is located within an area with potential for medieval and post-medieval remains. Berkshire Archaeology have reviewed the Archaeological Statement and agree with its conclusions that a scheme of evaluative archaeological works is required including a trial trench which would then inform if any archaeological mitigation is required. Details of a written scheme of archaeological investigation are to be secured by way of condition. .

6.67 The proposals are considered to accord with Policy EN2.

Other

Employment Skills and Training

6.68 Policy CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) seeks that development that would result in employment should provide mitigation in line with its impacts on labour and skills. As a major category residential development and in line with the adopted Employment Skills and Training SPD (2011), the development is expected to provide a construction phase employment and skills plan to demonstrate how it would benefit the local employment market or an equivalent financial contribution towards local skills and training. The Applicant has indicated that they intend to provide a financial contribution towards local skills and training to be secured by way of the section 106 legal agreement. In accordance with the SPD this contribution would be £3, 380.

Community Infrastructure Levy

6.69 The proposed development has a gross internal area of 1, 352.1 sq.m which equates to a potential levy of £211, 252.

Equalities Impact

6.70 When determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected

characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable in principle and in respect of design, layout and character of the area, transport matters, landscape, ecology, residential amenity, sustainability and other matters. In respect of heritage matters, the proposals by way of their siting, massing and detailed design are considered to preserve the setting of the surrounding Grade II listed buildings at no.s 92-100 and 106 Southampton Street and no. 63 Southampton Street and 50 Crown Street as well as that of the Grade II* listed buildings at no. 72-86 Southampton Street and to preserve views into the nearby Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The development is considered to adhere to the relevant policies of the Development Plan as set out in the Appraisal section of this report above. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions and completion of a section 106 legal agreement as set out in the recommendation box at the top of this report.

Drawings and Documents Considered Submitted:

- Drawing ref. PD03 Rev M - Proposed Elevations
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 24th August 2022

- Right of Light Consulting Daylight and Sunlight Report (Within Development) ref. (F-ROL-046) 2.6
- Right of Light Consulting Daylight and Sunlight Report (Neighbouring Properties) ref. (F-ROL-045) 2.3
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 27th January 2022

- Drawing ref. PD02 Rev O - Proposed Plans
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 4th January 2022
- Drawing ref. PD01 Rev M - Proposed Ground Context
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 13th December 2021

- TSA Ecology Bat Presence / Likely Absence Report
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 31st January 2022

- Groundsure Premier Utilities Report ref. 607505 Issue no. 1
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 15th October 2021

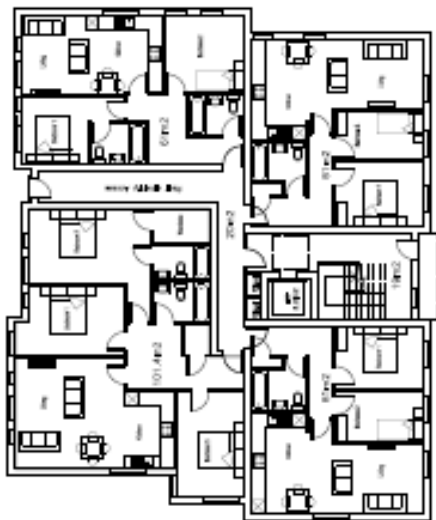
- ALB Planning Design & Access Statement
- Drawing ref. CM/21448/P - Floor & Site Plan (Existing)
- Drawing ref. CM/21448/ELE - Elevations (Existing)
- HCUK Heritage Statement ref. 6406B
- HCUK Archaeological Appraisal ref. ref. 6406
- KP Acoustics Noise Impact Assessment Report ref. 21739.NIA.01 Rev. B
- ALB Planning Statement ref. 75-81 Southampton Street, Reading RG1 2QU
- Perfect Property Developments Ltd SuDS Report ref. WHS1886 Version no. 2
- Vectos Transport Statement ref. 205626 Issue no. 4
- XCO2 Air Quality Assessment ref. 9.624 Version no. 2.0
- XCO2 Energy & Sustainability Statement ref. 9.624 Version 0.3
- Location Plan ref. BK423583
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 1st October 2021

Case Officer: Matt Burns

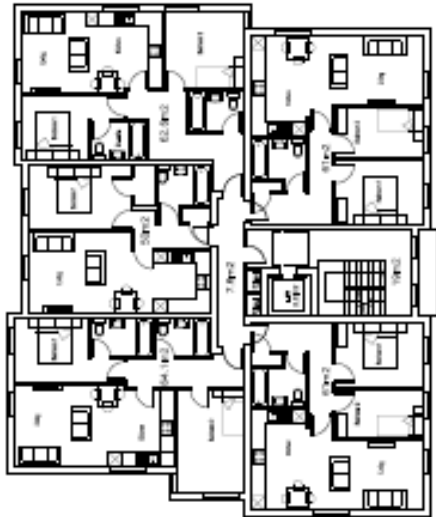
Plans and Drawings:



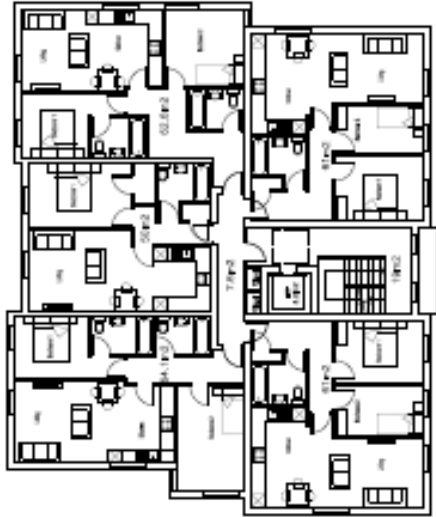
Proposed Site Plan



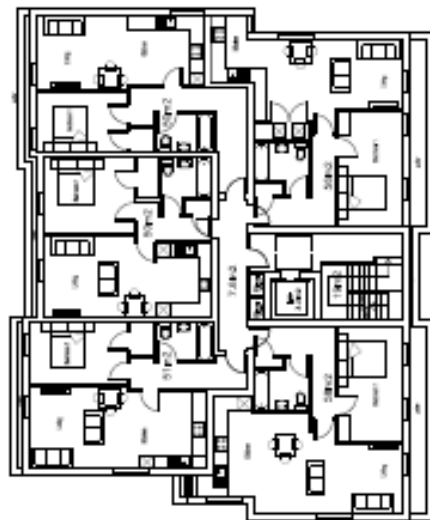
PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR
 1x2bed Suite,
 4 Flrs
 32 Beds: Total 1x3 Bed, 11x2 Bed & 1x1 Bed



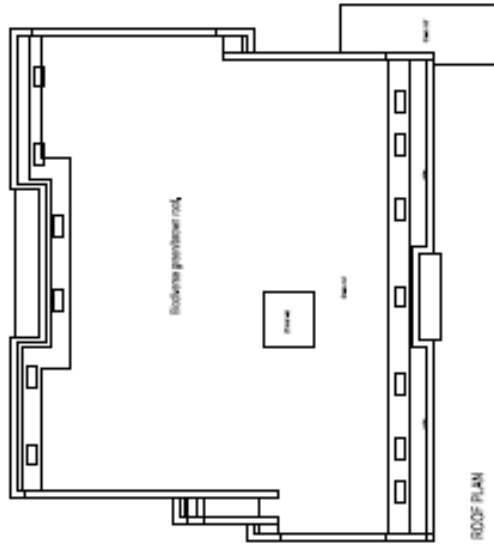
PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR
 1x2bed Suite,
 5 Flrs



PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR
 1x2bed Suite,
 5 Flrs

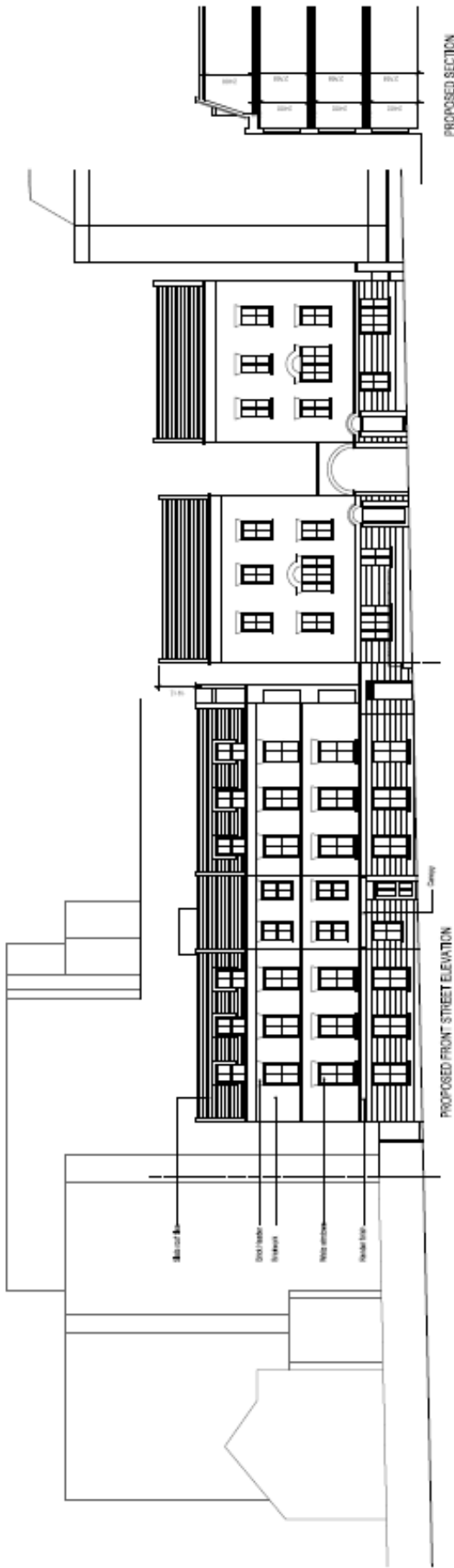


PROPOSED THIRD FLOOR



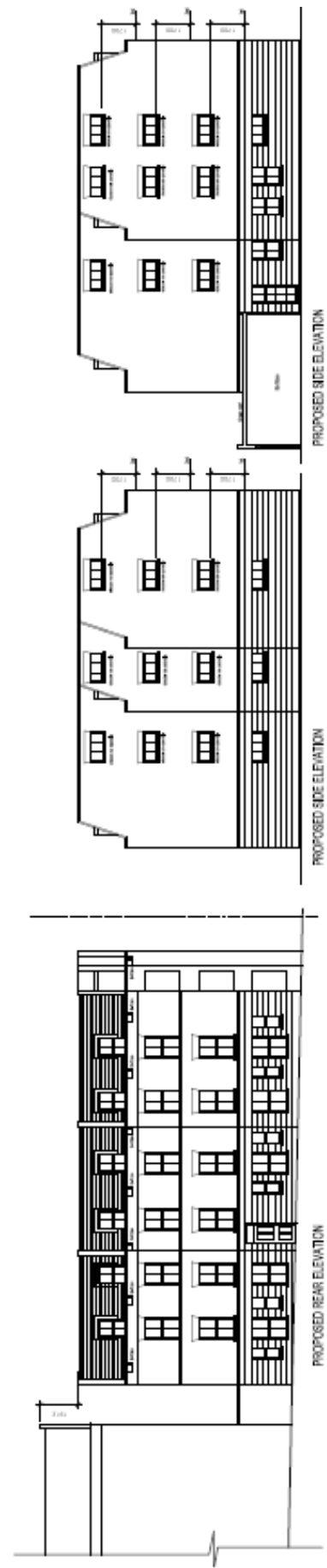
ROOF PLAN

SCALE 1:200



PROPOSED SECTION

PROPOSED FRONT STREET ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION

PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION

Proposed Elevations



Proposed Visual Looking North Along Southampton Street

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7th September 2022

Ward: Kentwood

App No: 220463/FUL

Address: Unit 8 Stadium Way, Reading, RG30 6BX

Proposal: Change of use of vacant unit to use as an indoor climbing/ bouldering centre (Use Class E(d)), minor amendments to building elevations/entrances, provision of cycle/bin storage and associated works

Applicant: Grip-UK Ltd

Extended Target Date: 12/09/22

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT permission subject to the following conditions and informatives

Conditions to include:

1. Standard Time Limit
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials as specified
4. Hours of operation as specified
5. Only to be used as an indoor climbing/ bouldering centre (use class E(d))
6. Retail area (shop and café) remain ancillary to the climbing centre
7. Bin storage as specified
8. Vehicle parking as specified
9. Cycle parking as specified
10. Sustainability measures as specified
11. Flood Risk measures as specified

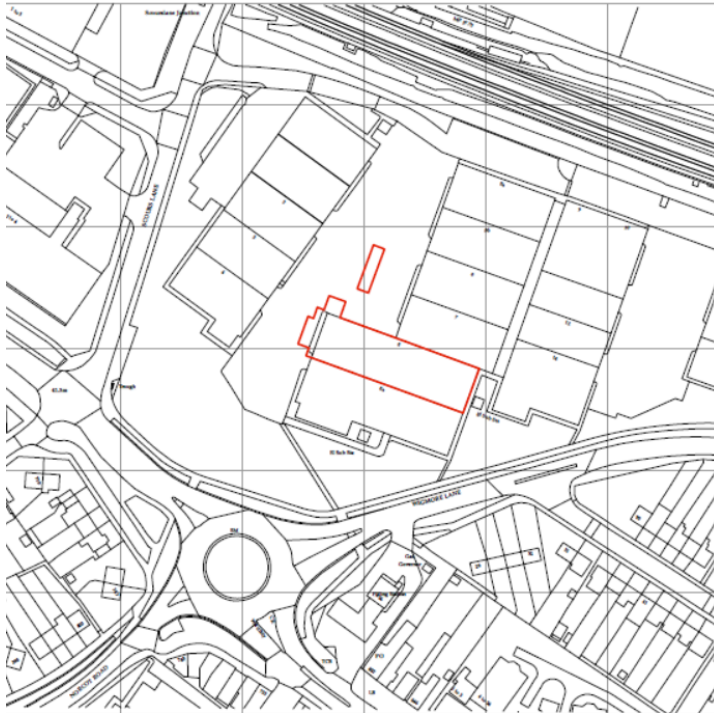
Informatives

1. Terms
2. Building Regulations approval may be required
3. Complaints about construction
4. Separate advertisement consent is required for any new signage
5. The site lies on contaminated land
6. Positive and Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 The site currently consists of a vacant warehouse building with double height accommodation at ground floor and small first floor area to the front of the building. The unit measures a total of circa 1,350 sqm, with 1,240 sqm at ground floor and small mezzanine office level area to the front providing a further 110 sqm.
- 2.2 The unit has been vacant for over 4 years, since 2017. The unit had previously been occupied from June 2005 by Plasman Laminate Products which utilised the property as a light industrial use to prepare and cut to order work surfaces and kitchen products.

- 2.3 The wider area is characterised by a variety of uses including industrial and business uses, with the district centre of Oxford Road West 1 km metres to the east, and the city centre 2.5 kms to the east. Residential communities are located within the wider area to the north, south and east.
- 2.4 The Local Plan identifies the site as being within a Core Employment Area (EM2h: Portman Road) and the site is located within Flood Zone 2.



Site Location Plan



Image of the site

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application is for the change of use the vacant property to use as an indoor climbing/ bouldering centre (Use Class E(d)). No new floorspace or changes to the size of the building envelope are proposed.
- 2.2 The proposed occupier is The Climbing Hangar, which aims to bring an alternative sport and fitness activity that is affordable and accessible to all ages in the form of rock and boulder climbing.

2.3 The Climbing Hangar has various activities on offer, and the space will comprise the following:

- *Main climbing / bouldering wall*: the climbing space will be the main focal point and will offer a range of climbing activities
- *Office*: a small ancillary management office is also proposed adjacent to the reception. The function of this office will be for use of staff of the climbing centre.
- *Reception / Retail area*: the proposed retail area will serve as a small ancillary use of the climbing centre, selling specific climbing products from the customer service area, which also includes a reception.
- *Café*: the proposal also includes an ancillary café area
- *Changing rooms and WCs*: changing facilities and WCs will be provided within the facility

2.4 The proposed use will generate employment with the potential for 15 full-time members of staff and 15 part-time members of staff.

2.5 The Climbing Hangar will be open to members of the public at the following times:

Day	Opening Hours
Monday - Friday	06:30 - 22:00
Saturday/Sunday	09:00 - 20:00

2.6 Minor external alterations are required to facilitate the use and entail minor amendments to entrances/exits, windows and provision of new glazed frontage in the location of the existing roller shutter. An air source heat pump is proposed on the side elevation.

2.7 The proposal includes 16 car parking spaces and 24 cycle parking spaces (12 external spaces and 12 internal spaces).

2.8 This application is being presented to the Planning Applications Committee as it is a major application owing to the fact the change of use relates to more than 1000 sqm of floorspace.

3. PLANS/ DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED:

- 5.900_Rev* - Detail - Cycle St Plan
- 5.901_Rev* - Detail - Cycle St Elevations
- 2.200_Rev G - Proposed Elevations

Received 23rd August 2022

The Climbing Hangar Sustainability

Received 22nd August 2022

Vectos Response to Reading Borough Council (RBC) Transport Development Control dated July 2022

Received 26th July 2022

0.000_Rev B - OS Location Plan
0.001_Rev G - Existing Site Plan
0.200_Rev F - Existing Elevations
2.001_Rev I - Proposed Site Plan
2.200_Rev F - Proposed Elevations

Received 11th May 2022

0.100_Rev E - Existing Ground Floor Plan
0.101_Rev E - Existing First Floor Plan
0.102_Rev B - Existing Roof Plan
2.100_Rev G - Proposed Ground Floor Plan
2.101_Rev F - Proposed First Floor Plan
2.102_Rev B - Proposed Roof Plan
Application Form
Planning Statement & Sequential Assessment
Flood Risk Assessment
Supporting Letter ref.MB1116
Transport Statement VN222202 dated March 2022 prepared by Vectos

Received 29th March 2022

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 None relevant to this site, but application 220637/FUL at Scours Lane (*Proposed development a Drive-Through restaurant (Use Class E (a,b) and Sui Generis Hot Food Take Away, Car Parking, enhanced landscaping and Access Arrangements*) is also being presented to this committee on 7th September 2022 and is located 32m to the south-west of this site at Stadium Way.

5. CONSULTATIONS:

5.1 Internal Consultees

Transport: No objection, subject to condition

Planning Policy Manager: No objection

Environmental Protection: No objection

5.2 External consultation:

Environment Agency: Did not wish to be consulted

- 5.3 A site notice was displayed. In addition, the following addresses were formally consulted via letter on 11/04/22:

Units 1-12 Stadium Way

- 5.4 One representation was received querying the address of the site, as it had been submitted as 'Unit 8a' Stadium Way

Officer Comment: Originally, the application was submitted under the address 'Unit 8a' Stadium Way. Upon further investigation, the agent confirmed that the site is 'Unit 8' Stadium Way and the application amended accordingly.

LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC2: Sustainable Construction and Design
CC3: Adaption to Climate Change
CC4: Decentralised Energy Source
CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
EM2: Location of New Employment Development
EM3: Loss of Employment Land
EM4: Maintaining a Variety of Premises
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Parking
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
EN18: Flooding and Drainage

Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues for consideration are:

- a) Principle of Development
- b) Transport considerations
- c) Design and impact on the character of the area
- d) Impact on neighbouring amenity
- e) Sustainability
- f) Flooding
- g) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Appraisal

- a) Principle of Development

- 6.2 The application site is located within Core Employment Area EM2h: Portman Road. Policy EM2 defines the boundaries of Core Employment Areas to be the main location for industrial and warehouse uses and there is a general presumption against loss of employment land in these areas. It is noted, however, that the related policies should ensure a flexible and responsive supply of employment land in Reading.
- 6.3 In terms of the principle of loss of employment land within a Core Employment Area, the measures undertaken to market the property over a lengthy period are noted. Officers advise that this provides a compelling case for loss of the employment use to another alternative commercial use, which nevertheless would still create employment opportunities. It is also worth being aware of paragraph 4.3.16 of the Local Plan, the supporting text to policy EM3 on loss of employment land. This defines 'employment land' as including other uses not within the B use classes (as they were then) but for which an employment area is the only realistic location. One of the stated possible considerations is whether a use would require a building with high, blank frontages, which may well be the case for a climbing use. Climbing uses require a certain height clearance that can only regularly be found in industrial or warehouse units and therefore it is accepted that this particular site would be able to provide this setting. Upon consultation with the Planning Policy Manager, it was not considered that a sequential test (demonstrating that this site was the most sequentially preferable for the facility) was necessary for a climbing facility. According to the NPPF, the requirement for a sequential test relates to 'main town centre uses' which include "more intensive sport and recreation uses" which this is not considered to be.
- 6.4 Given the above, there is no in-principle objection to the proposals, as also confirmed by the Planning Policy Manager, subject to all other matters (as discussed below) being satisfactory. Notwithstanding, whilst the proposed change of use is considered acceptable, as other uses in Class E (retail, food premises etc) have different characteristics to the proposed use, they may not be appropriate for this site and therefore a condition is recommended restricting the use of the site to the Class E(d) use specified (Climbing Centre). It will also be conditioned that the retail areas (café and shop) remain ancillary to the climbing centre. The current application has been considered on the basis of change of use to a climbing centre only.

b) Transport considerations

- 6.5 This site is located in an industrial area and is served from Stadium Way, which is an industrial estate service road. A high proportion of the traffic using the road is commercial traffic ranging from light vans to articulated lorries. There is high demand for parking in the area.
- 6.6 The site is accessed from Stadium Way in the north, which forms a priority junction with Scours Lane and wider vehicle access is via the Scours Lane/Oxford Road priority T-junction. It is proposed the indoor climbing centre will operate during the following times with potential for up to 15 full-time members of staff and 15 part-time members of staff.
- 6.7 It is stated that the applicant's core audience generally consists of 16 to 45-year olds, ranging from young professionals to families. The majority of users are between the ages of 18 and 29 (which makes up around 65% of members).
- 6.8 Policy TR5 states that development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable

transport facilities, particularly public transport. Local parking standards are set out in the Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which takes into account the accessibility of the site.

- 6.9 However, there are no adopted parking standards for this specific type of use. Therefore, an application of this type, will be considered on its own merits considering business operations, staffing numbers and anticipated number of customers.
- 6.10 In terms of car parking, the proposal will deliver a total of 16 allocated vehicle bays overall for customers and staff (including disabled parking adjacent to the building entrance).
- 6.11 A Transport Statement has been submitted to support the application and further information has been submitted regarding the operation of the business. Data has been collected from the operational Climbing Hangar site in Exeter as it is anticipated that the proposed Reading facility will operate in a similar manner.
- 6.12 The applicant has clarified that the typical duration of visits by members to their climbing centres is around one hour, and during a peak period on a weekday (between 6 and 7 pm) the entry numbers are up to 45 users in an hour. A comparable level of occupation is expected for the proposed Reading facility. The applicant has undertaken a trip rate analysis of the existing use utilising the Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) and this has established that the existing use would generate 9 vehicle movements in the AM Peak and 5 in the PM Peak. To establish the proposed trip generation the applicant has provided data from another existing walking climbing facility and this has indicated that within the AM peak period the proposal would generate 4 vehicle movements with 34 generated in the PM Peak period. The increase in trips within the PM Peak would be 29 equating to 1 vehicle movement every 2 minutes.

The site will be open between the following hours:

- Monday - Friday: 6.30pm - 10pm.
- Saturday - Sunday: 9am - 8pm.

- 6.13 Data on arrival numbers has been collected from the operational Climbing Hangar site in Exeter to give a daily entry profile of visitors and indication of the level of occupation throughout the day. A comparable daily profile of visitors is expected for the proposed Reading facility. It is anticipated that a peak period will occur between 5pm - 8pm where around 46% of daily weekday users arrive within this 3-hour early evening window. The peak hour is between 6pm - 7pm where 45 members arrive. During the weekend arrivals at the site are much more even throughout the day, with a maximum of 30 visitors arriving between 10am - 11am.

Table 2 shows a breakdown of the number of staff that will be on-site across a typical day.

Period	No. Staff
Weekday Mornings	3 – 4 Staff Members
Weekday Afternoons	3 – 4 Staff Members
Weekday Evenings	3 – 4 Staff Members
Weekends	5 – 6 Staff Members
During Timetabled Sessions	No changes to the above

- 6.14 The applicant has confirmed that there will be no regional or national competitions undertaken at the site whereby people would travel into the premises and that the site will at no time be available for private bookings.
- 6.15 The proposed Reading climbing facility be provided with a total of 16 allocated parking spaces. Anticipated travel / parking behaviours associated with the proposal site have been subject to further analysis by assessing parking demand at the operational Climbing Hangar site in Exeter with 15 parking spaces.
- 6.16 It is indicated that during a typical weekday, the proposed 16 on-site spaces could be fully occupied between 5pm - 6pm only, when some overspill parking could potentially occur. During a typical weekend day the proposed parking provision could be fully occupied for a period of two hours, between 11am - 1pm. The applicant has confirmed that the wider estate at the Stadium Trade and Business Park has an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology management system, whereby car parking is monitored in order to ensure that there is no unauthorised / unsafe / inappropriate parking activity. They have also stated that it has been confirmed by Grip-UK Ltd that Unit 8 has permission to use the wider parking in the estate during times when the adjacent businesses are closed. Given that the peak demands for the proposal will mainly be outside of the peak times for the industrial units this has been accepted and no overspill parking would occur.
- 6.17 The site will also be provided with cycle parking facilities that will further encourage travel via this mode. The proposal will provide a total of 24 cycle parking spaces. 12 spaces will be located adjacent to the main site entrance and a further 12 spaces will be provided within the site as standing bike spaces. There are no specific standards for a climbing centre but a gym / leisure facility of a similar size would require a provision of just 4 cycle spaces, the proposed provision is therefore deemed acceptable. The external cycle stands will be covered, and the cycle parking secured via condition.
- 6.18 It should be noted that the Oxford Road / Scours Lane / Bramshaw Road junction has been recently assessed in relation to application 220637 (Scours Lane - see planning history section of this report) and this has identified that the junction is well within capacity and therefore this proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on this junction. In addition, the Oxford Road / Norcot Road / Wigmore Lane junction has also recently been assessed and this does identify that it is within close proximity of its actual capacity. However, once the distribution split of traffic has been assessed the proposal would generate a reduced number of vehicles travelling through the junction than the 29 vehicle movements identified above and as such this would not have a detrimental impact on the junction.
- 6.19 Overall, the two developments (this, and that at Scours Lane) would result in a minor increase in vehicle movements on the Highway Network and could not be classified as a severe impact given that the Drive Thru application (220463) has assessed the Oxford Road / Scours Lane junction along with the Oxford Road / Norcot Road / Wigmore Lane roundabout junction which has identified that the junctions would remain within capacity.
- 6.20 In view of the above, it is considered that the development if permitted would not lead to an unacceptable increase in traffic or parking on the surrounding highway network in line with policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

c) Design and impact on the character of the area

- 6.21 There are no external alterations proposed to facilitate the change of use, other than the obscuring of high level windows where changing facilities would be and the installation of a glazed frontage to replace the existing roller shutter. A timber bin shelter and cycle store is proposed at the front of the site. Given the small scale of the external works, the proposal would therefore not be considered to detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding industrial area, in accordance with Policy CC7. An informative will be attached, to advise the applicant that any future signage would be subject to separate Advertisement Consent and is not approved as part of this planning application, despite being indicated on the plans.
- 6.22 Further to the above, Policy CC7 specifically states that design should “*address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people so that they can use them safely and easily*”. The building is a public building and as such needs to be suitable in terms of incorporating disabled access. The applicant has confirmed that the building allows access by people with disabilities and those with young children, as providing level thresholds and level access throughout the property and the main public areas of the use across a single level only. Disabled changing and w/c facilities are incorporated. In this instance, given the context of the site and nature of the proposals this is considered acceptable to comply with Policy CC7 in this respect.

d) Impact on neighbouring amenity

- 6.23 Taking into consideration the industrial nature of the surrounding area, and the nature of the proposals, they are not considered to result in any material harm to neighbouring occupiers in terms of loss of light, privacy or overbearing impact. Similarly, Environmental Protection officers have raised not concerns in respect of noise or disturbance in principle (the building is sufficiently located away from sensitive receptors) and the surrounding area. As such the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of Policy CC8.

e) Sustainability

- 6.24 Policy CC4 states: “*Any development of more than 20 dwellings and/ or non-residential development of over 1,000 sq m shall consider the inclusion of decentralised energy provision, within the site, unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is not suitable, feasible or viable for this form of energy provision.*”
- 6.25 Policy CC2 requires non-residential minor developments to meet ‘Very Good’ BREEAM standards, where possible. Further to this, the Policy does acknowledge that for some uses such as industrial and warehouses it might be difficult to meet these standards. In cases where it might be more difficult to achieve this standard, then “developments much demonstrate that the standard to be achieved is the highest possible for the development.”
- 6.26 However, the applicant has advised that the approach is not achievable and that due to the construction of the building and nature of the relatively minor scope of works, it is very unlikely that a BREEAM certificate would be able to be issued. Indeed, it is considered that significant parts of the building would have to be reconstructed, which is neither practical nor what the planning permission was for.
- 6.27 The building was not originally designed and constructed with BREEAM in mind and it is not practical or reasonable to request external works beyond the scope for which

permission was applied for. As such, the BREEAM credits are unlikely to be achieved. The applicant has provided a list of BREEAM credits and discussed why these are unachievable in this instance, or in some cases not applicable (mainly owing to the refurbishment nature of the proposals). Examples include:

- Project brief and design - the building itself is not being changed the proposed brief does not include any major redevelopment of the building's envelope, services or integral structure.
- Life cycle cost and service life planning - It is The Climbing Hangar's policy to only change elements of the building that require alteration and to not generate additional waste unnecessarily.
- Acoustic performance - It would be wholly unsustainable to replace the existing wall cladding, for example, given the proposed use would not result in substantial harm in terms of noise levels, given the surrounding area is commercial

6.28 Instead, the applicant considers that more appropriate practical measures could be incorporated into the scheme:

- Installing an Air-source heat pump
- Retain and re-use any Mechanical and Electrical services from the existing fit out where possible.
- LED energy efficient lighting with PIR sensors within front of house for low frequency usage areas
- Covered cycle externally and internal cycle storage designed and specified in line with BREEAM guidelines to encourage sustainable access. Internal changing facilities to encourage walking and cycling to the facility.
- Toilet and changing facilities for customers to include automatic timed shut off taps and urinal flush sensors to reduce water wastage, along with energy efficient hand dryers.

6.29 Whilst Policy CC2 requires non-residential minor developments (including conversions) to meet the 'Very Good' BREEAM standards, it does stipulate where possible and acknowledged that for some cases such as industrial units and warehouses it might be difficult to meet these standards. Whilst fully acknowledging the 'downgrading' of this condition, the above commentary is considered in this very specific instance, given the context of the site and nature of the proposals, to be satisfactory, enabling officers to apply some flexibility in the recommendations within the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2019 and to comply with Policy CC2 in this respect. It is also considered particularly positive that a decentralised energy source is proposed, which is compliant with Policy CC4 of the Local Plan (2019).

f) Flooding

6.30 The site is located within Flood Zone 2. The most recent use of the site was as offices and warehouse which is classified as a "less vulnerable use" within Table 2: Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification. The proposed use for sport and leisure would also fall within the "less vulnerable use" category of Table 2 and therefore the proposed change of use would not increase the vulnerability to flooding. The Environment Agency did not wish to comment on the proposal and on this basis, the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough

Local Plan (2019). However, some brief details on a flood evacuation were detailed in the supporting Flood Risk Assessment which will be secured via condition. These measures include monitoring the Environment Agency for flood alerts and undertaking visual monitoring of the site.

g) Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

6.31 The proposed development does not attract a CIL charge.

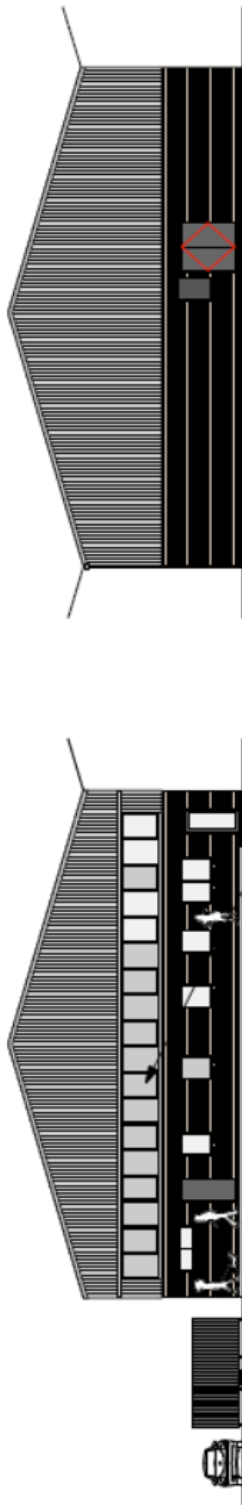
Equality Act 2010:

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

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 It is considered that the proposal is acceptable when assessed in relation to national and local policy, as outlined in the report. The recommendation is therefore to grant planning permission, subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Connie Davis



01 Elevation A 1:200

03 Elevation C 1:200

Existing fire doors expanded.

Windows to be made opaque where walls or changing facilities are built up to rear.

Vertical timber screen to bin store.

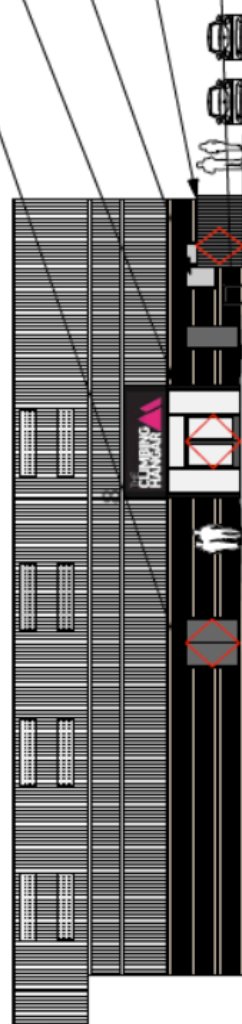
Existing fire doors expanded.

Glazed Screen Inc Doors and signage in existing Roller Shutter opening.

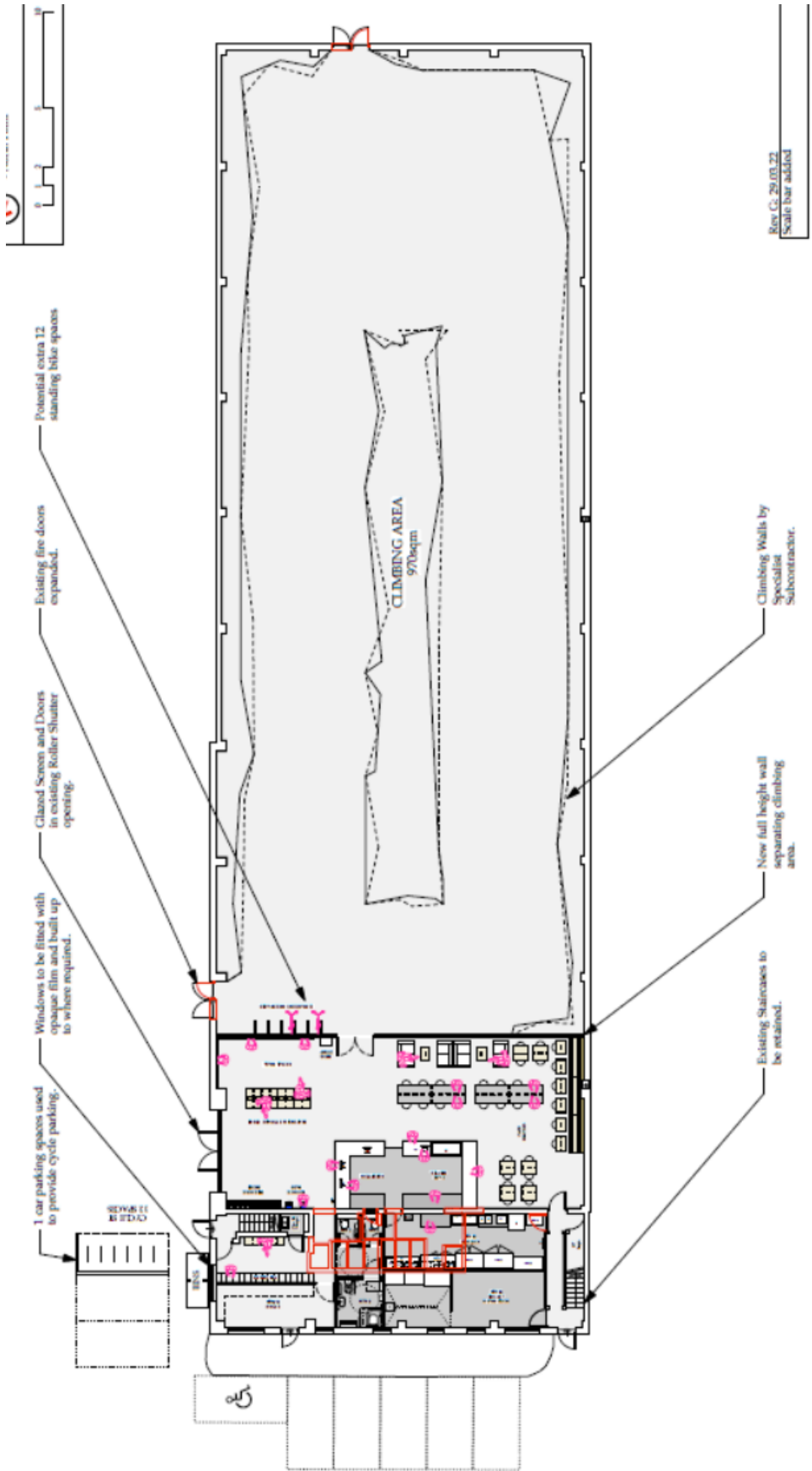
Window to be made opaque where walls are built up to rear.

Vertical timber screen to bin store.

Sheffield cycle stands adjacent to entrance.



02 Elevation B 1:200



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 7 September 2022

Ward: Kentwood

App No.: 220637/FUL

Address: Scours Lane, Tilehurst, Reading

Proposals: Proposed development of a Drive-Through restaurant (Use Class E (a,b) and Sui Generis Hot Food Take Away, Car Parking, enhanced landscaping and Access Arrangements

Applicant: Cube Real Estate Ltd

Deadline: An extension of time has been agreed until 9th September 2022

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE planning permission for the following reason:

1. The proposed development would result in the loss of undesignated open space that has not been previously developed and which currently makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance and environmental quality of the area due to its openness, undeveloped character and green vegetated appearance. As such the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area contrary to Policies CC7 and EN8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives

- 1.Plans refused
- 2.If otherwise approving, developer liable for costs associated with seeking and providing a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in respect of altering parking restrictions on Scours Lane
- 3.If otherwise approving, developer liable for costs associated with relocating lamp column and litter bins.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site relates to an area of grassland located on the south east side of Scours Lane, opposite the junction with Oxford Road, near Norcot Roundabout. There is a change in site levels and the site slopes up from the north to the south of the site.
- 1.2 The surrounding area to the north and west is predominantly comprised of the industrial and commercial units of Stadium Way. The area to the south is predominantly residential, with shops nearby on the opposite (south) side of the Norcot Roundabout. The River Thames is to the north of the site, beyond the railway line.

- 1.3 The site is located within the Portman Road Core Employment Area (EM2h) as well as within an Air Quality Management Area.
- 1.4 There are 3 trees on the site which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (reference 30/10). Scours Lane is a designated Green Link and Oxford Road a treed corridor, which these trees, and others on the site, form part of.
- 1.5 The rearmost part of the site, to the north, is within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as designated by the Environment Agency.
- 1.6 The site location plan together with site photographs are shown below:

Site location plan (not to scale)



Aerial view



1.7 This application has been called-in for Committee determination by the request of Councillor Keeping due to concerns for increased traffic.

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 Full Planning Permission is sought for a mixed-use of drive-thru restaurant Use Class E (a, b) and Sui Generis hot food takeaway for a Gregg's bakery/coffee outlet.

2.2 The proposed building would be 165m² in size and would be constructed out of material to include metal cladding in dark grey and blue colours. The proposals would incorporate internal and external seating areas.

2.3 The submission indicates the split of customers would be 20% eat in, 50% drive through and 30% takeaway.

2.4 A new access is proposed off Scours Lane and 22 car parking spaces are proposed, to include 3 disabled parking bays and 5 bays with electric vehicle charging points.

2.4 The proposals include soft landscaping, tree planting and indicative biodiversity enhancements.

2.5 SUBMITTED PLANS AND DOCUMENTS:

Site Location Plan 2483 P00a

Site Block Plan as Existing 2483 208101

Site Block Plan as Proposed 2483 208150

Ground Floor Plan as Proposed 2483 208151
Ground Floor Plan as Proposed 2483 208150
Elevations as Proposed 2483 208250
Sections as Proposed 2483 208350
Landscape Cross Sections QD784-301
Cellular Tree Protection System QD784-303
Well being Space QD788-200
Seating Area Layout QD788-201
Tree Survey Report by Quartet Design dated January 2022
Arboricultural Impact Assessment/Arboricultural Method Statement
Green Link Planting Principles QD784-307
Wider Green Link Corridor QD784-306
Green Link Ecological Enhancements GD784_305 Rev A
Landscaping Masterplan GD784-300
Received 6th August 2022

Transport Statement dated September 2021
Energy Strategy Statement Rev 01
Noise Impact Assessment January 2022
Flood Risk Assessment dated September 2021
Design and Access Statement dated April 2022
Air Quality Assessment dated February 2022
Odour Risk Assessment dated February 2022
Retail Sequential Test Assessment dated June 2021
Planning Statement dated April 2022
Community Statement
Received 29th April 2022

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 211706/FUL - Retail drive through pod (Use Class E (a.b) and sui generis hot food takeaway, car parking, landscaping and access. Withdrawn.
- 3.2 200912/PRE Pre-application advice for proposed construction of 1 retail drive-through pod (Use classes A1, A3 and A5) including car parking, landscaping and access arrangement. Comments provided; concern raised in respect of the impact on the character of the area.

Other Nearby Sites of Relevance

- 3.3 *8 Stadium Way*
220463/FUL Change of use of vacant unit to use as an indoor climbing centre (Use Class E(d)), minor amendments to building elevations/entrances, provision of cycle/bin storage and associated works. Pending Consideration - also on the Agenda for the Planning Application Committee 7th October 2022. The site is in close proximity, located approximately 32m to the north east.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal Consultees

RBC Transport

- 4.1 No objection subject to conditions to include submission and approval of construction method statement, cycle parking, delivery and servicing. Discussed further below.

RBC Natural Environment

- 4.2 Further to revised plans demonstrating replacement planting, no objection subject to condition to secure tree protection and landscaping. Discussed further below.

RBC Ecology

- 4.3 Further to revised plans demonstrating replacement plant and additional biodiversity enhancements, no objection, discussed further below.

RBC Environmental Protection

- 4.4 No objection subject to conditions in respect of noise, odour, hours of use, bins/rats and contaminated land. Discussed further below.

Berkshire Archaeology

- 4.5 No objection subject to condition requiring submission and approval of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation. Discussed further below.

External Consultees

Environment Agency

- 4.6 No comments received.

5. Publicity

- 5.1 Surrounding neighbouring properties were notified of the applications by letter. A site notice was also displayed at the application site.

- 5.2 Three letters of objection and 14 letters of support and have been received. Comments and concerns are summarised as follows;

Objection

- technical reports not fit for purpose
- loss of grassed area will impact flooding
- will impact quiet enjoyment of residents
- impact on traffic
- already plethora of other hot food takeaways in area
- odour problems
- permission for food hut previously refused
- littering

Support

- great idea
- best thing to happen to Scours Lane
- great to have outside town centre
- Greggs offers vegan options
- will bring business to the area
- will freshen up existing business in area
- positive as nothing like this in the area
- area needs a fresh hot food outlet
- no other easily accessible Greggs in Reading Borough Council
- great to have in walking distance
- limited food outlets in area
- prices affordable

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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

6.2 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 Guidance 2014 onwards

6.3 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

6.4 **Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019):**

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure

EM1: Provision of Employment
EM2: Location of New Employment Development
EM3: Loss of Employment Land
EN8: Undesignated Open Space
EN12: Areas of Archaeological Significance
EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
EN18: Flooding and Drainage
TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
RL2: Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development
RL3: Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres
RL5: Impact of Main Town Centre Uses

6.5 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

Other relevant documents:

Reading Tree Strategy (2021)
Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (2021)

7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Principle of Development/Land Use Matters
- Design Considerations and Impact on Character of the Area
- Impact on Natural Environment - Trees, Landscaping and Ecology
- Impact on Parking/Highways
- Impact on Flooding
- Impact on Neighbouring Properties
- Sustainability
- Archaeology

Principle of Development/Land Use Matters

7.1 The site is located within a Core Employment Area as per Policy EM2 (Location of New Employment Development). The proposals would not seek to introduce a non-employment use in the area and the development would not, in itself, result in the loss of employment land or floorspace.

7.2 The proposed use is a town centre use in an edge of town centre location.

The NPPF specifies that retail development should be located in line with a sequential approach, and that it should have no detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres. This is reiterated in Policy RL2 (Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development) which proposals outside designated centres will need to demonstrate that a sequential approach has been adopted to site selection.

- 7.3 As part of this application submission, a sequential test to site selection has been provided. The sequential test considers the availability of premises within and on the edge of Reading Town Centre which would be capable of accommodating the proposal's requirements. The sequential assessment includes sites within a defined search area, of between 1,879m² and 2,818m² and clearly seen and accessible from an A or B road. Outside of this range, the submission considers that sites would not be viable or would not meet the established needs of the operator and these sites have not been assessed.
- 7.4 It is considered that suitable parameters have been provided for identifying alternative sites that are consistent with NPPF and PPG guidance. It is also considered that the submission demonstrates a reasonable degree of flexibility in relation to its size and furthermore, given the nature of the use and requirement for passing traffic, the need to be clearly visible from an A or B road is accepted.
- 7.5 Whilst the applicant's sequential test does not identify alternative sites in other district/local centres, it is considered that the emphasis in the NPPF is on the protection of Town Centres rather than smaller neighbourhood centres.
- 7.6 The conclusion of the sequential site assessment is that there are no suitable and available sites that would meet the requirements of the developer as a consequence of either insufficient available floorspace, or a level of floorspace significantly in excess of that required or not visible from an A or B road (given the nature of the use).
- 7.7 Given the above, the proposals are considered to accord with Policy RL2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 which advises that planning applications for main town centre uses in out-of-town centre or edge of town centre locations will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated there are no other sequentially preferable sites or premises.

Retail Impact

- 7.8 The Council has adopted a threshold of 1,000 sqm in Policy RL5 (Impact of Main Town Centre Uses) for assessment of retail impact. The proposal relates to development of less than 1000 sqm, and, therefore, does not require an assessment of impact. There is therefore no policy objection to the proposed development in terms of impact.

Design Considerations and Impact on Character of the Area

- 7.38 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires that all development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is situated. Policy EN8 (Undesignated Open Space) states that there will be a presumption in favour of retention of undesignated open space.....The quality of existing open space should not be eroded by insensitive development on adjoining land”. This is in line with the expectations of paragraph 99 of the NPPF for the protection of open space.
- 7.39 The application submission states that, “the site is not presently in any significant recreational use which would be displaced as a result of the development”. The definition of ‘open space’ in the glossary to the NPPF does not limit it to land in public ownership, but all space of public value. Furthermore, and importantly, the NPPG confirms that open space can take many forms, including being an important part of the landscape and setting of built environments. This is reflected in the supporting text to Policy EN8 which explains that “Reading has many areas of open space not identified in Policy EN7 (Local Green Space and Public Open Space) in both public and private ownership. It is important that these areas are retained where possible”.
- 7.40 It is acknowledged that the piece of land does not have and formal recreational use. However, aerial imagery shows that the area formed part of the open land around the site when it served the Greyhound Stadium, before its redevelopment to an industrial estate in the 1970s/1980s. The land has the character and appearance of an open area of managed grassland which provides valuable relief between the industrial/commercial areas to the north and the busy Oxford Road and residential areas to the south. It is one of the very few large areas of soft landscaping within the vicinity. The site has visual amenity value (as well as important natural environment designations) and is an important area of undesignated green space in this otherwise built-up area. The site forms part of the openness coming from the denser Oxford Road to the east towards the more suburban area of Tilehurst to the west and is clearly visible - and providing landscaped relief - from all directions. Its inherent openness is an important part of its character, and it marks a change in character in the urban environment and it is important in doing so. The appearance of the grassed areas of the site and the existing trees makes a significant positive contribution to the landscape character of this approach into the town centre.
- 7.41 It is asserted in the submission that the majority of the site is to remain untouched. However, it is considered that the erection on the site of the proposed building and the formation of its associated hardstanding areas and presence of cars would result in a large amount of the presently grassed area being developed and broken up. The physical appearance of the proposed building and its associated hardstanding areas (roads/cars, footpaths, parking areas, outdoor seating areas) and the visual impact of

them would result in the loss of the open character of the grassed amenity space which contribute to the landscape character of the area, all to the detriment of the amenity and landscape character and visual amenity of the area.

- 7.42 Further to the above, it is recognised that the amount of tree planting, wildflower planting and ecological enhancements (discussed below) proposed would mitigate harm to ecology and the Green Network. However, this is secondary to the fundamental concern over the loss of this open space and overall undeveloped green character. It is officers' strong opinion that the proposed development would significantly change the site's natural and open character by removing a substantial area of existing green space trees of amenity value and replacing it with a new building and associated hardstanding. This would have a detrimental impact on the amenity and landscape function that this piece of undesignated open space provides to this area, contrary to Policies CC7 and EN8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Natural Environment - Trees, Landscaping and ecology

- 7.43 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks that development shall maintain and enhance the character of the area in which it is located including landscaping. Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) requires new development to make provision for tree retention and planting to assist in extending the Borough's vegetation cover. The site is also located within an Air Quality Management Area which increases the importance of tree retention. Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and The Green Network) requires that new development should provide a net gain for biodiversity where possible and should incorporate biodiversity features into proposals where practical.
- 7.44 Application 211706 (see planning history above) was partly withdrawn due to concerns regarding the protection of retained trees, insufficient landscaping and unacceptable fragmentation of the green link and wider green network.
- 7.45 The current submission is the same proposal for the area within the site boundaries but, in addition, includes significant green link and ecological enhancement along Scours Lane, Stadium Way and Wigmore Lane (on applicant land) to show the applicant's wider landscape and ecological aims.
- 7.46 2 trees are proposed to be removed to enable development (T2 Black Alder and T3 Cherry); 3 trees would be affected by the erection of a retaining wall across their root protection areas (protected T1 Leyland Cypress, T4 Cherry and T5 Black Alder); and 2 trees would have a cellular confinement system driveway installed across their root protection areas to protect their roots from compaction via vehicles (T8 Ash and T9, a protected London Plane).

- 7.47 The Council's Natural Environment Officer has confirmed that one of the affected trees, T1 (Leyland Cypress), is already in a poor condition - classed as a category U tree - and is considered a tree of limited value and unsuitable for retention. However, other existing trees that would be affected by the proposal are highly prominent trees visible from Oxford Road that have a high amenity value and contribute positively to the open character of the area.
- 7.48 To mitigate against the loss of these trees and to provide ecological enhancements, the following is proposed:
- 119 new trees to be planted on site and along Stadium Way, Scours Lane and Wigmore Lane - 38 planted in association with the proposed development within the site boundary and 81 planted outside the site boundary to enhance the wider green link
 - Native shrub planting on site and along Stadium Way
 - Wildflower planting along Wigmore Lane
 - 5 bird boxes, 4 bat boxes, hedgehog hotels and 4 log piles within boundary
 - 15 bird/bat boxes on existing trees and warehouse buildings outside boundary
- 7.49 As above, the trees to be removed to enable development are prominent trees, visible from the busy Oxford Road, of high amenity value. In contrast, a significant share of the proposed 119 trees, such as those along Stadium Way would have limited public amenity value due to less exposure to traffic/public. The same is true, to a lesser extent, for the trees along Wigmore Avenue.
- 7.50 Natural Environment Officers consider that the new trees proposed on the Oxford Road frontage would at maturity, eventually match the amenity value of those removed and that the tree cover net gain as a result of the proposals is considered, on balance, to mitigate successfully against the loss of the existing trees - from a replacement tree perspective. This more technical approach, tree for tree, is considered acceptable in terms of tree numbers. However, officers consider that the visual impact in the short to medium term would be harmful as described above and also, importantly, for the longer term, this does not mitigate fundamental concerns about the impact on the open and undeveloped character of the area as described in the section above.
- 7.51 The Council's Ecologist has raised no objection to the proposals due to the enhancements proposed that would contribute towards enhancing the green network. In technical terms, the Ecologist does not consider that the proposal would result in fragmentation of the two green links that cross the site (nor the wider green network) and that whilst a biodiversity net gain metric calculation has not been provided, the proposals would likely result in a net gain in habitat units as measured using the DEFRA Metric.

- 7.52 Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, conditions would have been recommended to secure tree protection measures during development, Arboricultural supervision and inspections. A landscaping condition would have also been recommended to secure planting details to include the species, maintenance and management schedule and a condition to require full details of the ecological enhancements (to include ongoing maintenance and monitoring arrangements). In accordance with Policies EN12 and EN14.

Traffic Generation and Parking

- 7.9 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. The applicant has produced a transport statement to accompany the application.
- 7.10 The site is accessible on-foot and by cycle to a range of local destinations. Pedestrian crossing facilities are provided on the A329 Oxford Road facilitating direct pedestrian access to Norcot Road to the south, and across the Wigmore Lane and Norcot Road arms of the roundabout junction. A signalised pedestrian crossing is provided across the A329 Oxford Road, circa 200-metres south-east of the roundabout.
- 7.11 The site also benefits from access to frequent public transport services operating along the A329 Oxford Road corridor.

Access

- 7.12 Scours Lane is approximately 6.7m in width, subject to a 30mph speed limit and is provided with footways on both sides of the carriageway and street lighting. Scours Lane provides access to the Stadium Way Industrial Estate, Deacon Way as well as access to Reading City football club, The Atrium Health Club, Reading Marine Services, Park, Riverside Park Homes and the River Thames.
- 7.13 Scours Lane forms a give-way controlled crossroads junction with the A329 Oxford Road and Bramshaw Road. Heading eastwards on the A329 Oxford Road there is no right turn lane waiting area or filter lane into Scours Lane; however, 'Keep Clear' markings are provided over the eastbound carriageway through the junction to prevent blocking for traffic turning into / out of Scours Lane.
- 7.14 The proposed unit would be accessed from Scours Lane approximately 40m north of its junction with the A329 Oxford Road. The proposed site access road would be 6.0m in width to facilitate two-way movement of vehicles entering and exiting the proposed retail drive-thru pod simultaneously. The

new bell-mouth junction would be constructed with 4.0m radii on both sides of the proposed site access road. The vehicular access would be provided with 2.4m x 43m visibility splays in both directions in accordance with the Manual for Streets requirement for a 30mph road. Transport Officers confirm that in terms of access design, the proposal is acceptable.

- 7.15 A lamp column and refuse/recycling bins would need to be relocated to facilitate the access, but a new location has not been identified on the submitted plans. Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, the applicant would be advised that they would be liable for any costs associated with relocating the lamp column (separate to the costs associated with the changes to the parking regulations) and that these works would be required to be undertaken with the Council's approved contractor before any works associated with the proposed access be implemented.
- 7.16 The area experiences high levels of on-street parking especially with large HGV and articulated trucks on the east side of Scours Lane which is currently unrestricted. Transport Officers advise that the visibility splays from the proposed site access would be impacted by high levels of on-street parking. Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, a financial contribution towards a review of the existing parking regulations in the area - with the view to implementing parking restrictions on Scours Lane in close proximity to the site access - would have been sought and secured by S106 Legal Agreement. Transport Officers advise that the financial contribution would have amounted to £7,500.
- 7.17 The length of the one-way drive-thru lane from the serving hatch to the main parking area is approx. 50m providing queuing length for at least 8-9 vehicles at any one time. A further 40m of additional queuing length, equivalent to an additional 6-7 vehicles, is also available within the main parking area which Transport Officers have confirmed is acceptable.

Parking

- 7.18 The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically, these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities. In accordance with the adopted SPD, a maximum parking standard of 1 space per 5sqm should be provided (based on class A3 Restaurant & Café' use) equating to 35 parking spaces. The proposals include the provision of 22 parking spaces which falls below the adopted standards.
- 7.19 It is stated by the applicant that given the nature of the uses proposed, only a proportion of customers would choose to park, either for purchasing or consuming goods. To justify a lower parking provision, a car parking accumulation exercise has been undertaken by the applicant, for weekday

and Saturday/Sunday peak periods. The peak in demand is anticipated to occur during the Saturday lunchtime period 12:00-13:00hrs when it is anticipated that a total of 19 car parking spaces would be occupied. A review of the parking restrictions on Scours Lane (as recommend by Transport Officers above) would ensure that no overspill would occur on the public highway.

- 7.20 The proposed car park would incorporate the provision of 5 x active EV charging bays (23%). Whilst this would be an over-provision, Transport Officers do not consider this would result in an overspill of car parking.
- 7.21 The level of cycle parking proposed would be in excess of the minimum standards as laid out in the RBC Parking Standards and Design SPD of 1 space per 6 staff plus 1 space per 300m². 5 x 'Sheffield' cycle stands for customer and staff use would be provided. However, the cycle parking must also be covered if it is be used for staff cycle parking. Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, exact detail of cycle parking could have been dealt with by way of condition.

Servicing & Deliveries

- 7.23 Deliveries to the proposed retail drive-thru pod would come from the Company's distribution warehouse where timings are controlled such that the restaurant receives its fixed delivery slot and on-site staff are notified within 30-min of a vehicle arrival to make any necessary preparations for servicing. Where feasible, deliveries are scheduled to arrive on-site during quiet trading periods.
- 7.24 It is envisaged that the proposed retail drive-thru pod would receive three deliveries per week for frozen, chilled and ambient products all of which could be accommodated in one multi-temperature vehicle per visit. The proposed retail drive-thru pod would be provided with a dedicated delivery bay of 13.0m in length and 2.8m in width that would be located at the northern end of the pod 'island' with trolleying distance for food deliveries and refuse collection being less than 20.0m from the delivery bay. A swept path analysis of a 10m long rigid delivery vehicle accessing the delivery bay and entering / exiting the site in a forward gear is provided within the submitted Transport Statement and Transport Officers confirm this is acceptable.
- 7.25 Refuse collection would be made by a private contractor. Refuse collections would be timed outside of peak hours and scheduled to not be concurrent with food deliveries utilising the dedicated delivery bay.
- 7.26 Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, a condition would have been recommended for submission and approval of a scheme to manage deliveries and servicing.

Trip Generation

- 7.27 Concern has been raised by Councillors around the potential for increasing traffic delays around the already busy Norcot roundabout. Concern is raised that the potential addition to any traffic waiting to turn right from Oxford Road into Scours Lane would only exacerbate an existing problem to the main traffic flow, with the potential to increase danger.
- 7.28 The applicant has undertaken an assessment using data from fast food drive thru restaurants using the TRICS database. TRICS is the national standard system of trip generation 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 to ascertain likely trip generation. The proposal would generate an increase in trips as is illustrated in the below table taken from the Transport Statement:

Table 5.1 Vehicular Trip Generation

Time Period	Arrivals		Departures		Total		
	Trip Rate	No. Vehs.	Trip Rate	No. Vehs.	Trip Rate	No. Vehs.	
Weekday	AM Peak Hour (08:00-09:00)	9.991	17	9.519	16	19.510	33
	Lunchtime Peak Hour (12:00-13:00)	15.025	25	14.015	24	29.040	49
	PM Peak Hour (18:00-19:00)	12.437	21	13.226	22	25.663	43
	Daily	148.532	250	147.652	248	296.184	498
Saturday	Lunchtime Peak Hour (13:00-14:00)	34.236	57	34.433	58	68.669	115
	Daily	350.546	589	348.693	586	699.239	1,175
Sunday	Lunchtime Peak Hour (13:00-14:00)	24.216	41	24.457	41	48.673	82
	Daily	238.092	400	239.397	402	477.489	802

Trip Rates expressed per 100sqm

- 7.29 The proposed retail drive-thru pod has the potential to generate 33 total two-way vehicle trips during the weekday AM peak hour, 43 two-way vehicle trips during the weekday PM peak hour. It can also be seen from Table 5.1 that the proposed retail drive-thru pod would be likely to generate substantially higher traffic flows at the weekend, compared to the weekday. On a Saturday it is estimated that the proposed development could generate up to 115 total two-way vehicle trips during the lunchtime peak hourly period. On a Sunday up to 82 two-way vehicle trips could be generated during the lunchtime peak period.

7.30 As has been the case when assessing other drive through facilities within Reading it is accepted that the proposed use would attract a mixture of the following:

- New Trips - These trips are new to the network and would not take place without the proposed development being in place;
- Pass-by Trips - These trips represent traffic that is already passing the site, these trips simply divert in and re-join the network afterwards;
- Diverted Trips - These trips represent traffic passing nearby that diverts into the site, this traffic is already present on the network but the route it takes will vary; and,
- Linked Trips - These trips represent traffic that already enters the site for some other purpose and simply includes a trip to the new development as part of this. These trips have no impact on the study network.

7.31 Table 5.2 (from the Transport Statement) sets out the proportions of peak hour hourly vehicle trips by type. New (sole purpose) trips can vary between weekdays and weekends.

Table 5.2 Peak Hourly Total Two-Way Vehicle Trips by Type

Trip Type	Weekday AM Peak		Weekday PM Peak		Saturday Lunchtime Peak		Sunday Lunchtime Peak	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
New	42%	14	45%	20	36%	42	36%	30
Pass-By / Diverted	48%	16	38%	16	42%	48	42%	34
Shared	10%	3	17%	7	22%	25	22%	18
TOTAL	100%	33	100%	43	100%	115	100%	82

7.32 Transport Officers advise that it should be noted that the potential trip generation is based on data from fast food drive thru chain restaurants (McDonald, Burger King, KFC) which are considered to be higher vehicle trip generators than the proposed Gregg’s Drive-thru restaurant. Therefore, Transport Officers consider that the TRICS assessment establishes a worst-case scenario.

7.33 Capacity assessments have been undertaken of the proposed site access onto Scours Lane, the A329 Oxford Rd / Scours Lane / Bramshaw Rd crossroads as well as the A329 Oxford Rd / Wigmore Lane / Norcot Rd roundabout using the predicted vehicle trip data for the proposed development in Table 5.1 (of the Transport Statement).

- 7.34 It should be noted that the trip rates in Table 5.1 only reflect vehicle trips to the site. A detailed analysis of the two-way person trips has been undertaken in section 5 of the Transport Statement which assesses the person trips by alternative modes.
- 7.35 It is noted that the Scours Lane forms a give-way controlled crossroads junction with the A329 Oxford Road and Bramshaw Road with no right turn lane facilities into or out of Scours Lane and no enhancement of this situation is proposed. However, Transport officers confirm that the capacity assessments demonstrate that the proposed development would have an immaterial impact on the operation of the local highway network causing minimal delays above current levels.
- 7.36 Further to the above, the accident data demonstrates that one minor accident has occurred at the A329 Oxford Rd / Scours Lane / Bramshaw Rd crossroads in a 5 year period. Therefore, Transport officers consider that there is no evidence that the junction cannot accommodate the additional vehicle flows anticipated by the development or that the proposal would cause severe or detrimental impact on the surrounding local highway network. Transport Officers also consider that the proposed use would be more likely to be utilised by staff and visitors of the local business and would not generate any significant increased vehicular movement along Scours Lane.
- 7.37 Given the above, Transport Officers' clear advice is that the development, if permitted, would not lead to an unacceptable increase in traffic or parking on the surrounding highways network such to warrant a refusal on this basis. It is considered that the proposals are acceptable in transport terms and would accord with Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5.

Impact on Flooding

- 7.53 Policy EN18 (Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems) requires that development be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding...and that wherever possible development should be designed to reduce flood risk both on- and off-site.
- 7.54 The majority of the site is within Flood Zone 1 (at the lowest probability of flooding) as designated by the Environment Agency, with the rearmost part of the site (to the north) partly located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The proposals would be located to the south of the site, within Flood Zone 1, which is the area at lowest risk of flooding, and a flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application.
- 7.55 The proposal falls within the 'less vulnerable' class of the NPPG's flood risk vulnerability classification table. This type of development is considered compatible within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a as per the NPPG's Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification table. As such, in terms of flood risk, the

proposals are considered to comply with the relevant national and local policies and guidance. The proposed SuDs document has suggested that the proposed surface water drainage would be managed by way of a new soakaway located underneath the car park. The Council's Lead Flood Officer has confirmed that this is acceptable. The soakaway would increase the run off rate from the site over and above the greenfield run off rate but as this would be a minimal increase this would be acceptable. However, no ground investigations have been undertaken to establish the actual infiltration rate and this would need to be provided to ensure that the soakaway is of a sufficient size. Should the application have otherwise been considered acceptable, a condition would have been recommended requiring details of a sustainable drainage system to dispose of runoff from the development, through permeable paving systems.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties

- 7.56 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 and visual dominance, amongst other things. Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect surrounding occupiers from the impact of pollution.
- 7.57 Given the location of the proposal, distance to residential properties and the intervening Oxford Road, the proposals are not considered to result in any loss of light, privacy or overbearing effects to any neighbouring property.
- 7.58 A noise assessment has been submitted with the application. The Council's Environmental Protection Officer has confirmed that this has been undertaken appropriately and agrees with the conclusions of the assessment, that the noise level of the proposed plant would not exceed background noise. As such, the proposals are not considered to result in any unacceptable adverse impact in terms of noise. Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, a condition would have been recommended to stipulate noise levels to be maintained.
- 7.59 An odour assessment has been submitted with the application. However, it proposes two options for odour control, one which the Council's Environmental Protection Officer has confirmed would be acceptable and one which is unclear at this stage. The Council's Environmental Protection Officer has confirmed that, should the application have otherwise been recommended or approval, that this could have been dealt with by way of condition. The hours of use would also have been conditioned.
- 7.60 It is recognised that litter can be a problem; however, in a commercial environment, unfortunately some litter can be expected. A condition would have been recommended to have been attached to any decision requiring details of bin storage to be submitted by way of a pre-commencement

condition. This would have also secured details to ensure that bin stores were vermin proof, to prevent rats accessing the waste.

- 7.61 Given the above, it is not considered that the proposal would generate any significant material harm to residential amenity through privacy or overbearing effects, noise, disturbance or odours to the extent that it is harmful to the health and well-being of neighbouring residents and as such, with the recommended conditions attached, it would satisfy Policy CC8.

Sustainability

- 7.62 Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction), supported by the Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD seeks that minor non-residential development such as this should comply with BREEAM Level of 'Very Good'.

- 7.63 The application submission is supported by an Energy Statement which includes the following proposed energy efficiency measures:

- Improved building fabric
- Energy efficient lighting.
- Lighting Control Systems.
- Space heating and domestic hot water provided by waste heat collected from refrigeration systems and supplemented by ASHP.
- High Efficiency mechanical ventilation.
- Improved services distribution.

- 7.64 Notwithstanding the above and should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, a condition would have been recommended to require the standard BREEAM certificate to be provided demonstrating 'Very Good' standard in compliance with Policy CC2.

Archaeology

- 7.65 Policy EN2 (Areas of Archaeological Significance) seeks to protect areas of archaeological potential.

- 7.66 The Berkshire Archaeologist considers that the site may have archaeological implications. Whilst the site is closely sandwiched between a large commercial development and the Oxford Road, and shows an elevation change across it, this open patch of grassland has been present for a considerable number of years (as above, GIS imagery indicates this area as open space pre-1980s), apparently undisturbed and undeveloped. It is possible therefore that historic buried sediments are still present in this location, if construction activity for the commercial development or the road did not disturb the site. The site lies at the edge of the Thames floodplain, which is an area typically used by prehistoric and Roman inhabitants for agricultural, settlement, and funerary activity. The

proposed works may damage or destroy preserved archaeological remains through below-ground works required for development.

- 7.67 Given the above, evidence is required from across the site in order to demonstrate whether or not intact deposits survive. If they do, then they will need to be evaluated for their archaeological potential. The presence or absence of buried sediments can be determined through a series of archaeological test pits or bore holes, followed, if necessary, by archaeological trial trench evaluation (or trial trenching may be used from the outset). Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, the Archaeologist has confirmed that this could have been dealt with by way of condition requiring a programme of archaeological work to be submitted and approved.

Other matters

Contaminated Land

- 7.68 Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) required that developments on land affected by contamination can be satisfactorily managed or remediated against so that it is suitable for the proposed use. The development lies on the site of an historic gravel pit which has the potential to have caused contaminated land and the proposed development is a sensitive land use.
- 7.69 The site lies adjacent to the site of historic works, which has the potential to have caused contaminated land. Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, the Council's Environmental Protection Officer recommend 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). The proposal is considered to accord with Policy EN16.

Other Matters Raised in Representation

- 7.70 The material planning considerations have been addressed in the report above.
- 7.71 A refusal of planning permission nearby does not automatically mean a new proposal should be refused. Each application is assessed and decided on its own merits.
- 7.72 It is not the function of the planning system to safeguard existing businesses from competition.

Equalities Impact

- 7.73 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

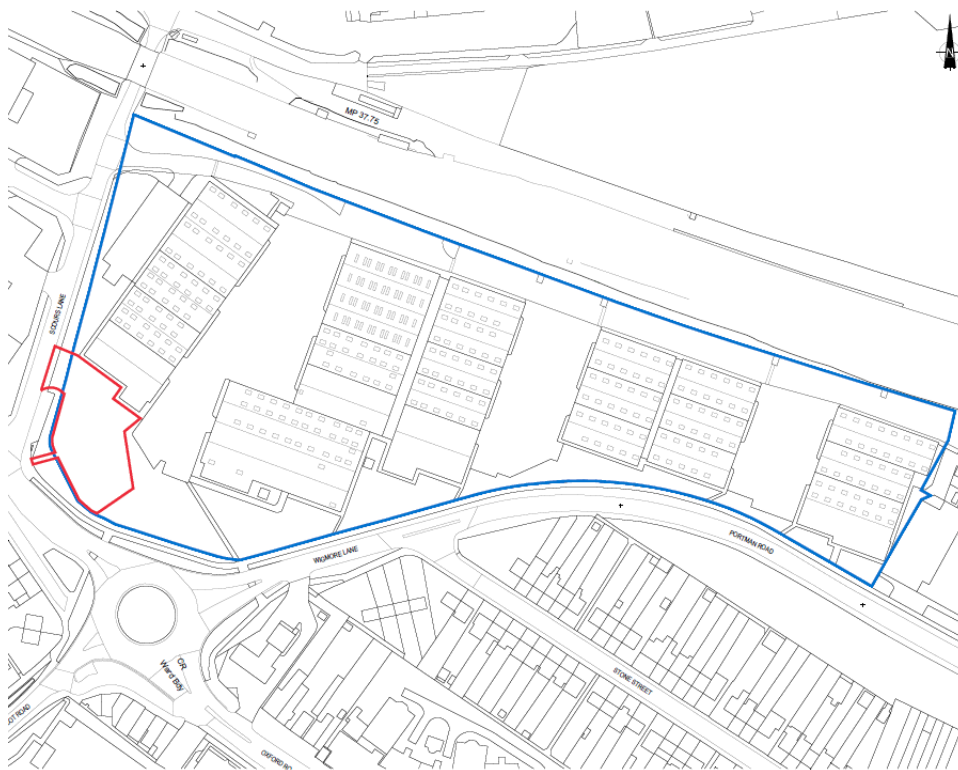
There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development.

8 CONCLUSION

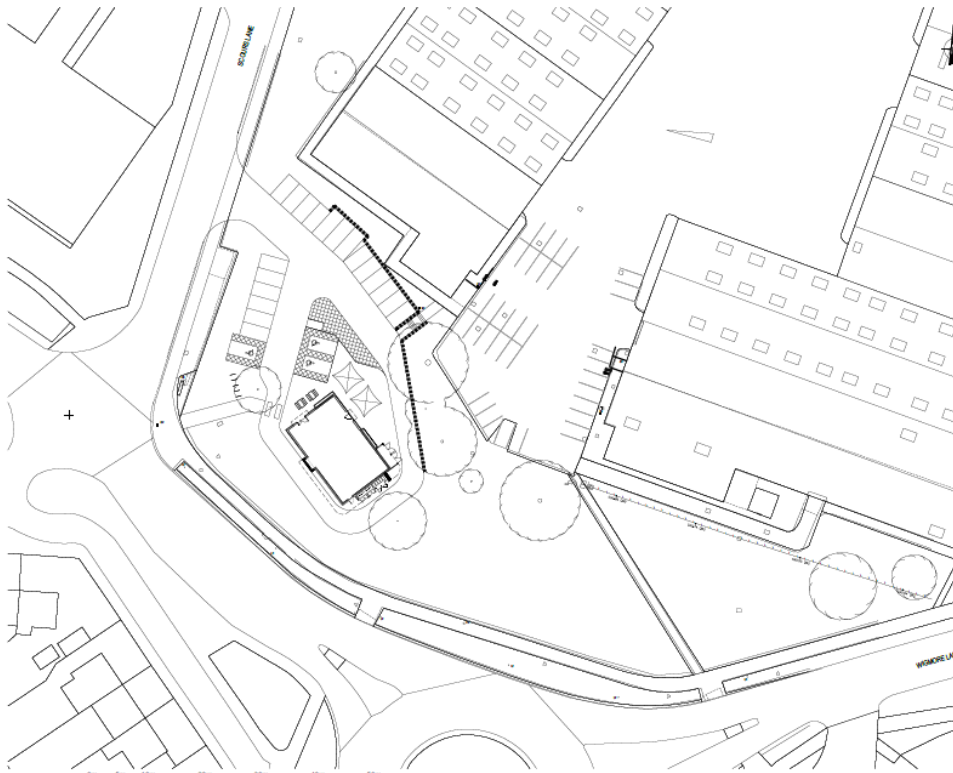
- 8.1 It is considered that the proposals would result in the loss of undesignated open space that would be harmful to the character of the area. It is recognised that there are no technical consultee objections to the scheme. However, the harm identified is not considered to be outweighed by proposed landscape and ecological mitigation for the reasons set out above,
- 8.2 The application is, therefore, recommended for refusal as set out in the recommendation at the head of the report.

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

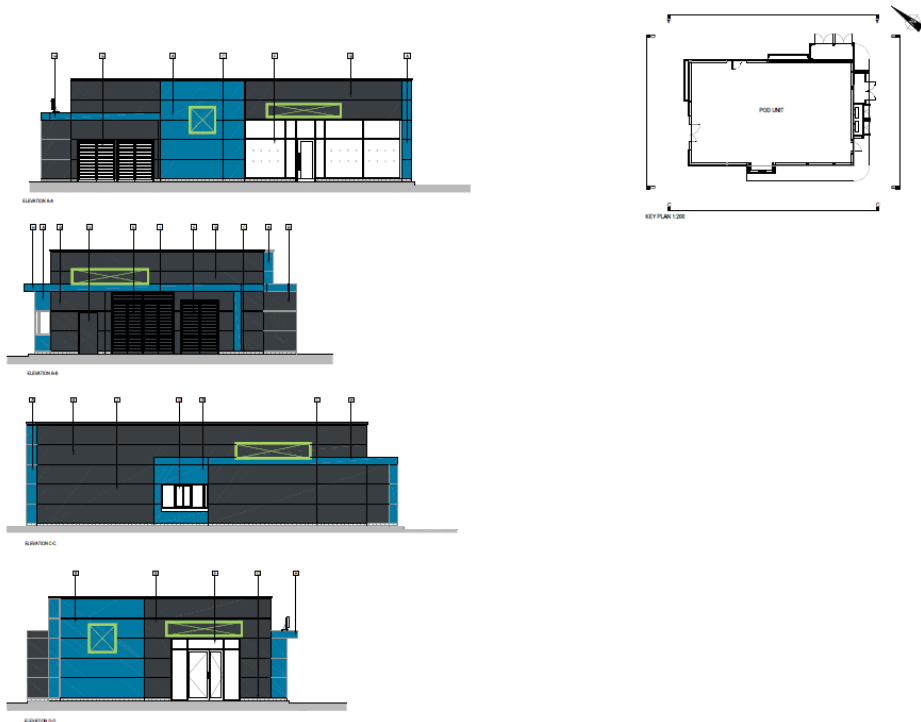
Plans Considered:



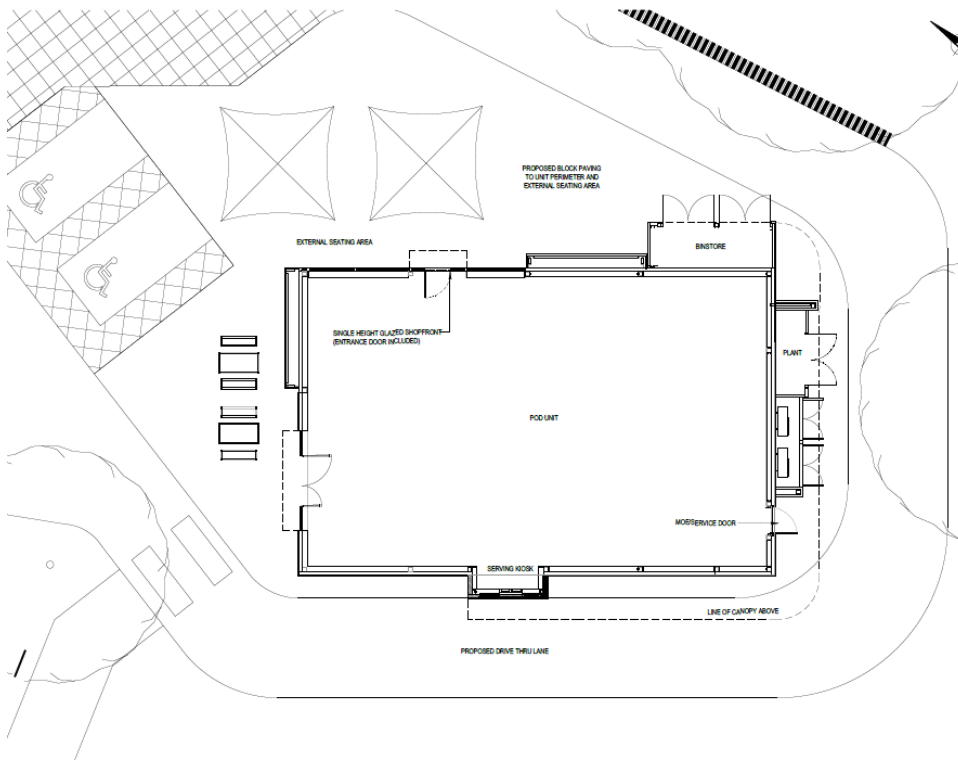
Site Location Plan



Site Block Plan Proposed



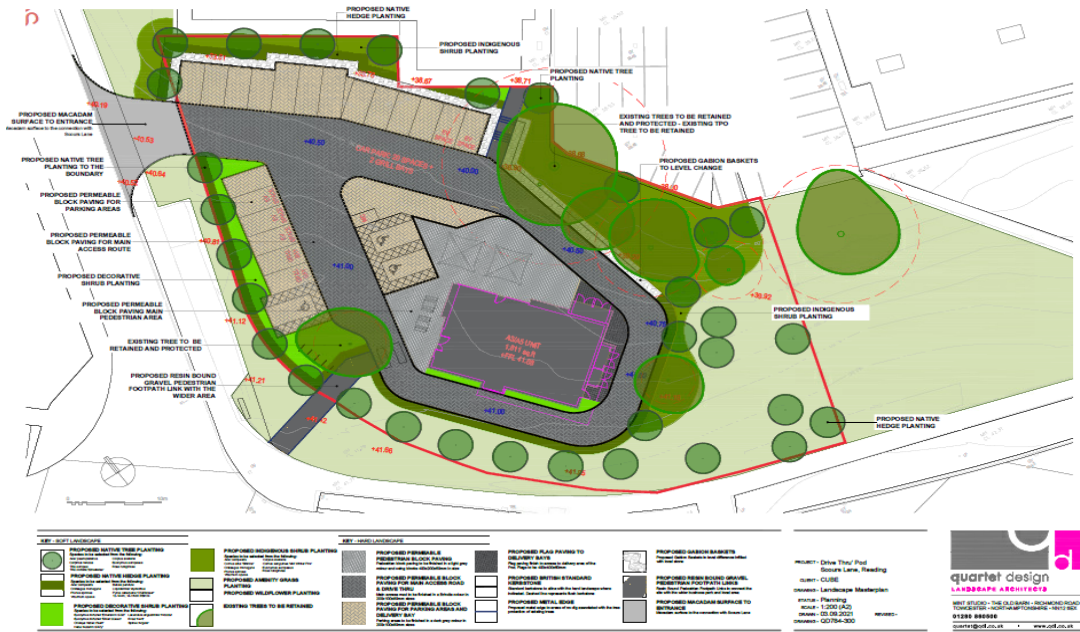
Proposed Elevations



Ground Floor Plan Proposed



Green Link and Ecological Enhancements



Landscape Masterplan