

To: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)
Councillors Yeo, Cresswell, Davies,
Emberson, Ennis, Gavin, Goss, Hornsby-
Smith, Leng, Moore, Robinson, Rowland
and Williams

Direct ☎ : 0118 9372303

26 September 2023

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

NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 4 OCTOBER 2023

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 4 October 2023 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
1. MINUTES	-		9 - 14
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-		
3. QUESTIONS	-		
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	Decision		15 - 18
5. PLANNING APPEALS	Information		19 - 22
6. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL	Information		23 - 28
7. STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT AT FORMER READING GOLF CLUB, KIDMORE END ROAD, EMMER GREEN	Decision	EMMER GREEN	29 - 36

PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

8. 201104/FUL - 10 EATON PLACE	Decision	ABBEEY	37 - 94
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CIVIC OFFICES EMERGENCY EVACUATION: If an alarm sounds, leave by the nearest fire exit quickly and calmly and assemble on the corner of Bridge Street and Fobney Street. You will be advised when it is safe to re-enter the building.

Proposal Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide a residential building of up to 5 storeys (Use Class C3) and associated public realm improvements.
Recommendation Permitted subject to Legal Agreement

9. 230908/FUL - 104-105 FRIAR STREET Decision ABBEY 95 - 120

Proposal Change of use of 104-105 Friar Street from a vacant Class E unit to an Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) (Sui Generis) (SG).
Recommendation Application Permitted

10. 231046/REG3 - THE RIDGEWAY SCHOOL, HILLBROW Decision CHURCH 121 - 128

Proposal Retrospective retention of existing demountable 2 storey modular classrooms and temporary permission to further retain the modular unit for 5 years and minor associated works (amended description).
Recommendation Application Permitted

11. 231037/REG3 - 24 LESFORD ROAD Decision COLEY 129 - 138

Proposal Change of use of private amenity land for the purpose of providing parking for a further temporary period (beyond separate approval 211928 granted on 04/02/2022) of 18 months.
Recommendation Application Permitted

12. 230814/FUL - 9 UPPER CROWN STREET Decision KATESGROVE 139 - 182

Proposal Demolition of existing buildings and structures, associated re-use of frame with basement level used for car parking and servicing, erection of 3 no. residential blocks containing 46 no. dwellings above, associated parking (including replacement), access works and landscaping, relocation of substations and associated works to rear of indigo apartments to facilitate pedestrian access.
Recommendation Application Permitted

13. 231094/FUL - HILLS MEADOW CAR PARK, GEORGE STREET, CAVERSHAM Decision THAMES 183 - 192

Proposal Temporary erection of ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Christmas festival, for a period of time not to be before 15 October 2023 and not to extend beyond 21 January 2024

Recommendation Application Permitted

14. 231143/REG3 - 19 BENNET ROAD Decision WHITLEY 193 - 204

Proposal Proposed front extension and raising of roof line of 3 current commercial garages to align with existing adjacent workshop. Works include changes to fenestration, replacement commercial cladding and a single storey side extension.

Recommendation Application Permitted

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Agenda Annex

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 Yeo (Vice-Chair), Cresswell, Davies, Ennis, Gavin, Goss, Hornsby-Smith, Leng, Moore, Robinson, Rowland and Williams

Apologies: Councillor Emberson

RESOLVED ITEMS

26. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

27. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS

The Committee considered a report setting out a schedule of applications to be considered at future meetings of the Committee to decide which sites, if any, they wished to visit prior to determining the relevant applications. The report also listed previously agreed site visits which were yet to take place.

It was reported at the meeting that the following previously agreed site visit had been missed off the report:

- 221345 - Curzon Club, 362 Oxford Road – unaccompanied site visit

Resolved -

- (1) That the following application be the subject of an accompanied site visit:

230745/FUL – GREAT BRIGHAMS MEAD, VASTERN ROAD

Construction of a two-storey roof (third and fourth floor) extension to accommodate 100 apart-hotel rooms (Use Class C1) with associated parking, cycle stores and bin stores.

- (2) That the following application be the subject of an unaccompanied site visit:

231041/FUL – LAND AT PORTMAN ROAD

Proposed residential development comprising 80 apartments including enabling works to the existing access and car park.

28. PLANNING APPEALS

The Committee received a report on notifications received from the Planning Inspectorate on planning appeals registered with them or decisions made and providing summary reports on appeal decisions of interest to the Committee.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

Appendix 1 to the report set out details of three new appeals lodged since the last Committee. Appendix 2 to the report set out details of one appeal decided since the last Committee. There were no reports on appeal decisions in Appendix 3

Resolved –

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

29. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Committee received a report on the types of development that could be submitted for Prior Approval and providing a summary of 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. Table 1 set out eight prior approval applications received, and Table 2 set out five applications for prior approval decided, between 5 July and 23 August 2023.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

30. LOCAL LISTING - READING BRIDGE

The Committee considered a report on a proposal to add Reading Bridge 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: Nomination Form & Evidence
- Appendix 4: Proposed Local List text

The report set out the results of the 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.

Resolved –

That Reading Bridge be added to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

31. CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO PLANNING PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

The Committee considered a report on a consultation by the Government on changes to permitted development rights which had been launched on 25 July 2023 with a deadline for

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

responses of 25 September 2023. The report had appended the questions in the consultation, which proposed changes to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended, and covered the following areas:

- changes to certain permitted development rights that allow for some commercial buildings to change to dwellinghouses - Class MA – Use Class E to residential – also Class M & N
- changes to certain permitted development rights that allow easier agricultural diversification and development on agricultural units – Class Q.& Class R
- changes to certain permitted development rights that allow for non-domestic extensions and the erection of new industrial and warehouse buildings
- changes to the permitted development right that allows for the temporary use of land to allow markets to operate for more days
- changes to the existing permitted development right that allows for the erection, extension or alteration of schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, and closed prisons to also apply to open prisons
- the application of local design codes to certain permitted development rights

An update report was tabled at the meeting which contained proposed responses prepared by officers to the questions in the consultation on topics relevant to Reading.

Resolved –

That the responses to the consultation questions set out in the update report be agreed.

32. 230908/FUL - 104-105 FRIAR STREET

Change of use of 104-105 Friar Street from a vacant Class E unit to an Adult Gaming Centre (Sui Generis).

The Committee considered a report on the above application.

It was reported at the meeting that the Licensing Sub-Committee had agreed to give a licence to the premises. The licence had not yet been issued, but would include two conditions relating to CCTV and signage about CCTV. The proposed planning condition 3 in the report relating to CCTV was therefore not appropriate and it was suggested that Condition 3 be removed and replaced with an informative regarding the CCTV requirements from the licensing conditions.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved –

That consideration of application 230908/FUL be deferred for further information on matters including:

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

- whether the development would result in clustering of too many similar uses within one area in the town centre in relation to the range and diversity of leisure uses required by Policy CR4 of the Local Plan (paragraphs 5.3.13 and 5.3.14 refer) and whether it would impact the requirement for active frontages in the town centre in Policy CR7 of the Local Plan;
- whether there had been an active search for other uses for the premises since the closure of the café on the site in March 2023.

33. 230319/FUL & 230320/LBC - 101 OXFORD ROAD

Removal of office carparking from site to allow the construction of one new dwelling in grounds of listed building and alterations to boundary wall.

The Committee considered a report on the above application.

Comments and an objection were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to grant planning permission for application 230319/FUL, subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 13 November 2023 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the report;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended.

34. 230682/VAR - THE ORACLE, BRIDGE STREET

Application under Section 73 of Town and Country Planning Act (1990) to remove condition no. 62 of planning permission ref. 970419 to allow the sub-division of 'department store' floorspace. Imposition of new planning condition(s) to restrict use of 'department store' floorspace within Use Class E(a)(b)(d)(e), with a minimum unit size of 1,000 sqm (GIA).

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which provided additional information regarding proposed amendments to Condition 18, proposals for officers to assess and agree a series of plans relating to nine conditions, and a consultation response from the Environment Agency.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That application 230682/VAR be approved;
- (2) That planning permission be subject to the new Conditions 76 to 81 and reviewed Conditions 1 to 75 as set out in the original report, with the amendments to Condition 18 as set out in the update report;
- (3) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to assess and agree specific plans in relation to Conditions 16, 24, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 49, as recommended in the update report;
- (4) That planning permission be subject to the informatives as set out in the original report.

35. 221936/FUL - BENNET COURT, BENNET ROAD

Demolition of existing buildings and erection of one industrial building for flexible industrial processes (Use Class E (g)(iii)), general industrial (Class B2) or storage or distribution (Class B8) uses with ancillary offices, and all other ancillary and enabling works including altered access, on-site parking, landscaping, drainage, engineering and boundary treatment works.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting giving information on a request from the applicant to alter the trigger point for Condition 9 and amending Condition 9 accordingly.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 legal agreement by 27 September 2023 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the original report;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives recommended in the original report, with the amendment to Condition 9 recommended in the update report.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.20 pm)

Planning Applications Committee

04 October 2023



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Title	POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Julie Williams, Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Not applicable, but still requires a decision
Recommendations	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. note this report and confirm if the site(s) indicated on the appended list are to be visited by Councillors. 2. confirm if there are other sites Councillors wish to visit before reaching a decision on an application. 3. confirm if the site(s) agreed to be visited will be arranged and accompanied by officers or unaccompanied with a briefing note provided by the case officer.

1. Executive Summary

- 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 with a note added to say if recommended for a site visit or not.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1. A site visit helps if a proposed development and context is difficult to visualise from the plans and supporting material or to better understand concerns or questions raised by a proposal.
- 2.2. Appendix 1 of this report provides a list of applications received that may be presented to Committee for a decision in due course. Officers will try to indicate in advance if visiting a site to inform your decision making is recommended. Also, Councillors can request that a site is visited by Committee in advance of consideration of the proposal.
- 2.3. However, on occasion, it is only during consideration of a report on a planning application that it becomes apparent that Councillors would benefit from visiting a site to assist in reaching the correct decision. In these instances, Officers or Councillors may request a deferral to allow a visit to be carried out.
- 2.4. Accompanied site visits are appropriate when access to private land is necessary 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.
- 2.5. 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.

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

2.7. 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.

3. Contribution to Strategic Aims

4.1 The processing of planning applications contributes to creating a healthy environment with thriving communities and helping the economy within the Borough, identified as the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan.

4. Environmental and Climate Implications

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

4.2. 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.

5. Community Engagement

5.1. Statutory neighbour consultation takes place on planning applications.

6. Equality Implications

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

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

6.2. It is considered that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not relevant to the decision on whether sites need to be visited by Planning Application Committee. The decision will not have a differential impact on people with the protected characteristics of; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) or sexual orientation.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. None arising from this report.

8. Financial Implications

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

9. Timetable for Implementation

9.1. Site visits are normally scheduled for the Thursday prior to committee. Planning Administration team sends out notification emails when a site visit is arranged.

10. Background Papers

10.1. There are none.

Appendices

1. Potential Site Visit List:

Ward: Thames

Application reference: 230822

Application type: Outline Planning Approval

Site address: Forbury Retail Park, Forbury Road, Reading, RG1 3JD

Proposal: Outline application with all matters reserved with the exception of access, for site redevelopment involving the demolition of all existing structures & a residential-led mixed use proposal for up to 820 residential units (Class C3) & up to 5,500 sqm (GEA) of commercial uses (Class E), together with various associated works including replacement pedestrian and vehicle access routes, open spaces, hard & soft landscaping & sewer works, basement excavation up to 200 basement level car parking spaces, up to 53 separate car parking spaces for Class E uses, up to 860 cycle parking spaces & servicing facilities. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

Reason for Committee item: Major Application

2. Previously Agreed Site Visits with date requested:

- 230613 - Amethyst Lane – accompanied agreed by PAC 21.06.23
- 230612 - Dwyer Road – accompanied agreed by PAC 21.06.23
- 230745 - "Great Brighams Mead", Vastern Road – accompanied agreed by PAC 06.09.23
- 231041 - Portman Road – unaccompanied agreed by PAC 06.09.23

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Planning Applications Committee

04 October 2023



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Title	PLANNING APPEALS
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author	Julie Williams, Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Inclusive Economy
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To note the report.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. To advise Committee on notifications received from the Planning Inspectorate on planning appeals registered with them or decision made and to provide summary reports on appeal decisions of interest the Planning Applications Committee.

2. Information provided

- 2.1. Please see Appendix 1 of this report for new appeals lodged since the last committee.
- 2.2. Please see Appendix 2 of this report for appeals decided since the last committee.
- 2.3. Please see Appendix 3 of this report for new Planning Officers reports on those appeal decisions of interest to this committee.

3. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 3.1. Defending planning appeals made against planning decisions 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.

4. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 4.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 4.2. 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

5. Community Engagement

- 5.1. 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.

6. Equality Implications

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

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

6.2. It is considered that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not relevant to the decision on whether sites need to be visited by Planning Application Committee. The decision will not have a differential impact on people with the protected characteristics of; age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) or sexual orientation.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. 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.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. 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”.

9. Timetable for Implementation

9.1. Not applicable.

10. Background Papers

10.1. There are none.

APPENDIX 1

Appeals Lodged:

WARD: KATESGROVE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/23/3315618
CASE NO: 220258
ADDRESS: 220 Elgar Road South,
PROPOSAL: Residential redevelopment comprising demolition of existing single storey building and erection of 16 dwellings together with associated works (re-submission of application 210526)

CASE OFFICER: Jonathan Markwell
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: Refuse Planning Permission
APPEAL LODGED: 13.09.2023
COSTS: Have applied for an award of costs

WARD: WHITLEY
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/23/3319656
CASE NO: 230095
ADDRESS: Whitley Wood Road Street Works, Whitley Wood Road
PROPOSAL: Proposed 5G telecoms installation - H3G 15m street pole and additional equipment cabinets

CASE OFFICER: Nicola Taplin
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: Refuse Planning Permission
APPEAL LODGED: 14.09.2023

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

WARD: BATTLE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/X/22/3310197
CASE NO: 200036
ADDRESS: 551b Oxford Road, Reading
PROPOSAL: Use of building to rear of 551 Oxford Road as self-contained dwelling

CASE OFFICER: Connie Davis
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED: 25.08.2023

WARD: CHURCH
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/23/3315646
CASE NO: 221368
ADDRESS: "Site At", Pepper Lane, Reading
PROPOSAL: Proposed 15.0m Phase 9 slimline Monopole and associated ancillary works

CASE OFFICER: Beatrice Malama
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED: 08.09.2023

WARD: REDLANDS
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/23/3319441
CASE NO: 221856
ADDRESS: 48 Cardigan Road, Reading
PROPOSAL: Change of use from C3 to a 4-bedroom C4 HMO with minor interior amendments and rear extension (amended)
CASE OFFICER Josh Clayman
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: DISMISSED
DATE DETERMINED: 08.09.2023

WARD: BATTLE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/23/3318408
CASE NO: 221776
ADDRESS: "Adjacent", 1 Bridgewater Close, Reading
PROPOSAL: Application for proposed replacement of existing rooftop telecommunications equipment with telecommunications installation
CASE OFFICER Beatrice Malama
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED: 08.09.2023

APPENDIX 3

Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

None with this agenda but looking to provide summary reports in update pack

Planning Applications Committee



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

04 October 2023

Title	APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author	Julie Williams, Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Inclusive Economy
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To note the report.

1. Executive Summary

- 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. Prior Approval

- 2.1. 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.
- 2.2. 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
- 2.3. 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.
- 2.4. 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 contributing towards affordable housing, and the application fees for these “light touch” applications are significantly less than the equivalent planning application fee.
- 2.5. 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 provide 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 a rolling estimate be provided for the possible loss in planning fee income.

3. 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. Estimates of the equivalent planning application fees are provided.
- 4.3 The planning considerations to be taken into account when deciding each of these types of application are specified in more detail in the GDPO. In some cases the LPA first needs 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 appeals on prior-approval decisions will be included elsewhere in the agenda.

4. Contribution to strategic aims

- 4.1. 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 contribute to the strategic aims of the Council.
- 4.2. However, the permitted development prior approval process allows the LPA to consider a limited range of matters in determination of the application. These are: transport and highways impacts of the development, contamination risks on the site, flooding risks on the site, impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development and the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses. Officers will refuse to grant approval or will seek conditions in those cases where a proposal fails to satisfy on these matters thereby contributing to the themes of the Corporate Plan.

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 encourages developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods. The Prior Approval process facilitates the re-use of existing buildings and in most cases the refurbishment will be required to comply with current building regulations which seek improved thermal performance of buildings.

6. Community Engagement

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

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2. There are no direct implications arising from the proposals.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1. None arising from this Report.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1. 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 £1,883,885.

(Class E (formally office) Prior Approvals - £1,700,794:

Householder Prior Approvals - £90,792:

Retail Prior Approvals - £16,840:

Demolition Prior Approval - £6,161:

Storage Prior Approvals - £5716:

Shop to Restaurant/Leisure Prior Approval - £6331;

Light Industrial to Residential - £20,022:

Dwellings on detached block of flats - £2048:

Additional storey on dwellings - £206:

New dwellinghouses on terrace/detached buildings - £17,483.

Demolition of buildings and construction of new dwelling - £128;

Prior approval to mixed use including flats - £2484.

Figures since last report:

Householder Prior Approvals - £110;

- 9.2. However, it should be noted that the prior approval application assessment process is simpler than 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. Finally, it should not be assumed that if the prior approval process did not exist that planning applications for the proposed developments would come forward instead.

10. Timetable for Implementation

- 10.1. Not applicable.

11. Background Papers

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

Appendices

Table 1 - Applications received since 23rd August 2023 to 25th September 2023

Type:	How many received since last report:	Loss in possible fee income:
Householder Prior Approvals	1	£110
Class E Prior Approvals	0	0
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	n/a
Prior Notification	0	n/a
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
Demolition of buildings and construction of new dwelling	0	0
Prior approval to mixed use including flats	0	0
TOTAL	2	£110

Table 2 - Applications decided since 23rd August 2023 to 25th September 2023

Type:	Approved	Refused	Not Required	Withdrawn	Non Determination
Householder Prior Approvals	0	0	0	1	0
Class E Prior Approvals	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
Telecommunications Prior Approval	0	1	0	0	0
Dwellings on detached block of flats	0	0	0	0	0
Householder Additional Storey	0	0	0	0	0
New dwellings on terrace buildings or New dwellings on detached buildings	0	0	0	0	0
Demolition of buildings and construction of new dwelling	0	0	0	0	0
Prior approval to mixed use including flats	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	1	0	1	0

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Planning Applications Committee

04 October 2023



Reading
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Title	Street Name assignment at Former Reading Golf Club, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Heather Porter, Data and GIS Manager (Data Intelligence and Policy)
Lead councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Our Foundations
Recommendations	<p>The Committee is asked:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the street names from the table set out at 3.3 of this report. 2. In the event that none of the proposed names are considered suitable Committee to select names from the Street Names Proposals list at Appendix 2, as previously approved by Committee.

1. Purpose of report

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

2. Background

- 2.1 The development is located at Emmer Green, off Kidmore End Road. We have received the plans from the developers, based on these plans we would like committee to approve nine street names to be reserved for the development.
- 2.2 A plan of the site detailing the road layout is attached in Appendix 1.

3. Proposed changes

- 3.1 That Committee approve nine names for the development from the table presented in 3.3.
- 3.2 In the event that Committee consider none of the names offered to be acceptable, alternative names will need to be selected by the Committee from the Approved Street Names list in Appendix 2.

3.3 Table of Proposed Names

Name	Reason for name	Ward	Site	Source
The Fairway	To reflect the former use of the site.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	GIS team
Fox Crescent	As a tribute to a young boy that passed away in 2022 and had close connections to a sub-contractor used by the developer.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	Developer
Tallow Way	A form of lubricant once made locally.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	Approved Street List
Falcon Green	Name of a bird seen locally.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	Approved Street List
Monarch Meadow	As a tribute to the late Queen.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	Approved Street List
Saunderson View	Make of historic tractor once used locally.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	Approved Street List
Thornycroft Way	Historic firm formerly based on the bank of the Thames that made boats and lorries.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	Approved Street List
Tilley Terrace	Historic type of oil lamp.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	Approved Street List
Barnes Road	David Barnes was a firefighter who died at an accident at Elgar Road, Reading in 1977.	Emmer Green	Former Golf Course, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.	Approved Street List

4. **Contribution to strategic aims**

4.1 Street Naming and Numbering falls under the Council's "Our Foundations" corporate theme. Street Naming and Numbering data is a foundational part of our digital transformation; producing high quality, authoritative reference datasets which can be used across the Council's services provides a high level of confidence in our products and outputs across our community.

5. **Community engagement**

5.1 No community engagement activities are required for these proposals.

5.2 During the consultation with Councillors, no responses were received.

6. Equality impact assessment

- 6.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 6.2 In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics, it is considered that the proposed changes would not have adverse impacts.

7. Environmental and climate implications

- 7.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 7.2 The Planning & Building Control and Planning Policy Services play a key part in mitigating impacts and adapting building techniques using adopted policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly, making efficient use of land, using sustainable materials and building methods. Developments coming forward through prior approval will need to meet current building control standards, which include energy efficiency and performance.

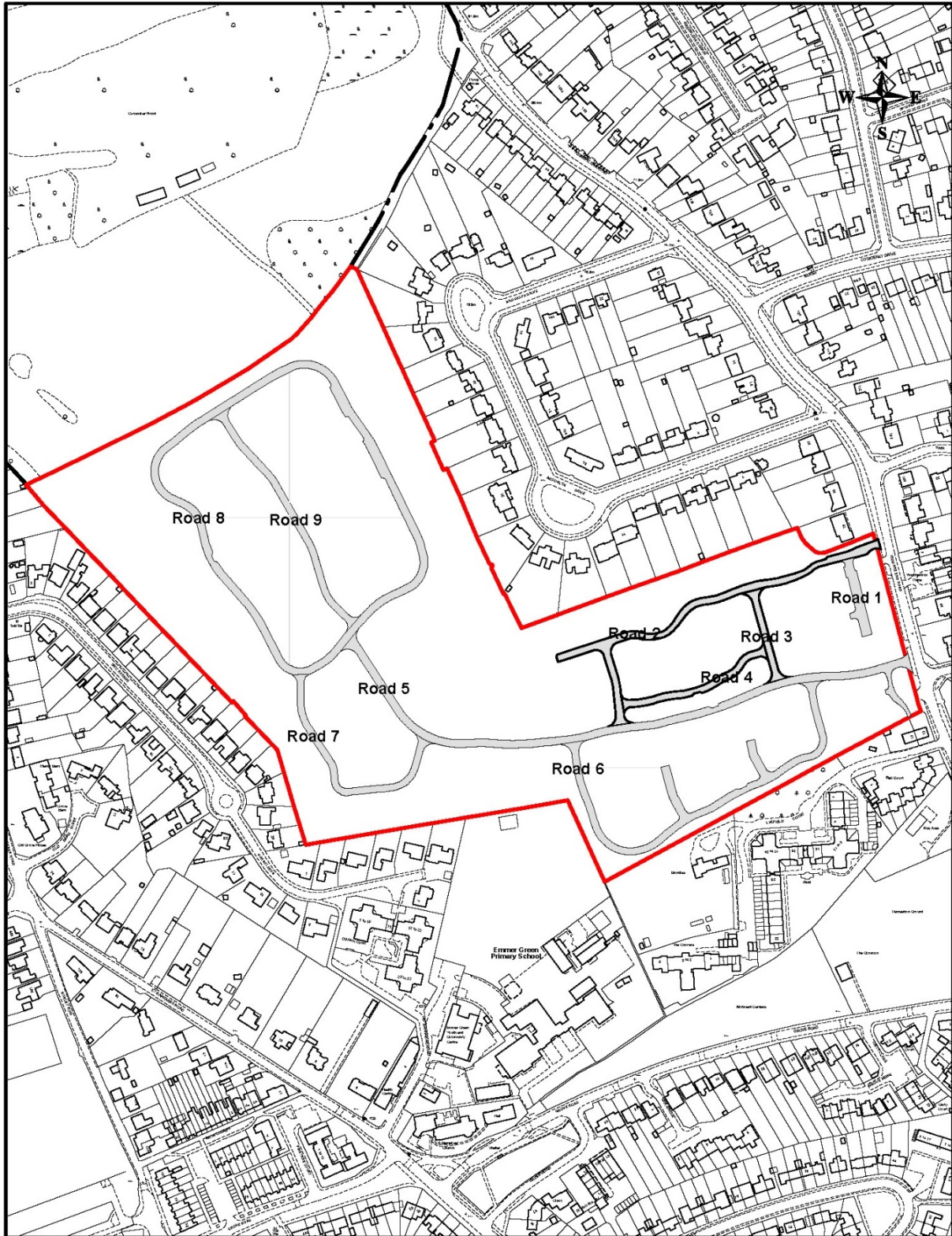
8. Legal implications

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising from the proposals in the consultation.
- 8.2 The creation of street names should follow the guidelines detailed in the “Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for the National Land and Property Gazetteer”, a reference manual based on Property Addressing Standard BS7666:2006 Parts 1 & 2.

9. Financial Implications


- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Appendix 1 - Former Reading Golf Club, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green. (Street Plan)



Title: STREET NAMING & NUMBERING PLAN.
Former Reading Golf Club, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading.

NEW ROADS REQUIRED.

 **Reading**
Borough Council
Working better with you

SN&N Xref.No.:34520230702 Date: 06/09/2023 Scale at A4: 1:3500
Produced by GIS & Mapping Services Ref: G:\SN&Numbering\RBC process\2023\0723 Applications July 2023\34520230702

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Appendix 2 – Approved Street List

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

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

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

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

04 October 2023



Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	201104/FUL
Site Address:	10 Eaton Place, Reading, RG1 7LP
Proposed Development	Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide a residential building of up to 5 storeys (Use Class C3) and associated public realm improvements (amended description)
Applicant	Hamble Residential Limited
Report author	Matt Burns - Principal Planning Officer
Deadline:	Originally 10/05/2021, but an extension of time has been agreed with the applicant until 31 st October 2023
Recommendation	Delegate to the Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (AD PTPPS) to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to the satisfactory completion of a Section 106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the Section 106 legal agreement not be completed by the 31 st October 2023 (unless officers on behalf of the AD PTPPS agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).
S106 Terms	<p>To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To secure affordable housing on site consisting of four x 3-bedroom maisonettes. All at Reading Affordable Rent (RAR) tenure. <p>In the event that a Registered (affordable housing) Provider is not secured for the provision of the Affordable Housing on site, the units to be offered to the Council to be provided by the Council as Affordable Housing. In the event that neither a Registered Provider or the Council can come forward to provide Affordable Housing on-site, the developer to pay to the Council a default sum equivalent to 15% of the Gross Development Value of the development for provision of Affordable Housing elsewhere in the Borough. To be calculated (the mean average) from two independent</p>

	<p>RICS valuations to be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to first occupation of any market housing unit. In this event, the sum to be paid prior to first occupation of any market housing unit and index-linked from the date of valuation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To secure a zero-carbon offset contribution as per the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2019 to ensure the development provides a minimum of 35% improvement in regulated emissions over the Target Emissions Rate in the 2013 Building Regulations, plus a contribution of £1,800 per remaining tonne towards carbon offsetting within the Borough (calculated as £60/tonne over a 30-year period). As per formula in the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. Payment would be triggered on commencement of development and would be index-linked. 3. To secure a construction phase Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) or equivalent financial contribution (£3, 845). As calculated in the Council’s Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013) – plan to be provided/ contribution payable (index linked) on commencement of the development. 4. To secure private waste collection arrangements for the development for all waste streams (general waste, recycling and food waste), including collection of waste directly from the communal bin store, use of a non-standard waste collection vehicle and stipulation that no bins are to be kept on the public highway at any time. <p>In order for Officers to work efficiently and effectively, it is suggested that minor changes to the Heads of Terms and details of the legal agreement during the negotiations, where necessary, are delegated to officers.</p>
<p>Conditions</p>	<p>To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Limit – 3 years. 2. Approved plans. 3. Pre-commencement (excluding demolition) details of all external materials to be submitted and approved. 4. Compliance condition – dwelling mix only as approved. 5. Pre-occupation provision of all energy measures set out in the Energy and Sustainability Statement hereby approved. 6. Pre-occupation photovoltaic array details to be submitted and approved. 7. Pre-Commencement submission (excluding demolition) and approval of a design stage SAP assessment.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Pre-Occupation submission and approval of an as built SAP assessment. 9. Pre-occupation provision of Sustainable Drainage Strategy. 10. Pre-commencement (including demolition) demolition and construction method statement (including Transport and EP based requirements) to be submitted and approved. 11. Compliance condition relating to hours of demolition/construction works (0800-1800hrs Mondays to Fridays and 0800-1300hrs Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays) 12. Compliance condition relating to no burning of materials or green waste on site. 13. Compliance condition relating to discovery of any unidentified contaminated land. 14. Pre-occupation stopping up of existing vehicular access and reinstatement of footway . 15. Pre-occupation notification of occupiers that they would not be automatically entitled to a parking permit. 16. Pre-occupation provision of approved cycle parking. 17. Pre-occupation provision of approved bin stores. 18. Pre-occupation submission and approval of measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing bin stores. 19. Pre-commencement (excluding demolition) submission and approval of all hard and soft landscaping details (including details of green/blue roof). Thereafter all landscaping to be carried out in accordance with approved details in the first planting season following occupation of the development with replacement planting required for first 5 years. 20. Compliance condition that no vegetation clearance shall take place during the bird nesting season. 21. Pre-commencement (excluding demolition) submission and approval of a biodiversity enhancement scheme including six swift bricks and four bat tiles or bricks. 22. Pre-occupation submission and approval of an external lighting scheme, including details of how any lighting will not adversely impact wildlife. 23. Pre-occupation implementation of the noise mitigation measures set out within the approved noise assessment and mitigation scheme. 24. No mechanical plant to be installed unless a noise assessment and mitigation scheme has been submitted and approved. 25. No fixing or installing of miscellaneous item to the external faces or roof of the building hereby permitted. 26. Pre-occupation submission and approval of security strategy. 27. Compliance condition that level access to the development shall be provided and retained
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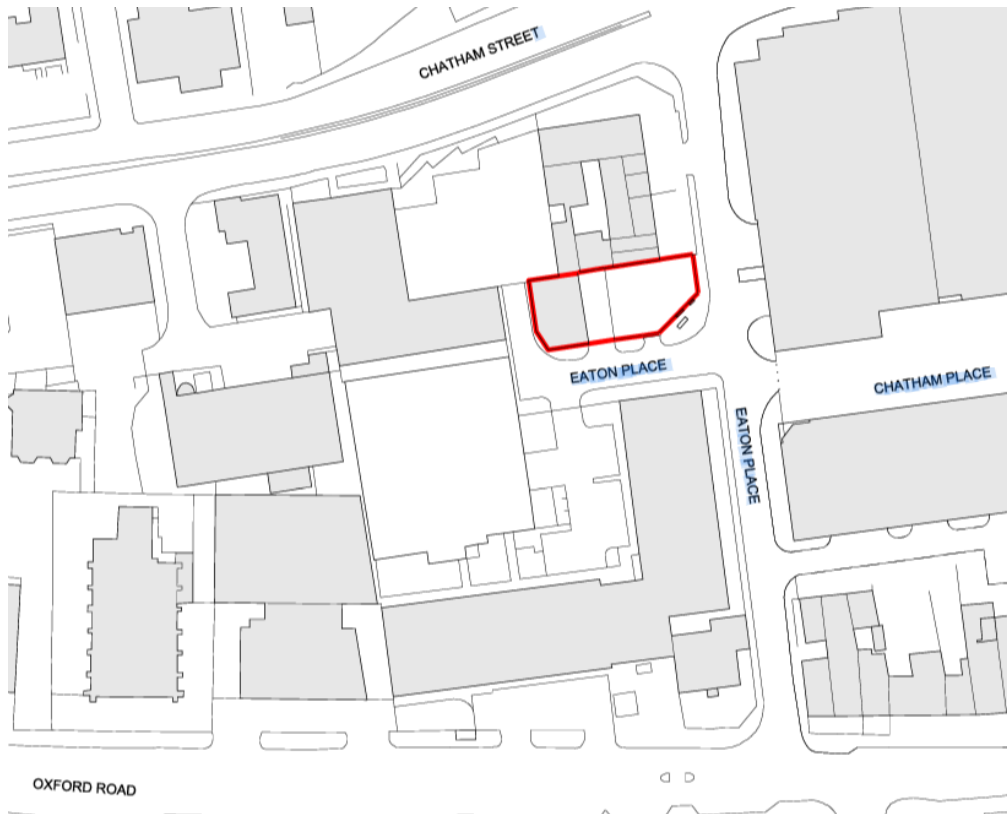
	<p>28. Pre-commencement submission (including demolition), approval and implementation of scheme of archaeological investigation.</p> <p>All pre-commencement conditions have been agreed with the Applicant.</p>
<p>Informatives</p>	<p>To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive and Proactive Statement 2. Damage to the highway 3. Works affecting highways 4. Section 106 Legal Agreement 5. Thames Water informative 6. Pre-commencement conditions 7. Terms 8. Building Control 9. Complaints about construction 10. Encroachment 11. Community Infrastructure Levy 12. No automatic entitlement to parking permits 13. Future occupiers to be made aware of the proximity of existing live music venues

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposal is recommended for approval subject to a legal agreement and conditions as set out above.
- 1.2 The proposal would produce a residential scheme, including on-site affordable homes, provided within land allocated for housing within the Western Major Opportunity Area of the town centre, as defined by Policy CR12c of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. The proposals would incorporate an appropriate design, ensure that there would be no unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties and provide suitable accommodation for future residents. The proposal would have no adverse transport impacts and would be acceptable in terms of ecology, biodiversity and sustainability. Whilst the development would result in harm to the setting of the adjacent grade II listed The Butler Public House, the level of harm identified is 'less than substantial' and in accordance with paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) the significant public benefits of the development, including those outlined above, are considered to outweigh this identified harm and the application is therefore recommended to you for approval.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is located on the west side of Eaton Place and contains a two-storey flat roof office building with car park to the front (east).



Site Location Plan





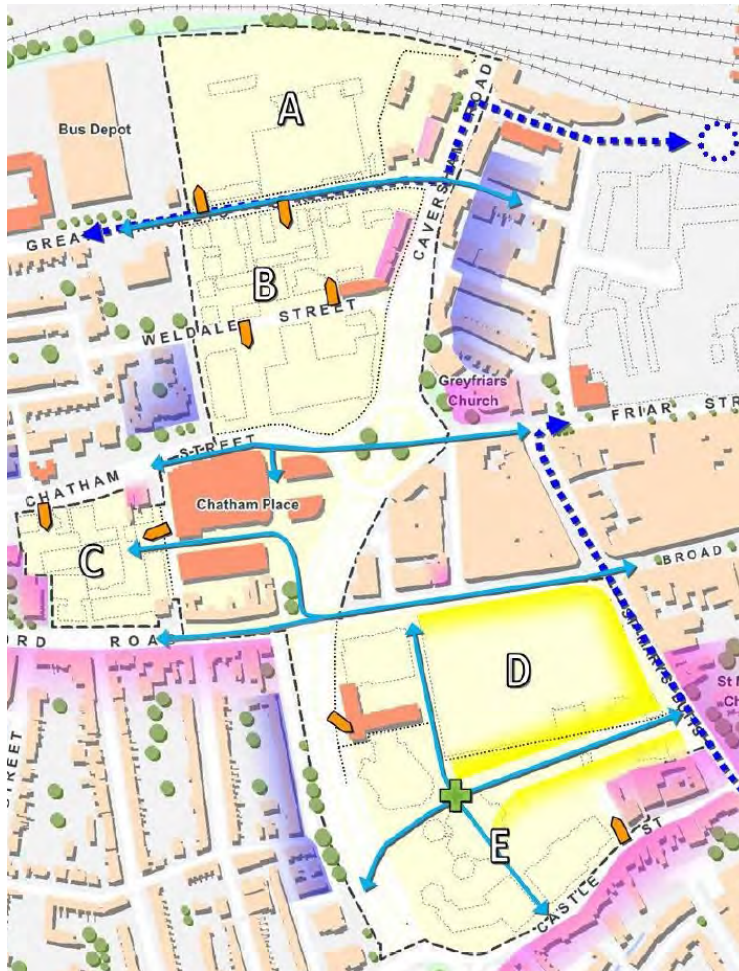
Photographs of the application site as existing

- 1.2 The site is located within the western part of the town centre and within the Reading Central Area, but is located just outside of the Central Core, Office Core and Primary Shopping Areas as defined by Policy CR1 (Definition of Central Reading). The site is located outside of, but adjacent to, the western tall buildings cluster within the town centre as identified by Policy CR10 (Tall Buildings).
- 1.3 The application site is also located within West Side Major Opportunity area within the town centre, as defined by Policy CR12, and forms part of a wider parcel of land that is allocated for development under part C of Policy CR12 (Chatham Street, Eaton Place and Oxford Road). The site allocation policy states that:

CR12c, CHATHAM STREET, EATON PLACE AND OXFORD ROAD

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

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



Plan showing the West Side Major Opportunity Area within which the application site is allocated for development as per of the wider parcel of land labelled C

- 1.4 The area surrounding the application site contains a variety of uses and building styles. To the north of the application site is The Butler pub which fronts Chatham Steet, the main building of which dates from the 1830s and is Grade II Listed. The pub also has a series of later single storey extensions added in the 1870s which due to their age and historic connections to the use of the pub also form part of the listing. The rear extensions to the pub are located within the Policy CR12c site allocation area but the main pub building is not. Also, to the north of the stie is the recently constructed new-build residential development at the site of 115 Chatham Street which contains a three to five storey building of 54 flats (planning permission ref. 210349) which also forms part of the Policy CR12c site allocation area.
- 1.5 To the east of the application site on the opposite side of Eaton Place is the large 9 storey Q Park multi-storey car park building which also fronts on to Chatham Street. To the south of the application site is Eaton Court (no. 106-112 Oxford Road) which is a large L-shaped three-storey vacant office building which extends to the south along Eaton Place and fronts on to Oxford Road. This building also forms part of the Policy CR12c site allocation area and is subject to a pending planning application 210639 for demolition and residential redevelopment to provide three buildings

comprising 120 residential units (Use Class C3), along with car parking, cycle parking, servicing bay and associated landscaping, amenity space, plant and refuse areas and access arrangements. To the west is a two-storey car park serving Eaton Court with the Face Bar music venue located beyond this further to the west.

- 2.6 The site is located within an air quality management area (AQMA). The edge of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area is located 50m to the south.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application was originally submitted in March 2021 and proposed an 8-storey building containing 27 dwellings. At the time, officers raised significant concerns regarding the proposals with the applicant in relation to overdevelopment of the site and excessive scale. As a result plans for an amended, reduced and scaled down development, were submitted in February 2023. These amended plans superseded those originally submitted with the application and the application description has been amended accordingly. It is this amended scheme and plans which are considered as part of this report.
- 2.2 The amended application seeks full planning permission for demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide a residential building 5 storeys (Use Class C3) and associated public realm improvements.
- 2.3 The proposal is to provide 15 new dwellings with the following unit mix:
- 3 x 1 bed flats
 - 8 x 2 bed flats
 - 4 x 3 bed maisonettes
- 2.4 The 4 x 3 bed maisonette units are all proposed to be affordable housing under the 'Reading Affordable Rent Tenure' (27% of the total number of units). These units would be located over the ground and first floor level of the building, with each maisonette having its own front door onto Eaton Place to the south as well as each having their own bin/cycle store. The maisonettes would have private balconies to the north elevation of the building at first floor level.
- 2.5 The 1 and 2 bedroom open-market units would be located on the second, third and fourth floors of the building and would have their own separate communal entrance on the west side of the building with the flats accessed via external deck veranda-style corridors to the north elevation of the building. Communal cycle and bin storage are proposed to the ground floor of the building. These units would have access to a landscaped communal roof top garden at fourth floor level.
- 2.6 A green/blue roof is proposed at fifth storey which would utilise surface water drainage for irrigation of roof top garden areas. Solar panels are proposed to the main roof of the building.

2.7 The development is proposed as car free with no vehicle parking spaces proposed.

2.8 Submitted Plans and Documentation:

2211027-TK01 Rev A Swept Path Analysis Refuse Vehicle
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 24th July 2023

052-TWA-XX-RF-DR-PL-11015 P4 Proposed Roof Plan
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 7th June 2023

052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-11000 P4 Ground Floor Plan
2211027-01 Proposed Highway Works
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 16th May 2023

052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-16001 P3 Proposed Site Section A-A
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-16002 P3 Proposed Site Section B-B
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-10000 P2 Proposed Site Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-19000 P2 Affordable 3B 6P Ground Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-19001 P2 Affordable 3B 6P First Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-19002 P2 2B 4P Typical Layout Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-19003 P2 1B 2P Typical Layout Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-17001 P3 Proposed North Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-17002 P3 Proposed East Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-17003 P3 Proposed South Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-17004 P3 Proposed West Elevation
052-TWA-XX-01-DR-PL-11001 P3 First Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-02-DR-PL-11002 P3 Second Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-03-DR-PL-11003 P3 Third Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-04-DR-PL-11004 P3 Fourth Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-36100 P2 Cladding Bay Study 01 Bay Study 052-
TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-36101 P2 Cladding Bay Study 02 Bay Study 052-
TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-36102 P2 Cladding Bay Study 03 Bay Study
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-99000 P3 Demolition Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-07001 P3 Existing North Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-07002 P3 Existing East Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-07003 P3 Existing South Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-07004 P3 Existing West Elevation
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-00002 P2 Existing Site Plan
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-01000 P3 Existing Ground Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-01-DR-PL-01001 P3 Existing First Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-RF-DR-PL-01002 P3 Existing Roof Plan
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-00001 P2 Site Location
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 2nd February 2023

Design and Access Statement, prepared by Anomaly Architects
Planning Statement, prepared by Icen Projects
Heritage and Townscape Assessment, prepared by Icen Projects
Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Assessment, prepared by Point 2
Surveyors

Energy and Sustainability Statement, prepared by Cudd Bentley Consulting

Overheating Assessment, prepared by Cudd Bentley Consulting

SuDS Assessment and Drainage Design, prepared by Infrastruct CS Ltd

Transport Statement, prepared by Motion

Noise Assessment, prepared by Accon

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 2nd February 2023

Land Contamination Report, prepared by leap

Air Quality Assessment, prepared by accon uk

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 22nd February 2021

2.9 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):

In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. Based upon the floor area of the proposed development the expected levy due would be £257,071, albeit this figure is likely to decrease slightly in practice in the event that the applicant applies for social housing relief for the affordable housing elements of the scheme.

3. **PLANNING HISTORY**

Application Site

031121FUL - Change of use to education facility – Granted. 07/10/2003.

Eaton Court 106-112 Oxford Road

190419OPA - Change of use from B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 58 units - Prior Approval not required. 14/05/2019.

210639FUL - Demolition and residential-led mixed use redevelopment to provide three buildings comprising 131 residential units (Use Class C3), one ground floor unit comprising flexible commercial floorspace (Use Class E & F2) and one ground floor unit comprising flexible commercial and residential floorspace (Use Class E, F2 & C3), along with car parking, cycle parking, servicing bay and associated landscaping, amenity space, plant and refuse areas, and access arrangements – Received 23rd April 2021. Under Consideration.

115 Chatham Street

150721FUL - Erection of part 4, part 5 storey building providing 16 residential units with associated parking and landscaping – Granted. 17/02/2015.

210349FUL - Demolition of the existing buildings on site and erection of a 3 - 5 storey building to provide 54 residential units (Class C3). Provision of private and communal external amenity areas, car and cycle parking and refuse storage – Granted. 17/12/2021.

The Butler PH Chatham Street

180366LBC - Internal and external alterations associated with the conversion and renovation of existing outbuildings to form hotel

accommodation - Listed Building Consent Granted. 05/03/2019. (Now expired, not implemented).

180365FUL - Conversion of existing outbuildings from tyre fitting & associated repairs (Class B1a) and part of existing pub (Class A4) to a 14-bed hotel (Class C1) with parking and associated works – Granted. 05/03/2019. (Now expired, not implemented).

230558FUL - Demolition of existing outbuildings and part of the existing pub, to construct an extension housing a 19-bed hotel room with parking (C1 use) and associated works – Application received 25/04/2023 but currently invalid.

230559LBC - Listed building consent for the renovation of the existing public house including the installation of a new access route within 85 Chatham Street, and the construction of a minor extension along Chatham Street continuing the established architectural language – Application received 25/04/2023 but currently invalid.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 RBC Transport – No objection subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement, provision of cycle and bin stores as proposed, reinstatement of kerb to existing vehicle access to site and to advise future occupiers that they would not be automatically entitled to an on-street parking permit. A section 106 obligation is also required to secure private refuse collection arrangements for the development.
- 4.2 RBC Environmental Protection – No objection subject to conditions to secure implementation of the development in accordance with the noise mitigation measures set out within the submitted noise impact assessment report, submission and approval of a construction method statement and details of bin stores, limitation of construction hours to standard working hours (0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday, 0800 to 1300 Saturdays and no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays) and to monitor the site for any unidentified contamination.
- 4.3 RBC Natural Environment – No objection subject to a condition to secure submission and approval of detailed landscaping arrangements, including details of the proposed blue/green roof.
- 4.4 RBC Housing – No objection, welcome the affordable housing offer, particularly the provision of all affordable units as 3 bed family sized units at 'Reading Affordable Rent' tenure.
- 5.5 RBC Waste – Whilst the proposed bin stores are large enough to accommodate the requisite number of bins for the development, the location of the communal store would not be suitable for Local Authority waste collection services due to its distance from the kerbside. Furthermore, a separate bin collection point, external to the building, is

not proposed and it is not clear where such a collection point could be provided without blocking the footway.

- 5.6 Ecology Adviser – No objection, subject to conditions to secure that any vegetation removal takes place outside of the bird nesting season (which is between March and August), submission and approval of landscaping and biodiversity enhancement schemes including details of biodiverse blue/green roof and an external lighting scheme for the development.
- 5.7 Lead Local Flood Authority – No objection subject to a condition to secure implementation of the proposed drainage (SuDS) scheme.
- 5.8 Thames Water – The developer would be required to obtain a build over agreement with Thames Water prior to commencement development given the application site is located within 3 metres of a public sewer. The developer should also be notified that driven construction piles are not permitted within 15m of a public sewer.
- 5.9 Berkshire Archaeology – No objection, subject to a condition to secure submission, approval and implementation of an archaeological written scheme of investigation.

Public

- 5.10 The following properties were notified of the application and submission of amended plans by letter:
- Eaton House 106-112 Oxford Road
 - Q Park 6 Chatham Place
 - The Butler PH 85-91 Chatham Street
 - 115 Chatham Street
 - Eaton Place Tyres Eaton Place
 - 1, 2, 4 & 6 Chatham Place
 - 7 Chatham Place
- 5.11 Site notices advertising the application and amended plans was also displayed at the application site and on Chatham Place.
- 4.12 Two objections to the proposed development were received in relation to the, now superseded, original plans, raising the following issues:

Comments received on original plans:

- Loss of privacy and overlooking to flats in Mayer House.
- Overbearing impact of scale of development in combination with the Q Park multi-storey car park building.
- Impact of the development on the historic character and setting of the Grade II Listed The Butler pub.
- The proposed development and external deck access to the north elevation would compromise implementation of planning permission ref. 180365FUL at the adjacent The Butler pub for conversion of rear outbuilding to a hotel, by way of overlooking

and loss of light to the hotel rooms (*Officer comment: this planning permission has lapsed*).

- The Butler Pub is an established live music venue. The proposed residential development should not prejudice continued use of the pub for live music.
- Concern that the proposed deck access to the north elevation of the development would not comply with current Building Regulations in terms of fire strategy.

5.13 An objection to the proposed development has been received in relation to the amended plans the owner of The Butler pub, raising the following issues:

- Overlooking and loss of privacy to The Butler pub, particular the rear courtyard area used for live music events, from the proposed deck access to the north elevation of the development.
- The Butler pub operates until 1am on Friday and Saturdays, Thursdays until midnight and until 11pm the rest of the week and for a set number of days per year a live event can take place on any day of the week until 1am. The proposed proximity of the building and location of balconies and habitable room windows to the north elevation of the building directly on the boundary with The Butler pub will result in amenity issues for future occupiers and undermine the ability of The Butler to operate its existing use effectively in the future.
- The submitted sunlight/daylight report fails to assess the impact of the development on The Butler.
- The submitted noise assessment fails to assess the impact of The Butler and associated live music events on future occupiers of the proposed development.
- No details of the fire risk associated with the development have been submitted with the planning application.
- Impact of the scale and proximity of the proposed development on the historic character and setting of the Grade II Listed pub.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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

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

- 6.3 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) and the NPPF (2023). The relevant national / local policies / guidance are:

National Planning Policy Framework (2023). The following chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
- EN9: Provision of Open Space
- 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
- CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading
- CR6: Living in Central Reading

CR12: West Side Major Opportunity Area

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

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

Other relevant documents:

- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3
- Reading Borough Council Tree strategy (2021)

7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Land use principles
- Development density, unit mix and affordable housing
- Design considerations and effect on character and heritage
- Amenity Matters
- Transport
- Natural Environment
- Sustainability
- Other Matters
- Equalities impact

Land use principles

- 7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) 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.
- 7.2 The site forms part of the West Side Major Opportunity Area (MOA) which is allocated for residential development in the Reading Local Plan (2019) under policy CR12c (Development in the West East Side Major Opportunity Area). The vision for the West Side MOA, which also includes parts of Caversham Road, Weldale Street, Chatham Street, Hosier Street and Broad Street Mall) is for the area to “*be a mixed-use extension to the west of the centre containing high-quality mixed-use environments and fostering stronger east-west links into the central core*”.

- 6.3 Policy CR12 continues by stating that development in the West Side MOA will:
- i) Contribute towards providing a mix of uses including residential. Development for education will be an acceptable part of the mix;
 - ii) Help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability, in particular on key movement corridors and east-west links through the area and between development areas and the station, including improved crossings of the IDR where achievable;
 - iii) Safeguard land which is needed for mass rapid transit routes and stops;
 - iv) Provide additional or improved areas of open space where possible, generally in the form of town squares, and provide additional green infrastructure where possible;
 - v) Give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and conservation areas and conserve and, where possible, enhance listed buildings and conservation areas and their settings;
 - vi) Give careful consideration to the archaeological potential of the area and be supported by appropriate archaeological assessment which should inform the development;
 - vii) Demonstrate that it is part of a comprehensive approach to its sub-area, which does not prevent neighbouring sites from fulfilling the aspirations of this policy, and which contributes towards the provision of policy requirements that benefit the whole area, such as open space; and
 - vii) Give early consideration to the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required.
- 6.4 It is considered that the proposed development meets all of these overarching objectives, as will be demonstrated in more detail throughout this report.
- 6.5 More specifically, the application site forms part of the wider Chatham Street, Eaton Place and Oxford Road sub-area under Policy CR12c which states that: *“Development of this area will be primarily for residential, with potential for community uses. There may also be some small-scale retail and leisure uses on the Oxford Road frontage. This area is surrounded by heritage assets or low-rise residential, and inappropriate building scale at the fringes of the site will not be permitted. There is an opportunity to enhance the Oxford Road frontage, including with tree planting”*. The policy indicates that the wider sub-area has an indicative potential for 180-260 dwellings.
- 6.6 Again, it is considered that the proposed development meets the objectives of this policy, as will be demonstrated in more detail in this report.
- 7.7 The broad principle of the proposal for residential development is therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policies CC6, H1 and CR12. The details of the proposed development are now considered within the rest of this report.

Development density, unit mix and affordable housing

- 7.8 The application proposes a development density of 365 dwellings per hectare (15 dwellings/ 0.041-hectare site). Although a high-density development, it is noted that there is no prescribed local policy density upper limit for town centre sites, with the indicative development density for the wider Policy CR12c sub-area being for a high-density development at 226 dwellings per hectare. Paragraph 5.4.15 of the supporting text to the policy clarifies that the number of dwellings is, to an even greater extent than other areas, an indication only and that development capacity can vary significantly on high density town centre sites.
- 7.9 In addition, Policy H2 (Density and Mix) outlines an indicative density of above 70 per hectare in town centre locations, with factors such as site characteristics, accessibility and need to achieve high quality design and minimise environmental impacts informing the appropriate density. Therefore, detailed matters such as design and standard of accommodation, which are assessed later in this report, will inform the suitability of the density of development that is proposed. .
- 7.10 Part v) of Policy CR12 notes that development within the West Side MOA should *“give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and conservation areas and conserve and, where possible, enhance listed buildings and conservation areas and their settings”*. This will be assessed in more detail in the design and heritage section elsewhere in this report.
- 7.11 In terms of unit mix Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) seeks that residential developments within the town centre area should incorporate a maximum of 40% of 1-bedroom units and a minimum of 5% of 3-bedroom units. The application proposes 3 x 1-bedroom flats (20%), 8 x 2-bedroom flats (53%) and 4 x 3-bedroom maisonettes (27%) and is therefore policy compliant in this respect. Policy H2 also sets out that the mix of residential development proposed should contribute towards meeting the identified housing needs of the Borough. Figure 4.6 of the within the supporting text to Policy H2 sets out that there is most need within the borough for family sized units of 2 and 3 bedrooms. In this respect the high proportion of 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings proposed by the development is considered to be a notable benefit in terms of contributing to the identified housing needs within the Borough.
- 7.12 In terms of affordable housing, Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) states that development proposals of 10 or more dwellings should provide 30% on-site provision of affordable housing. The application proposes that 4 x 3 bed maisonette units within the development would all be provided as affordable housing under the ‘Reading Affordable Rent’ tenure’. This equates to a provision of 27% of the total number of units as affordable housing.

- 7.13 Whilst the proposed affordable housing provision would be marginally below the policy requirement, the RBC Housing Manager welcomes the proposed affordable housing to be provided as part of the development. This is because it is proposed that all the affordable units would be provided at 'Reading Affordable Rent' tenure which goes above and beyond the minimum tenure mix sought by the adopted RBC Affordable Housing SPD, which seeks at least 62% of units to be provided at this tenure level and a maximum of 38% of units to be under shared ownership tenure (or similar).
- 7.14 In addition, the Housing Manager as welcomes that all four affordable units would be 3-bedroom family sized maisonettes spread across the ground and first floors of the development, each with their own front door accessed from Eaton Place to the south and each with their own bin and cycle stores. This would meet the identified need for family sized dwellings within the Borough identified under Policy H2.
- 7.15 In overall terms, Officers consider that the benefits of the provision of all the affordable housing units as 3-bedroom family sized maisonettes at the 'Reading Affordable Rent' tenure, which go beyond the minimum requirements sought by the Affordable Housing SPD and meet an identified need for family sized units, would outweigh the marginal under provision in terms of number of units (27% of units compared to 30% sought by Policy H3). Therefore, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in respect of affordable housing.

Design considerations and effect on character and heritage

- 7.16 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that "Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification." Paragraph 202 goes on to state "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal...".
- 7.17 Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) seeks to protect heritage assets and their settings and where possible, enhance them. Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) seeks that new development displays sensitivity to historic context.
- 6.16 Policy CC7 (Design and The Public Realm) states that "all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area". The NPPF in paragraph 130 c) states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments "are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 6.17 The application site is located on the northwest edge of the West Side MOA (Major Opportunity Area). The site allocation area Policy CR12c

sets out that the area is surrounded by heritage assets, low-rise residential and that inappropriate buildings of scale at the fringes of the allocation area will not be permitted.

- 6.18 In contrast to the existing office building, the proposed development would fill the application site and, as such, would be narrow and rectangular in form. The footprint of the proposed building would 'step' in at the western and eastern ends of the site where plot tapers and narrows further. The proposed building would be four full storeys in height with a recessed fifth storey which would be set in from the edge of the lower floors to the north, east and south elevations of the building.



Proposed Site Plan

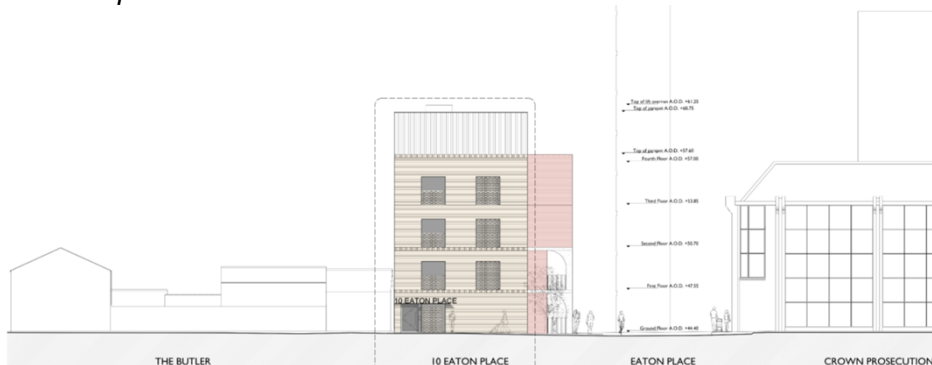
- 6.19 As discussed above, the site and immediate surrounding area is located within West Side MOA which is an area allocated for significant redevelopment at a higher density than existing.
- 6.20 The character of the surrounding area has already begun to evolve with the completion of the large Q Park multi storey car park and Chatham Place residential development located on the opposite side of Eaton Place to the east and southeast of the application site which consists of modern buildings of between seven to eighteen storeys.
- 6.21 In addition, to the northeast of the application site is the recently completed development of a modern building of between three and five storeys containing 45 flats on the former site of 115 Chatham Street. Further redevelopment of a significant area directly to the south and east of the application site at Eaton Court, an existing three storey office building, is also proposed under planning application 210639, albeit this application has not yet been determined. This proposes a redevelopment to provide 120 residential units across a series of buildings of between five and seven storeys.
- 6.22 At a total of five storeys in height the proposed building would be set significantly below the height of the Q Park and Chatham Place developments to the east and would reflect the maximum height of the

recently completed residential development at 115 Chatham Street to the north-west of the site. The existing office building to the adjacent site to the south at Eaton Court would sit at the fourth storey height of the proposed building therefore not presenting a significant change or step in massing from this adjacent site as existing. Furthermore, the site at Eaton Court is located more centrally within the MOA and therefore it considered reasonably possible that a higher density development may come forward on this site in future. Current undetermined planning application ref. 210639 at Eaton Court proposes buildings of between five and seven storeys.

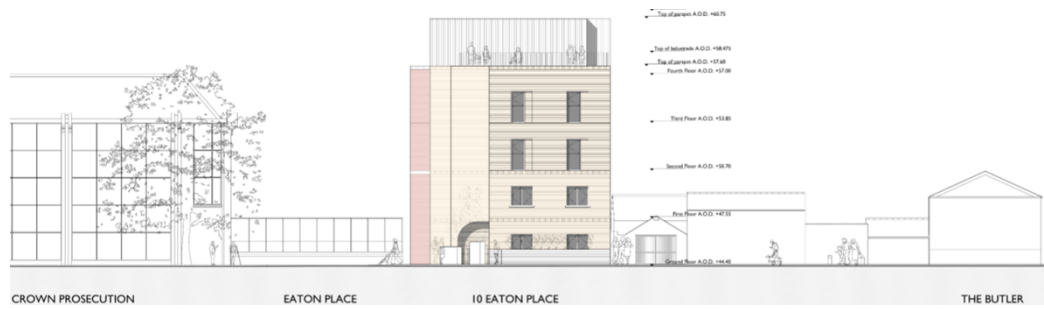
6.23 There is also still evidence of lower density developments nearby, most notably the presence of the two-storey Grade II Listed pub directly to the north of the application site. The main public house building is located adjacent to but outside of the MOA but the single storey outbuilding and extensions to the rear are included within it. At five storeys the proposed building represents a step-up scale of development from that of The Butler, albeit still at a much lower level than the scale of many of the larger modern buildings found in the immediate vicinity.



Proposed north elevation and west to east street-scene section



Proposed west elevation and north to south street-scene section



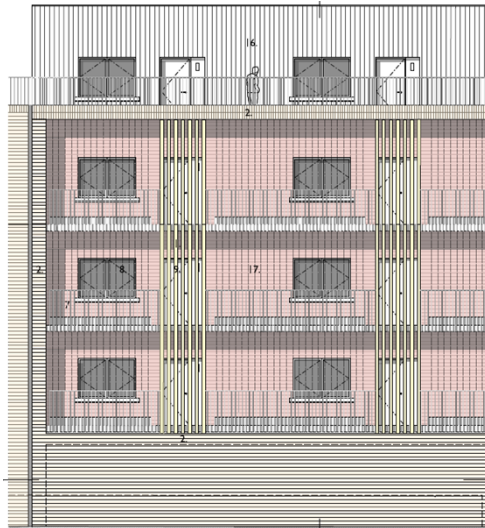
Proposed east elevation (facing Q Park) and north to south street-scene section



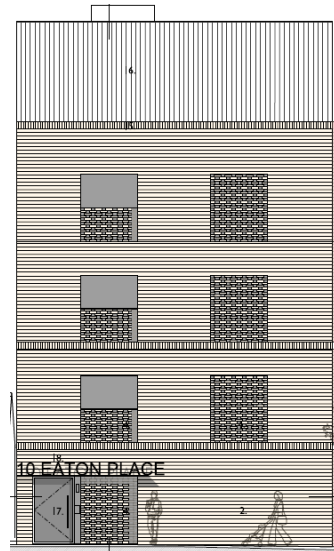
Proposed north elevation (facing The Butler PH) and west to east street-scene section

- 7.26 In general townscape terms it is considered that the scale of building proposed is suitably transitional and acknowledges the site's location within the MOA where higher density development is anticipated but also in terms of its position towards the edge of the MOA and between the larger scale Chatham Place and Q Park buildings and the smaller scale of buildings to the West along Chatham Street.
- 7.27 In terms of materials both red and light buff brick are proposed as the primary finishes to the building. Existing buildings surrounding the site display a wide range of materials from the grid like metal structure and timber louvres of the adjacent Q Park and the red brick and colourful painted brick and render of The Butler PH, albeit red brick remains the predominant material with buff brick also present along Chatham Street. In this respect the proposed use of materials is considered appropriate for the existing and evolving character of the area.
- 7.28 It is considered that the proposed building displays a good level of architectural detail and variation through use of red and buff brick, stepping of the building footprint to the western and eastern ends, parapet detailing and contrasting white glazed terracotta cladding to the recessed fifth storey, where a communal landscaped roof terrace is proposed to the eastern side of the building. Characterful white arches formed from pre-cast concrete are also proposed to the south elevation of the building at ground and first floor level where the individual front entrance doors to four maisonettes and upper floor covered balconies would be located. In particular the proposed entrance doors would add some much-needed enlivenment and surveillance to Eaton Place at street-level.

7.29 The proposed external decked access lined with steel balustrading to the north elevation of the building also provides visual interest to the upper floors of the building. A varied material finish would also be provided to the west elevation of the building from where the entrance to the flats located at third, fourth and fifth floor of the building would be located which would incorporate hit and miss brick detailing to the windows of the stair core and circulation corridor.



Proposed deck access to north elevation



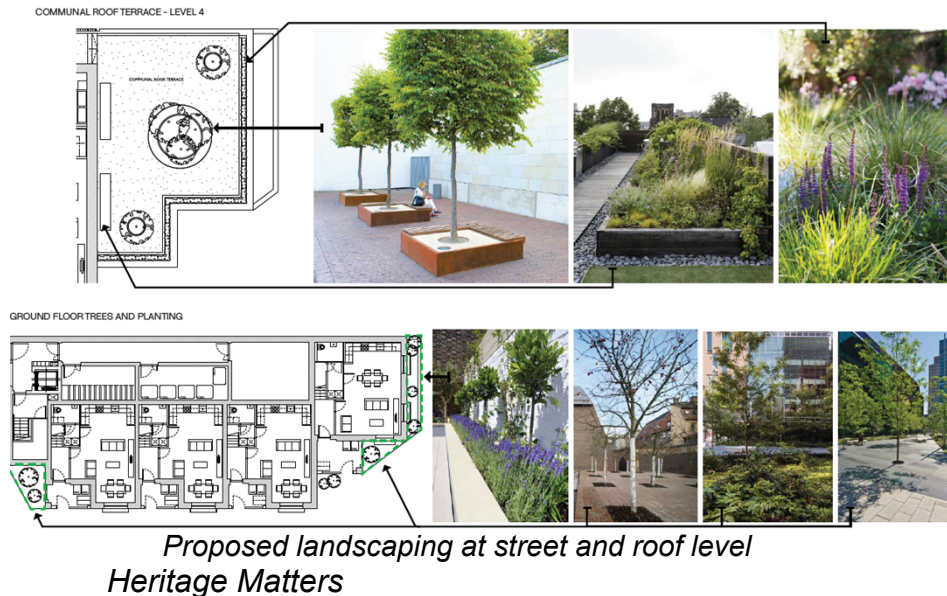
Proposed hit and miss brickwork detail to west elevation

7.30 It is considered that the proposed development would be a significant enhancement to the contribution of the site to the character and appearance of the surrounding area when compared to the site as existing and would that the development responds positively to its local context and in terms of the wider aspirations for development within the MOA.



Visual of the proposed development looking northwest from Eaton Place. In the foreground is a visual interpretation of potential future development on the site of Eaton Court but which is not approved. The Butler PH can be seen behind the proposed development in the background

7.31 the proposals also incorporate landscaping both at street-level and to the roof top of the building within the communal terrace. At street-level small tree species planting is proposed around the western and eastern edges of the development where the footprint of the building steps in. The existing site, aside from overgrown vegetation, in the vacant car park is devoid of greenery and the landscaping is lacking generally within the surrounding area. The proposed introduction of landscaping within the development, particularly that at street-level if considered to be a welcome addition and visual enhancement to this part of Eaton Place.



7.32 In terms of impact of the proposed development on heritage assets, as described above the proposals have a close direct relationship and shared boundary with the Grade II Listed The Butler PH to the north. The pub was originally built in the 1830's and is a two-storey brick building with shallow pitched roof. The building has a typical 'pub front' in the central bays which is deemed of importance in the listing description, described as having "6 sided central moulded panel with the traditional Old Ready Abbey sign (restored)".

7.33 The application is accompanied by a Heritage and Townscape Assessment (HTA) which concludes that the significance of the listed building is derived from its architectural interest as a surviving example of a classic pub building from the era and by way of the architectural composition and detailing of the colourful front elevation of the building. Officers and the Council's Conservation and Urban Design Officer, (CUDO) agree with this conclusion. Views of the front elevation of the pub and its setting are obtained looking south from Chatham Street.



Grade II Listed The Butler Pub



View of The Butler Pub looking south across Chatham Street

- 7.34 The submitted HTA goes on to describe that the setting of the Grade II Listed pub has been eroded over time through introduction of the adjacent large modern developments to Chatham Street (Q Park and Chatham Place) which have urbanised and modernised the setting to the extent that the value and contribution to the significance of the pub from its setting is reduced. Officers and the CUDO agree that the large modern buildings so close to the pub have severely detracted from its setting and its significance as a listed building. In particular the Q Park building is highly visible within views of the pub along Chatham Street and also to views looking north along Eaton Place.

- 7.35 Historic England Guidance on the setting of heritage assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3) sets out that

where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development to the asset itself or its setting, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset.

- 7.36 The application site is located directly to the south of the pub. The area to the rear of the main pub building contains later additions in the form of a series of extensions. These later additions also form part of the listing by way of their curtilage location, albeit they are considered to be of less significance given they are later additions to the building and their more functional form. The existing car park area and two storey utilitarian style office building contained within the application site, whilst not being prominent features, are poor quality and unsympathetic features which do not contribute positively to the setting of the listed building. Loss of the office building and car park would not result in any harm to the setting of the pub or its significance.
- 7.37 Whilst, as discussed above, officers consider the proposed development to be well thought out and to be an improvement to the visual appearance and character of the existing site and Eaton Place generally, it is recognised that the development of a multi-storey residential block immediately to the rear of the grade II listed pub building would undoubtedly add to the cumulative negative impact on the setting of this Listed Building. Any introduction of a building of this, or similar, scale and mass on the site would introduce new built form which would alter views to/from the pub along Chatham Street and Eaton Place and are considered to cause harm to the setting of the Listed Building.
- 7.38 In this respect the level of harm to the setting of the listed building must be assessed. Whilst juxtaposing with the modest scaled listed building, the proposed scale and massing of the development is considered appropriate in such a central location and within the defined MOA and is considered to make the most of the opportunities presented by the wide-ranging scale and uses of surrounding buildings. Whilst each planning application must be considered on their individual merits, it is also it is also reasonably likely that further, higher density, development will come forward in the surrounding MOA in future.
- 7.39 The detailed design of the building is considered to be of a good quality. Notably, the proposed predominant use of light buff brick to the decked access to the north elevation of the building which would be seen in the backdrop of the listed pub and its principal elevation when viewed from Chatham Street. It is considered that these materials would soften and lighten views of the development in this direction and allow the distinctive colourful front façade of the pub to retain its prominence as a landmark feature to Chatham Street. The proposed development would also create a new standalone identity on the site rather than seeking to directly replicate or compete with the scale of the more modest listed building.



Visual of proposed development behind The Butler PH looking south from Chatham Street. Q Park shown in the foreground to the east with the recently completed residential development at 115 Chatham Street shown adjacent to the west fronting Chatham Street. Red brick buildings in the background are not approved and are a visual interpretation of potential future development on the site of Eaton Court

- 7.40 Furthermore, it is clear that the significance of this listed building in particular is derived more from its historic and architectural interest and functional connection as pub serving the surrounding urban area (as with any town centre pub), rather than from any sense of isolation (like a standalone monument or isolated farmhouse), which in this case was enforced through the insensitive removal of traditional terraced rows to Chatham Street in the mid-20th Century. It is not considered that the development in terms of its sale and design would threaten the continued function of the listed building as pub. This matter will also be assessed further within the amenity section of this report.
- 6.37 It is considered no benefit to the pub's historical significance that it should remain surrounded by utilitarian style buildings and uses. For the pub to once again be read as part a regenerated Chatham Street and Eaton Place incorporating residential developments is considerable to be a benefit of the scheme and one which accentuates its juxtaposition as being a historic community surrounded by larger modern developments. This would aid in improving the legibility and understanding of its setting and traditional function as a place of meeting for the surrounding community.
- 7.42 In the context of the above and returning to the national and local policy tests which govern the considering of such proposals on the setting of designated heritage assets, officers consider that level of harm caused to the setting of the Listed Building would be 'less than substantial', and result in a limited negative impact on the character and appearance of this building. As described earlier in this report, paragraph 202 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this

harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal as discussed in other sections of this report.

- 7.43 The Caste Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area is located 60m to the south of the application site where Eaton Place joins Oxford Road. Given this separation and also the presence of existing large buildings between the application site and conservation area the proposed development would not impact upon views into and out of this conservation area and is not considered to impact on its setting.
- 7.44 There are also other listed buildings present within the wider surrounding area. Closest of which includes grade II listed Mannson House 104 Oxford Road located 60m the south of the site and grade II listed 118 Oxford Road located 90m to the west of the application site. Given these separation distances it is not considered that the proposed development would interfere with the setting of these listed buildings.

Amenity Matters

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

Noise and disturbance

- 7.46 Both the Face Bar and The Butler Pub are popular and important parts of the town's night-time economy. As recognised community/leisure facilities and entertainment venues, there is a need for officers to ensure that future residents of this development are able to suitably co-exist without prejudicing the commercial viability of these venues.
- 7.47 In this regard, the proposal is considered to trigger the 'Agent of change' principle which is reference under paragraph 187 of the NPPF. This states that 'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed'.
- 7.48 A detailed noise assessment has been submitted with the application which considers noise from both The Face Bar nightclub and the Butler Pub as well as other general commercial and traffic noise from the surrounding area.
- 7.49 The noise assessment identifies that noise from Face Bar will not be intrusive to future occupiers of the development given the separation

distance between the two sites which is 40m. Furthermore, the closest elevation of the development to Face Bar contains the lift and stair core only and no habitable room windows, whilst the recently completed residential development at 115 Chatham Street would also shield the proposed development from noise impacts. For similar reasons the noise assessment also concludes that noise from more distant Chatham Steet Motor works garage (114-116 Chatham Street) located 55m to the north west of the application site on the northern side of Chatham Street would also not be intrusive to potential future occupiers of the development.

- 7.50 In regard to The Butler, the submitted noise assessment sets out that the application site was surveyed during a period when live entertainment events were happening and also during a period when a live entertainment event was not taking place at the venue. The assessment concludes that in order to reduce intrusive noise to acceptable levels inside the proposed flats, improved insulation, glazing with an enhanced performance along with high-performance mechanical ventilation will be required. The mechanical ventilation is required given internal noise levels within the proposed flats would likely exceed target levels during live music events. A combination of all or some of these measures will be required for each elevation of the proposed development, with the north elevation being most adversely affected given this would be located directly on the shared boundary.
- 7.51 The noise assessment also considered external noise levels within the communal and private amenity spaces of the development and concludes that the majority of private balconies would be within the relevant target noise level. However, the predicted noise level to the roof top communal amenity area would likely exceed target levels. Therefore, a solid balustrade of a minimum 1m in height is proposed at the edges of the communal area to achieve the lowest practicable noise level to this space.
- 7.52 The Council's Environmental Protection Officers have reviewed the submitted noise assessment in detail and are satisfied that it has been carried out to an appropriate standard and that the recommended mitigation measures could ensure that noise levels within the flats would not exceed recommended levels and provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers in terms of noise. Implementation of these measures would be secured by condition.
- 7.53 Officers have considered the objection received from the owner of the neighbouring Butler Pub. It should firstly be noted that often, a pub and residential uses are commonly seen as compatible uses. Most urban and rural pubs across the country are traditionally located next to or within close proximity of a residential use. In Reading itself, there are a number of successful and longstanding pubs which operate successfully with similar characteristics to the application site, which itself was once next to a terrace of houses.
- 7.54 With the use of the proposed noise mitigation measures, officers are of the view that the proposed residential development to the rear of the pub

would not adversely affect the ability of the pub to continue to operate and provide live entertainment events, as protected by the 'agent of change' principle. Notwithstanding this, national guidance also suggests that developers should inform potential purchasers/occupiers of the mitigation measures available to reduce the risk of later complaints to these adjoining venues. This advisory note can be included as an informative on any permission granted.

Privacy

- 7.55 The closest existing residential occupiers to the development would be at the recently completed development at 115 Chatham Street to the north west of the site. The closest part of this adjacent site contains the car park and the neighbouring building would be located six metres from the proposed development at its closest point. The closest elevations of the proposed development would be the west and north which consist of stair core windows and the communal decked access, such that not undue loss of privacy for existing or future occupiers are considered to result. The angled relationship between the two developments also reduces the potential for any overlooking or loss of privacy.



Plan showing relationship of proposed development to existing surrounding buildings

- 7.56 New residential occupiers are also proposed to the south of the application site at Eaton Court under adjacent planning application ref. 210639, albeit this application has not yet been determined. Based on the currently submitted plans for this adjacent site the closest proposed habitable room windows would be located 12.5m to the south on the opposite side of Eaton Place within a building of six storeys. Given the site's location within the town centre and MOA where higher density development and close relationships between buildings are commonplace, it is not considered that this relationship is unacceptable in terms of loss of privacy or overlooking impacts.

- 7.57 The proposed development would be sited on the shared north boundary of the site with The Butler PH. As a public house and entertainment

venue it is not considered that there would be any unacceptable relationships with this building in terms of privacy. An existing residential flat is located to the first floor of the pub, within the main building, and has rear facing windows which would look towards the proposed development. However, the back-to-back distance between the proposed development and the flat would be 20m which is considered sufficient to prevent any undue overlooking or loss of privacy.

- 7.58 In overall terms it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any unacceptable impacts in terms of overlooking or privacy for existing or future occupiers.

Daylight/Sunlight

- 7.59 A daylight/sunlight report has been submitted with the application which considers the impact of the development on light levels to existing surrounding residential developments as well as light levels within the development itself.
- 7.60 The closest residential property is the recently completed development at 115 Chatham Street to the north west of the application site. The daylight sunlight report concludes that of the 27 habitable rooms within 115 Chatham Street that face the proposed development 19 achieve the suggested level of daylight and sunlight recommendation by the BRE (Building Research Establishment) standards in the existing situation. As a result of the proposed development 18 of these 19 windows would continue to receive daylight which meets BRE recommended levels. Of the 8 rooms which do not currently meet BRE recommended levels, these would be further adversely affected by introduction of the proposed development; albeit the report concludes that the change in luminance experienced would not be material and unlikely to change the level of amenity experienced in the affected rooms.
- 7.61 The submitted assessment also considers the impact on receipt of daylight and sunlight to Mayer House (Chatham Place) located to the south-east of the application site and concludes that facing habitable room windows to this building would continue to fully adhere to the BRE Guidelines if the proposed development were to be implemented.
- 7.62 In terms of the internal levels of daylight and sunlight within the proposed development the report concludes that 75% of the habitable rooms within the development would achieve the levels of daylight and sunlight recommended by BRE and that this is considered to represent a good level of compliance for a town centre development. The windows receiving the lowest light levels within the development would be the ground floor windows to three of the maisonettes to the south elevation which serve open plan living room/kitchen/dinning areas. The kitchen areas located to the rear of the rooms furthest from the window are worst impacted. However, the daylight and sunlight report identifies that the living and dining parts of the rooms, located closest to the windows, would receive reasonable daylight levels.

- 7.63 In overall terms, given the site's location within the town centre where high density developments in close proximity to one another are common, it is considered that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable impacts on receipt of daylight and sunlight to existing surrounding residential dwellings and that good levels of daylight and sunlight would be provided within the proposed development.
- 7.64 Whilst the submitted daylight and sunlight assessment does not consider the relationship of the development with that proposed by the currently undetermined planning application on the adjacent site to the south at Eaton Court, officers are satisfied that the separation distance to this development at 12.5m, which is greater than that to 115 Chatham Street, is such that daylight sunlight impacts are unlikely to be significant. Particularly, within the context of the sites town centre location where similar relationships between buildings are common. The daylight sunlight assessment also does not consider the impact of the development on The Butler pub to the north given that this is a commercial premises. Whilst there is an existing flat to the first floor of the pub, the 20m separation from the development to the flat is considered sufficient to ensure there would be adverse loss of daylight to this dwelling. On this basis, with the building in use as a pub and live entertainment venue, officers do not identify that there would be any unacceptable impacts in terms of daylight and sunlight.

Air Quality

- 7.65 The site is also located within an AQMA (Air Quality Management Area) where Policy EN15 (Air Quality) seeks to ensure existing and future occupiers are not adversely impact by poor air quality. 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. Given the development is car-free it is also considered unlikely that the development itself would result in increased emissions. Environmental Protection Officers are satisfied that the development would not result in significant exposure or emission of air borne pollutants and no mitigation is necessary.

Standard of Accommodation for Future Occupiers

- 7.66 All dwellings have been proposed to meet or exceed the nationally described space standard (as outlined in Policy H5) for the type of dwelling/number of bedrooms. All habitable rooms would be served by at least one window and all units are considered to be served well in terms of outlook. The proposed 4 x three-bedroom maisonettes, spread across ground and first floors, in particular are well-sized and considered to provide a high standard of amenity.
- 7.67 In terms of outdoor space, Policy H10 states that “... flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens”. In this instance, the four proposed maisonettes, would each be served by two private amenity balconies to the north and south elevations of the

building. The eleven smaller flats proposed from second to fourth floor level would have access to a 51.4m² communal roof terrace (accessed via the main stair core). The roof terrace would be enhanced by soft and hard landscaping features.

- 7.68 Policy H10 acknowledges that developments within central Reading are more constrained and unlikely to provide outdoor space to the same level as houses in other parts of Reading. Officers are satisfied that the development provides adequate private and communal outdoor amenity spaces for future occupiers given the site's town centre location. Furthermore, the development would be located 500m from Victoria Park which contains open space and play equipment for families and opportunities for more formal recreation.

Accessibility

- 7.69 The proposed development would accord with Policy H5(e) in providing all dwellings as accessible and adaptable units in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations. Level access from the existing pavement would be provided at the entrance to the communal stair and lift core leading to the upper floor flats and this would be retained via condition.

Safety and Security

- 7.70 Crime and the fear of crime can have a major impact on quality of life and the wellbeing of a building occupants. Enabling occupants to feel safe and secure is therefore essential and is supported by Policy CC7. The proposed development would introduce and enhance natural surveillance of Eaton Place through ground and upper floor windows. Notably the proposed introduction of four street level front doors to the maisonette dwellings to the south elevation of the building which face onto the key pedestrian and/or cyclist movement corridor along Eaton Place, which is identified within the Western MOA under Policy CR12, creating activation and surveillance to this route.
- 7.71 The development incorporates communal access and facilities to its western elevation for occupier of the flats located at second floor level and above. A condition is recommended to secure a security strategy to demonstrate how access to the building and communal space would be managed and controlled.

Waste

- 7.72 Policy CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage) states that development should promote layouts and designs that provide adequate, well-designed spaces to facilitate waste storage.
- 7.73 In this respect the ground floor maisonettes would each have their own secure bin store located adjacent to the covered front entrance doors from Eaton Place where there would be adequate space for storage of general waste, recycling and food waste. The flats located on the 2nd floor

and above would have access to a communal bin store area on the ground floor of the development.

- 7.74 RBC Waste Officers have reviewed the proposals and are satisfied that both the communal and private bin stores would be of sufficient size to accommodate the required size and number of bins for general waste, recycling and food waste and a condition will secure their provision and retention.
- 7.75 On the advice of Environmental Protection Officers, a condition is recommended to secure submission and approval of details of measures to ensure all bin stores within the development are secure from pests and vermin.
- 7.76 In terms of waste collection arrangements the development does not incorporate space for on-site servicing and therefore waste collection would be from kerbside. RBC Waste Officers have advised that the location of the communal bin is too distant from the kerbside to utilise RBC waste collection services. Furthermore, RBC Transport Officers have advised that there is insufficient turning space within the part of Eaton Place which runs parallel to the west elevation of the building where the communal bin store is located to allow an RBC refuse collection vehicle to turn around and leave in forward gear without overrunning the footway. Any incidence of footway overrun is considered hazardous and not acceptable from a highway safety perspective. In addition, a key pedestrian and cycle movement corridor is identified within the Western MOA (under Policy CR12) which runs past the south elevation of the building where the overrun would occur. It is not acceptable for new development to jeopardise functionality of this corridor.
- 7.77 Given the conflict identified above in relation to RBC waste collection for this particular development applicant has proposed that all dwellings would be served by private refuse collection arrangements. This would be secured via a section 106 obligation. This obligation would include a requirement for waste collection to be undertaken using a non-standard smaller waste collection vehicle to ensure the vehicle can turn around within the road without overrunning the footway and causing a hazard to pedestrians. A swept path turning diagram has been provided to demonstrate how the proposed non-standard waste could turn and RBC Transport Officers are satisfied that this arrangement is acceptable from highway safety perspective.

Transport

- 7.78 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.
- 7.79 Eaton Place forms a junction with Chatham Street which in turn forms a junction with Oxford Road (A329) which is a main transport corridor and a

red route 'no stopping' corridor. Located within the town centre the area is well served by rail and bus links and also contains the largest proportion of public car parking spaces in the Borough.

- 7.80 The development is proposed as car-free. RBC Transport Officers consider that a car free development is acceptable in this location given the sustainable location of the site close to the town centre, good public transport links, including walking distance to Reading and Reading West Stations as well as nearby Oxford Road being part of the Reading Cycle Network. There is an existing dropped kerb at the site which provides access to the current on-site car park. This will need to be stopped up and realigned with the footway if the development takes place and implementation of would be secured by condition should planning permission be granted. .
- 7.81 There are also extensive parking restrictions, preventing unauthorised parking, in the area. A condition and informatives would also be attached to any planning permission to confirm that future occupiers of the development would not be automatically entitled to a parking permit. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on-street car parking in the area. RBC Transport Officers have advised that the recent adjacent development at 115 Chatham Street (planning permission ref. 210349) provided a car club space on the local highway that would be available for use by future occupiers of the proposed development at 10 Eaton Place. The number of dwellings proposed by the current application is not considered to justify the provision of a dedicated car club for this development in its own right.
- 7.82 In accordance with the Council's current adopted standards each 1- and 2-bedroom unit would require 0.5 cycle parking spaces each and each 3-bedroom unit 1 cycle parking space. Therefore, a total of 11 cycle storage spaces (rounded up from 10.5) are required for the whole development. 13 cycle parking spaces would be provided a part of the development which would be in excess of the Council's minimum standards. Each of the independently accessed maisonettes would have their own dedicated cycle store space for one cycle under the covered porch accesses. The cycle storage for upper floor flats would be in a communal store at ground floor level access from the communal access to the building from the west elevation. These arrangements are considered suitable and would be secured by condition.
- 7.83 The development has the potential to cause noise and disturbance to existing surrounding occupiers and result in additional vehicle movements on the surrounding highway network during the construction phase of the development. Therefore, a condition is recommended to secure a construction method statement to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are put in place.

Natural Environment

- 7.84 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.
- 7.85 A bat survey report has been submitted with the application and concludes that the risk of bats being affected by the demolition of the existing building is minimal. The survey report has been reviewed by the RBC Ecology Adviser who is satisfied with the conclusions of the report and that the survey was undertaken to an appropriate standard. Notwithstanding this, bats are known to be present within the surrounding area and therefore a condition is recommended to ensure that any details of external lighting proposed are submitted and approved prior to installation to ensure that this would be wildlife friendly.
- 7.86 The vacant car park on the site currently contains overgrown vegetation which has the potential to be used by nesting birds. Therefore, a condition is also recommended to ensure that vegetation clearance is undertaken outside of the bird nesting season to ensure birds are not harmed during any construction works associated with the proposed development.
- 7.87 Aside from the overgrown vegetation within the existing hard standing car park, the application site is devoid of greenery or other vegetation. RBC's Ecological Adviser is satisfied that the street and roof level landscaping proposed and green roofs at fourth and fifth floor level would ensure the development results in a net gain in biodiversity. Details of provision of at least six swift bricks and four bat tiles building into the walls of the proposed building would be secured by way of condition.
- 7.88 The RBC Natural Environment Officer is also satisfied with the landscaping principles provided as part of the application and given the site's location within an air quality management area the inclusion of small tree planting to the Eaton Place frontages of the development is considered appropriate. The Officer also welcomes the inclusion of the green roof which would also double as a 'blue roof' and collect rainwater via attenuation tanks to irrigate the garden areas within the development. Full details of all landscaping and the green/blue roof would be secured by conditions.

Sustainability

- 7.88 Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy H5 (Standards 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 the Building Regulations with a financial contribution to off-set the carbon performance of the development to zero. Development should also achieve the higher water efficiency defined in the Building Regulations. Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) also requires development to demonstrate how consideration has been given to securing energy for the development from decentralised sources.

- 7.89 The application is accompanied by an energy and sustainability statement which sets out that the development is projected to achieve a 68.05% improvement in the dwelling carbon emission rate defined by the 2013 Building Regulations which would exceed the minimum 35% improvement required by Policy H5. The statement advises that this level of improvement would be achieved by a number of passive design and energy efficient measures incorporated within the development including use of high thermal performance building materials and use of energy efficient lighting and heating temperature controls. A total of 67 photovoltaic panels are also proposed to the roof of the building which further contribute to the projected improvement in the dwelling carbon emission rate; as well as providing an on-site decentralised energy source in accordance with Policy CC4. Implementation of the development in accordance with the proposed energy strategy would be secured by way of condition.
- 7.90 As per the requirements of Policy H5 a financial contribution, to off-set the improvement in the dwelling emission rate of the development to zero carbon, would be secured by a section 106 agreement obligation. This obligation would require an 'as built' report demonstrating the actual carbon performance of the development to be submitted to and approved by officers prior to occupation of the development to allow the precise level of contribution required to be calculated (and also the offset contribution to be paid prior to occupation of the development).
- 7.91 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 sustainable drainage scheme (SuDS), including blue/green roof to improve drainage conditions across the site, landscaping scheme and building materials with high thermal efficiency.
- 7.92 In accordance with Policy EN18 (Drainage and Flooding) all major development must incorporate SuDS to ensure that runoff rates would be no greater than existing conditions of the site. The policy also goes on to state that wherever possible SuDS provision should maximise ecological benefits linking into the existing Green Network and incorporate tree planting and landscaping. The SuDS strategy has been submitted with the application which includes a management and maintenance scheme. The Council's Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Officer has revised the scheme and considers it to be acceptable noting that the proposed

blue/green roof would ensure run off rates across the site would reduce from existing. Implementation of the development in accordance with the SuDS strategy is recommended to be secured by condition.

- 7.93 Subject to the recommended conditions and section 106 obligations it is considered that the application has demonstrated that the proposed development would comply with Policies CC3, CC4, H5 and EN18.

Other

Archaeology

- 7.94 Policy EN2 requires that developers should identify and evaluate sites of archaeological significance and that where remains are identified and cannot be preserved 'in situ' they should be properly excavated, investigated and recorded.
- 7.95 Berkshire Archaeology have reviewed the proposals and have advised that there is potential for archaeological remains of various periods below ground in the surrounding area but remains of such significance that they would merit preservation in situ are not likely to be present. Therefore, it is considered sufficient to secure submission, approval and implementation of a written scheme of archaeological investigation prior to commencement of development on site.

Employment Skills and Training

- 7.96 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. This obligation would be secured as part of proposed section 106 legal agreement. It would be the choice of the developer whether they seek to provide an employment or provide the equivalent contribution. In the event they choose to pay the contribution then officers have calculated this to be £3, 845.

Representations Received

- 7.97 Matters raised are considered to be addressed in the Appraisal section of the report above.

Equalities Impact

- 6.92 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

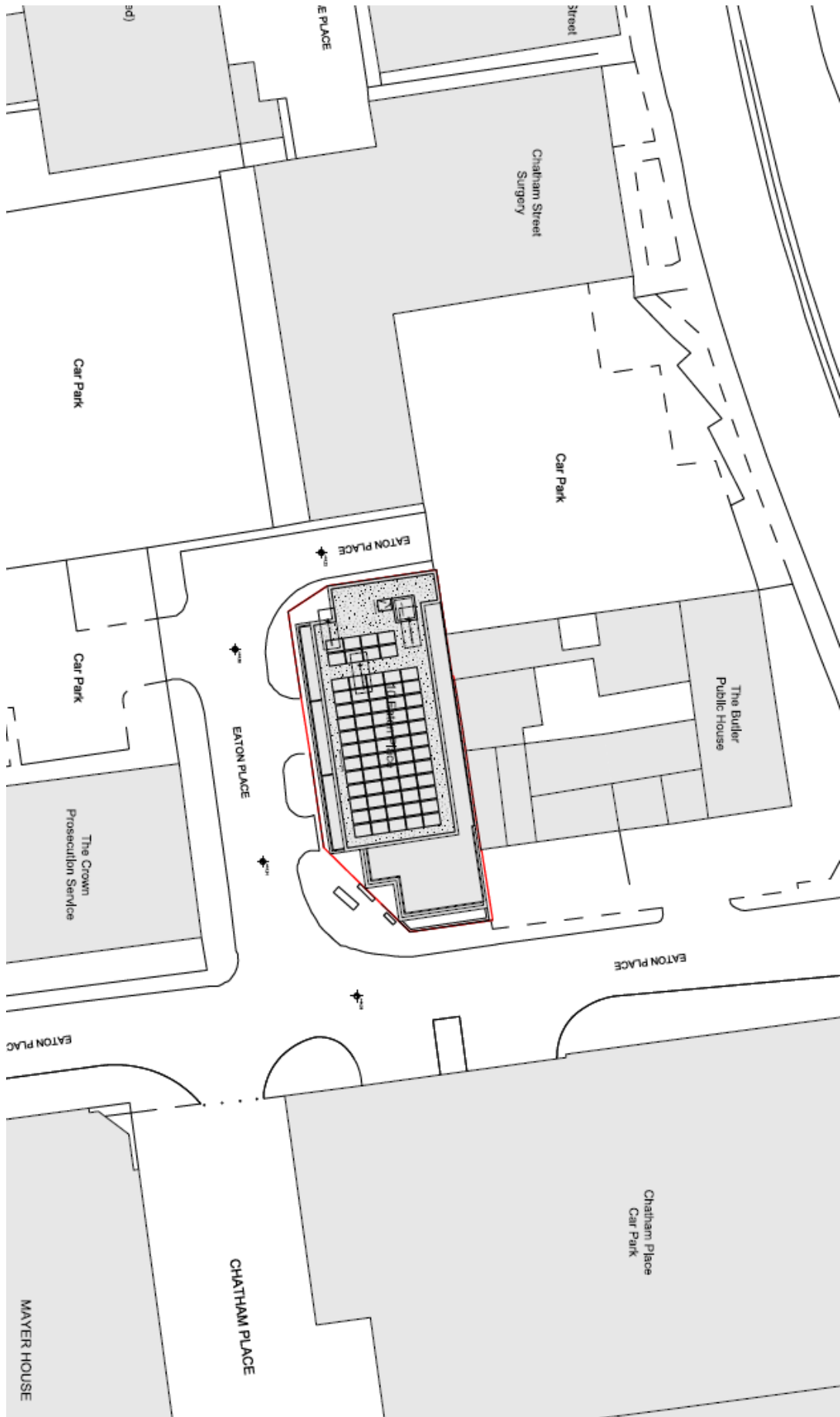
- 8.1 The proposal would see a residential scheme provided on underutilised land allocated for housing within the Western Major Opportunity Area defined by Policy CR12c of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. The principle of development in land use terms is therefore considered acceptable. The overall dwelling mix proposed by the development is acceptable in accordance with the requirements of the local plan.
- 8.2 Economically, during the construction phase the proposed development would clearly contribute to and encourage associated economic activity by directly sustaining jobs in the borough. This would be supported further by a construction phase Employment Skills and Training Plan which can be secured via the Section 106 legal agreement. In the longer term, future occupants of the proposed dwellings will contribute to the viability and vitality of businesses in local area. Other related economic benefits include CIL contributions and the matters set out in the S106 Heads of Terms. The development would therefore clearly perform a positive economic role.
- 8.3 In terms of the social role, the proposals would fulfil one of the NPPF's core aims to 'boost significantly the supply of housing' (para. 60) and deliver a range of homes of different types and tenures. The proposal would contribute to meeting the Borough's identified housing need and of a mix and density appropriate to its sustainable location.
- 8.4 The proposal would provide 4 x 3-bedroom affordable homes at an above policy tenure mix with all four units to be provided at Reading Affordable Rent level. This would ensure a supply of good quality, secure and affordable housing to meet identified local housing needs. The development would therefore make a welcome contribution to improving access to local affordable housing to meet local needs and would constitute a significant and tangible public benefit in accordance with Policy H3 of the Local Plan.
- 8.5 In design terms, the site is currently a underutilised site next to a listed building. The proposed development is considered to positively improve the character and appearance of the immediate area, by providing much needed visual uplift to a long-vacant commercial site with open car parking and activity/surveillance to improve this site positioned between two busy arterial routes along Chatham Street and Oxford Road.
- 8.6 In terms of health and wellbeing, as described, the development is considered to create a good quality level of residential accommodation that would not prejudice or prevent future occupiers from enjoying a good quality of life. Adequate mitigation measures have been included within the development to protect future occupiers from existing live entertainment venues nearby. Accordingly, the above health and

wellbeing factors are considered key material social benefits and comply with Policy CC8 of the Local Plan.

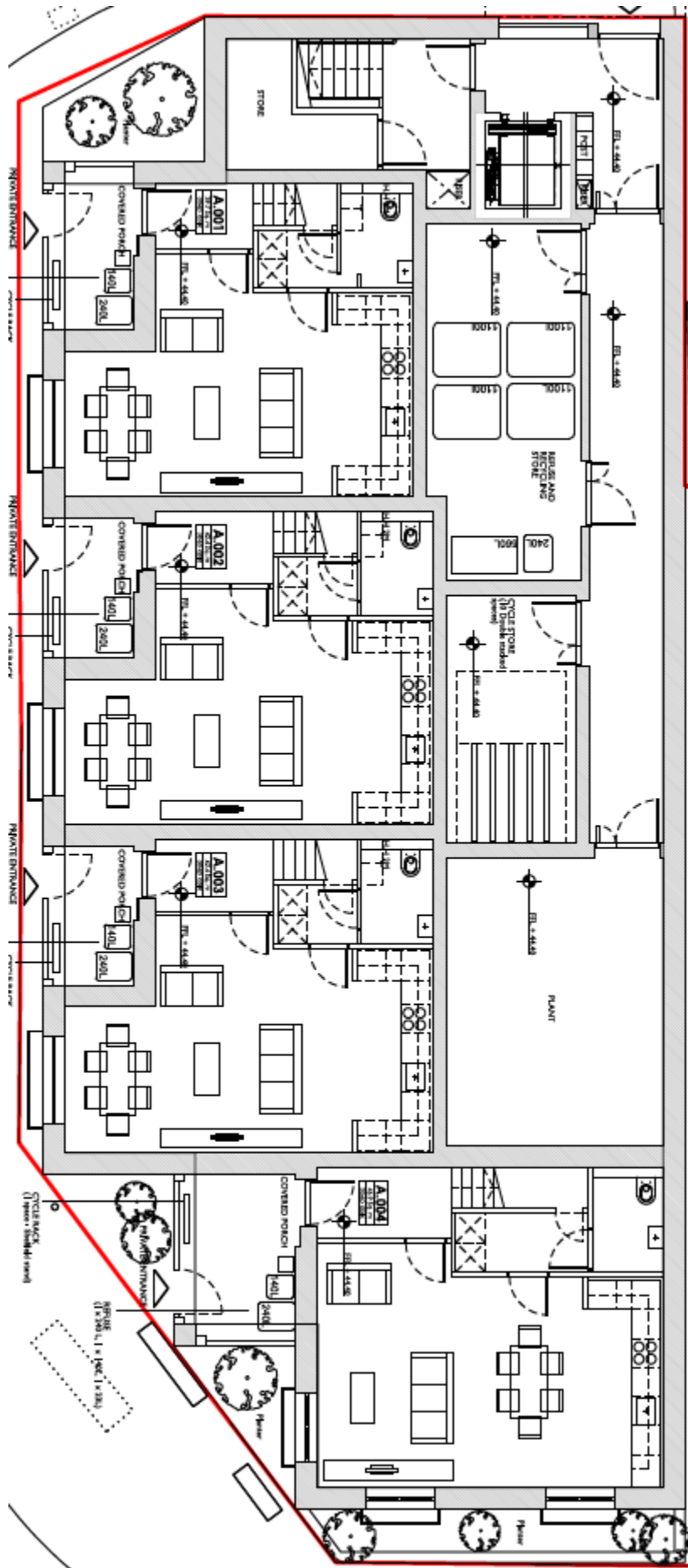
- 8.7 With regard to the natural environment and the role this development will play in meeting the challenge of climate change, it is recognised that this residential development has demonstrated compliance with the Council's enhanced energy efficiency and sustainability standards. The proposals would also provide a net gain in on-site biodiversity and albeit to a lesser extent, landscaping, including small tree planting within a designated air quality management area. By utilising allocated previously developed land, the proposal will meet the Council's spatial strategy for the location of new development by reusing land of low environmental value.
- 8.8 In terms of sustainable transport and supporting the Council's key objective of reduced car usage and improved air quality, the proposal would be car free and provide desirable cycle facilities for residents.
- 8.9 Finally, with regard to the historic environment, officers do consider that the proposal would on the whole have a negative impact (i.e. it would cause harm) to the existing setting of the The Butler Pub as a result of the introduction of built form of a greater scale directly to its rear which would be visible in the backdrop of views of the significant principle front elevation of the pub. As made clear, in this instance, Officers consider that the harm caused to the setting of the Listed Building would be 'less than substantial'. As described earlier in this report, para 202 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 8.10 As concluded above, officers are of the view that the above public benefits of the development are significant and would outweigh the 'less than substantial harm' caused to the setting of the Butler Pub through the introduction of the development. This complies with national requirements and that of Policy EN1 of the Local Plan.
- 8.11 When applying an overall critical planning balance of all material considerations presented, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of a S106 Legal Agreement.

Case Officer: Mr Matt Burns

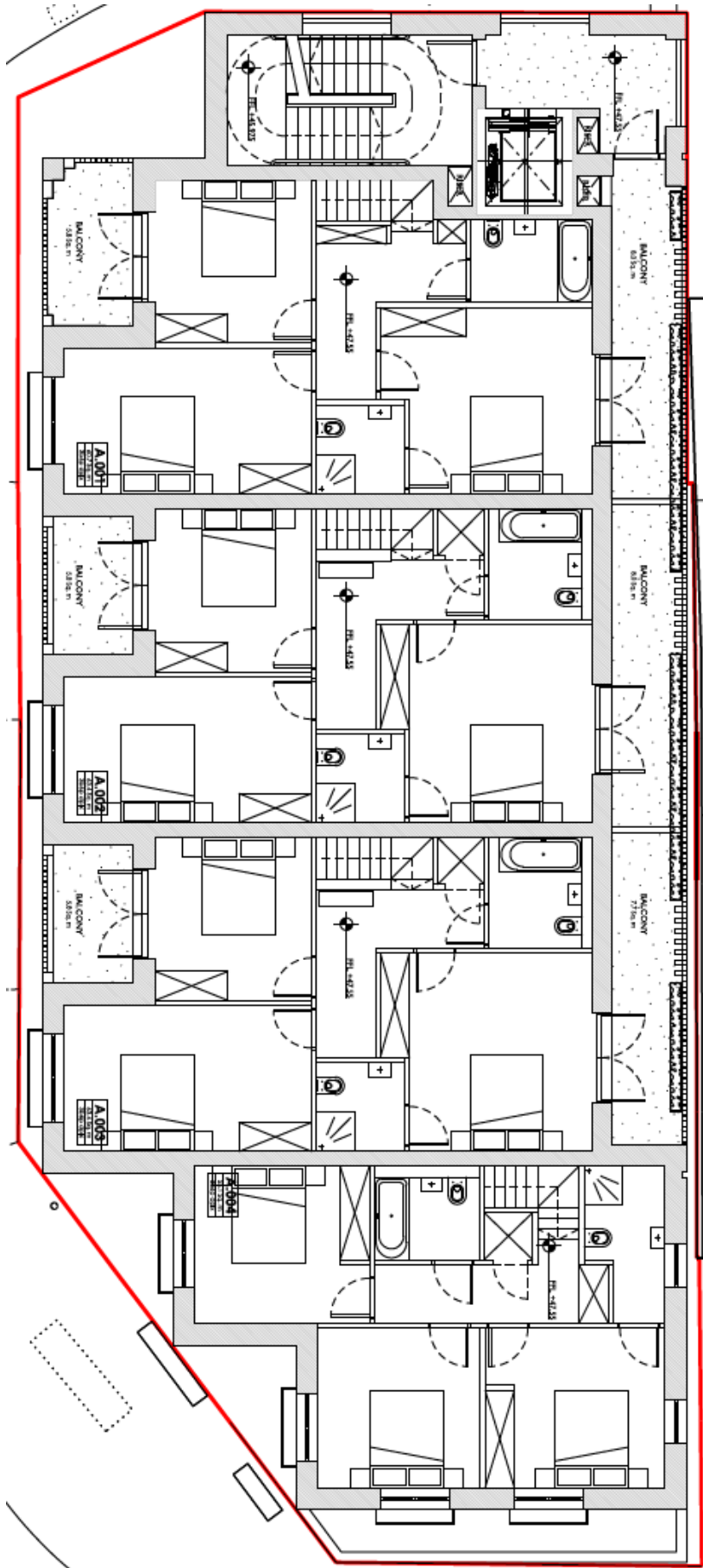
Proposed Plans shown below:



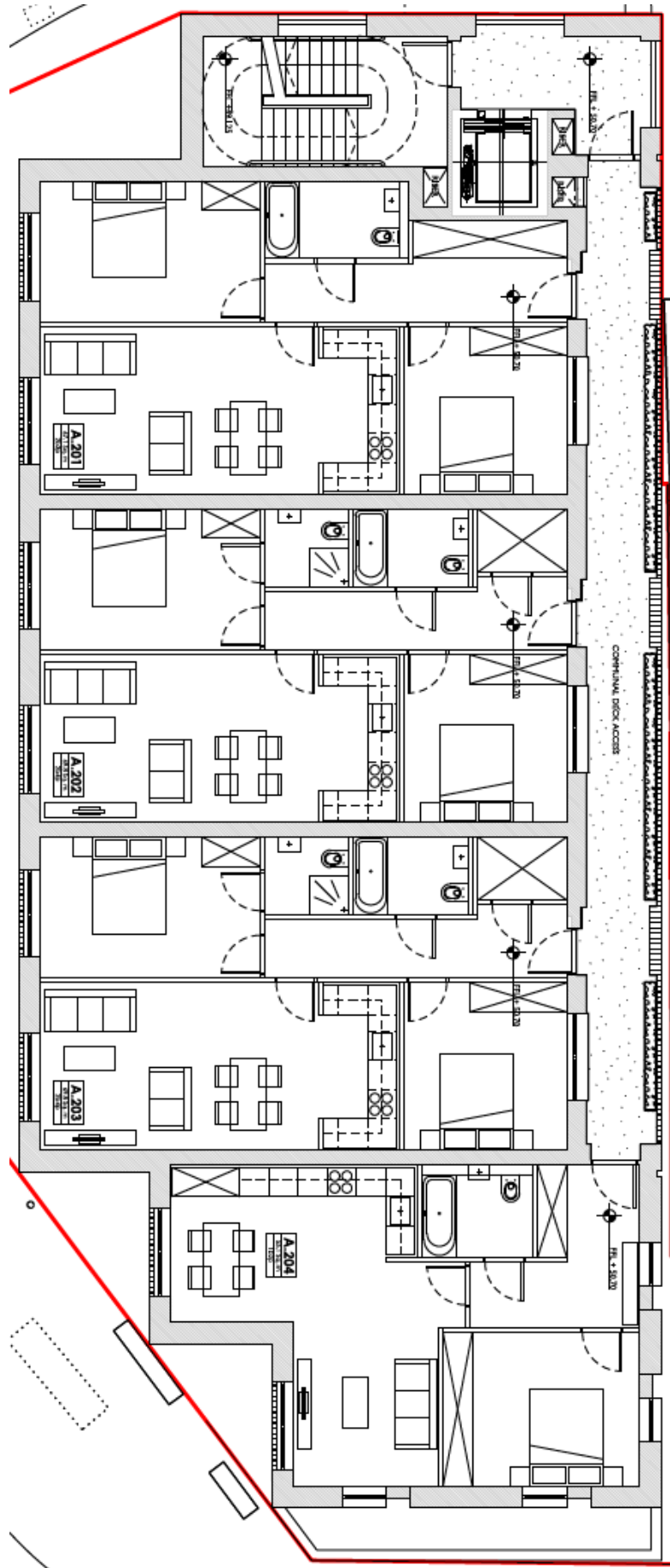
Proposed Site Plan



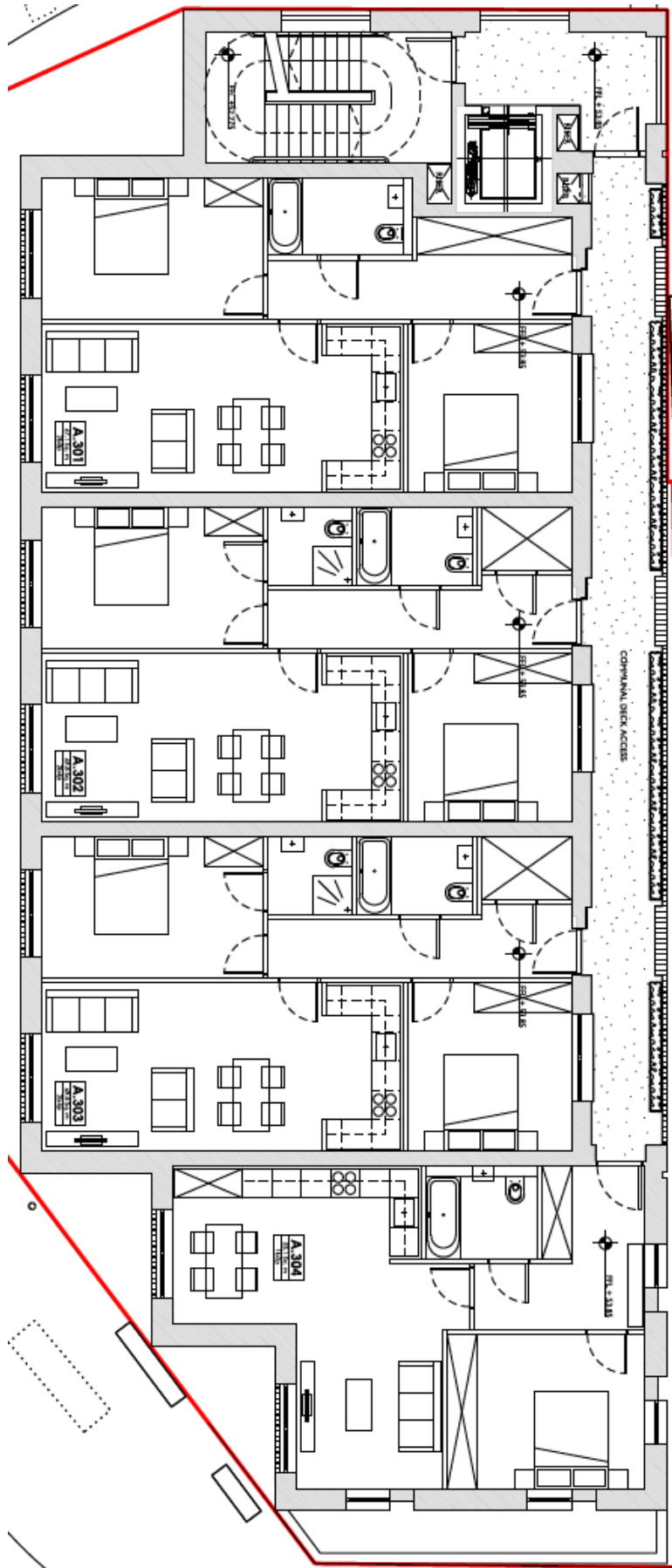
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



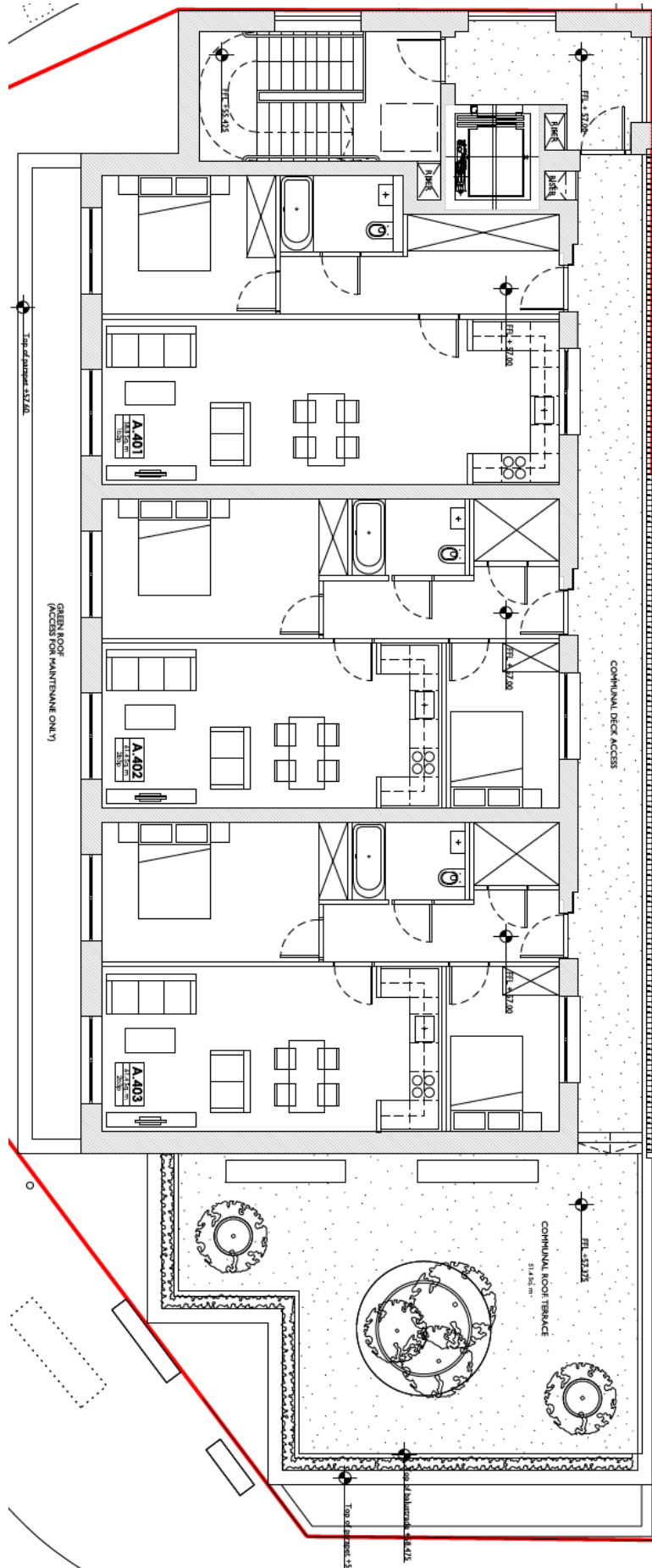
Proposed First Floor Plan



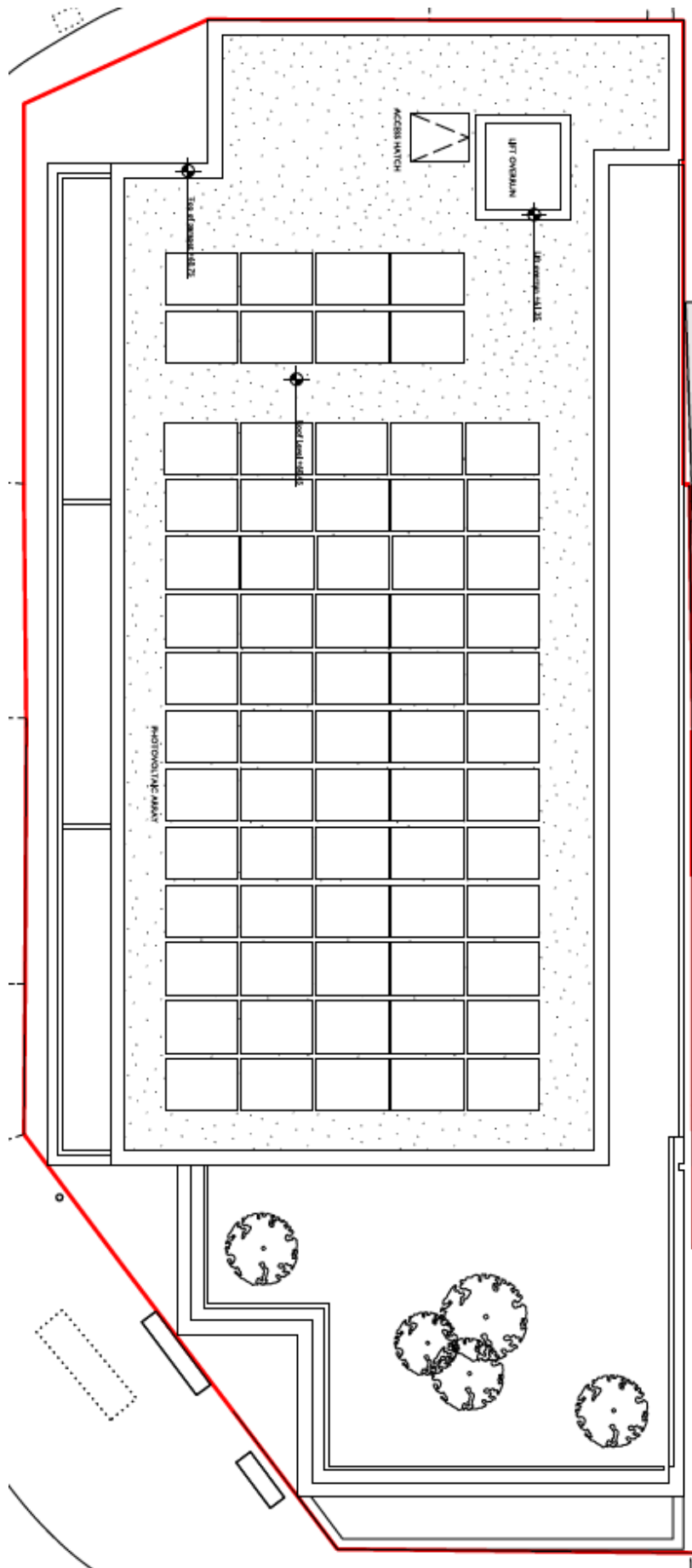
Proposed Second Floor Plan



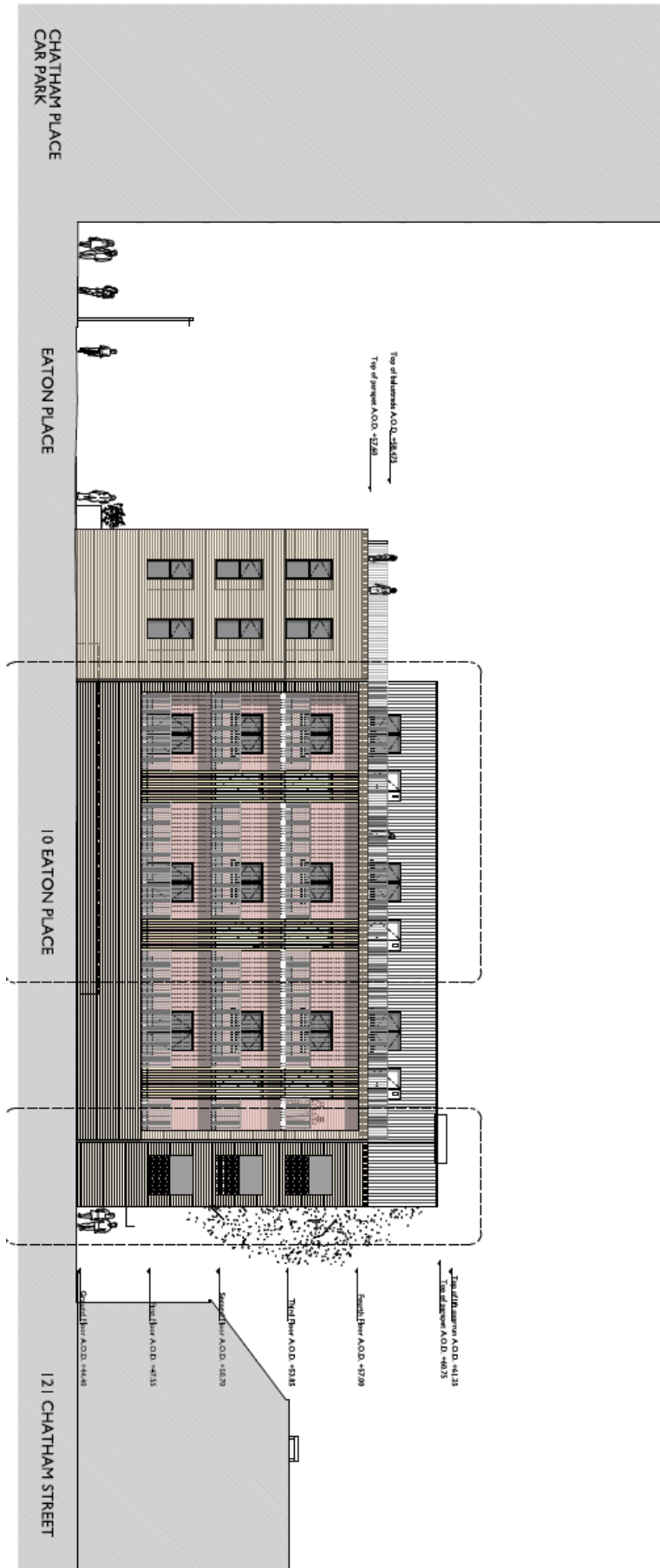
Proposed Third Floor Plan



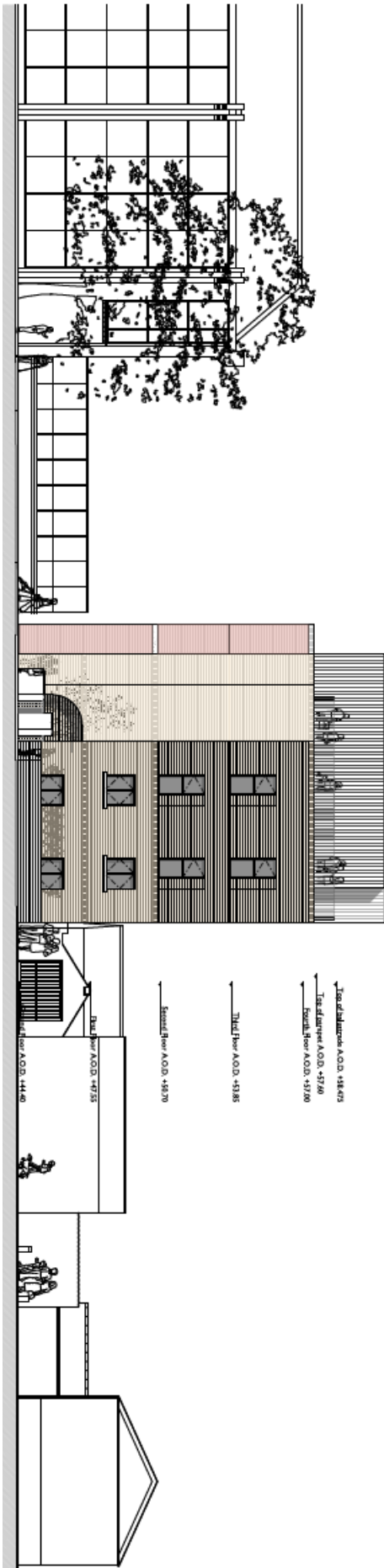
Proposed Fourth Floor Plan



Proposed Roof Plan



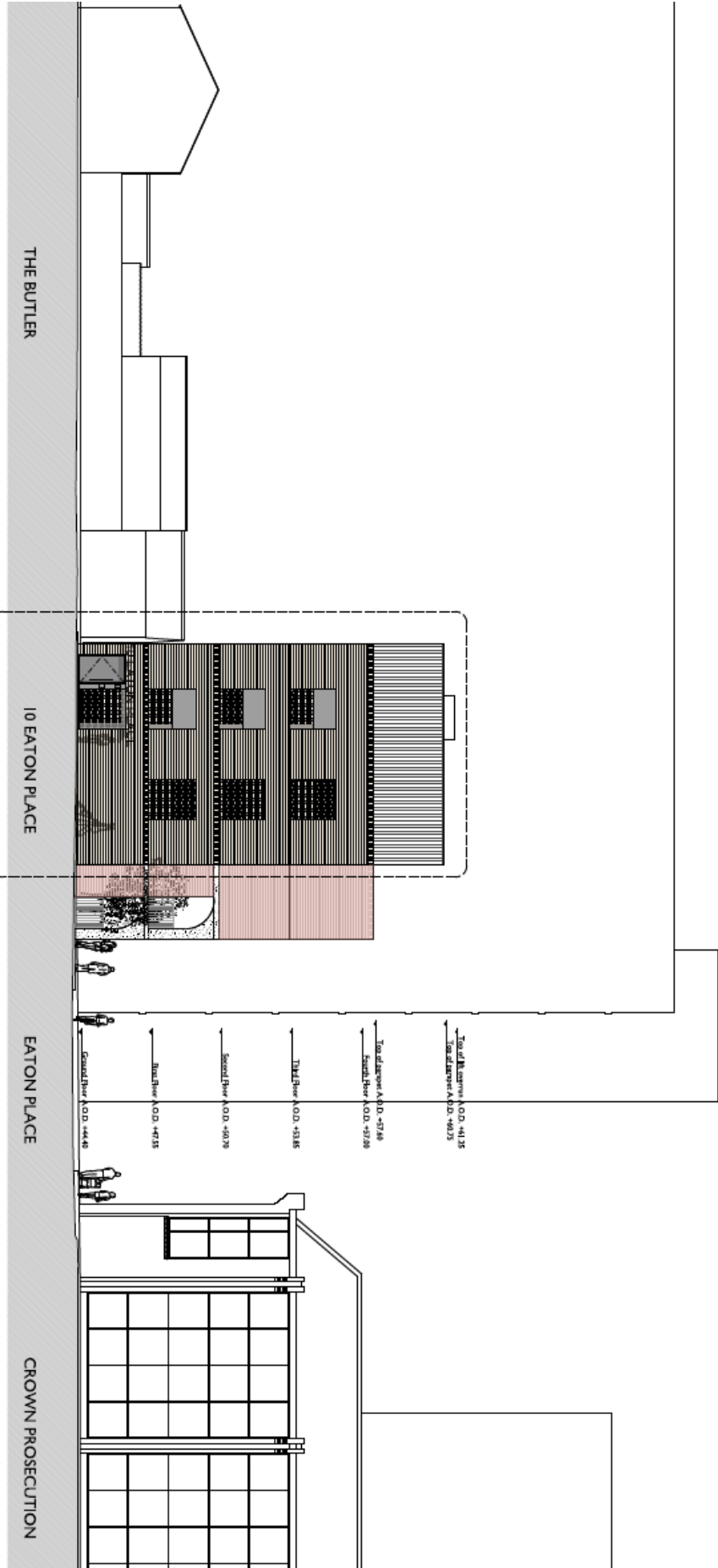
Proposed North Elevation and Street-Scene



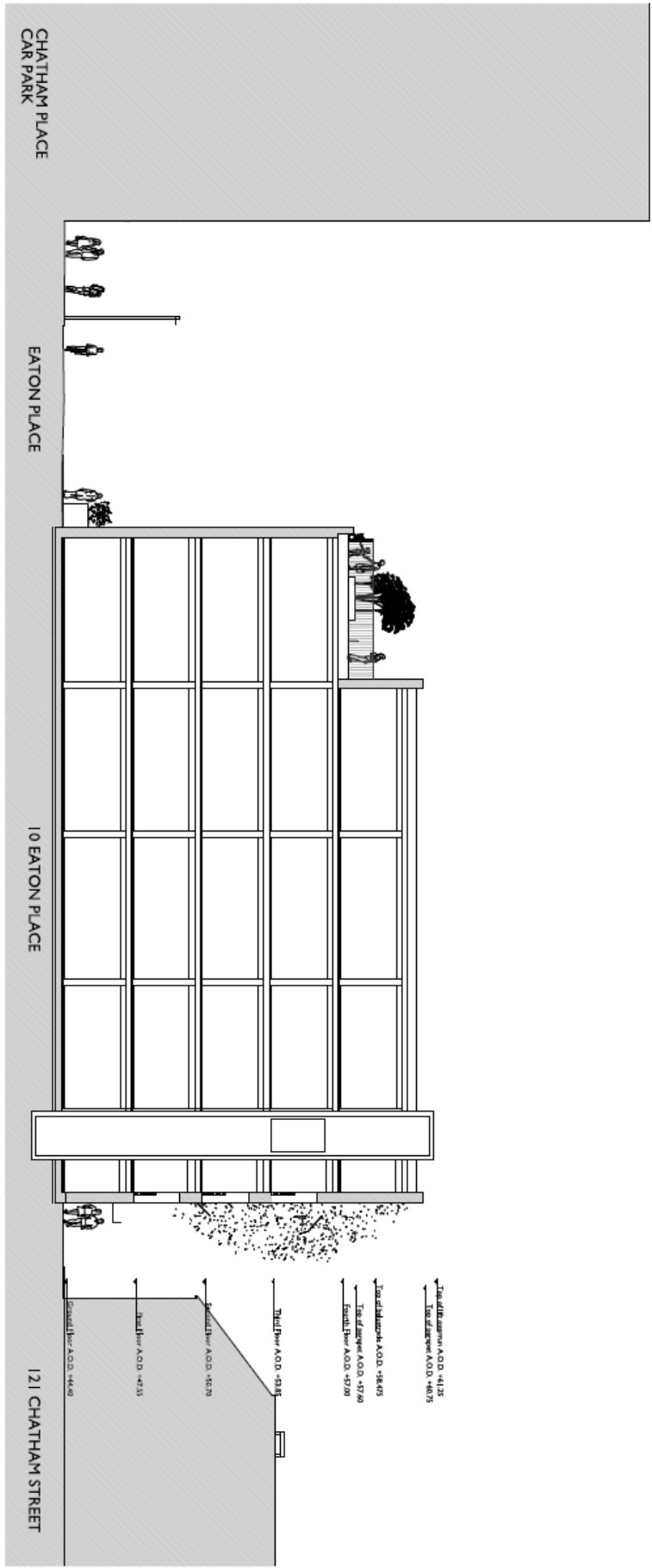
Proposed East Elevation and Street-Scene



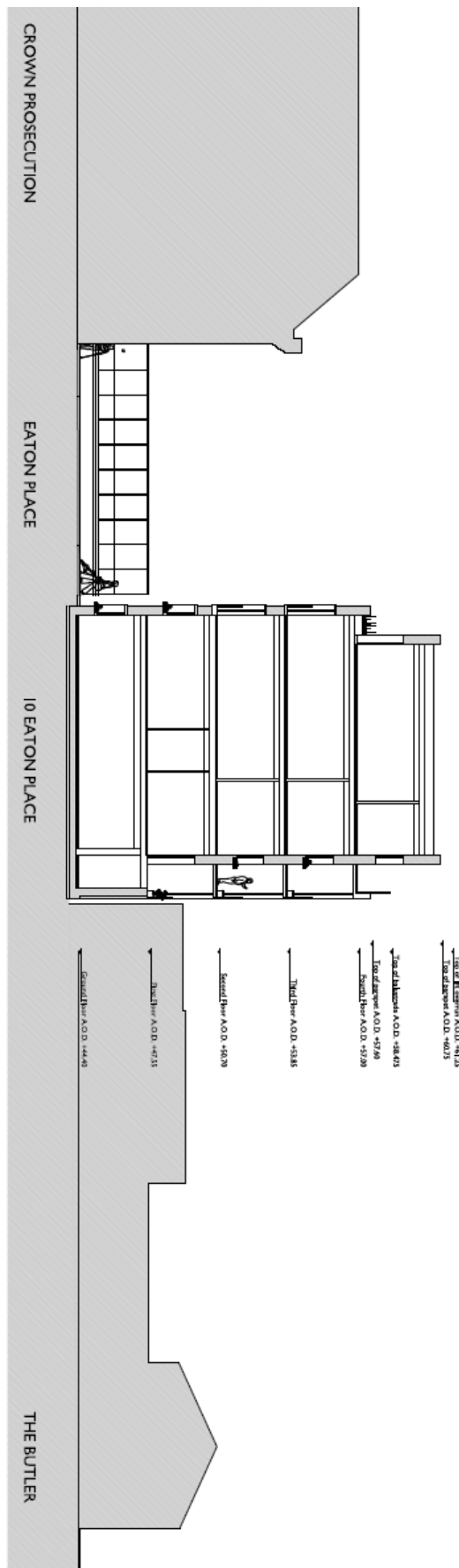
Proposed South Elevation and Street-Scene



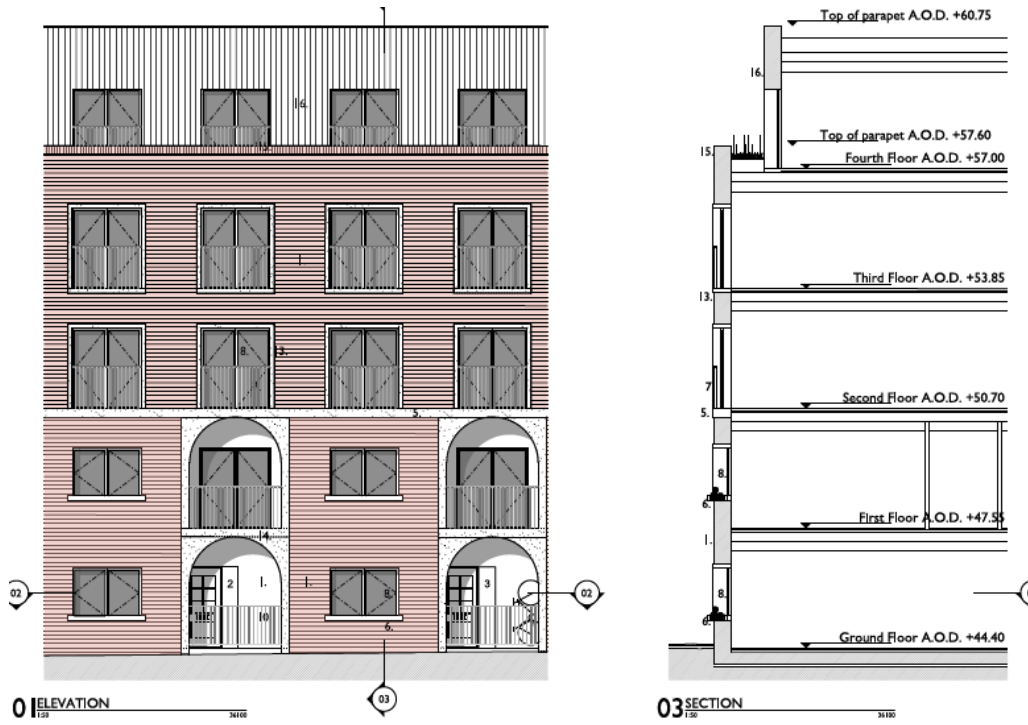
Proposed West Elevation and Street-Scene



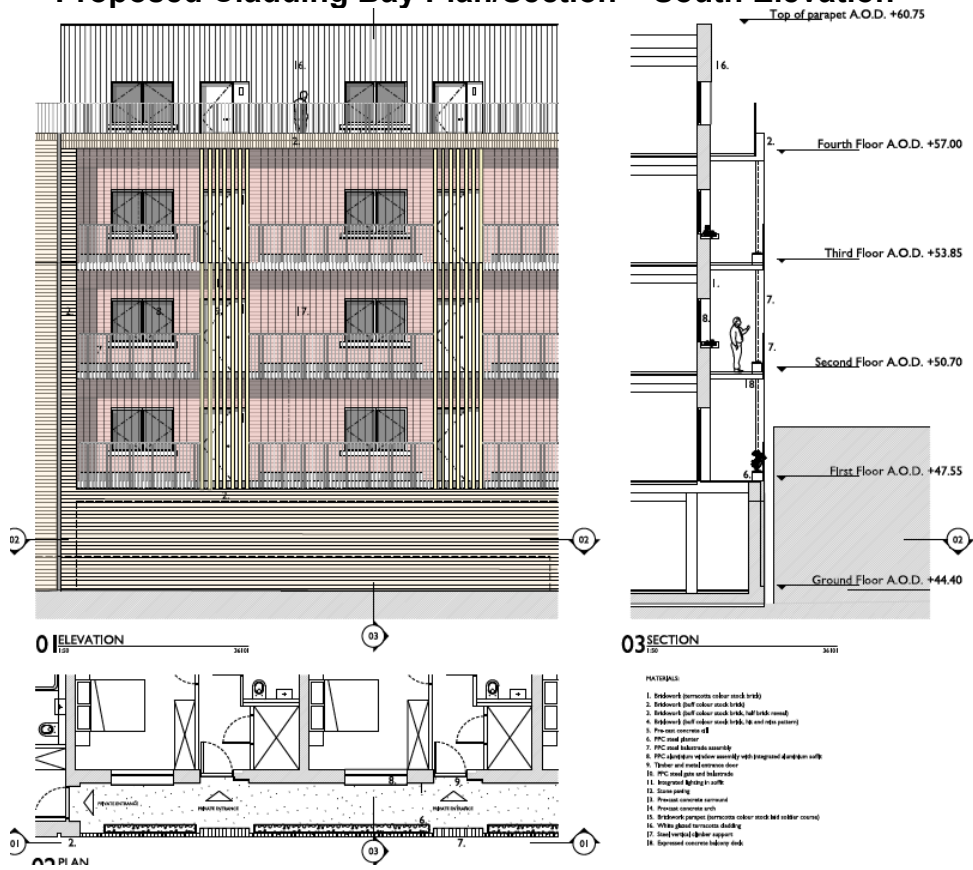
Proposed East to West Site Section



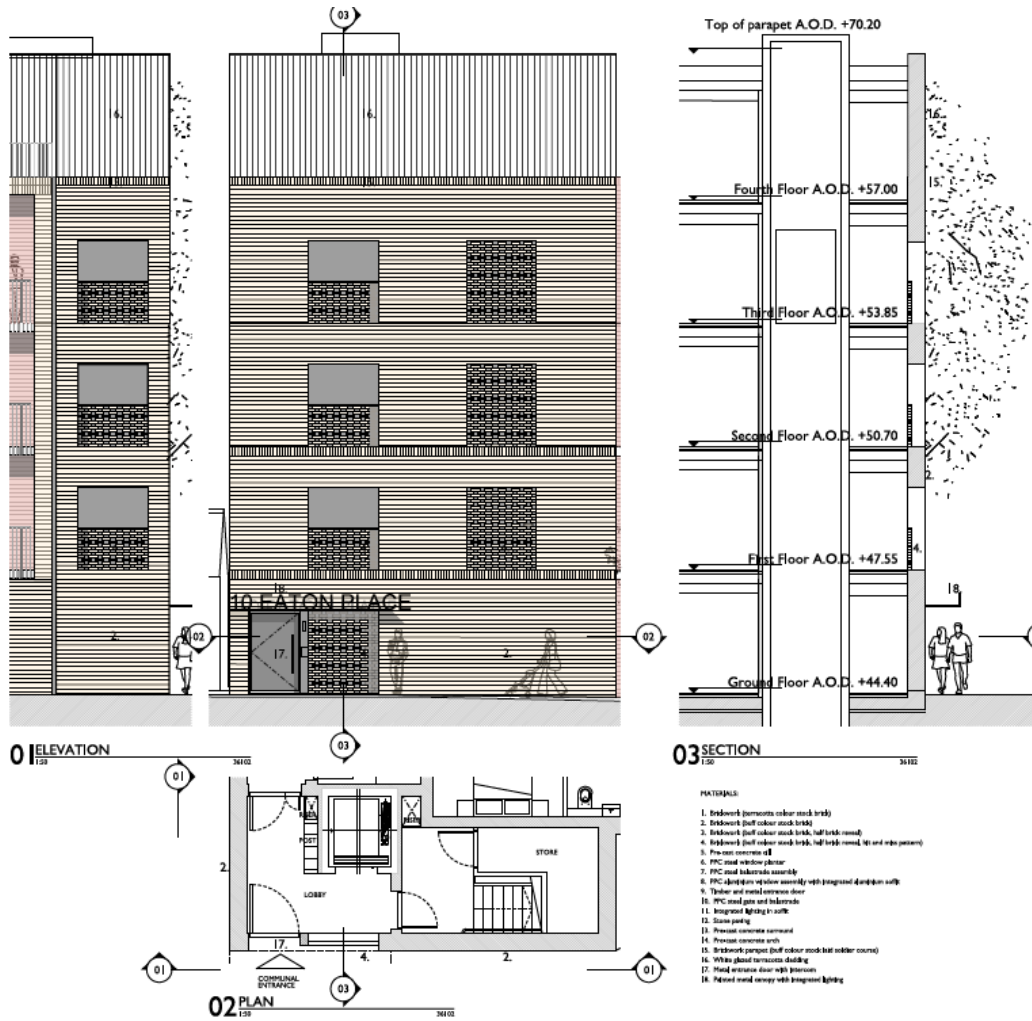
Proposed North to South Site Section



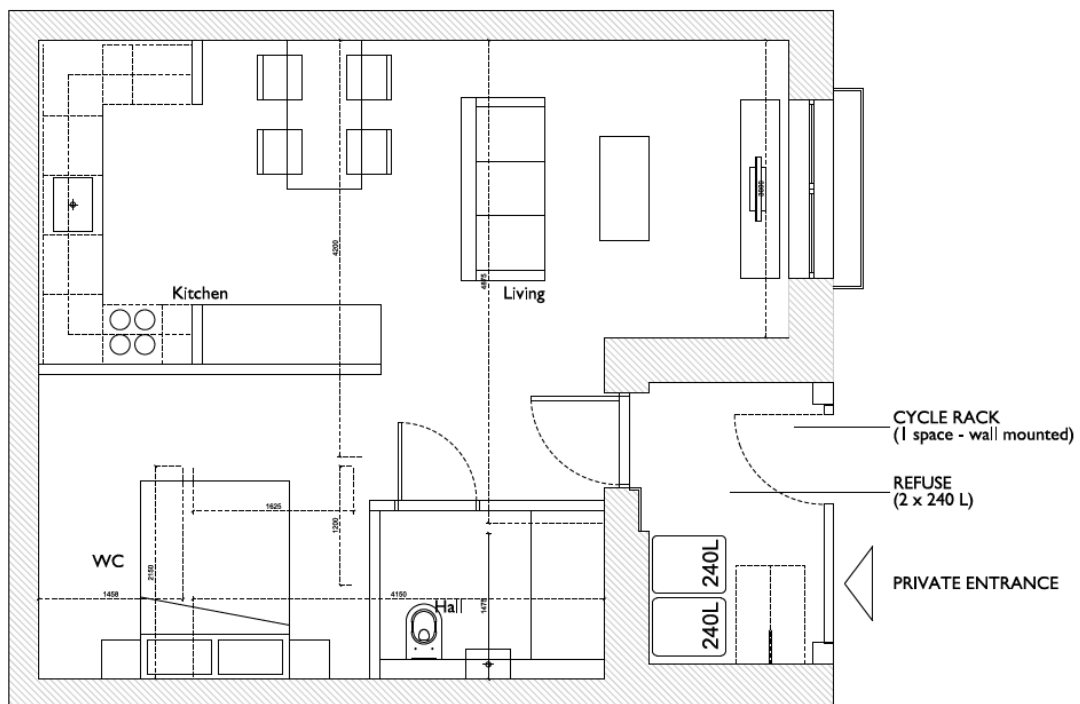
Proposed Cladding Bay Plan/Section – South Elevation



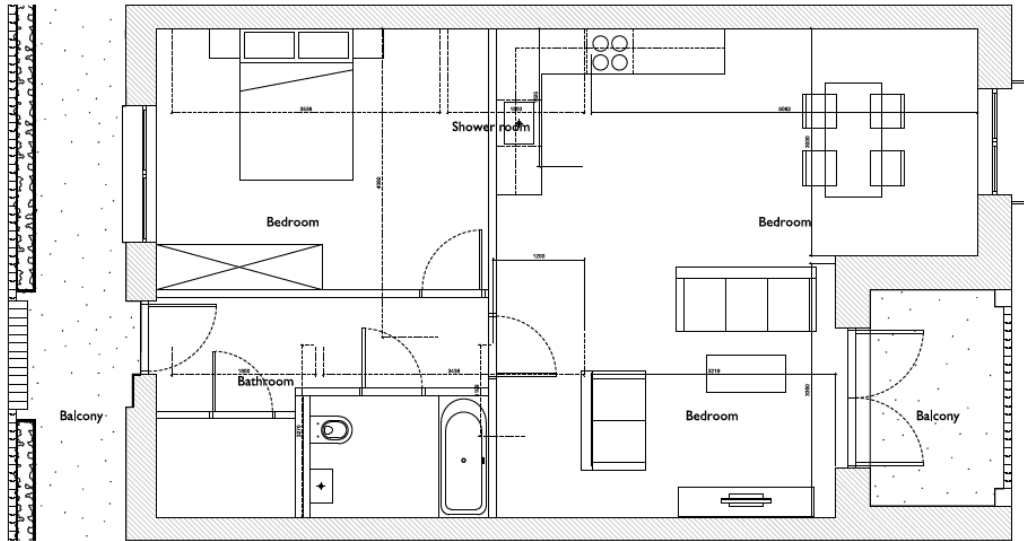
Proposed Cladding Bay Plan/Section – North Elevation



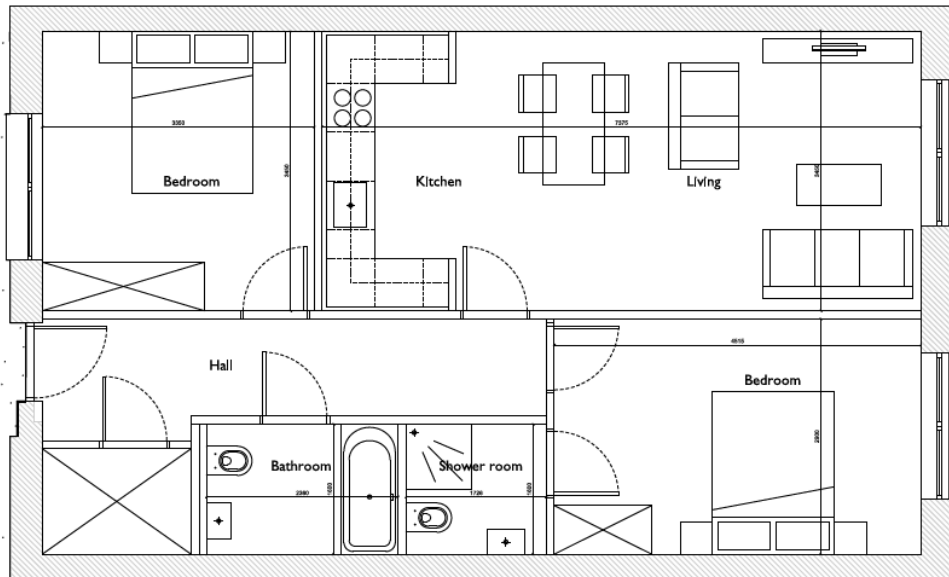
Proposed Cladding Bay Plan/Section – West Elevation



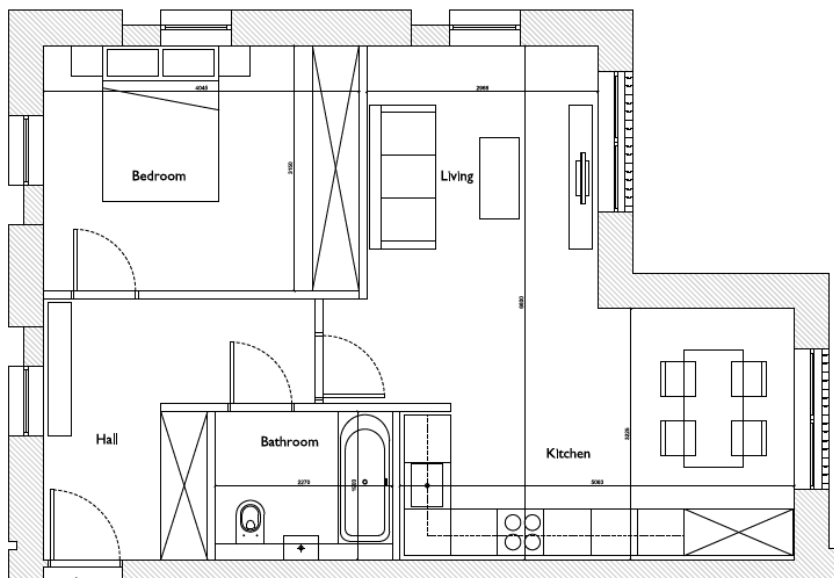
Maisonette Detailed Floor Plan – Ground Floor



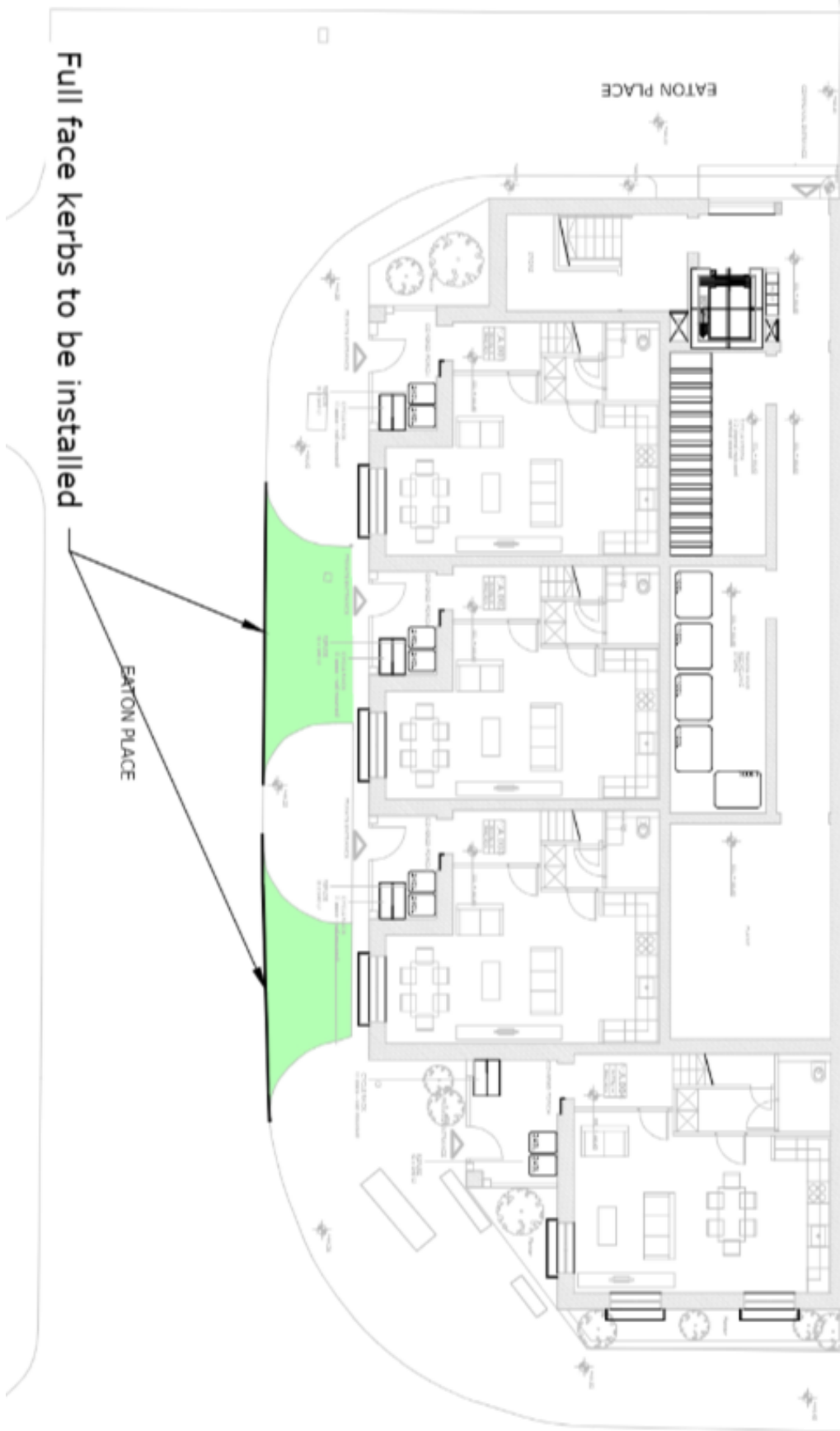
Maisonette Detailed Floor Plan – First Floor



Typical Detailed Floor Plan Layout of flat (to 2nd floor and above)



Typical Detailed Floor Plan Layout of flat (to 2nd floor and above)




Proposed Highway Works Plan (Reinstatement of footway and kerbs)



Proposed Visual Looking north west from Eaton Place



Proposed visual looking south from Chatham Street

04 October 2023	 Reading Borough Council <i>Working better with you</i>
Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	230908/FUL
Site Address:	104-105 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1EP
Proposed Development	Change of use of 104-105 Friar Street from a vacant Class E unit to an Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) (Sui Generis) (SG)
Applicant	Merkur Slots Ltd (UK)
Report author	David Brett
Deadline:	11/10/2023
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to conditions as follows
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Limit – Three Years 2. Approved Plans 3. Notwithstanding the provisions of Class 12 of Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the non-residential unit hereby approved shall retain 'active window displays' along the length of the frontage, without the installation of window vinyls, roller shutters, or similar which would obscure visibility between the public realm and the unit. Reason: in the interests of retaining a vibrant and attractive street scene and improving active surveillance, in line with Policies CC7, OU5 and CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. 4. The noise mitigation specified shall be installed in accordance with the specifications recommended within the Noise Assessment submitted with the application, as prepared by Archo Consulting on 28/06/2023, document reference PR2001_147_FINAL. Reason: In order to protect the amenity of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
Informatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive and Proactive 2. Terms and Conditions

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. Following the deferral of the decision from the September 2023 Planning Applications Committee, the proposal is still recommended for approval subject to the conditions as outlined above.

- 1.2. The proposal would reuse a vacant unit that is part of the primary frontage along Friar Street. The proposal would contribute positively towards the night-time economy and complement existing uses within the vicinity, as well as provide offer an alternative activity to drinking. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. At your September meeting, consideration of this application for full planning permission was deferred to seek additional information on the following:

- Whether the development would result in clustering of too many similar uses within one area in the town centre in relation to the range and diversity of leisure uses required by Policy CR4 of the Local Plan (paragraphs 5.3.13 and 5.3.14 refer) and whether it would impact the requirement for active frontages in the town centre in Policy CR7 of the Local Plan.
- Whether there had been an active search for other uses for the premises since the closure of the café on the site in March 2023

3. The proposal

- 3.1. This application for full planning permission still seeks the change of use from a Class E unit to an Adult Gaming Centre (Sui Generis Use Class). No external alterations are proposed within this application. The proposed Adult Gaming Centre use would facilitate 'slot gaming', bingo machines and tablets, and the serving of hot and cold drinks (no alcohol).

- 3.2. The following plans have been received (double strikethrough denotes superseded documents):

- Site Plan Rev B
- ~~- Proposed Ground & First Floor – 882-PL-10~~
- Existing Ground Floor Plan and Front Elevation – FRS/RED/01 Rev B
- Existing First Floor Plan – FRS/RED/02
- Application Letter prepared by Planning Potential dated June 2023, reference 23/7039
- Application Statement – Working Together, The Merkur Family
- Footfall, Pedestrian Flow and Linked Trip Surveys
- ~~- Noise Assessment – PR2001_147_FINAL~~

Received on 29/06/2023

- Proposed Ground & First Floor – 882-PL-112

Received on 27/07/2023

- Noise Assessment – PR2001_147_FINAL

Received on 28/07/2023

- Site Location Plan

Received on 08/08/2023

- Proposed Ground Floor & Shopfront Elevation – 882-PL-16

Received on 05/09/2023

4. Appraisal

- 4.1. The main considerations are:

- Gambling Premises and Similar Uses
- Search for Other Uses for the Premises
- Other Matters

Gambling Premises and Similar Uses

- 4.2. At the September Planning Applications Committee, further information was requested to determine if there is a clustering of Adult Gaming Centres (AGC). It should first be noted that the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) does not define the clustering of AGCs or indicate the threshold of what would be an over-concentration of AGCs. The Local Plan does deal with the perceived proliferation of betting shops and payday loan companies under Policy RL4 (Betting Shops and Payday Loan Companies), but AGCs do not fall under the definition of a betting shop or payday loan company.
- 4.3. A recent Planning Appeal Decision in LB Hounslow (Appendix 2) discusses 'over-concentration' of uses, and the impact of other uses within a locality.
- 4.4. Paragraph 16 of the Inspector's decision letter at Appendix 2 states that; *"My attention has been drawn to the presence of four betting shops close to the site, all of which I observed during my site visit. However, as both AGC and betting uses do not fall within a defined use class, they are classed as sui generis or 'of its own kind' and, irrespective of any similarities between them, planning permission is required to change from a betting shop to an AGC or vice versa. Furthermore, my attention has been drawn to a range of other differences between the uses including the types of gaming machines permissible, the mix of activity within each of them and opening hours"*.
- 4.5. Supporting text to Policy RL3 (Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres) at paragraph 4.6.16 of the Local Plan makes the distinction between what is a 'centre use' in Reading and what is 'not a centre use'. The paragraph specifies that certain uses falling within the 'sui generis' category and provides examples. In this instance, the use proposed at 104-105 Friar Street is considered akin to an amusement arcade and betting shop i.e., uses that facilitate gambling (gambling uses). Ultimately, the development is considered to be a compatible 'centre use'.
- 4.6. In the absence of a specific policy relating to an over concentration or clustering of AGCs, a survey of gambling uses within 150m of the proposal site has been carried out. This is to understand the reality of AGCs located within the town centre location, along with other gambling uses. It is recognised that pubs often have gambling machines, however, this survey has focused on uses that primarily focus on facilitating gambling.
- 4.7. There are a total of 91 primary frontage units within a 150m radius of the proposal site and this includes units located along West Street, Oxford Road, Broad Street and Friar Street. Of the 91 units, there are three existing AGCs and one betting shop.



Map showing the locations of Gambling Uses within a 150m radius of 104-105 Friar Street

- 4.8. As a result, 4% of the existing primary frontage units within a 150m radius of the proposal site are gambling premises. The proposed use would increase the percentage of primary frontage units operating as gambling premises to 5%. This is considered a small increase and highlights that the use would be experienced amongst a number of other uses within a 150m radius of the site, such as supermarkets, restaurants, pubs, clubs, retail units, barbers and salons.
- 4.9. When further examining the context of proposal site and the land uses in the surrounding area, it is acknowledged that the development would result in a pub (The Hope Tap) that would have an AGC either side. This is, however, considered indicative of the reality of the character of this section of Friar Street which caters heavily towards nightlife, with a kebab shop, gentleman’s club, karaoke bar, restaurant, and night club all within 100m of the proposal site to the east along Friar Street. At this point, it is considered pertinent to reiterate that the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) does not define what an overconcentration or clustering of AGCs is. The above assessment in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.6 of this report concludes that the AGC use would be experienced amongst a broad range of uses within the radius of 150m, whilst also reflecting the established character of the surrounding area.
- 4.10. This is considered to reflect the description of town centre uses within paragraph 5.3.13, supporting text Policy CR4 (Leisure, Culture and Tourism in Central Reading) of the Local Plan: *“This policy refers to those leisure, culture and tourism uses that are defined as ‘main town centre uses’ in the NPPF, excluding drinking uses, which are covered elsewhere. These facilities will assist in widening the variety of the offer of the centre, and would, in many cases, help to attract a greater range of people into the centre. For that reason, additional uses should be encouraged, and there are substantial opportunities within Central Reading to accommodate leisure and cultural uses, as well as new visitor accommodation. Policy RL2 directs major leisure, culture and tourism*

uses to Central Reading, and CR1 defines the Central Core as the most suitable part of the centre.”

- 4.11. Supporting text to Policy CR4 at paragraph 5.3.14 of the Local Plan states: *“In order to diversify uses in the town centre and improve the Centre’s leisure offer, it is important to accommodate leisure, cultural and tourism activities that appeal to a wide range of age and social groups. Leisure and entertainment uses that would contribute to the 18-hour economy will be encouraged, and existing uses maintained. This should include a range of different, yet complementary evening and night-time economy uses to cater for all sections of Reading’s community, and offer alternative activities to drinking.”*
- 4.12. Concerning Policy CR7 (Primary Frontages in Central Reading), the Policy states that, *“Proposals that would result in the loss of A1 or A2 use such that the proportion of the length of frontage within the street in A1 or A2 use falls below 50% will not be permitted, unless the proposal introduces a use that makes a positive contribution to the overall diversity of the centre. 50% of new primary frontages as shown on the Proposals Map should be in A1/A2 use.”*
- 4.13. The last use of 104-105 Friar Street was as a café, which closed in March 2023. On 25th June 2020, a Certificate of Lawfulness (Proposed) was granted for the use of 104-105 Friar Street as a coffee shop (application reference 200611/CLP). Condition 1 of the Certificate granted an A1 use for:
 - Internet café, or
 - Café which only serves cold for consumption off site.
- 4.14. As the previous use described falls under the A1 use class (until 31st August 2020 and for the purpose of interpreting development rights to 31st July 2021, now Class E) the development does have an impact on existing A1/A2 uses along primary frontages within Central Reading. This is because the proposal site is changing from an A1/A2 use, to a non-A1/A2 use. The wording of the Policy, however, concerns development that would result in the proportion of frontages along Friar Street (North and South) falling below 50%.
- 4.15. The percentage of A1/A2 uses along Friar Street (North and South) is already below 50% at 38.2% (Annual Monitoring Report 2021-2022). The loss of the A1/A2 frontage to 104-105 Friar Street would result in the percentage of A1/A2 uses along Friar Street becoming 37.3% (a reduction of 0.9%). As discussed in paragraphs 4.6 to 4.9 above, it is important to consider the variety of existing uses along Friar Street and the wider surrounding area.
- 4.16. It should also be noted that the flexibility of Class E (as of 1st September 2020) allows for the change of use of 104-105 Friar Street to uses both suitable and unsuitable for the town centre as defined under Policy CR7, without the need for planning permission. Under Class E the proposal site can freely change to uses that under the previous Use Classes Order were A1 (Shops), A2 (Financial and professional services), A3 (Restaurants and cafés), D1 (Non-residential institutions) and D2 (Assembly and leisure). However, the site can also change to B1 (Office), a use that is not defined as suitable for primary frontages in Central Reading under Policy CR7. It should also be noted that a change of use to a Sui Generis AGC would mean that any proposal to turn the use of the site back into a use defined under Class E would require a new planning permission.
- 4.17. The Sui Generis AGC is considered to make a positive contribution to overall diversity of the centre as it is a related Sui Generis use that would provide an active frontage, with the number of gambling premises within a 150m radius of the site becoming 5% as discussed in paragraph 4.8 above.
- 4.18. To summarise, the Adult Gaming Centre use proposed is still considered complementary to the night-time economy and offers an alternative activity to drinking in accordance with Policies CR4 and CR7 of the Local Plan.

Search for Other Uses for the Premises

- 4.19. As per section 2.1 of this report, the second reason for deferral was to investigate “whether there had been an active search for other uses for the premises since the closure of the café on the site in March 2023”.
- 4.20. The use of the premises as a café ended on 1st March 2023. This planning application was received by the Local Planning Authority on 29th June 2023. Officers are not aware of any alternative uses that may have been proposed for the site after the café closed on 1st March 2023. There is also no such requirement for applicants to provide marketing information for change of uses from Class E to a Sui Generis use within the town centre.
- 4.21. Concerning the protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses, supporting text to Policy RL6 (Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses) at paragraph 4.6.32 of the Local Plan requires evidence to be provided that continuing a Leisure Facility and Public House use is not viable, and that any alternative uses must fulfil a similar role. There is, however, no such policy that resists the loss of cafes.

Other Matters

- 4.22. As advised within the verbal introduction to this item at the October 2023 Planning Applications Committee, condition 3 (Security Measures) as set out in the October Committee Report for this item has been deleted from the Recommendation for this application. This is because a separate Premises Licence has been approved for the business, which contains conditions relating to the provision and ongoing maintenance of CCTV surveillance both within the premises and along the frontage. The conditions also require the presence of CCTV surveillance to be advertised on site.
- 4.23. Condition 3 as set out in the October report would fail the test for planning conditions (neither necessary nor reasonable) as they are a duplication of conditions set out in the Premises Licence. Condition 3 concerning CCTV details has therefore been removed.

5. Equality implications

- 5.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

6. Conclusion & planning balance

- 9.1 As with all applications considered by the Local Planning Authority, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 9.2 Officers consider that the proposal complies with the policies in the Local Plan. Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Having gone through this process officers consider that the benefits of the proposal with regards to enhancing the night-time offer of the town and reinstating a

vacant unit within the primary frontage of Friar Street outweighs the low-risk noise and disturbance that may arise from the use. Concerns of problem gambling will be strictly monitored under the separate Licensing regime.

- 9.3 It is considered that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. As such, this application is recommended for approval subject to the conditions as outlined above.

Plans & Appendices

Appendix 1 - ABB – 230908 – 104-105 Friar Street Committee Report (September 2023)

Appendix 2 – Appeal Decision APP/F5540/W/22/3296792

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06 September 2023



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	230908/FUL
Site Address:	104-105 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1EP
Proposed Development	Change of use of 104-105 Friar Street from a vacant Class E unit to an Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) (Sui Generis) (SG)
Applicant	Merkur Slots Ltd (UK)
Report author	David Brett
Deadline:	Extension of time agreed on decision to 13/09/2023
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to conditions as follows
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Time Limit – Three Years2. Approved Plans3. Prior to the first occupation of the Sui Generis unit hereby approved, details of formal surveillance measures (e.g. CCTV) on the Friar Street elevation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The measures shall be implemented (e.g. CCTV monitored by Reading Borough Council) prior to the first occupation of the Sui Generis unit hereby approved and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details approved. Reason: To protect the amenity of future users of the proposed development and in the interests of safeguarding the character and appearance of the building and the wider immediate area, in accordance with Policy CC7, CC8 and CR2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.4. Notwithstanding the provisions of Class 12 of Schedule 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the non-residential unit hereby approved shall retain 'active window displays' along the length of the frontage, without the installation of window vinyls, roller shutters, or similar which would obscure visibility between the public realm and the unit. Reason: in the interests of retaining a vibrant and attractive street scene and improving active surveillance, in line with Policies CC7, OU5 and CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.5. The noise mitigation specified shall be installed in accordance with the specifications recommended within the Noise Assessment submitted with the application, as prepared by Archo Consulting on 28/06/2023, document reference PR2001_147_FINAL.

	Reason: In order to protect the amenity of future occupants of the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
Informatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive and Proactive 2. Terms and Conditions

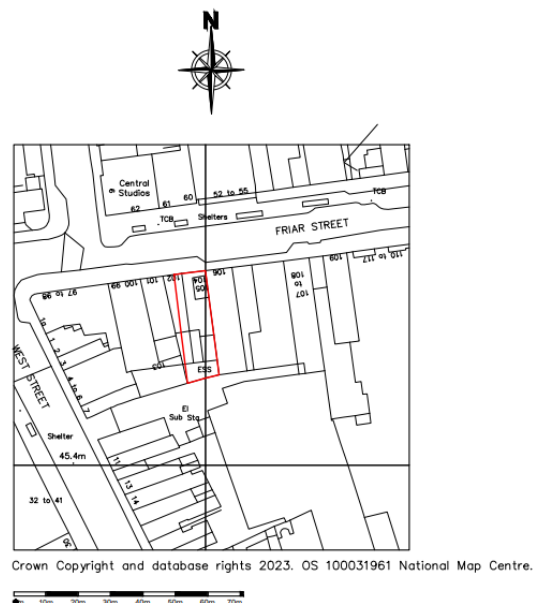
1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to the conditions as outlined above.
- 1.2. The proposal would reinstate a vacant unit that is part of the key frontage along Friar Street. The proposal would contribute positively towards the night-time economy and complement existing uses within the vicinity, as well as provide offer an alternative activity to drinking. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. This application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of 104-105 Friar Street from a vacant Class E unit (latest previous use as a café) to an Adult Gaming Centre (Sui Generis Use Class). No external alterations are proposed within this application.
- 2.2. The application was called to Planning Applications Committee by Abbey Ward Councillors due to the following reasons:
 - The proliferation of Adult Gaming Centres within the locality.
 - The loss of a retail outlet, undermining retail diversity in the context of the Station Hill development.
 - The lack of active frontage.
- 2.3. The proposal site consists of a vacant retail unit on the south side of Friar Street. The surrounding area consists of a variety of town centre uses at ground floor level including pubs, clubs, restaurants, bars and gambling premises. This part of Reading Town Centre is considered to contribute heavily towards the night-time economy of the town. A large portion of the north side of Friar Street directly opposite the proposed site is currently under development as part of the Station Hill project.

2.4. Location Plan:



2.5. Site Photo:



3. The proposal

3.1. This application for full planning permission seeks the change of use from a Class E unit to an Adult Gaming Centre (Sui Generis Use Class). No external alterations are proposed within this application. The proposed Adult Gaming Centre use would facilitate 'slot gaming', bingo machines and tablets, and the serving of hot and cold drinks (no alcohol).

3.2. The following plans have been received (double strikethrough denotes superseded documents):

- Site Plan Rev B
- ~~- Proposed Ground & First Floor – 882-PL-10~~
- Existing Ground Floor Plan and Front Elevation – FRS/RED/01 Rev B
- Existing First Floor Plan – FRS/RED/02
- Application Letter prepared by Planning Potential dated June 2023, reference 23/7039
- Application Statement – Working Together, The Merkur Family
- Footfall, Pedestrian Flow and Linked Trip Surveys
- ~~- Noise Assessment – PR2001_147_FINAL~~

Received on 29/06/2023

- Proposed Ground & First Floor – 882-PL-112

Received on 27/07/2023

- Noise Assessment – PR2001_147_FINAL

Received on 28/07/2023

- Site Location Plan

Received on 08/08/2023

4. Planning history

104-105 Friar Street (Proposal Site)

- 4.1. 201319/ADV - Replace the existing fascia signage and projecting sign. – Application Permitted on 03/11/2020
- 4.2. 200611/CLP - Certificate of lawfulness for proposed used as a coffee shop – Application Permitted on 25/06/2020

93-98 Friar Street

- 4.3. 94/00968/FD – Change of use from retail shop to high class amusement centre – Application Permitted on 17/02/1995

134-135 Friar Street

- 4.4. 230688/ADV - New Shopfront – Application Permitted on 13/07/2023
- 4.5. 211609/APC – Discharge of Condition 3 (Details of Formal Surveillance Measures) of planning consent 210577 (Amended Description) – Application Permitted on 12/01/2022
- 4.6. 211316/ADV – 3mm aluminium panel, powder coated to ral 3023, panel cnc cut with yellow acrylic and dote detail, letters and dots to illuminate only via internal leds – Application Permitted on 12/10/2021
- 4.7. 210577/FUL – Change of use to Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) (Sui Generis) – Application Permitted on 21/07/2021

9 West Street

- 4.8. 220128/VAR - Change of use of the premises from a hair and beauty use (mixed A1 retail and Sui Generis) to tanning salon and Adult Gaming Centre (Sui Generis) as permitted by planning application 160783 but with the removal of condition 3 to allow unrestricted opening times. – Application Permitted on 04/08/2022
- 4.9. 180317/VAR - Change of use of the premises from a Hair and Beauty Use (Mixed A1 Retail and Sui Generis) to Tanning Salon on the First Floor and Adult Gaming Centre on the Ground Floor (Sui Generis) without complying with condition no.3 (hours of use) of planning permission ref. 160783 to seek unrestricted 24 hour use to the ground floor adult gaming centre use(first floor tanning salon use to remain at permitted hours - 09.00-22.00 Mondays to Sundays) – Application Withdrawn on 16/04/2018
- 4.10. 170391/VAR - Change of use of the premises from a Hair and Beauty Use (Mixed A1 Retail and Sui Generis) to Tanning Salon on the First Floor and Adult Gaming Centre on the Ground Floor (Sui Generis) without complying with condition no.3 (hours of use) of planning permission ref. 160783 to seek unrestricted 24 hour use. – Application Refused on 08/05/2017. Reasons for Refusal:
 - 1. Change of use of the premises from a Hair and Beauty Use (Mixed A1 Retail and Sui Generis) to Tanning Salon on the First Floor and Adult Gaming Centre on the Ground Floor (Sui Generis) without complying with condition no.3 (hours of use) of planning permission ref. 160783, to allow unrestricted 24 hour use, would result in unacceptable noise and disturbance to the residential amenities of the nearby area, contrary to Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012, (amended 2015).
- 4.11. 160783/FUL - Change of Use of the premises from a Hair and Beauty Use (Mixed A1 Retail and Sui Generis) to Tanning Salon on the First Floor and Adult Gaming Centre on the Ground Floor (Sui Generis) – Application Permitted on 13/09/2016 (Committee Decision.

5. Consultations

5.1. The following consultation responses were received:

RBC, Licensing

5.2. The Licensing team do not object to this premises. This part of town (this end of Friar Street and around the corner in West Street) now contain a betting shop and 3 adult gaming centres, with this premises being a bingo premises, but essentially operating as an adult gaming centre. Clustering is not a consideration for the Licensing team when dealing with a Gambling Act premises licence application, and the reality is that these kinds of premises generate very little in the way of noise due to having a very low customer count, even at peak times.

RBC, Environmental Protection

5.3. I have reviewed the noise assessment which demonstrates that noise from the proposed use should not impact the amenity of the nearest existing residential property. However, the new residents at Station Hill will be closer than the existing receptor therefore the assessment needs to be revised to take this into account.

5.4. Updated response from the RBC Environmental Protection Team upon review of revised Noise Impact Assessment as received on 28/07/2023: "The assessment is good, and shows that there shouldn't be a noise issue at the accommodation opposite. There are a few recommendations made in the assessment regarding minor works to the doorway, and also some ongoing management of the premises so I would recommend a condition requiring them to implement the recommendations from the assessment."

RBC, Transport Development Control

5.5. The site is located within the Reading Central Area and within Reading's primary shopping area. The site is located within Zone 1 of the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD which is an area at the very heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments, with limited residential. This area is well served by rail and bus links and also contains the largest proportion of public car parking spaces. The Broad Street Mall, The Oracle and Q-Park multi storey car parks are also in close proximity to the site. There are extensive parking controls in the area preventing on-street parking.

5.6. It is considered that in this location the proposed change of use from a vacant unit to an Adult Gaming Centre will have a negligible impact in Transport terms. The proposal is expected to generate linked trips to other town centre venues such as cafes, restaurants and other leisure facilities. Therefore, there are no Transport objections to the proposed change of use.

Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor

5.7. No response received.

Public/local consultation and comments received

5.8. 11 neighbouring properties were consulted by letter and one site notice was displayed at the application site.

5.9. Two letters of objection were received to the application. As a result, the following concerns were raised (as summarised):

- The number of casinos, gaming and gambling venues in Reading.
- The impact that Adult Gaming Centres have on vulnerable people.

6. Legal context

- 6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 6.2. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 6.3. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Policies:

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

EN15 Air Quality

RL1 Network and Hierarchy of Centres

RL2 Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development

TR3 Access, Traffic and Highways-Related Matters

CR1 Definition of Central Reading

CR2 Design in Central Reading

CR4 Leisure, Culture and Tourism in Central Reading

CR7 Primary Frontages in Central Reading

7. Appraisal

- 7.1. The main considerations are:

- Principle of Development
- Design
- Safeguarding Amenity
- Transport
- Air Quality

Principle of Development

- 7.2. The Glossary of the NPPF details that the main town centre uses are: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).
- 7.3. In accordance with paragraph 5.3.14 of Policy CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan: "In order to diversify uses in the town centre and improve the Centre's leisure offer, it is important to accommodate leisure, cultural and tourism activities that appeal to a wide

range of age and social groups. Leisure and entertainment uses that would contribute to the 18-hour economy will be encouraged, and existing uses maintained. This should include a range of different, yet complementary evening and night-time economy uses to cater for all sections of Reading's community, and offer alternative activities to drinking." The Adult Gaming Centre use proposed is considered complementary to the night-time economy and offer an alternative activity to drinking in accordance with Policy CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

- 7.4. In accordance with policy CR7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, 104-105 Friar Street has been identified as a primary frontage within the centre of Reading. Therefore, the use of the ground floor should be A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, C1, D1, D2 or related Sui Generis, unless it would be an entrance to upper floors. The most recent use of 101-105 Friar Street was as a café, which closed in March 2023.
- 7.5. It is considered that the proposed Adult Gaming Centre would be experienced in the context of a broad range of other uses within the immediate surroundings. It is acknowledged that there are several night-time economy uses within the vicinity and on this basis the proposed use is considered appropriate.
- 7.6. The use proposed within this application is an Adult Gaming Centre, a Sui Generis Use. This is considered in itself to be a 'centre use'. It is noted that there are three other Adult Gaming Centres within 150m of 104-105 Friar Street; one at 9 West Street (approved under application 160783), one at 134-135 Friar Street (approved under application 210577) and another at 97-98 Friar Street. As the proposed development seeks to retain a 'centre use', the proposed development is considered suitable in principle, reinstating a centre use in a primary frontage in the centre of Reading. Therefore, the proposed change of use is considered in principle to be in accordance with policy CR7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Design

- 7.7. Policy CR7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan also requires frontages to be of a high visual quality (Other policies would also be relevant in terms of shopfronts and design). The agent states that an application to alter the frontage of 104-105 Friar Street would be forthcoming depending on the outcome of this change of use application. Any frontages that have the potential to hinder movement or cause unnecessary safety risk will not be permitted. The proposed change of use application does not involve any physical alteration to the property, and it will remain compatible with the appearance of the area; any future separate application would be considered on its own merits.
- 7.8. In the interest of retaining 104-105 Friar Street as an active shopfront, it is considered appropriate to condition the approval of this application to retain an 'active window display' along the length of the frontage. This is to preserve the lively and attractive street scene in accordance with Policies CC7, OU5, and CR7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. This is to safeguard the applicant making changes which may not in themselves facilitate a future application.

Safeguarding Amenity

- 7.9. As per paragraph 5.3.17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan; "Leisure, cultural and tourism development should not give rise to adverse impacts on the amenity of nearby residents and other town centre users, or to existing town centre spaces. Proposals will therefore be expected to mitigate any potential issues of noise disturbance (particularly night-time noise), traffic-related congestion, and anti-social behaviour and crime."
- 7.10. The Supporting Statement submitted explains the proposed AGC use is to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- 7.11. In accordance with Policies CC8 and CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, noise arising from the development was initially raised as a concern by Environmental Protection. The Noise Impact Assessment was amended to discuss the impact that the use would have on the future occupants of Station Hill. It has been concluded within the

assessment that the external noise impacts are considered highly unlikely to occur and is suitable for 24-hour operation.

- 7.12. The conclusions drawn within the Noise Impact Assessment have been agreed by the Environmental Protection Team. A condition will be included to any approval of this application to ensure that the recommendations made within the Noise Impact Assessment will be carried out.
- 7.13. Due to the nature of the use as an AGC and the controls that would be in place by the applicant surrounding entry to and from the premises, officers are content that the change of use and opening hours proposed would not give rise to harmful levels of noise to neighbouring residents. This is particularly in the view of the neighbouring context, uses and Friar Street being a key contributor to the night life in Reading.
- 7.14. As per the response from the Reading Borough Council Licensing Officer these kinds of businesses generate very little in the way of noise due to having a very low customer count event at peak times. The applicant submitted a Premises Licence application to Reading Borough Council at the same time as this planning application, for which a consultation response was provided by the Thames Valley Police (TVP) Licensing Officer. No objections to the Premises Licence were raised by the TVP Licensing Officer, with the Premises Licence granted under section 164 of the Gambling Act 2005 by Reading Borough Council not including any hours restrictions.
- 7.15. The TVP Crime Prevention Design Advisor (CPDA) was also consulted on this application based on the 24 hour use of the premises. In the absence of a response from CPDA, it is considered appropriate to secure details of surveillance measures prior to occupation as a Sui Generis AGC in accordance with Policies CC7, CC8 and CR2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Particularly as this is an area of Reading where evening activity is expected, with several drinking establishments located along Friar Street. As raised by Licensing; it is considered necessary to obtain these details as the surrounding area has been identified as a problem area, particularly after midnight. It is not considered likely that the AGC use proposed would inherently contribute further to the 'problem area', however, to aid in the wider surveillance of Friar Street as a whole it is considered necessary to obtain surveillance details for 104-105 Friar Street via condition. This is to protect the amenity of future users of the proposed development and in the interests of safeguarding the character and appearance of the building and Friar Street, in accordance with Policy CC7, CC8, CR2 and CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 7.16. Based on the information submitted within this application and the nature of the use proposed (no alcohol on site, gaming machines only, entry monitored by door staff), it is not considered necessary or reasonable in this specific instance to restrict by condition the opening hours of this application in order to protect neighbouring amenity. The proposed use is considered appropriate for the town centre, with the premises located in what is considered a prime location for night life in the town. It is considered that the proposed development would not give rise to harmful levels of noise or anti-social behaviour given the nature of the use and the controls that would be put in place by the AGC, together with the recommended planning conditions referenced above.
- 7.17. Referring back to paragraph 5.3.17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan; the proposed development at 104-105 Friar Street is considered to mitigate potential noise issues. While concerns of crime and anti-social behaviour have been addressed in the submission of relevant policy documents, the documents have not been fully assessed by the CPDA. Officers do not have evidence to substantiate that the proposed use would directly contribute to increased levels of crime and anti-social behaviour, however, details of surveillance measures will be secured via condition to aid in the monitoring of a 'problem area' for nightlife. In terms of traffic-related congestion; as explained by the Transport Team, the proposed development is within an area that is well served by rail and bus links and also contains the largest proportion of public car parking spaces. There are no requirements for car parking in this zone as any demand for parking will be met by the town centre public car parks.

- 7.18. Concerns have been raised from the consultation for this application regarding the impact that the proposal would have on vulnerable people with a gambling addiction. As discussed, there are existing gambling premises such as betting shops and Adult Gaming Centres, with the RBC Licensing Team remarking that such AGC uses have a very low customer count, even at peak times.
- 7.19. Officers consider that there is no evidence to suggest that this proposed use would significantly or disproportionately harm the health of and wellbeing of citizens within the locality. The conditions of the premises licence require the prominent display of literature promoting the awareness of gambling addiction, such as Gam Care, 'Stay in Control' and the national gambling helpline. The business is also required to operate under the Gambling Act 2005 and adhere to training policies that include identifying, intervening and interacting with persons who may be vulnerable to harm from gambling.
- 7.20. Subject to the provision of further information regarding the surveillance measures at the premises, the proposed development is considered in accordance with policies CR4 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Transport

- 7.21. The site is in a sustainable location for access. It is in the town centre where it is adequately served by public transport and there has been no objection from the Transport Officers. In particular, it is considered that the potential for trips being generated to/from the site is no greater than the most recent use.

Air Quality

- 7.22. This proposal has been considered against Reading Borough Local Plan policy EN15, as the proposal site is within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). As demonstrated in the policy, this proposal does not meet the requirements for an Air Quality Assessment (AQA) and is considered not enough of a detrimental impact air quality to warrant such an assessment due to the size and scale of the proposal.

8. Equality implications

- 8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

9. Conclusion & planning balance

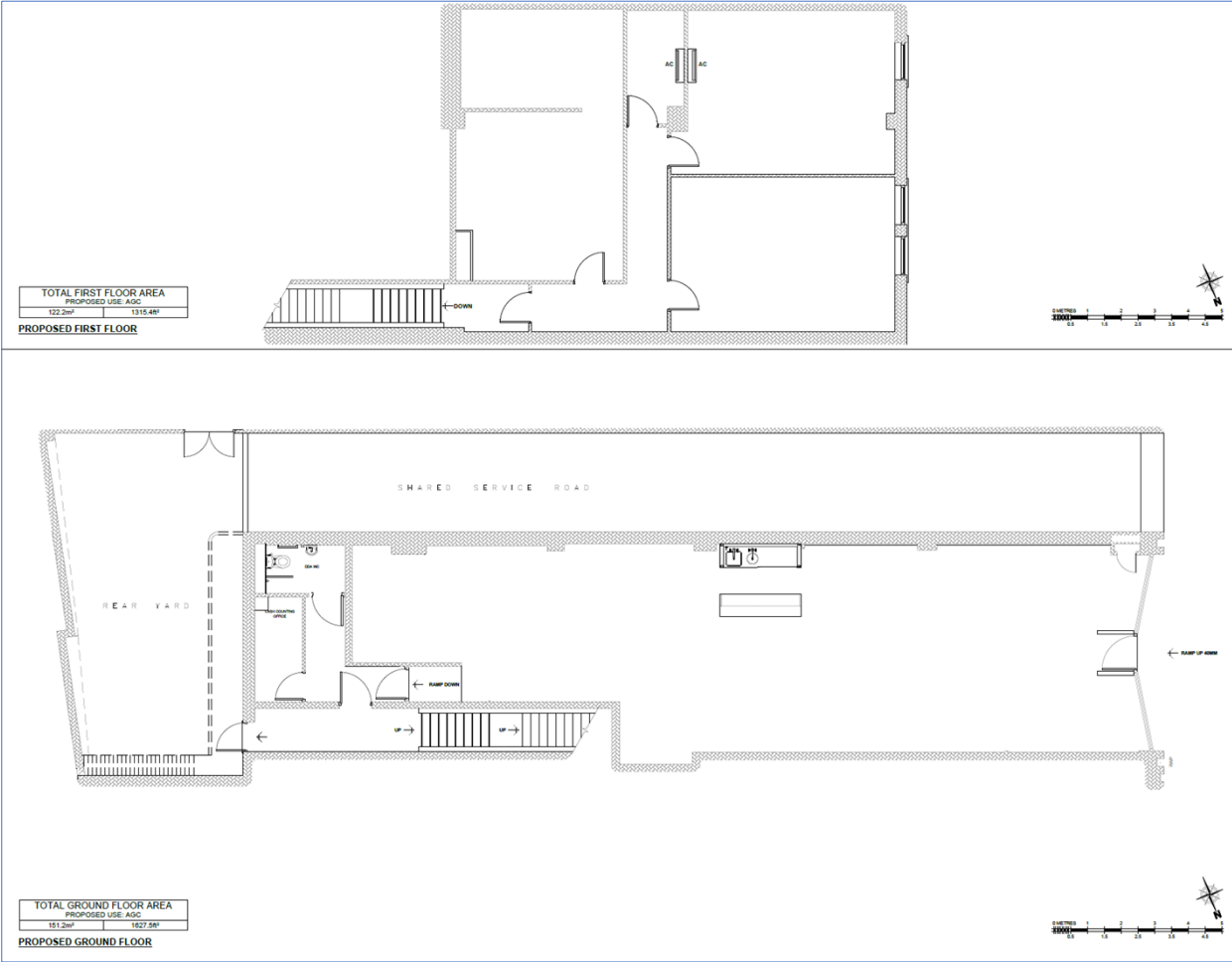
- 9.1 As with all applications considered by the Local Planning Authority, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 9.2 Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Having gone through this process officers consider that the benefits of the proposal with regards to enhancing the night-time offer of the town and reinstating a vacant unit within the key frontage of Friar Street outweighs the low-risk noise and

disturbance that may arise from the use. Concerns of problem gambling will be strictly monitored under the separate Licensing regime.

- 9.3 It is considered that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. As such, this application is recommended for approval subject to the conditions as outlined above.

Plans & Appendices

Proposed Floor Plans



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Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 March 2023

by Juliet Rogers BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/22/3296792

Neals Corner, 1-5 Staines Road/2-6 Bath Road, Hounslow TW3 3HJ

- 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 Chongie Entertainment Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00083/AL/P10, dated 7 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 March 2022.
 - The development proposed is the change of use of part ground floor and part first floor for the creation of an Adult Gaming Centre (Sui Generis) with an associated new shopfront
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the new shopfront. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the change of use and planning permission is granted for the change of use of part ground floor and part first floor for the creation of an Adult Gaming Centre (Sui Generis) at Neals Corner, 1-5 Staines Road/2-6 Bath Road, Hounslow, TW3 3HJ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 00083/AL/P10, dated 7 February 2022, so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted and subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans, insofar as they relate to the change of use:
 - P08 rev 00 – Location Plan
 - P07 rev 00 – Proposed Layout

Preliminary Matters

2. Changes to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 (the UCO Amendment Regulations), amending the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (the UCO), came into force on 1 September 2020. This introduced a new Commercial, Business and Service Use Class E (Class E) replacing several classes including, Class A3 – Food and Drink which includes restaurants. Based on the evidence before me, although vacant at the time of my site visit, the appeal site was previously used as a restaurant with ancillary storage space.

3. Following the determination of the appeal planning application, another planning application comprising the installation of a new shopfront at the appeal property has been approved, subject to conditions, by the Council¹. A request has subsequently been made by the appellant to consider only the proposed change of use as part of the appeal. However, this is not the proposed development that was considered by the Council, upon which interested party views were sought and the subject of the appeal. Therefore, if I were to determine the appeal based solely on the proposed change of use, given the number of interested party representations on both the application and the appeal, there is the potential that the views of interested parties would be prejudiced. As a result, my decision is based on the development as submitted with the appeal application.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
- the character and appearance of the area, with particular regard to the locally listed building; and
 - the vitality of Hounslow Town Centre (the Town Centre).

Reasons

Character and appearance

5. The appeal site comprises the majority of the ground floor and part of the first floor of a five-storey plus basement level building on the corner of an area **known as 'Neal's Corner'**. Although not located within a conservation area, nor a listed building, the appeal property is a Locally Listed Building. Whilst not afforded the same protection as a designated heritage asset, in accordance with paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the effect of the proposed development on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account.
6. I consider the significance of the appeal property to derive from its prominent location at one end of the High Street adjacent to Bell Square, its historical architectural detailing and its use of a variety of colours and types of material. Concerning the existing shopfront, although not considered to be the original, it comprises many traditional features **identified in the Council's Shop front design guidelines – Supplementary planning document (2013) (the SPD)** including risers, mullions, fascias, corbels and pilasters. As such, I consider these features contribute to the overall significance of the locally listed building.
7. The proposed shopfront comprises the installation of modern windows and surrounds to the **property's facades at ground floor level**, with large areas of glazing. This would result in the removal of many of the mullions separating the panes and the risers beneath the windowsills. The fascias would also be replaced with glazing and materials would be removed from the corbels and the pilasters to expose the brickwork beneath. Notwithstanding the poor quality materials used in the existing shopfront, its bright yellow colour, or the fact that many sections need repair or replacing, the loss of these traditional

¹ Planning application ref: 00083/AL/P11

features would cause harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

8. Based on the reasons set out above, in my view, the proposed shopfront would result in limited harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. In the words of the Framework, in these circumstances, a balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.
9. Whilst the proposed shopfront is associated with the proposed change of use of currently vacant premises, the implementation of these proposals is not dependent upon the other. Therefore, any benefits from the replacement of the existing shopfront alone would be minimal, despite their poor condition and bright colour. As a result, I attach limited weight to the benefits associated with their replacement.
10. Consequently, I conclude that the benefits set out above do not outweigh the harm I have identified to the non-designated heritage asset and, therefore, the proposed development does not satisfy the requirements of paragraph 203 of the Framework. It would also conflict with policies CC1 and CC2 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (the Local Plan) which require, amongst other provisions, development to conserve and take opportunities to enhance the special qualities and heritage of the Borough through the use of high-quality design. The proposed shopfront would also conflict with the design objectives set out in the SPD, irrespective of **the SPD's age**, which seeks to retain the traditional features within shopfronts in the Borough.

The vitality of the Town Centre

11. The proposed development comprises the change of use of part of the ground floor of the appeal site, labelled Retail Space 1 on the Proposed Layout Plan² submitted with the planning application, plus the small area within the first floor, to an adult gaming centre (AGC) (Sui Generis). No change of use is proposed for the remaining area of the ground floor accessed off Bath Road, labelled Retail Space 2 (Class E).
12. While the Officer Report states that the appeal site is located outside the Town Centre, the Council has subsequently confirmed that it is located within its **boundary. However, it is located outside Hounslow's Primary Shopping Area** and does not form part of a primary or secondary retail frontage. As such, policies TC2, TC3 and TC4 are relevant, which collectively seek to ensure the future vitality of the town centres in the Borough by managing the growth of retail and other uses within them.
13. Although primarily seeking to encourage retail towards the town centres, policies TC2 and TC3 also direct other **'town centre uses' to these locations** intending to promote them as places that provide diverse retail, service, business, cultural and leisure offers. Such an approach accords with the sequential test set out in paragraph 87 of the Framework.
14. Policy TC4 identifies the need to consider the cumulative impact of proposals by avoiding the over-concentration of non-retail uses to maintain and enhance the role of retail in the town centres. However, as units formerly within an A1 (retail) use class now fall within the recently introduced Class E and a change

² Drawing Ref: P07 Revision 00, dated 27 January 2022

to another Class E use would not be an act of development requiring planning permission, this policy has reduced weight. Furthermore, the changes to the UCO are intended, as noted in the Explanatory Memorandum to the UCO Amendment Regulations, to better reflect the diversity of uses found in town centres, to provide flexibility for businesses to adapt and diversify to meet changing demands and support the viability of these areas.

15. Notwithstanding this, there is no further detail, either in Policy TC4 or its **supporting text, defining the term 'over-concentration'** or an indication of the threshold above which the cumulative impact of non-retail uses would be harmful. Whilst Policy TC4 covers the Town Centre as a whole, the Council's Officer Report refers to the number of uses within the immediate area. During my site visit, I observed a wide range of uses, including retail, recruitment agencies, estate agents, hot food takeaways, restaurants and cafes, a public house, betting shops and another AGC within the immediate area. Taking the usual meaning of the term over-concentration to be *having too much of something in one place*, two AGCs near to each other would not, in my view, amount to an over-concentration, given their separation by Bell Road. Moreover, the two AGCs would be experienced in the context of a broad range of other uses within the immediate surroundings.
16. My attention has been drawn to the presence of four betting shops close to the site, all of which I observed during my site visit. However, as both AGC and betting uses do not fall within a defined use class, they are classed as sui generis or '**of its own kind**' and, irrespective of any other similarities between them, planning permission is required to change from a betting shop to an AGC, or vice versa. Furthermore, my attention has been drawn to a range of other differences between the uses including the types of gaming machines permissible, the mix of activity within each of them and opening hours.
17. Whilst I note the reference to the efforts of the Council to diversify and enhance the cultural destination at Bell Square, as part of the wider regeneration ambitions of the Town Centre, I see no reason to conclude that the proposed change of use would be detrimental to or limit these ambitions. Given the appeal premises have been vacant following fire damage in February 2019 despite marketing efforts and its prominent location, it is not contributing to the activity and vitality of the Town Centre. Moreover, the proposed development would bring the majority of the vacant premises back into use, and provide jobs and investment to the area. It would also assist in supporting pedestrian footfall at this end of the High Street given the complementary nature of the use to shopping activity, and contribute to the evening economy focused around Bell Square. These factors weigh in favour of the grant of planning permission.
18. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed change of use would form part of a suitable mix of uses which would be complementary to the Town Centre's **retail** function, the cultural destination at Bell Square and the vitality of the Town Centre would not be undermined. It would accord with policies TC2, TC3 and TC4 of the Local Plan in this respect. It would also accord with Chapter 7 of the Framework which seeks to ensure the vitality of town centres by allowing them to grow and diversity in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries.

Other Matters

19. During the appeal, the appellant submitted a Unilateral Undertaking (UU), pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This obligation seeks to tie the approved planning permission for a new shopfront to this decision, should I be minded to allow the appeal in respect of the proposed change of use. However, the change of use element of the appeal scheme can be implemented, irrespective of any changes to the shopfront. Given this and my decision in respect of the change of use, it has not been demonstrated that the UU is necessary in this circumstance.
20. I acknowledge the strong objections and concerns raised by many interested parties about anti-social behaviour, and the safety of the public and other occupiers of the building, including those attending the learning centre. However, as there is a statutory requirement to exclude under-18s from AGCs, failure to do so would ultimately be an enforcement issue for the relevant licensing authorities. Similarly, risks to vulnerable persons, including those visiting nearby employment services, are more relevant to licensing requirements. Notwithstanding the lack of substantive evidence that the appellant has the appropriate license in place for the premises, the appeal documentation confirms the 'Think 25' entrance policy would be implemented by AGC staff and no alcohol would be served.
21. As recognised by the Council, there is no definitive evidence linking AGC uses with crime, disturbances or disruptive behaviour, and any noise from the use would be reasonable given the adjacent cultural destination of Bell Square and the promotion of the night-time economy. Comments from interested parties also include references to the shared use of toilet facilities in the building. However, I have no substantive evidence before me to indicate that customers of the AGC would be permitted to access these facilities.

Conditions

22. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I have imposed a condition, for the avoidance of doubt, specifying the approved plans.
23. Both parties have suggested a condition should be imposed restricting the use of Retail Space 2 to Class E(a) – retail. However, PPG states that **"conditions can...enable development to proceed where it would otherwise have been necessary to refuse planning permission"**. Given the existing use of the appeal site falls under Class E, I do not consider limiting its use to retail only is necessary to make the change of use acceptable, nor relevant to the development being permitted. Furthermore, given the difficulties in marketing the premises already demonstrated³, imposing such a condition would limit the potential for Retail Space 2 to be brought into use. I have not, therefore, imposed this condition.

Conclusion

24. The proposed development, insofar as it relates to the new shopfront, conflicts with the development plan when considered as a whole, and there are no material considerations, either individually or in combination, that outweigh the identified harm and associated development plan conflict. Therefore, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed insofar as it relates to the new shopfront.

³ Letter from jrbt Commercial Property dated 26 January 2022

Insofar as it relates to the change of use of part ground floor and part first floor for the creation of an Adult Gaming Centre (Sui Generis), I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Juliet Rogers

INSPECTOR

04 October 2023



Reading
Borough Council
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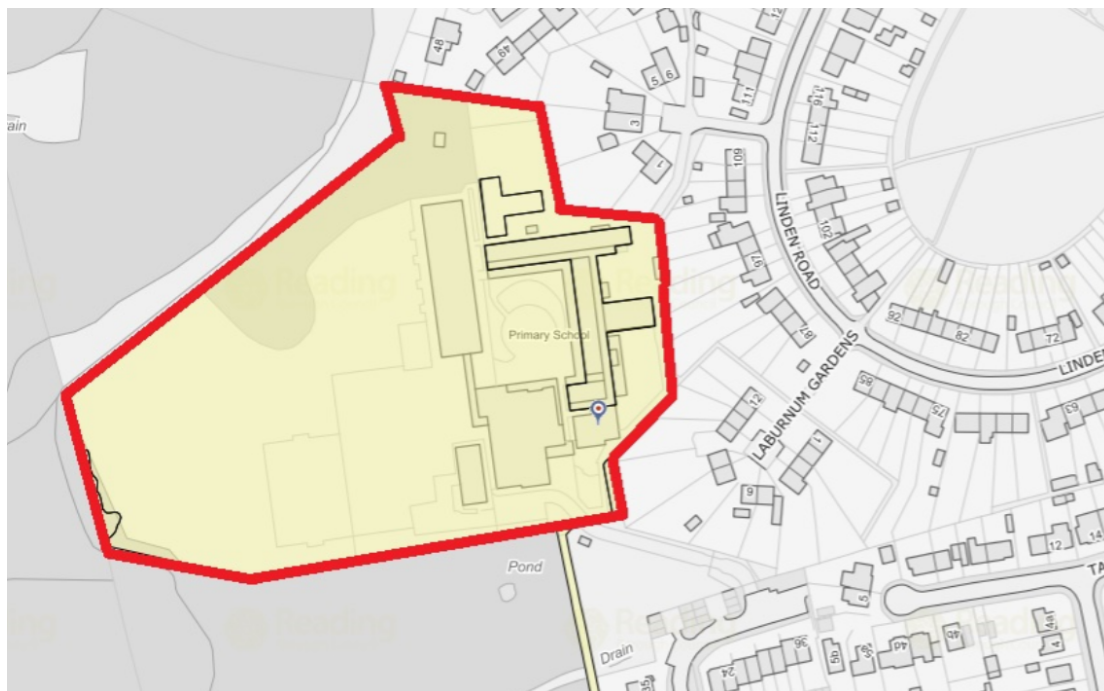
Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Church
Planning Application Reference:	231046/REG3
Site Address:	The Ridgeway Primary School, Hillbrow, Reading RG2 8JD
Proposed Development	Retrospective retention of existing demountable 2 storey modular classrooms and temporary permission to further retain the modular unit for 5 years and minor associated works (amended description).
Applicant:	Reading Borough Council – Property Management
Report author	Marcie Rejwerska
Deadline:	11 October 2023
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to conditions as follows:
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Temporary Buildings (Reinstatement) 2. Approved Plans 3. Materials As Specified 4. Boundary Treatment (To be approved and installed as approved before occupation for SEND pupils)
Informatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Terms 2. Building Control 3. Complaints about construction 4. Encroachment 5. Positive and Proactive - Approval

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This report explains the proposal submitted by Reading Borough Council for retrospective permission to retain the two-storey demountable modular unit at The Ridgeway Primary School, and to obtain a further temporary permission for 5 years (until 2028). The unit has been vacant since 2017 and is in poor condition. The proposal seeks permission to undertake essential repairs to bring the unit back into use to provide classrooms for SEND students from January 2024. The continued use of the unit as proposed is acceptable and minimal concerns raised in terms of amenity impacts arising from the proposal, although a pre-commencement condition is recommended to secure further details of the proposed new fencing around the unit due to insufficient information being included within this submission.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application is referred to Committee owing to it being for works to Council owned (Regulation 3) property.
- 2.2. The surrounding area is residential, and the school has existing access points from Willow Gardens and Hillbrow. The existing modular unit is set away from boundaries with residential properties.
- 2.3. The double modular unit was granted temporary planning permission in 2013, which was further extended in 2015 until 2016. The modular has been stood vacant at the site since 2017.
- 2.4. Site location plan:



3. The proposal

- 3.1. The proposal is part retrospective to retain the modular unit at the site since the previous permission expired in 2016. Permission is also sought to retain the demountable modular two-storey unit on the grounds of The Ridgeway Primary school to accommodate SEND pupils, for an additional 5 years (until 2028).
- 3.2. The submitted planning statement identifies the need to retain the modular unit to provide classroom space for SEND students from January 2024.
- 3.3. The proposal also includes the erection of fencing, although insufficient details have been submitted in relation to the design and scale of this.
- 3.4. Submitted plans and documentation:
 - 3.4.1. Design, Access and Supporting Statement, received 10 August 2023
 - 3.4.2. Location Plan, received 16 August 2023
 - 3.4.3. Proposed Plan, received 16 August 2023
 - 3.4.4. E02348-P-301 Proposed Elevations, received 26 July 2023

4. Planning history

- 4.1. 970916/REG3 – Construction of modular nursery building. Demolition of existing swiftplan building – Application permitted.

- 4.2. 051149/REG3 - Single-storey extension to existing modular nursery building. – Application permitted
- 4.3. 130192/REG3 – Provision of one double-stack demountable modular double classroom and associated external works. – Application permitted
- 4.4. 130299/REG3 – The provision of three temporary single storey portable buildings to provide meeting rooms and small group teaching spaces – Application permitted
- 4.5. 130733/APC – Discharge of conditions 9 and 11 of planning permission 13/00230/REG3 – Conditions discharged
- 4.6. 141554/FUL – Expansion from 1FE school to 3FE school – Application permitted (Committee decision)
- 4.7. 150481/REG3 – Retention of temporary double stack demountable modular double classroom for a further 18 months – Application permitted
- 4.8. 150568/APC – Discharge of condition 8 of planning permission 141554/REG3 – Conditions discharged
- 4.9. 150785/APC – Discharge of conditions 2, 17, 21, 23 and 25 of planning permission 141554/REG3 – Conditions discharged
- 4.10. 150822/NMA – Non-material amendment to planning permission 141554 for the addition of kitchen ventilation plant to Hall Block roof and a change of brise soleil design – NMA agreed
- 4.11. 150868/NMA – Non-material amendment to planning permission 141554 for amendments to proposed pitches and increase in hard play space – NMA agreed
- 4.12. 151482/NMA – Non-material change to planning permission 141554/REG3 for a change in material of the new hall roof from standing seam metal to felt. – NMA agreed
- 4.13. 151710/APC – Discharge of condition 8 of planning permission 141554/REG3 – Condition discharged
- 4.14. 151872/APC – Discharge of conditions 7, 13, 14, 16 and 19 of planning permission 141554/REG3 – Conditions discharged
- 4.15. 161429/APC – Discharge of conditions 9, 18 and 30 of planning permission 141554/REG3 – Conditions discharged
- 4.16. 180473/APC – Discharge of condition 20 of planning permission 141554 – Condition discharged

5. Consultations

5.1. Statutory:

5.1.1. Sports England – No comments to make.

5.2. Non-Statutory

5.2.1. RBC Natural Environment – No comments to make.

5.2.2. RBC Transport Development – No comments received.

5.2.3. RBC Ecology – No objections.

5.2.4. RBC Environmental Protection - No comments to make.

5.2.5. RBC Education Division – No comments received.

5.3. Public:

5.3.1. The following neighbouring properties were consulted by letter for both applications:

6 Laburnum Gardens, Reading RG2 7EN

7 Laburnum Gardens, Reading RG2 7EN

8 Laburnum Gardens, Reading RG2 7EN

9 Laburnum Gardens, Reading RG2 7EN

10 Laburnum Gardens, Reading RG2 7EN

5.3.2. No letters of representation received.

5.3.3. Site notices were sent to the applicant to display around the site.

6. Legal context

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

6.2. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

6.3. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Policies:

CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

OU1 New and Existing Community Facilities

7. Appraisal

7.1. The main considerations are:

I. Land use principles

II. Amenity impacts

I) Land use principles

7.2. The proposed works seek to make the classrooms within the vacant unit available for SEND pupils, from January 2024 for a period of 5 years. The submitted planning statement notes that the unit's proximity to the access gate from Hillbrow means that SEND students will have a separate, quieter access point to the school.

7.3. The Ridgeway Primary School is currently 3FE (form of entry) but operating as 2FE, therefore there is no further proposal to expand the staffing at the school.

7.4. The modular unit was erected in 2013 prior to the permission and implementation of the rear extensions (planning permission 141554) and associated new playing fields. The area on which the modular unit sits were part of an area of playing field which was essentially lost through planning permission 141554.

- 7.5. As such, the retention of the modular unit is not considered to unreasonably reduce the amount of playing field space at the site since this was lost through the implementation of planning permission 141554 and therefore is considered to comply with Sports England Playing Fields Policy (Policy Exception 3), which reads “*The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming, or forming part of, a playing pitch, and does not result in the loss of or inability to make use of any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins), a reduction in the size of the playing areas of any playing pitch or the loss of any other sporting/ancillary facilities on the site.*”
- 7.6. The existing playing fields at the school accommodate 3FE, therefore the proposal does not necessitate an additional provision of playing fields at the site.

II) Amenity impacts

- 7.7. The unit is located away from boundaries with residential dwellings. The nearest residential properties are located on Laburnum Gardens, which back onto the school site.
- 7.8. There is no identified risk of harm to these properties from the appearance and siting of the modular unit nor from factors associated with its use, such as noise.
- 7.9. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 7.10. The proposal also includes erection of fencing around the existing modular unit although as insufficient information has been submitted within this application; a condition is recommended to secure these details via a pre-occupation condition.

8. Equality implications

- 8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues, and priorities in relation to this particular application.

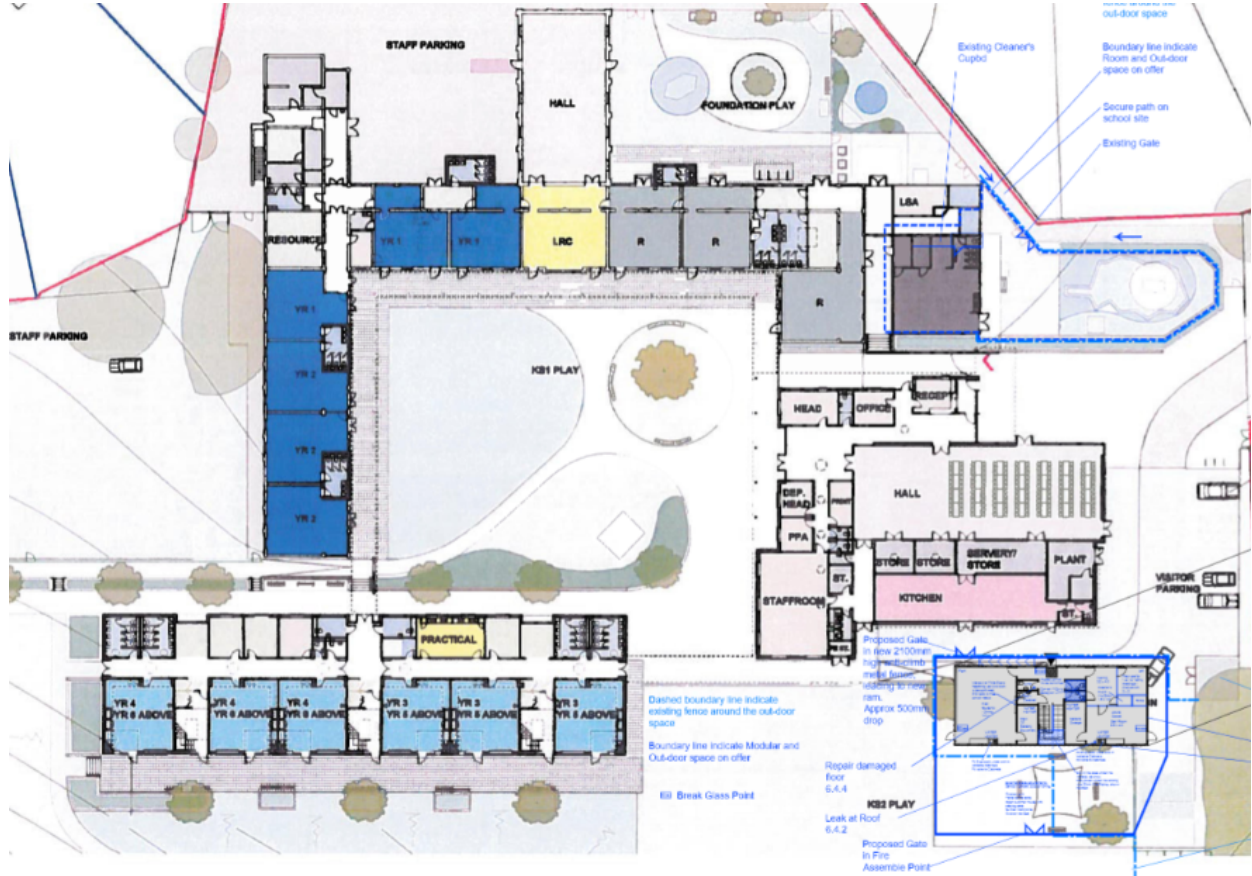
9. Conclusion & planning balance

- 9.1 As with all applications considered by the Local Planning Authority, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 9.2 Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Having gone through this process officers consider that the proposal is acceptable both in terms of use, design, and the impact on the surrounding residential area.

- 9.3 It is considered that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. As such, this application is recommended for Planning Permission to be granted subject to the recommended conditions.

Plans & Appendices

Block Plan



Photos taken during site visit



Rear of the unit



Front of the unit

04 October 2023



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Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Coley
Planning Application Reference:	231037/REG3
Site Address:	Land adjoining 24 Lesford Road, Reading, RG1 6DX
Proposed Development	Change of use of private amenity land for the purpose of providing parking for a further temporary period (beyond separate approval 211928 granted on 04/02/2022) of 18 months.
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Jonathan Markwell, Principal Planning Officer
Deadline:	Originally 20/09/2023, but a formal extension of time for the determination of the application has been agreed until 06/10/2023
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to conditions as follows:
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Temporary permission for 18 months – full reinstatement of land to its former private amenity space use and reinstatement of the raised kerbs (along Wensley Road and Lesford Road) and grass verge (along Wensley Road) thereafter 2. Approved plans
Informatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive and proactive 2. Terms of the conditions 3. Inclusion of a series of photographs to help inform reinstatement works as per condition 1.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. Permission was originally granted in February 2022 for parking at the site, for a temporary period of 18 months to assist displaced vehicles during close-by redevelopment works on Wensley Road. Delays in the completion of the nearby redevelopment necessitates this proposal for the space to provide parking for a further temporary period of 18 months. No known significant issues have arisen at the site since the original proposal and the policy context has not altered, enabling this application to be supported.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application site is a rectangular shaped space 476m² in area, located between dwellings which front onto Wensley Road to the north and Lesford Road to the south (see figure 1 below). Historically, the site has been a lawned, Council-owned, private amenity space (see figure 2 below). Since January 2022 the site has been utilised for the parking of motor vehicles, with entry from a crossover on Wensley Road and

vehicles exiting onto Lesford Road (see figure 3 below). Land levels at the site fall slightly in a north to south direction.

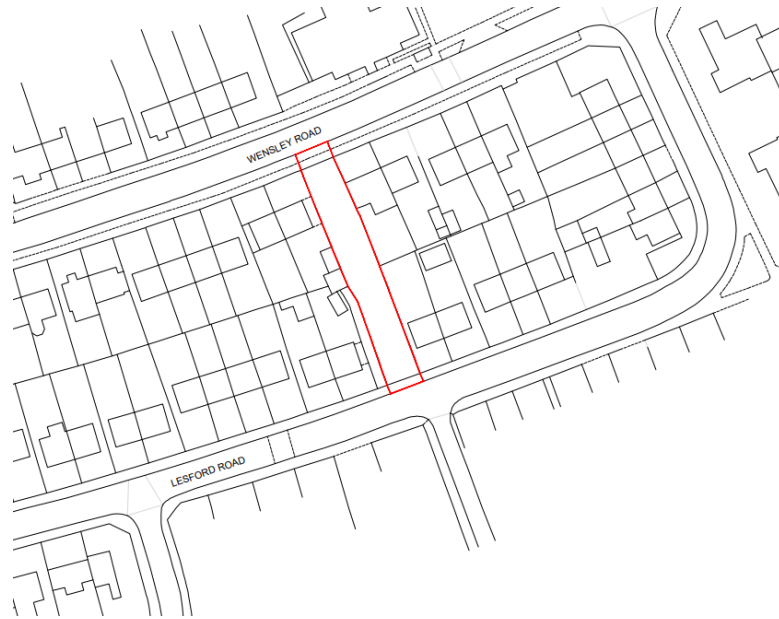


Figure 1: Extract of Site Location Plan HTA-A-DR-001



Figure 2: July 2019 Google Street Views from Wensley Road (left) and Lesford Road (right)



Figure 3: View of the application site exit looking north from Lesford Road (18/08/2023)

- 2.2. The surrounding area is predominately residential in nature, including a mix of two storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings. Coley Allotment Gardens is located south of the application site, whilst Coley Park Community Centre is to the north. St. Mary & All Saints CofE Primary School is 150m east of the application site. The number 11 bus also passes the site.
- 2.3. The application is being considered by the Planning Applications Committee by virtue of being a Council's own application under Regulation 3.

3. The proposal

- 3.1. For the purposes of clarity, it is first referenced that temporary permission was previously granted on 04/02/2022 for the use of the private amenity land for parking for a period of 18 months. The temporary permission expired on 04/08/2023 (see relevant history below at section 4). The current application seeks a further temporary permission for the retention of the existing arrangements at the site for another 18 month period. The application was received on 25/07/2023, prior to the expiry of the original temporary permission. However, now that 04/08/2023 has passed, the current application is now retrospective.
- 3.2. The applicant has explained that construction works are ongoing in relation to nearby to Wensley Court, Riversley Court and Irving Court, together with wider redevelopment proposals adjacent to these residential tower blocks to provide 46 additional dwellings, roads and replacement parking and open space (see section 4 below for full details). These ongoing works have displaced some parking spaces, both on street and within the parking courts adjacent to the blocks. The proximity of the application site to the three residential blocks are shown below at figure 4, together with a site photograph from the south looking north at figure 5. There have been some delays in the originally anticipated programme of works, most notably associated with obtaining a (highways) Stopping Up Order. This has meant that the original completion date has slipped.

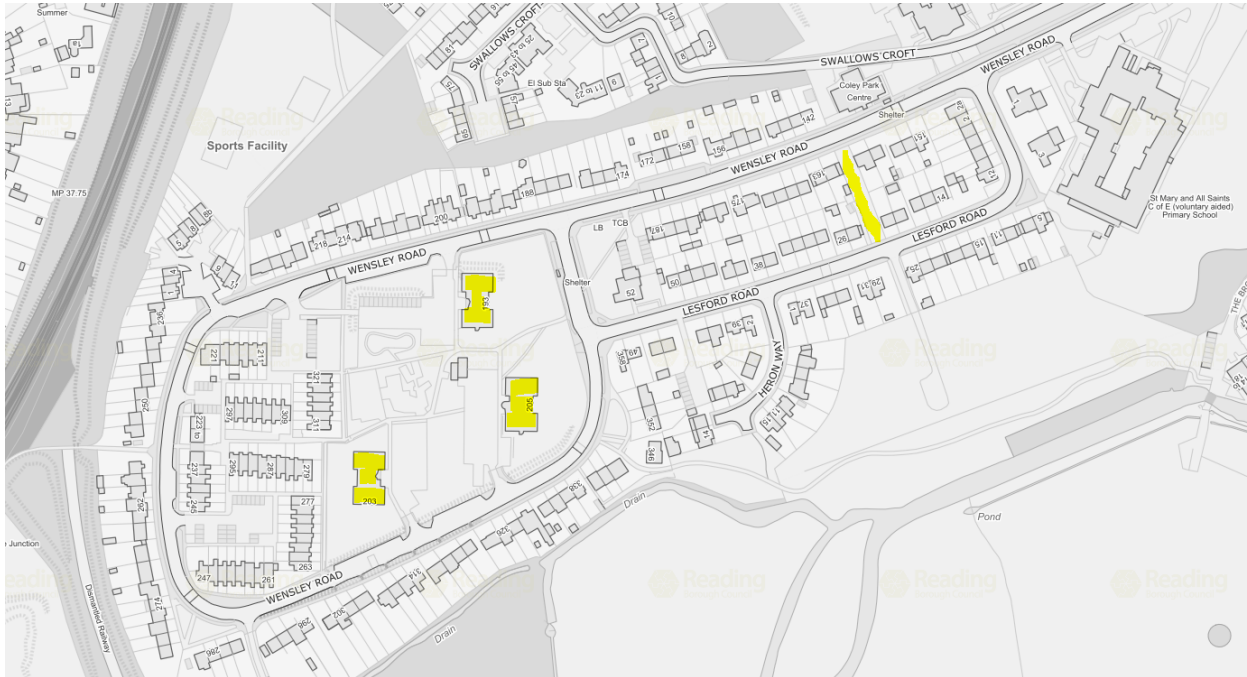


Figure 4 – the application site (highlighted in yellow to the right) in context to Wensley Court, Riversley Court and Irving Court (highlighted in yellow to the left)



Figure 5 – Ongoing construction works, showing Wensley Court (background) and Riversley Court (right). Irving Court is not in photo (further to the left) (18/08/2023)

3.3. The applicant has also detailed that although hard landscaping works have been prioritised in the initial phasing of the redevelopment (as shown in part in figure 5) to minimise temporary parking reductions, future works will further reduce on-street parking by two spaces for a period of some months and bus services will continue along Lesford Road. Accordingly, the purpose of this application is to further extend the timespan of the temporary parking space to help mitigate impacts on the highway and provide parking for residents during the construction phase.

- 3.4. The applicant has advised that the nearby development is now expected to be completed by Spring 2024. Hence, the further 18 month period applied for should comfortably be sufficient time for all works to be completed on the nearby areas.
- 3.5. In terms of the spaces themselves, the intention is for the site to remain as it is currently, providing 11 spaces, as shown below in figure 6. Dropped kerbs provide one-way entry (via Wensley Road) and exit (via Lesford Road) points. Barriers limit the height of vehicles (1.9m) able to access the space, with knee high rails and bollards provided along the perimeter. Simple signage is provided to direct vehicles into and out of the space. 'Cellpave' matting has been applied to maintain a grass appearance, whilst enabling parking to take place safely.

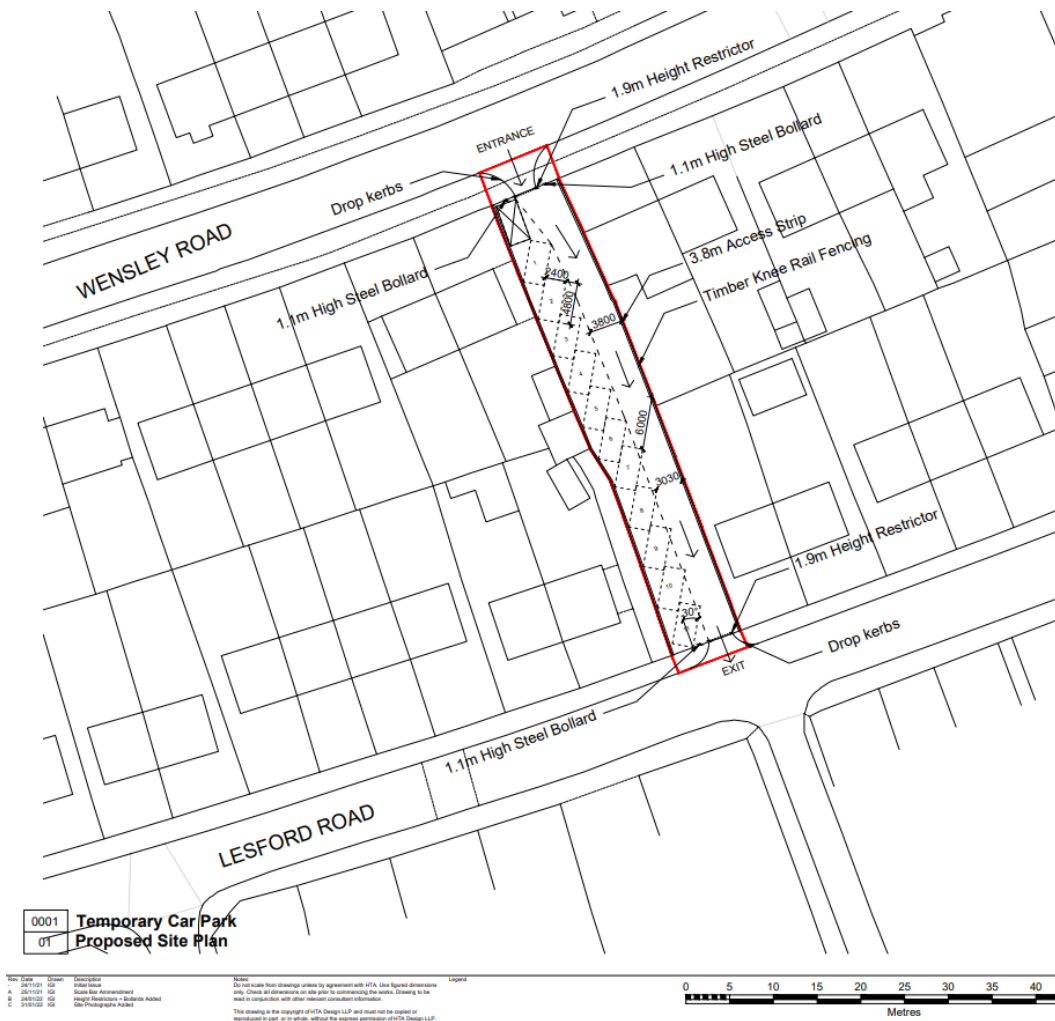


Figure 6: Extract of Temporary Parking Plan (HTA-A_DR_0003 Rev C)

- 3.6. In terms of the Reading Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the applicant has duly submitted a CIL form. On the basis of the information provided and the nature of the proposals it is advised that the scheme is not CIL liable.
- 3.7. Plans and information taken into account:
- HTA-A-DR-001 - Site Location Plan
 - HTA-A_DR_0003 Rev C - Temporary Parking Plan
 - Cellpave AP Specification details by Groundtrax
 - Proposed Temporary Car Park Extension of Use Planning Supporting Statement by Daryn Inston
 - Decision notice for application 211928 at Land adjoining 24 Lesford Road Reading RG1 6DX
 - Committee Report to 2nd February 2022 Planning Applications Committee
 - Update Report to 2nd February 2022 Planning Applications Committee

4. Planning history

- 4.1. The following application relates to the application site:
- 4.2. 211928/REG3 - Temporary Change Use of private amenity land for the purpose of providing temp parking for a period of 18 months (Part Retrospective). Granted 04/02/2022.
- 4.3. The following applications, associated with nearby development to the west of the application site on Wensley Road, are also considered to be of relevance:
- 4.4. Phase 1 Development (land adjacent to Wensley Court, Riversley Court and Irving Court) - 200122 - Demolition of 29 garages and development of 46 new dwelling units, including the provision of affordable homes, provided in a mixture of houses and apartments (1 bed / 2 bed / 3 bed / 4 bed) in blocks of between 2.5 to 4 storeys, and the provision of bicycle parking spaces, car parking spaces and public realm works. Granted following completion of legal agreement 16/12/2020. Development is presently under construction implementing these works.
- 4.5. Phase 2 Development (relating to Wensley Court, Riversley Court and Irving Court) - 210549/REG3 - Various renovation works to the three tower blocks (Wensley Court, Irving Court and Riversley Court), including replacement of the external envelope and windows, extended and reconfigured entrance areas incorporating altered refuse and recycling facilities, replacement ground floor escape doors, external stairs and windows, roof level works, various landscaping works including planting and surface treatments, and external cycle parking stores. – Granted 22/07/2021. Development is presently under construction implementing these works.

5. Consultations

- 5.1. Statutory & Non-Statutory:
- 5.2. RBC Transport - No transport objections given the temporary parking is provided to reduce on street parking in the surrounding area whilst the construction works are completed.
- 5.3. RBC Environmental Protection – No comments.
- 5.4. RBC Natural Environment - The car park layout, including use of 'Cellpave' (plastic mats which allow cars to move over grassed areas), has been implemented as per approval 211928. The continued use, as approved, for a further 18 months does not raise any concerns. As before, a condition should be attached to ensure the land is returned to its former use as private amenity space once the temporary use as a car park has ceased.
- 5.5. Public:
- 5.6. The neighbouring residents on Wensley Road and Lesford Road were formally consulted by letter. In addition, two site notices were erected at the site (at the entrance and exit points) on 18/08/2023, expiring on 08/09/2023. No responses have been received.

6. Legal context

- 6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 6.2. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the

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

- 6.3. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

NPPF 2021

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN8: Undesignated Open Space
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents
Topics
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Other relevant documentation
Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)

7. Appraisal

- 7.1. The main considerations are:

- Land use matters
- Design and landscaping
- Amenity
- Transport
- Other matters

i) Land use matters

- 7.1.1 The pre-existing private amenity land is recognised as an undesignated open space in the Borough, as per Policy EN8 of the Local Plan. The pre-existing site provided a green buffer to soften the predominantly suburban surrounding area. The policy specifies that there will be a presumption in favour of the retention of undesignated open spaces and that development should not result in the loss of or jeopardise the use and enjoyment of undesignated open space. In this case it is important to note that the application is temporary in nature, for a further period of 18 months, by which time the land will be returned to its pre-existing use as private amenity land. Accordingly, whilst there would be a further temporary loss (which when combined with the original permission would cumulatively total a period of 3 years), the loss would not be

permanent, which in this particular case provides a basis for justifying the proposals. It is also noted that the pre-existing site included fencing at both ends, preventing public access to the space, meaning the effect of the temporary loss of the space is downplayed in terms of jeopardising the use). With the inclusion of the recommended condition to return the site to its former use by the end of the proposed 18 month period, the proposals are considered to align with the principles of Policy EN8 (Undesignated Open Space).

ii) Design and landscaping

- 7.2.1 At the time of the original permission (see section 4 above), specific features were proposed to assist in protecting the green buffer appearance of the pre-existing site. Most predominantly, this included a “Cellpave” paving tile which allows grass to grow through the tile, in order to enable the continuation of a green buffer of sorts to remain. At the time of the officer site visit on 18/08/2023, this was shown in practice (see figure 7 below).



Figure 7: Left: View of the application site looking south from the Wensley Road entrance (18/08/2023). Right: Extract of Cellpave specification details

- 7.2.2 Whilst it is acknowledged that the temporary use of the site does represent a significant visual departure from the pre-existing arrangements (see figure 2), the utilitarian elements of the proposals (such as the entrances and signage) are necessary for the purpose of the proposal, with the inclusion of the paving tile evidently assisting in the mitigation of the impact during the temporary period. The paving assists as far as possible in maintaining the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm). The design shortfalls of the temporary proposals are considered to be outweighed by the separate benefits of the proposals, as explained elsewhere within this appraisal, but most notably the provision of parking to offset temporary losses associated with nearby separate redevelopment proposals.
- 7.2.3 In respect of other components of Policy CC7, the site is considered to be suitably accessible and safe for the proposed use, with views through the site being possible from both Lesford Road and Wensley Road.
- 7.2.4 With specific regard to tree and landscaping matters, the Natural Environment officer is content with the further temporary nature of the proposals, as detailed in section 4 above. At the time of the original permission the Cellpave was noted as assisting the protection of the existing conifer trees at No. 159 Wensley Road. Based on the officer site visit there did not appear to be any harmful impacts to existing nearby trees caused by the proposed use to date.

iii) Amenity

- 7.3.1 The continued use of the site for parking for a further 18 months is not considered to result in any significantly detrimental impacts to the living environment of existing

neighbouring residential properties. The inclusion of height barriers and bollards are considered necessary to reduce the likelihood of potential unauthorised encampments, while the Environmental Protection response (see section 4 above) raises no comments. Whilst it is acknowledged that for neighbouring occupiers there has been a change in the local context, with potential for increased noise and disturbance, vibrations, fumes and crime/safety concerns being experienced, given the limited number of spaces available at the site, this helps downplay the majority of these potential issues. The officer site visit indicated that boundary treatments between the site and the neighbouring properties had been maintained (see figure 8 below), assisting in reducing possible crime/safety concerns.



Figure 8: View from with the application site looking south towards the Lesford Road exit (18/08/2023)

7.3.2 It is noted that the original permission included a condition preventing the installation of any external lighting until a full lighting assessment was submitted and approved at the site. In the intervening time no lighting has been installed (and there is no known future intention either) and, based on there being no known significant issues arising at the site since its first use, it is therefore not considered necessary to include such a condition in this instance. In overall terms it is considered that the proposals comply with Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).

iv) Transport

7.4.1 As per section 4 above, Transport officers support the proposed temporary parking to reduce on street parking in the surrounding area whilst nearby construction works continue to take place. At the time of the original permission the proposals were welcomed and considered to make a positive contribution to highway safety by removing vehicles from the highway along Wensley Road and Lesford Road, aiding in the flow of traffic. As a result, the positive highway safety implications of the proposals are considered to be a key tangible benefit of the proposals. In addition, the spaces and signage was previously considered to be appropriate, with this having been maintained at the site in the intervening time. Accordingly, the proposals are strongly supported from a transport perspective.

v) Other matters

- 7.5.1 Officers are mindful that Planning Practice Guidance states it will be rarely justifiable to grant a second temporary permission, with further permissions normally either granted permanently or refused (Paragraph 014 Reference ID: 21a-014-20140306). However, there is a caveat in this guidance that exceptions can be made in cases where changing circumstances provide a clear rationale. In this case the changing circumstances of originally unexpected delays to the wider nearby works necessitate a further temporary time period being required for parking. Accordingly, the proposals are justified as an exceptional case where a second temporary permission is justified.
- 7.5.2 It is also acknowledged that the original permission included five separate conditions, whereas this proposal recommends only two conditions. The temporary time period condition is retained, but is increased in scope to also incorporate the reinstatement of raised kerbs and verges, which were previously separately referenced in condition 5 of 211928. In effect, conditions 1 and 5 are now combined. The approved plans condition remains unaltered. As discussed in the amenity section above, the previously included lighting condition is no longer considered necessary. The 211928 permission also included a compliance condition in relation to the retention of signage. This condition is not considered necessary on this occasion, as it is shown on the parking plan submitted, so is adequately covered by the approved plans condition given this will specify these details will be retained for the duration of the use for the temporary period. Planning Practice Guidance recommends that conditions are generally minimised wherever possible; this has been applied in this case.

8. Equality implications

- 8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application

9. Conclusion & planning balance

- 9.1 As with all applications considered by the Local Planning Authority, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 9.2 Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. The harmful impacts of the proposals include the continued temporary loss of undesignated open space at a site which is a green buffer in a suburban context, but this has been partly mitigated through the use of the Cellpave matting system to maintain a 'green feel' to the character of the space. The temporary nature of the application also weighs in favour of the proposal, meaning no permanent change of use is permitted. Moreover, the temporary benefits of removing vehicles from the highway during the on-going nearby redevelopment works in highway safety terms is considered to outweigh any harmful impacts of the temporary proposals.
- 9.3 It is considered that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. As such, this application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions specified at the outset of this report.

04 October 2023



Reading

Borough Council

Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Katesgrove
Planning Application Reference:	230814
Site Address:	9 Upper Crown Street, RG1 2SS
Proposed Development	Demolition of existing buildings and structures, associated re-use of frame with basement level used for car parking and servicing, erection of 3 no. residential blocks containing 46 no. dwellings above, associated parking (including replacement), access works and landscaping, relocation of substations and associated works to rear of Indigo apartments to facilitate pedestrian access.
Applicant	Irongate Property (Reading) Ltd
Report author	Tom Bradfield
Deadline:	13/10/2023
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to S106 (terms as follows) & conditions as follows
S106 Terms	<p>To secure affordable housing on site consisting of fourteen units (30% provision) on site, to be 5x one bedroom units of Reading Affordable Rent, 5x Two bedroom units of Reading Affordable Rent and 4x one bedroom units of First Homes. Reading Affordable Rent (RAR) tenure rent levels to be capped at 70% of market rent in accordance with the Borough Council's published RAR levels. The Housing Development team have confirmed that the offer is acceptable.</p> <p>Zero carbon offset financial contribution of £2,949.72.</p> <p>Employment, Skills and Training and Construction financial contribution of £8,820.75.</p>
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full - time limit - three years 2. Approved Plans 3. Materials (samples to be approved) 4. EV Charging Points 5. Cycle Parking (pre-commencement) 6. Refuse Collection (to be approved) 7. Parking Permits 1 (notification to LPA) 8. Parking Permits 2 (notification to occupants) 9. Car Parking Management Plan 10. Construction Method Statement 11. Noise Assessment and Mitigation 12. Contaminated Land Assessment 13. Remediation Scheme (To be submitted)

	14. Remediation Scheme (Implement and Verification) 15. Unidentified Contamination 16. Hours of Construction/Demolition 17. No Bonfires 18. Waste Storage 19. Sustainable Drainage (To be approved) 20. Sustainable Drainage (As Specified) 21. Archaeology 22. Biodiversity Enhancements 23. Hard and Soft Landscaping 24. Hard and Soft Landscaping (Implementation) 25. Green Roofs 26. Thames Water – Piling Method Statement 27. Boundary Treatment 28. SAP Assessment – Design Stage 29. SAP Assessment – As Built
Informatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive and Proactive • Pre-commencement conditions • Highways • S106 • Terms and Conditions • Building Regulations • Complaints about construction • Encroachment • Contamination • Noise between residential properties • CIL • Parking Permits • Thames Water

1. Executive summary

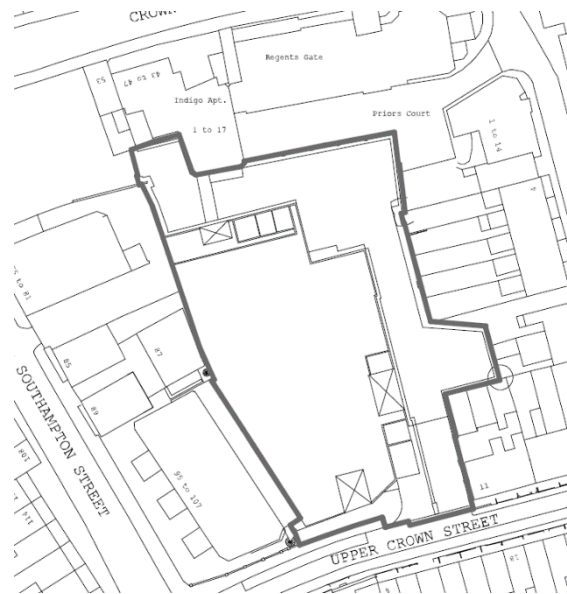
- 1.1. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to a legal agreement and conditions as set out above.
- 1.2. The proposal is very similar to a scheme which was refused under planning reference 211614 and dismissed at appeal. The applicant has addressed the Inspector's reason for dismissing the appeal, and although officers had concerns regarding the layout and design of the scheme, the Inspector was satisfied that the proposals would be acceptable. The Inspector's decision is a significant material consideration in this case and must be given due weight.
- 1.3. The proposal would successfully redevelop a previously developed site adjacent to the town centre which is currently underused. It would provide market housing, affordable housing and retain the existing parking spaces on site. The proposals would have an appropriate design, ensure that there would be no unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties and provide suitable accommodation for future residents. The proposal would have no adverse transport impacts, be acceptable in terms of ecology, biodiversity and sustainability. The application is therefore recommended to you for approval.

2. Introduction and Site Description

- 2.1. The application site is in current use as a data storage facility with roof deck car park above. The existing building is utilitarian in appearance and constructed from a mix of red brick and concrete frame. The site is accessed from Upper Crown Street and ground level via two vehicle ramps, one which slopes down to provide access to the data storage facility and to provide a servicing area for the building and three electrical

substations on the site, and one which slopes upwards to access the rooftop car park. The ground floor site level of the data storage facility is set down below the level of that of adjacent surrounding buildings to the south on Upper Crown Street and to the west on Southampton Street. The car park itself serves residents in the surrounding residential and commercial buildings, many of whom have long-term leases on car parking spaces on the site.

- 2.2. To the south and east of the site are modest two storey terraced residential dwellings on Upper Crown Street and Newark Street. To the west of the site is the rear of the properties fronting Southampton Street which are a mixture of commercial and residential ranging from single storey to five storeys in scale. To the north of the site is the rear of the large Indigo apartments building which ranges from four to six storeys in scale.
- 2.3. The application site is located outside of but adjacent to the Reading Central Area as defined by Policy CR1 (Definition of Central Reading). The site is also located within an area of potentially contaminated land and within an air quality management area.
- 2.4. The site location plan is below:



3. The proposal

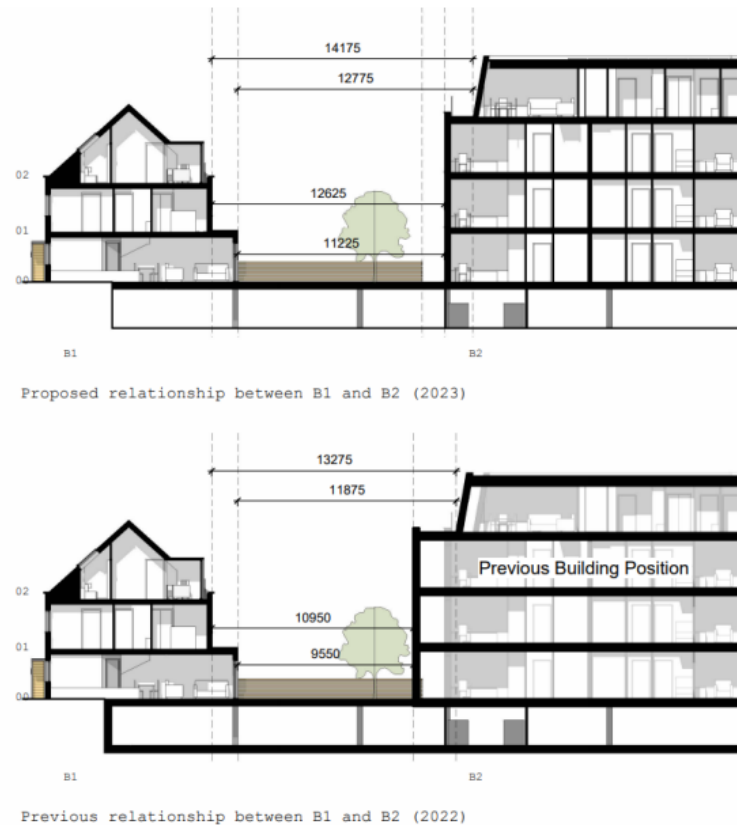
- 3.1. This application seeks to demolish the majority of the structures on the site, retaining some of the frame, and erect three buildings comprising 46 residential units. Building 1 would be four two storey houses which face south onto Upper Crown Street, Building 2 would be a four storey building containing flats behind Building 1 and Building 3 would be a five storey building on the western boundary. The mix of residential units would be as follows:

Type	Market	Affordable	Total
1 bedroom flat	13	9	22 (48%)
2 bedroom flat	11	5	16 (35%)
3 bedroom flat	4	0	4 (8.5%)
3 bedroom house	4	0	4 (8.5%)
Total	32 (70%)	14 (30%)	46 (100%)

- 3.2. Vehicle access would be retained as existing, with additional pedestrian access into the courtyard area from Upper Crown Street. 86 car parking spaces would be provided on

site in a basement car parking area. 68 of these car parking spaces would replace the existing leased car parking spaces for residents beyond the boundary of the site. 16 spaces would serve the residents of the proposed development and 2 spaces would be for servicing of the substation. 36 cycle parking spaces for residents would be provided, with additional spaces in the gardens of the houses and 6 visitor cycle parking spaces in the communal amenity space.

- 3.3. The proposals are very similar to the previously refused scheme (ref. 211614, latterly dismissed at appeal). The only substantive physical difference between the two applications is the repositioning of Building 2, so that the gap between the proposed terrace of houses and the wall of Building 2 increases from 9.55m to 11.225m at ground floor and from 10.95m to 12.625m at first floor. This is illustrated in the drawing below, taken from the submitted Planning & Affordable Housing Statement:



- 3.4. In order to facilitate this alteration, the unit mix is different from the previously refused scheme, which provided 21 one bedroom units, 11 two bedroom units and 14 three bedroom units.

- 3.5. The applicant has submitted the following documents for consideration:

- Planning and Affordable Housing Statement
- Air Quality Assessment
- Archaeological Assessment
- Contaminated Land Statement
- Ecology Statement
- Daylight/Sunlight Report
- Noise Impact Assessment
- External Daylight Study
- 3D Visuals
- Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Urban Drainage Statement
- Energy Assessment
- Energy & Sustainability Report
- Design & Access Statement
- Existing and Proposed Drawings (P001 – P041 & P090)

3.6. The previous application was a Major application which was refused under officers' delegated powers. This application is being referred to the Committee as it is a Major application with a legal agreement with a recommendation for approval.

4. Planning history

211614	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
	<p>Refused: 20/06/2022</p> <p>Dismissed at appeal (APP/E0345/W/22/3313234): 27th April 2023</p>

4.1. The previous application was refused by the Local Planning Authority for the following reasons:

1. *The development, as a result of the re-provision of significant number of on-site vehicle parking spaces unrelated to the proposed residential use, results in a significant proportion of the site being taken up by parking spaces and hardstanding. This, together with the scale and siting of proposed buildings 2 and 3, results in a development which appears cramped in terms of the proposed buildings within it but also in relation to existing buildings surrounding the site at no.s 75-81, 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street. The extent of hardstanding and parking spaces proposed, together with the scale and cramped layout of buildings 2 and 3 results in provision of poor-quality areas of on-site landscaping and communal open space. The layout and scale of the proposed buildings is detrimental to the usability of these spaces and provision of suitable landscaping. The re-provision of the significant number of on-site vehicle parking spaces for off-site users unconnected to the development also fails to provide a safe environment for future occupiers of the development due to the level of pedestrian and vehicle movements that would occur within the development and its buildings that would be unrelated to the to the residential occupiers of the site. The proposals are considered to be an overdevelopment of the site and to fail to create a safe or high-quality residential layout contrary to Policies CC7, EN14, and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.*

2. *The siting and the layout of proposed buildings 2 and 3 would result in direct overlooking between facing habitable rooms windows to the two buildings creating*

*a loss of privacy and overbearing form of development for future occupiers. The presence of balconies to the facing elevations exacerbates this unacceptable relationship and inadequate separation distance between the two buildings. **The siting and scale of proposed building 2 would result in an overbearing form of development for future occupiers of the proposed terrace of four dwellings (building 1) to the site frontage on Upper Crown Street and would be detrimental to the usability of their private amenity spaces.** The proposed development would fail to provide future occupiers with an acceptable standard of residential amenity or amenity spaces contrary to Policies CC8 and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.*

- 3. The siting of proposed building 3 directly on the west boundary of the site together with its scale is considered to result in an overbearing visually dominant relationship with the adjacent buildings at 85, 87, 89 Southampton Street which are either in residential use or have been granted prior approval for conversion to residential use. The siting of large windows directly on the boundary, whilst indicated on the proposed plans to be obscurely glazed, would result in a perception of overlooking to occupiers of these neighbouring buildings. The proposed development would be harmful to the residential amenity of both existing and future occupiers of no.s 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.*

- 4. In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure provision of a construction phase and end user phase employment skills and training plan or equivalent financial contribution, provision of a policy compliant level of on-site affordable housing and a carbon off-setting contribution, the proposals fails to adequately contribute to local labour and training needs, the housing needs of the Reading Borough and to achieve zero carbon homes standards contrary to Policies CC9, H3 and H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, the adopted Employment Skills and Training Supplementary Planning Document 2019, Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2021, Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document 2019 and Planning Obligations Under Section 106 Supplementary Planning Document 2015.*

- 4.2. The refused scheme was the subject of an Informal Hearing, which took place on 28th March 2023 and the Inspector's decision letter was delivered on 27th April 2023. The Inspector found the proposal acceptable in the majority of respects, but found that the proposal was unacceptable with regard to the relationship between Building 2 and the*

proposed terrace of houses facing onto Upper Crown Street (Building 1) and upheld that part of Reason 2 (highlighted in bold in the refusal reasons above). All other reasons for refusal were dismissed. The Inspector found that the harm arising from the unacceptable relationship between the two buildings, in particular the overbearing nature of the building that would compromise the outlook from the proposed houses and the quality of the rear gardens to the extent that the living conditions of the occupiers of the houses would be unacceptable. The Inspector's decision is included at Appendix 1.

5. Consultations

- 5.1. The following consultation responses were received from statutory and internal consultees:

RBC Transport

- 5.2. The Transport team raised no objection to the proposals. The access arrangements would be acceptable, the parking layout would also be acceptable. The number of parking spaces would be below the Council's adopted standards, but given the site's proximity to the centre of Reading and local transport networks, a lower provision is acceptable. The surrounding roads have extensive parking restrictions which would prevent overflow parking. A condition would ensure that no parking permits would be issued for new residents. Cycle parking provision would be acceptable. Additional information relating to access arrangements, electric vehicle charging points and reinstatement of dropped crossings was requested and received.

RBC Housing Development

- 5.3. The Housing Development Team welcome the 30% affordable housing offer, but would advise the supply of three bedroom units to ensure the mix is policy compliant. The provision of 25% of Affordable Housing as First Homes is required by national policy, but the provision of the remainder of the Affordable Housing as Reading Affordable Rent units rather than a split between RAR and Shared Ownership is welcomed.

RBC Natural Environment

- 5.4. The existing site has no planting or soft landscaping, and the proposal would introduce a soft landscaping area with trees, as well as green roofs. The layout and the hard-soft balance on the proposed plans are acceptable hence the proposal is supported in terms of trees and landscape. Several conditions requested relating to landscaping.

RBC Waste & Recycling

- 5.5. Further information was requested relating to the collection of waste and recycling, which was provided and is advised is now acceptable and would be secured by condition.

RBC Environmental Protection

- 5.6. Additional information relating to noise and air pollution was required and has been provided. A variety of conditions relating to noise, air quality, land contamination, bin storage, hours of construction and a CMS are suggested.

RBC Ecology

- 5.7. The proposals would have no impact on protected species or priority habitats, therefore no objection to the proposals. Conditions relating to landscaping and biodiversity enhancements are suggested.

Berkshire Archaeology

- 5.8. No objection subject to a condition relating to archaeological investigations.

Public Consultation

- 5.9. 144 neighbouring properties were consulted by letter and four site notices were displayed at the application site.
- 5.10. Nine responses were received and raised the below points:
- Loss of light (particularly to the City Gate building)
 - Loss of privacy (particularly to the City Gate building)
 - Loss of outlook from surrounding properties
 - Disruption during construction through noise, dust and debris
 - Lack of provision of secure car parking, bins and bicycles during construction and following construction
 - Lack of carbon capture
 - Too much car parking
 - Too little car parking
 - Resultant traffic would increase congestion on surrounding streets
 - Demolition of the existing building could harm the structure of surrounding buildings
 - Interference with access arrangements to parking for surrounding flats
 - Development is too large
 - Inappropriate access
 - Landscaping would not be sufficient and would not grow well given the scale of buildings
 - Impact on archaeological remains

6. Legal context

- 6.1. Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 6.2. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 6.3. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 6.4. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Policy – National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 4 - Decision Making

Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Policies:

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
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
EN15: Air Quality
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
H1: Provision of Housing
H2: Density and Mix
H3: Affordable Housing
H5: Standards for New Housing
H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
TR1 Achieving the Transport Strategy
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Supplementary Planning Documents

Affordable Housing (2021)
Planning Obligations under S106 (April 2015)
Sustainable Design and Construction (Dec 2019)
Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
Parking Standards and Design (2011)

7. Appraisal

7.1. The main considerations are:

- Principle of Development
- Future Residents' Amenity
- Neighbour Amenity
- Design, Character and Appearance of the Area
- Unit Mix and Affordable Housing
- Transport
- Ecology
- Sustainability
- S106 Legal Agreement

Principle of Development

7.2. The site is not allocated for development, but generally the proposals would align with the principles of the NPPF and the Local Plan which encourage the use of previously developed land where suitable opportunities exist.

7.3. The loss of the existing data storage use on the site would result in the loss of employment land, although given the use as a data centre, the number of employees is very low compared to the size of the site. The site is not located within a Core Employment Area, and is surrounded by residential uses, accessed via a modest, narrow road, there is no objection to the loss of employment land in this instance. Furthermore, the existing building is utilitarian in appearance and not considered to be of any architectural merit, so its loss would be acceptable, providing the replacement buildings maintain or enhance the character of the surrounding area, in accordance with

Local Plan Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm). The design of the proposals is assessed elsewhere in the report.

- 7.4. The proposed replacement of the existing employment use on the site with residential development would provide additional dwellings to the Borough's housing stock on previously developed land - the principle of which aligns with the broad objectives of Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) in assisting meeting annual housing targets. The application site is also situated within a predominately residential area, whereby its location and accessibility are considered to accord with Policy CC6 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development).
- 7.5. The proposal is very similar to the previously refused scheme (ref. 211614). The principle of redeveloping this site was considered acceptable by officers then, and was considered acceptable by the Inspector at appeal stage. Given the differences between the two schemes are minimal, the principle of residential development on this site is considered acceptable. The previous officer report and the Inspector's decision are attached as appendices.

Future Residents' Amenity

- 7.6. Local Plan Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) states that new build housing will need to comply with the nationally prescribed space standards. Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) requires dwellings to be provide with functional private or communal open space where possible. Local Plan Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) requires that homes should also have adequate natural light, outlook and privacy.
- 7.7. The previous scheme (ref. 211614) was refused on various grounds, several relating directly to future residents' amenity. The Inspector dismissed the appeal on the grounds that the relationship between Building 2 and the terrace of houses fronting Upper Crown Street would be unacceptable. The Inspector stated:

"The size and proximity of Building 2 to the rear of the terraced houses and their rear gardens would result in it being overbearing to the occupiers of these houses. The appearance of the building would be softened with a living wall on this elevation, which would also have some articulation from the siting of obscure glazed windows. In addition, the setting in of the mansard roof from this elevation would be significant, limiting its presence when seen from ground level in particular. I also recognise that for the easternmost house in the terrace, only part of the outlook would be onto Building 2. Nevertheless, the size and proximity of Building 2 would result in it being a dominant and oppressive presence that would compromise the outlook from the houses and the quality of the rear gardens to the extent that the living conditions of occupiers of the houses would be unacceptable.

I acknowledge that other properties may exist in the area with a similar outlook, and I saw during my site visit that neighbouring gardens are relatively small, in some instances smaller than those proposed for the terraced houses. However, development locally has been piecemeal in nature, and in the case of the older houses on Upper Crown Street and Newark Street these are of considerable age far predating modern standards for residential development. They also do not back onto buildings of the size and height of the proposed Building 2. In any case, the combination of factors identified above would result in unacceptable living conditions for the future occupiers of these properties. Even if a similar combination of factors does exist locally, this does not change my view that the appeal proposal would be unacceptable in this regard."

- 7.8. The current proposal increases the distance between the rear elevations of the houses and the wall of Building 2 by just under 2m. This also results in longer gardens for the houses. The increased distance between the houses and the side wall of Building 2 would ensure that the outlook from these properties would be significantly improved when compared to the previous scheme, and would be considered acceptable. Furthermore, the increase in the size of the gardens would contribute to the improved outlook both from within the properties and from within the gardens themselves. It is considered that this change overcomes the Inspector's concerns regarding the living

conditions of the future residents in the houses. A section comparison between the two schemes can be seen earlier in this report (between paras 3.3 and 3.4), and a floorplan comparison can be seen below, previous scheme on the left and proposed scheme on the right:



- 7.9. Buildings 2 and 3 would be separated by between 9m and 10m across the communal amenity space in the centre of the site with windows and balconies facing across this space. The appeal scheme had a similar relationship, and the Inspector found that this would be acceptable, and would ensure acceptable levels of privacy for the new units (para. 9 in the Inspector's Report). Furthermore, the Inspector found that the outlook and light provision would be acceptable for these units (para. 10 in the Inspector's report). Given the previous appeal decision is a significant material consideration when assessing a planning application, and the relationship between these two buildings has not changed, the proposals are considered acceptable in this regard.
- 7.10. The communal amenity space would be located between Buildings 2 and 3. It would include both hard and soft landscaping and be visible from Upper Crown Street. The Inspector identified that the communal amenity space would be "relatively compressed" (para. 15 in the Inspector's Report), however that given the landscaping it would be generally attractive and useable. The current proposal is similar in this regard, and the communal amenity areas are considered appropriate.
- 7.11. The units would all meet the relevant space standards, would have private amenity space and would receive appropriate levels of light and privacy.
- 7.12. The proposal would include adequate mitigation with regard to air quality through the implementation of an appropriate ventilation arrangement. Conditions are recommended to ensure that this is secured.
- 7.13. The proposal includes adequate noise mitigation to ensure that there would be no impact on future residents from external noise. Further mitigation is proposed to ensure that there would be no adverse impact as a result of noise between the two uses or from mechanical plant. Conditions securing these are recommended.
- 7.14. Overall, officers consider that the proposal would provide suitable future living conditions for residents on a constrained site adjacent to the town centre, and is therefore considered to comply with the Local Plan policies above.

Neighbour Amenity

- 7.15. Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties.
- 7.16. The site is surrounded by residential uses on all sides. To the north are Indigo Apartments and Regents Gate, to the west a currently vacant site with planning permission for residential at 75-81 Southampton Street, a mix of offices (with permission to convert to residential) and residential uses at 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street and

purely residential at City Gate Apartments (95-107 Southampton Street). To the south is Upper Crown Street itself, with a terrace of houses on the other side, and to the east mainly terraced houses with Priors Court in the north-eastern corner.

- 7.17. The previous scheme was refused and dismissed based on the position of Building 3 resulting in harm to numbers 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street through loss of privacy through the perception of overlooking and an overbearing presence which would be harmful to the residents' amenity.
- 7.18. The Inspector found that there would be no harm to the living conditions of the current and future occupants at numbers 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street. With regards number 85, which is currently in residential use, the Inspector stated that given the urban setting and separation distance of approximately 16m, there would be no harmful loss of outlook, or perception of overlooking (Paras. 20 & 21 in the Inspector's decision letter).
- 7.19. Number 87 Southampton Street is currently an office building, but has an extant planning permission to extend the building to provide a flat at existing roof level. Building 3 does not extend beyond the southern elevation of number 87, so there would be no impact on this side. The Inspector considered that it would extend beyond the northern direction, but that there would be no loss of outlook. The Inspector also determined that there would be no harm to the living conditions of potential future residents in the proposed new flat (paras 22 and 23 in the Inspector's Report). It was accepted at appeal stage that there would be no harm to number 89 given the position and orientation of the buildings.
- 7.20. Given that the size and position of Building 3 has not changed, these assessments carry significant weight in the planning assessment and accordingly, officers advise that there would be no harm identified to the living conditions of the neighbouring residents at 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street.
- 7.21. The relationship between the previous proposals and the other surrounding residential buildings (in particular Indigo Apartments and City Gate) was considered acceptable as part of the previous application, and given the relationships between the buildings and the proposal has not changed in any substantive manner, is still considered acceptable.

Design, Character and Appearance of the Area

- 7.22. Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) states that "all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area". The NPPF in paragraph 130 c) states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments "are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)".
- 7.23. One of the reasons for the refusal of the previous scheme related to the development appearing cramped due to the scale and siting of Buildings 2 and 3 and their relationship with the existing buildings around the site, resulting in poor quality landscaping and open space and the proposal was considered to be an overdevelopment of the site.
- 7.24. However, the Inspector disagreed with this assessment and considered that the site is within an area of mixed character, with low-rise terraced properties and larger buildings of up to six storeys in close proximity. The Inspector also noted that the site has restrictions relating to re-provision of car parking spaces for surrounding leaseholders. They held that Buildings 2 and 3 would be positioned appropriately, closer to the taller buildings around the site, ensuring that their height and massing would be in keeping with the immediate context. As discussed earlier in the report, the Inspector also determined that despite the close proximity of the buildings, the communal space would be acceptable. The Inspector found that the proposal was acceptable in terms of its effect on the character and appearance of the area and that it would provide adequate, functional communal amenity space (paras. 12 – 19 of the Inspector's letter).

- 7.25. The nearest Conservation Area is Market Place/London Street, the edge of which is approximately 60m to the northeast. There is also a row of Grade II Listed Buildings at 92-106 Southampton Street, approximately 40m to the west. Given the position of the site, distances involved and intervening buildings, the proposal would not be readily visible from these locations and would have no impact on heritage assets.
- 7.26. The overall design of the scheme has not changed, beyond the slight reduction in Building 2, as discussed earlier in the report. The proposal would create a row of terraced properties on Upper Crown Street, which would be an appropriate design response to the immediate context of the area. Furthermore, as the Inspector identified, the scale, position and design of the larger Buildings 2 and 3 would be in keeping with the character of the area and would be considered acceptable. The proposal would represent an improvement compared to the existing building, and would not result in any harm to the character and appearance of the area. Although officers have previously refused a similar scheme, the appeal decision found that the proposals would be an appropriate design response. This carries significant weight in the planning balance, and officers recommend that the proposals are now considered acceptable in this regard.

Unit Mix and Affordable Housing

- 7.27. Local Plan Policy H2 states that wherever possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing set out in figure 4.6 of the Local Plan, in particular for family homes.
- 7.28. The proposal would provide 46 units at the following mix:

Type	Market	Affordable	Total
1 bedroom flat	13	9	22 (48%)
2 bedroom flat	11	5	16 (35%)
3 bedroom flat	4	0	4 (8.5%)
3 bedroom house	4	0	4 (8.5%)
Total	32 (70%)	14 (30%)	46 (100%)

- 7.29. 24 family sized units would be provided (52%), with the remainder of the mix being one bedroom units. Provision of this level of family housing exceeds the policy requirements of 50% of units on sites outside the Town Centre. There has been a change in the unit mix from the scheme which was considered at appeal, but the proposal would still comply with Policy H2.
- 7.30. Local Plan Policy H3 requires development to make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading Borough. For a development of this size, 30% of the total dwellings are expected to be provided as affordable housing. If proposals fall short of the policy, then the developer should clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower contribution through an open-book viability assessment.
- 7.31. The proposal would provide 30% affordable housing, as per the above table. The Housing Development Team have indicated that whilst their preference would be to include three bedroom units in the mix, the provision of the entirety of the remainder (after First Home allocation) as Reading Affordable Rent (RAR) would be a significant benefit. Furthermore, the Inspector accepted the affordable housing offer at appeal stage. Given the proposals offer 30% Affordable Housing on a site adjacent to the town centre, with a high proportion of RAR units, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in this regard.

Transport

- 7.32. Policy TR1 of the Local Plan requires developments to promote and improve sustainable transport. Policy TR3 states that consideration will be given to the effect of a new development on safety, congestion and the environment. Proposals should provide acceptable access to the site and ensure that there would not be a detrimental impact on the functioning and safety of the transport network.
- 7.33. The site is located within the Zone 2, primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs.
- 7.34. The site is currently in use as a data centre with a private car park providing 74 car parking bays on the roof provided on a lease basis to occupiers of buildings surrounding the proposed site. This existing parking area contains parking spaces which are separately leased out on 999-year leases. The submitted Car Parking Plan confirms that leased spaces cannot be removed and are proposed to be provided off-site during the construction phase. The Inspector accepted the legal requirement for parking re-provision as a constraint of the site, but did not identify that it had an impact on the good design of the proposals. Interim arrangements for car parking provision would be a Civil matter between the Applicant and the leaseholders and not a matter for consideration as part of the planning application.
- 7.35. The development will provide a total of 86 car parking spaces at basement level. The existing access from Upper Crown Street is to be retained which will lead to the ramp to the basement parking area. The access to the proposed parking area would be acceptable. The proposed parking layout is deemed acceptable, and the dimensions of the parking spaces comply to current standards.
- 7.36. 68 parking spaces would replace the existing leased parking spaces and 16 spaces are to be provided for residents of the proposed development and 2 spaces for the servicing of the substation. Although the overall parking provision falls below the Council's current adopted standards for a Zone 2 development, given the close proximity of the site to the town centre and transport networks, a lower parking provision is considered acceptable in this location. The surrounding road network has extensive parking restrictions in place preventing unauthorised on-street parking, any overflow in parking would not affect flow of traffic on the classified road network. New residents would be restricted from receiving Parking Permits by condition.
- 7.37. A total of 21 cycle storage spaces would be required for the development. Cycle storage can be provided in the private garden areas for houses. For the flats, two tier cycle stands providing 36 spaces for residents would be provided at street level. This provision is in excess of the Council's current standards, and is therefore considered acceptable. Three Sheffield stands providing a total of 6 spaces are proposed for visitors located within the main communal spaces, which is considered acceptable.
- 7.38. Overall, the proposals would represent an appropriate development in transport terms, and it would comply with the Local Plan.

Ecology

- 7.39. Policy EN12 seeks to protect existing green space, ensure that there would be no net loss of biodiversity, and where possible to demonstrate that there is a net gain for biodiversity.
- 7.40. The proposal is accompanied by an ecological survey which demonstrates that there would be no impact on existing species at the site. Several conditions are recommended to ensure that the proposals would provide landscaping details, the installation of Swift bricks and details of green roofs is carried out to ensure adequate biodiversity net gain on site.

Sustainability

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

efficiency standards in excess of the Building Regulations, zero carbon homes standards (for major schemes), and provide at least 5% of dwellings as wheelchair user units. Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) and Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that development proposals incorporate measures which take account of climate change.

- 7.42. An energy and sustainability statement was submitted as part of the application. This demonstrates that the proposal would not meet zero carbon targets, but would achieve circa 70% carbon reduction through higher fabric standards and the low carbon and renewable energy systems, namely photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps.
- 7.43. The Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD states in paragraph 3.11 that "in achieving Zero Carbon Homes for major residential developments, the preference is that new build residential of ten or more dwellings will achieve a true carbon neutral development on-site. If this is not achievable, it must achieve 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.)"
- 7.44. Residual emissions would be offset with a carbon offset payment of £1,800 per tonne, in accordance with Policy H5 and the SPD. This contribution would be £2,949.72.
- 7.45. Although it is unfortunate that the proposed development cannot achieve Zero Carbon, the submitted Sustainability Statement demonstrates that the development achieves a 35% improvement along with a carbon offsetting in the form of a financial contribution, which will be secured through a S106 legal agreement. Officers are therefore satisfied that the development would be policy compliant in this regard.
- 7.46. Policy EN18 requires all major developments to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) with runoff rates aiming to reflect greenfield conditions and, in any case, must be no greater than the existing conditions of the site. The applicant has submitted a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that the proposed drainage rate would be a reduction when compared against the Brownfield runoff rate and provides a pipes' network to the attenuation tank. As such, the proposal complies with Policy EN18 and is considered acceptable subject to the conditions recommended above.

Legal Agreement

- 7.47. The overarching infrastructure Policy CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) allows for necessary contributions to be secured to ensure that the impacts of a scheme are properly mitigated. The following obligations would be sought and as set out in the recommendation above:
- To secure affordable housing on site consisting of fourteen units (30% provision) on site, to be 5 one bedroom units of Reading Affordable Rent, 5 Two bedroom units of Reading Affordable Rent and 4 one bedroom units of First Homes. Reading Affordable Rent (RAR) tenure would be capped at 70% of market rent as per published RAR levels. The Housing Development team have confirmed that the offer is acceptable.
 - In the event that a Registered (affordable housing) Provider is not secured for the provision of the Affordable Housing on site, the units to be offered to the Council to be provided by the Council as Affordable Housing. In the event that neither a Registered Provider or the Council can come forward to provide Affordable Housing on-site, the developer to pay to the Council a default sum equivalent to 12.5% of the Gross Development Value of the development for provision of Affordable Housing elsewhere in the Borough. To be calculated (the mean average) from two independent RICS valuations to be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to first occupation of any market housing unit. In this event, the sum to be paid prior to first occupation of any market housing unit and index-linked from

the date of valuation.

- Zero carbon offset financial contribution of £2,949.72.
- Employment, Skills and Training and Construction financial contribution of £8,820.75.

8. Equality implications

- 8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

9. Conclusion & planning balance

- 9.1 As with all applications considered by the Local Planning Authority, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 9.2 Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Having gone through this process officers consider that the benefits of the scheme in providing housing, affordable housing, redeveloping an underused brownfield site and providing a sustainable development would be sufficient to recommend the proposals for approval.
- 9.3 It is considered that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. As such, this application is recommended for Approval.



Appeal Decision

Hearing held on 28 March 2023

Site visit made on 28 March 2023

by M Chalk BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27th April 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/22/3313234

9 Upper Crown Street, Reading, RG1 2SS

- 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 Irongate Property (Reading) Ltd against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 211614, dated 15 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is 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.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. During the Hearing the Council confirmed it does not consider that the appeal proposal would be harmful to the living conditions of the occupiers of 89 Southampton Street. I see no reason to dispute this, given the relative siting of the existing and proposed buildings. I have determined the appeal accordingly.
3. Notwithstanding the appellants' appeal form, the description of development was changed from that stated on the application form, with 3 residential blocks proposed rather than 4. I have used this amended description above.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - Whether it would provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, with particular regard to outlook for occupiers of building 1 and the privacy and outlook of occupiers of buildings 2 and 3,
 - The effect on the character and appearance of the area; and,
 - The effect on the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, with particular regard to the outlook from and privacy of nos 85 and 87 Southampton Street.

Reasons

Future occupier living conditions

5. Policies CC8 and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (the LP) require, amongst other criteria, that development not cause unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, and must provide functional private open space that is not compromised by the relationship of other buildings.
6. The size and proximity of Building 2 to the rear of the terraced houses and their rear gardens would result in it being overbearing to the occupiers of these houses. The appearance of the building would be softened with a living wall on this elevation, which would also have some articulation from the siting of obscure glazed windows. In addition, the setting in of the mansard roof from this elevation would be significant, limiting its presence when seen from ground level in particular. I also recognise that for the easternmost house in the terrace, only part of the outlook would be onto Building 2. Nevertheless, the size and proximity of Building 2 would result in it being a dominant and oppressive presence that would compromise the outlook from the houses and the quality of the rear gardens to the extent that the living conditions of occupiers of the houses would be unacceptable.
7. I acknowledge that other properties may exist in the area with a similar outlook, and I saw during my site visit that neighbouring gardens are relatively small, in some instances smaller than those proposed for the terraced houses. However, development locally has been piecemeal in nature, and in the case of the older houses on Upper Crown Street and Newark Street these are of considerable age far predating modern standards for residential development. They also do not back onto buildings of the size and height of the proposed Building 2. In any case, the combination of factors identified above would result in unacceptable living conditions for the future occupiers of these properties. Even if a similar combination of factors does exist locally, this does not change my view that the appeal proposal would be unacceptable in this regard.
8. The appellants contend that future occupiers of the houses would be aware of the relationship before occupying the properties. I note that the proposed affordable housing would comprise 1 and 2 bedroom units, with these 3 bedroom houses in private ownership. However, I do not consider that this would excuse the provision of new housing with such poor outlook.
9. I heard during the Hearing that Buildings 2 and 3 at their closest would be separated by around 9 to 10 metres. There would be windows and balconies to bedrooms and living areas in both buildings facing one another across this distance. There would be trees between the buildings, but it would take time for them to become established. It is not clear to what extent screening would be effective, especially between apartments at the upper floors. However, I am mindful that these would be apartments in an urban environment where the surrounding density of development is high. Within this context, total privacy cannot be reasonably expected, and the upper floors would be separated to a greater degree by the setback at mansard level. Having regard to these factors, I consider that on balance the occupiers of these apartments would have acceptable privacy.
10. There would be limited separation between Buildings 2 and 3. The facing apartments would principally have outlook onto the communal amenity area

between and around the buildings. However, almost all of the apartments would be dual aspect, with windows or balconies providing wider vistas to the north or south beyond the building opposite. These apartments would have acceptable outlook, given the dense urban setting. The 1 person apartment on the ground floor of Building 3 would have a single window facing onto the communal area so would have the most limited outlook of those proposed. However, the proposed window would be full length and face onto an area of soft landscaping with trees between the two buildings. On balance, and again taking account of the dense urban setting, this relationship would be acceptable.

11. Overall, therefore, the appeal proposal would fail to provide acceptable living conditions for the occupiers of the 4 terraced houses due to poor outlook from the houses and their gardens. This would be contrary to the requirements of Policies CC8 and H10 of the LP set out above.

Character and appearance

12. The appeal site lies in an area of mixed character, with older, predominantly low-rise properties intermingled with taller, newer buildings. Along Upper Crown Street properties are generally 2 storey terraced houses, but the 5 storey City Gate building sits on one corner of the street, next to the appeal site. In addition, the site is next to the 6 storey Indigo Apartments as well as other buildings of more than 2 storeys.
13. Within this context the appeal proposal would be a relatively dense development of between 2 and 5 storeys in height. The developable area of the site above street level would be constrained by the provision of basement parking, with a wide access ramp along one boundary of the site. However, it is necessary to reprovide the parking spaces within the site due to the lengthy leases held by some of the users. While this limits the developable area for new buildings, the resultant spacing would prevent the development from being overbearing to neighbouring occupiers to the north and east of the site.
14. Buildings 2 and 3 would be centrally located within the site, closer to the taller neighbouring buildings than those to the south or east. Within this context, their height and massing would not appear out of keeping, especially given the height of Indigo Apartments and both the height and massing of City Gate.
15. Buildings 2 and 3 would be close together. This would result in a relatively compressed feeling for users of the communal space between them. However, the area would be planted with grass and trees, softening its feel. The public space on site generally would be more open with a mix of hard and soft landscaping to provide access and a generally attractive setting for the buildings.
16. Building 1 would be a terrace of 4 houses of similar scale to those existing in Upper Crown Street. The Council accepted during the Hearing that this aspect of the development was acceptable in terms of its scale, and I see no reason to disagree with this.
17. The low level parking would extend across the entire site. There would be little opportunity for planting, with much of this area beneath the buildings and receiving little or no natural light. This area would therefore be functional in character, but in my experience this is typical for parking areas in general,

particularly at subterranean level. Given the limited visibility of the parking, I am satisfied that it would be acceptable in terms of its effect on the character and appearance of the area.

18. Buildings 2 and 3 would each have dedicated stairwell accesses to the underground parking. Measures to ensure safe and controlled access to the buildings would be necessary, but this could be secured by an appropriately worded condition were I otherwise minded to allow this appeal.
19. Overall, therefore, the appeal proposal would be acceptable in terms of the effect on the character and appearance of the area. It would accord with the requirements of Policies CC7, EN14 and H10 of the LP. Taken together, these policies require that development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area and that it make provision for tree planting within the application site and functional private or communal open space.

Neighbour living conditions

20. The building at 85 Southampton Street is in residential use. Some of the rear windows face towards the appeal site and I heard during the Hearing that these would be around 16 metres from Building 3. This degree of separation would limit the extent of impact to the occupiers of No 85. Building 3 would be significantly taller than No 85, but given the urban setting and considerable separation distance the reduction in outlook would not cause unacceptable harm to the occupiers of No 85.
21. There would be windows to communal areas in the upper floors of Building 3 that would face towards No 85. As these would not serve habitable areas, an appropriately worded condition could require that these be fitted with obscured glazing, were I otherwise minded to allow this appeal. This would ensure that no perception of overlooking would result.
22. No 87 would be the closest building to Building 3. There are no windows in the facing elevation of No 87. From the evidence before me, the building is in use as offices, although presently vacant. While there are no defined standards of light or outlook for offices, I am nevertheless mindful that they are spaces where users can spend considerable periods. It would therefore be unreasonable to permit development that would cause an undue loss of light or outlook to the building. However, Building 3 would not extend beyond the south elevation of No 87, so would not affect the windows facing in that direction. It would extend to the north of No 87, but there would be no effect on natural light from this direction. There would be some loss of peripheral outlook from the closest windows, but this would be slight, and not to an extent that unacceptable harm would occur.
23. There is an extant permission for the addition of a flat to the top floor of No 87, above the existing offices. This would be approximately level with the fourth floor of Building 3, with the approved plans showing habitable room windows facing north and south. While the approved flat would experience some loss of peripheral outlook from the closest windows than previously envisioned, this would not be so harmful that it would justify a refusal of planning permission.
24. Overall, therefore, the appeal proposal would not result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of the existing buildings at 85 and 87

Southampton Street. It would therefore accord in this matter with Policy CC8 of the LP, which amongst other criteria requires that development not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties.

Other Matters

25. There is a Conservation Area (the CA) near the appeal site, and I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. No harm has been identified as arising to the CA from the appeal proposal. Given the separation distance and extent of intervening buildings I am satisfied that it would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the CA, or to its setting.
26. During the Hearing it was confirmed that an acceptable form of wording for a unilateral agreement had been reached between the main parties. This was then signed and circulated after the close of the Hearing in accordance with an agreed timetable. The agreement would secure the contributions for employment skills and training, affordable housing and carbon off-setting sought by the Council. Accordingly, the Council has stated that the related reason for refusal no longer applies. As I am dismissing the appeal on other grounds, it is not necessary for me to consider this matter further.

Planning Balance

27. The appeal proposal would create 46 new dwellings, contributing to the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, with a policy-compliant provision of 14 affordable units that would assist in addressing the local need for affordable homes. Given the recorded shortfall in delivery of affordable housing, this attracts additional weight in the overall balance.
28. The appeal site is close to Reading town centre with a range of shops, services and facilities. It comprises brownfield land, the redevelopment of which is supported both in local and national planning policies. The site is available and the development could be delivered quickly, helping to meet the Council's housing delivery targets. There would be economic benefits from the construction and occupation of the development, as well as benefits for local people from skills development secured through the provided legal agreement. The development would be in keeping with the general character and appearance of the area and would improve the appearance of the appeal site. The site is presently wholly laid for hardstanding and the data centre building, and there would be environmental benefits from the introduction of soft landscaping, sustainable drainage and the incorporation of biodiversity enhancement measures within the development. The appeal proposal would also include sustainability measures, including photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps, with the provision of electric vehicle charging points in the car park.
29. Collectively these benefits attract very substantial weight in favour of the appeal proposal.
30. Set against this is the harm that would occur to the occupiers of the terraced houses due to the proximity of Building 2. While this would only affect 4 of the proposed 46 dwellings, the height and overbearing presence of the taller building would result in the rear gardens and outlook from the rear of the houses being compromised to the extent that living conditions for occupiers

would be unacceptable. This harm would outweigh the benefits arising from the proposed development.

31. The appeal proposal would therefore conflict with the development plan, and there are no material considerations, including the identified range of benefits and the National Planning Policy Framework, to indicate that this appeal should be determined otherwise than in accordance with it.

Conclusion

32. For the reasons set out above, the appeal fails.

M Chalk

INSPECTOR

Appearances

For the appellant

Thomas Rumble	Woolf Bond Planning
Edward Mather	Colony Architects
David Fletcher	Evoke Transport Consultants
Nicholas Gardner	Base Energy Services

For the Council

Thomas Bradfield	Principal Planning Officer
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Interested parties

Tom Hawthorn	Resident
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DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT - Application No. 211614FUL

Address: 9 Upper Crown Street

Proposal: 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

Case officer: Matt Burns

Site Description and Surrounding Area

The application site consists of a data storage facility with roof deck car park above. The existing building is utilitarian in appearance and constructed from a mix of red brick and concrete frame. The site is accessed from Upper Crown Street and ground level via two ramps, one which slopes down to provide access to the data storage facility and to provide a servicing area for the building and three electrical substations on the site and one which slopes upwards to access the roof top car park. The ground floor site level of the data storage facility is set down below the level of that of adjacent surrounding buildings to the south on Upper Crown Street and to the west on Southampton Street.

To the south and east of the site are modest two storey terraced residential dwellings on Upper Crown Street and Newark Street. To the west of the site is the rear of the properties fronting Southampton Street which are a mixture of commercial and residential ranging from single storey to five storeys in scale. To the north of the site is the rear of the large Indigo apartments building which ranges from four to six storeys in scale.

The application site is located outside of but adjacent to the Reading Central Area as defined by Policy CR1 (Definition of Central Reading). The site is also located within an area of potentially contaminated land and within an air quality management area.

Proposal

The application seeks planning permission for partial demolition of the existing buildings and structures and erection of three residential blocks containing forty-six dwellings with basement level used for car parking and servicing, revised access, landscaping, relocation of substations and associated works to the rear of Indigo apartments to facilitate pedestrian access.

Amended plans have been submitted for consideration during the course of the application which revised the building layout from four residential blocks to three but maintained the number of dwellings proposed as forty-six (21 x 1 bed units, 11 x 2 bed units and 14 x 3 bed units). It is proposed that 30% of the units would be in the form of affordable housing.

The proposed development includes the provision of four townhouses of two storeys plus roof in the roof space which would front on to Upper Crown Street with the rest of units being in the form forty-two flats across two blocks of between five and six storeys. The existing building is proposed to be largely demolished but some of its frame and brick would be reused.

Vehicle parking spaces within the existing roof top car park are leased to a variety of commercial and residential occupiers of buildings which surround the site but also located

further afar within the town centre. The existing car park contains 74 spaces, 8 of which are allocated to the on-site data storage facility and the applicant advises that these are no longer required as a result of the proposed development whilst the remaining 68 spaces, which are leased to surrounding properties, are proposed to be re-provided on-site within the proposed development. A further 20 vehicle parking spaces are also to be provided on-site to serve the development meaning a total of 88 parking spaces are proposed. 86 of the parking spaces would be located at basement level within the development access via the down ramp from Upper Crown Street, whilst 2 spaces would be located to the Upper Crown Street frontage to the front of the proposed small terrace of dwellings.

A separate pedestrian access point into the site is also proposed from Upper Crown Street providing access to cycle and bin store areas of landscaping and communal open space.

The planning application is for a major category development.

Plans Considered

- P001 Rev A - Site Location Plan
- P008 Rev B - Site Plan
- P009 Rev B - Basement
- P010 Rev B - Ground Floor
- P011 Rev B - First Floor
- P012 Rev B - Second Floor
- P013 Rev B - Third Floor
- P014 Rev B - Fourth Floor
- P015 Rev B - Roof Plan
- P016 Rev A - Building 1 Floor Plans
- P017 Rev A - Building 1 Floor Plans
- P018 Rev A - Building 2 Floor Plans
- P019 Rev A - Building 2 Floor Plans
- P020 Rev A - Building 2 Floor Plans
- P021 Rev A - Building 2 Floor Plans
- P022 Rev A - Building 3 Floor Plans
- P023 Rev A - Building 3 Floor Plans
- P024 Rev A - Building 3 Floor Plans
- P025 Rev A - Building 3 Floor Plans
- P026 Rev B - Site Elevations Sheet 1
- P027 Rev C - Site Elevations Sheet 2
- P028 Rev B - Site Elevations Sheet 3
- P029 Rev B - Site Elevations Sheet 4
- P031 Rev B - Site Sections Sheet 1
- P032 Rev A - Building 1 Elevations
- P033 Rev A - Building 1 Sections
- P034 Rev A - Building 2 Elevations
- P035 Rev A - Building 2 Elevations
- P036 Rev A - Building 2 Elevations
- P037 Rev A - Building 2 Sections
- P040 Rev A - Building 3 Elevations

- P041 Rev A - Building 3 Elevations
- P042 Rev A - Building 3 Sections
- P043 Rev A - Indigo House Stairs
- P090 Rev A - Landscape Principles and External Lighting Strategy

Received on 24th March 2022

Syntegra Car Park Management Plan ref. 20-7496
WB Planning Planning Statement Addendum ref. TR/24Jan/7847
Received on 24th March 2022

Base Energy External Daylight and Sunlight ref. 8349 Rev 2
Received on 31st May 2022

Woolf Bond Planning Planning Statement WBP Ref. 7847
Colony Affordable Housing Statement ref. 222
Syntegra Air Quality Assessment ref. 20-7496
Arbtech Preliminary Root Assessment Survey Issue 1.2
Ark Environmental Consultancy Ltd Flood Risk Assessment & SuDS/Drainage Assessment for Planning
Syntegra Energy and Sustainability Statement ref. 20-7496
Syngenta Transport Statement ref. 20-7496 Rev B
Colony Feasibility Study ref. 222/DAS/REV1

Received on 28th September 2021

Irongate Archaeological Impact Assessment ref. AH_T-DBA_Report
Received on 12th November 2021

Enviroscreen Property Assessment - ref. 222_EPO2
Received on 19th October 2021

Planning History

950613 - Change of use from warehouse unit to children's play zone - Refused.

Prior to submitting the planning application the Applicant sought pre-application advice in relation to the application site.

Consultation Responses

RBC Transport - No objection to the level of car parking space provision for the development or proposed vehicular access to the site but further clarification required in respect of the location of the parking bays for the proposed terraced dwellings fronting Upper Crown Street, location of disabled access parking bays and cycle storage required.

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

RBC Environmental Protection - No objection subject to conditions to control construction hours, submission and approval of a construction method statement, bin store details, contaminated land assessment/remediation scheme and noise assessment and mitigation scheme.

RBC Waste Services - No comments received.

RBC Valuations - No comments received.

RBC Housing - The application proposes 30% on site affordable housing (14 units). As per the Affordable Housing SPD (2021), 8/9 of the units should be rented, with the rent capped at 70% Market rent including service charges, and the rest can be shared ownership or another affordable tenure of the Applicant's choice. Further clarification required on the proposed mix and location of the affordable housing within the development.

RBC Conservation and Urban Design - No comments received.

Ecology Adviser - No objection, subject to conditions to secure submission, approval and implantation of a scheme of biodiversity enhancements and a hard and soft landscaping scheme including full details of the propose green roof.

Berkshire Archaeology - No objection, subject to a condition to secure implementation of archaeological investigation works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be submitted and approved.

Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Adviser - No comments received.

Thames Water - No objection subject to a condition to secure submission, approval and implementation of a piling method statement detailing the depth and type of piling to be undertaken given the site is located within 15 metres of a strategic sewer.

Public Consultation

The following neighbouring properties were notified by letter and a site notice was displayed at the application site on 18th November 2021.

- Regents Gate 25-41 Crown Street
- 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18 Newark Street
- Flat 1, Flat 2 no. 20 Newark Street
- 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 Upper Crown Street
- Flat 1, Flat 2 no. 4 Upper Crown Street
- Flats 1 to 12 Priors Court Newark Street
- 12A Priors Court Newark Street
- 1 to 20 City Gate 96-107 Southampton St
- Office Suites 1 and 2 City Gate 96-107 Southampton Street
- 1 to 17 Indigo Apartments 45 Crown Street
- The Studio Indigo Apartments 45 Crown Street
- 53 Crown Street
- 75-81, 87, 89 Southampton Street

- Ground floor, First floor & Second floor flat no. 89 Southampton Street
- Flats 1 to 6 Ibex House 85 Southampton Street
- Flats 1 to 7 New Tudor Lodge 109 Southampton St

18 letters of objection have been received. The issues raised can be summarised as follows:

- The development is too large for the site and is an overdevelopment
- The surrounding roads cannot cope with the addition parking spaces and vehicular movements associated with the development
- No information on the interim arrangements for leaseholders of existing parking spaces on the site during construction phase of the proposed development
- No information on the interim arrangements for bin and cycle stores of occupiers of surrounding buildings which are located on the existing deck level car park
- The proposed demolition work may interfere with the structural integrity of surrounding buildings
- The scale of the proposals would have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers in terms of loss of light, overbearing impacts, overlooking and loss of privacy, noise, disturbance and air quality impacts
- The proposed construction works would have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers in terms of traffic, noise, disturbance and air quality impacts.
- Negative impact surrounding property prices
- No detail on disabled access within the development
- The additional car parking spaces proposed do not align with the Councils climate change and ecological pledges
- Why was the existing site permitted for use as car parking in the first place when it is not under the ownership of the majority of users of the car park
- The planning application on the adjacent site at 75-81 Southampton Street (ref. 211636) should have been flagged to local residents under this application
- Nearby bus services are already overstretched and cannot cope with additional users
- There are insufficient shops nearby to serve the development
- There are insufficient doctor's surgeries nearby to serve the development
- Clarification on servicing and delivery arrangements for the site required
- Surrounding roads are small and cannot cope with large construction vehicles

1 letter of support has been received which can be summarised as follows:

- Improved street-scene along Upper Crown Street
- Improved rear access and retained parking spaces on the site for surrounding buildings
- Sustainable location and provision of much needed residential development of a high quality and sympathetic design

Equality Act

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.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

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.

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

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

CC4: DECENTRALISED ENERGY

CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE

CC6: ACCESSIBILITY AND THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

CC9: SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN2: AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

EN9: PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE

EN10: ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE

EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK

EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLANDS

EN15: AIR QUALITY

EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES

EN17: NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT

EN18: FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

EM3: LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND

H1: PROVISION OF HOUSING

H2: DENSITY AND MIX

H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING

H10: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE

TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

Supplementary Planning Documents

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION SPD 2019

REVISED PARKING STANDARDS AND DESIGN SPD 2011

SECTION 106 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS SPD 2013

Appraisal

Principle

In terms of land uses principles the proposed redevelopment of the site would align with the general principles of the NPPF which states that the use of previously developed land, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist. However, this is subject to the more detailed considerations of relevant Local Plan policies and the context of the application site.

The application site is not an allocated site for development within the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Loss of the existing data storage use on the site must be considered. Whilst the site is not located within a designated Core Employment Area Policy EM3 (Loss of Employment Land) seeks that any loss of employment land is assessed against the following matters:

- (i) Is access by a choice of means of transport, including access to the strategic road network, poor, and likely to remain poor?
- (ii) Is the continued use of the site for employment, including the potential for redevelopment for employment uses, viable?
- (iii) Is there a surplus of a similar size and type of accommodation in Reading?
- (iv) Would continued employment use of the site detrimentally affect the amenity and character of a residential area?
- (v) Is the need for alternative uses stronger than the need for the retention of employment land?
- (vi) Would the proposal result in a piecemeal loss of employment land where there is potential for a more comprehensive scheme?

Given the site is surrounded by residential type uses and accessed via Upper Crown Street which is a modest narrow road there is no objection to the loss of employment land in this instance given continued use of the site for other employment related uses could be detrimental to the road network, residential amenity of existing surrounding occupiers and the predominant residential character of the surrounding area.

The existing data storage building is utilitarian in appearance and is not considered to be of any architectural merit. In the context of Policies CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) any replacement building would need to maintain or enhance the character of the surrounding area in order to justify removal of the existing building. Whilst not of architectural merit the existing building as a result of its siting and massing is not prominent to views from the surrounding area. The design merits of the proposed development will be assessed elsewhere in this report.

The proposed replacement of the existing employment use on the site with residential development would provide additional dwellings to the Borough's housing stock on previously developed land - the principle of which aligns with the broad objectives of Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) in assisting meeting annual housing targets. The application site is also situated within a predominately residential area, whereby its location and accessibility are considered to accord with Policy CC6 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development).

Development Density, Unit Mix and Affordable Housing

The proposal is for 46 dwellings on a site of 0.346ha resulting in a development density of 133 dwelling per hectare. Policy H2 (Density and Mix) provides indicative density ranges for development relative to its location within the Borough as shown in the table below:

Figure 4.5: Indicative density ranges (dwellings per hectare)

Town Centre	Urban	Suburban
Above 100	60-120	30-60

The supporting text to the Policy also states that indicative density ranges will not be applied as hard-and-fast rules, and the particular characteristics of a site when judged against the criteria in the policy may well mean that a density outside these ranges is appropriate. Given the site's location outside of but directly adjacent to the designated central area the built density proposed appears in-keeping with the site location. Notwithstanding this, Policy H2 states that the capacity of each site will depend on various factors that need to be addressed at application stage, including detailed design and layout and therefore the acceptability of the development density will be full informed by the more detailed assessments in the following sections of this report.

In terms of unit mix Policy H2 states that wherever possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing set out in figure 4.6 below:

Figure 4.6: Estimated size of accommodation type required in Reading (Source: SHMA 2016)

	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4+ bedroom
Market	10.3%	29.6%	41.5%	18.5%
Affordable	43.4%	32.9%	21.6%	2.1%
Overall	18.6%	30.5%	36.5%	14.4%

The Policy goes on to state that as a minimum, on new developments for 10 or more dwellings outside the central area and defined district and local centres, planning decisions will ensure that over 50% of dwellings will be of 3 bedrooms or more, having regard to all other material considerations. The proposed used mix of units is 21 x 1 bed units (46%), 11 x 2 bed units (24%) and 14 x 3 bed units (30%). Given the site's location directly adjacent to the defined Reading Central Area and character of developments surrounding the site which are also predominantly flat-led it is considered that the development proposes an appropriate unit mix.

Character and Appearance

Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires that new development is of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of surrounding area including is layout, landscape, scale, height, massing and architectural detail and materials.

In terms of the development layout there are fundamental concerns regarding the level of car parking proposed within the development particularly given the very significant majority of these spaces are unrelated to the proposed development; being leased and used by occupiers of surrounding off-site residential and commercial buildings. The development proposes 86 spaces, 68 of which are re-provision of the spaces leased and used by the existing surrounding residential

occupiers and not related to the proposed development or its future occupiers. This detrimentally impacts on the proposed layout and appearance of the development with such extensive parts of the site taken up by hardstanding and parking spaces. This is considered to fail to meet key urban design objectives of Policy CC7 in terms of character and failing to provide a place with its own identity and sense of place and quality of public realm and also in terms of provision of green infrastructure, landscaping and development which maintains or enhances the character of the area. Whilst the majority of parking spaces are covered by the basement (ground level) of the building 24 of the spaces are located around the eastern and northern boundaries of the site which together with the access ramp and way to these spaces results in a significant area of hardstanding with no defined pedestrian routes and minimal very minimal landscaping. These areas are considered to fail to make best use of the available space within the application site and to result in overdevelopment of the site and poor-quality development layout.

Furthermore, the extent of on-site parking proposed for off-site users also raises significant concerns about accessibility and security matters given the level of car movements directly into the site which are not associated with the proposed development and the with people from various surrounding buildings coming and within the residential development to access car parking spaces. This is also considered to fail further design objections of Policy CC7 in terms of creating safe and accessible environments and creating development with suitable access arrangements which is legible and easy to understand for users.

It is considered that the need to re-provide the existing 68 on-site spaces used by occupiers of surrounding buildings within the development places a substantial burden on the proposed development and is a significant barrier which prevents the development providing a high-quality residential layout. Whilst a car park management plan has been submitted in respect of the interim arrangements for the existing leaseholder during construction of the proposed development this issue should be addressed up front to avoid the need for such extensive interim arrangements. It is strongly considered that comprehensive redevelopment of the site should be taken as an opportunity to address and resolve the leasehold parking situation rather than a new development being focused and designed around this significant constraint, which it is considered results in a number of shortfalls in meeting key design aspirations for new development in the Borough. Within and close to the town centre, it is common for developments to be served by limited on site car parking or to be 'car free' which aligns with the Council's sustainable transport objectives and Climate Change Emergency declaration, taking advantage of the good accessibility of the town centre and access to public transport links, whereas this would not be the case with the proposed development.

The massing of the proposed buildings within the development is also considered to result in a cramped and visually dominant form of development which further exacerbates the overdevelopment of the site. Building 3 of the proposed development would be located directly on the western boundary of the site at 6 storeys in height. Whilst it is acknowledged that the existing data storage and roof top car park also sit directly on this boundary, the proposed building would be significantly greater in scale and between 4m and 5m taller in overall height than the existing level of the roof top car park. Furthermore, redevelopment of the site represents an opportunity improve this relationship and ensure a building of the scale of existing or proposed is not sited directly on a boundary in close proximity to existing surrounding buildings at 75-81 and 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street.

As a result, the proposal is considered to present a cramped layout in terms of the scale and separation of buildings within the site. Buildings 2 and 3 which would present as 4 and 5 storey from street-level within the site, separated by only 8m, resulting in visual dominance, overbearing and tunnelling impacts to the pedestrian walkway and communal landscaped amenity areas in this part of the site. Whilst introduction of the dedicated pedestrian route into the site is welcomed in terms of accessibility into the site and enlivening the public areas of the site, the scale of buildings and their limited separation would reduce the usability, quality and function of these areas within the development, further contributing to providing a poor standard of residential accommodation within the proposed development. Building no.2 at 4 storeys from street level within the site would also be set just 1m from the rear boundary of the small private garden areas of the terrace of dwellings proposed to be sited on the Upper Crown Street frontage of the site, also presenting a cramped and relationship between buildings and spaces within the site.

Notwithstanding the above significant concerns, the proposed introduction of a terrace of 4 x two storey (with accommodation in the roof space) to the Upper Crown Street frontage is considered to be an enhancement to the street-scene to this part of the site. The terraced form of the dwellings is reflective of the predominant character of Upper Crown Street and would replace the current utilitarian and out of keeping form of the flat roof data storage building which is visible from the street.

Materiality and the appearance of existing buildings surrounding the site is mixed and the proposed use of materials and architectural form of the larger buildings 2 and 3 within the site is considered to be appropriate for the site with predominant use of red brick and recessed mansard elements to the top storeys.

Residential Amenity

Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) states that development proposals should safeguard the amenity of both existing and future occupiers and Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks that development will only be permitted where it would not be damaging to the environment and sensitive receptors in terms of pollution. Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) sets out the standards to which new dwellings shall be constructed. Policy EN15 (Air Quality) seeks to protect existing and future occupiers from the impact of poor air quality.

Future Occupiers

All the proposed dwellings would meet the size standards set out in the Nationally Prescribed Space Standards under Policy H5 and all dwellings are considered to be served by adequate outlook and daylighting. The application also confirms that all the proposed dwellings will meet the M4(2) standards of Building Regulations 2013 for accessibility and adaptability standards and that 5% will meet the M4(3) standards for wheelchair users also required by Policy H5.

In terms of privacy for future occupiers within the proposed development there is considered to be an unacceptable relationship between buildings 2 and 3 where the facing elevations of the buildings would be separated by a distance of 9m. This is considered insufficient separation and would result in direct overlooking between facing habitable room windows, harmful to the

residential amenity of the occupiers. The presence of balconies to the facing elevations of both buildings further exacerbates this unacceptable relationship.

The area of the site between buildings 2 and 3 is also where a significant proportion of the communal landscaped outdoor amenity space for the flats within the development would be located. Policy H10 (Private and Communal Amenity Space) states that *dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space, including green space wherever possible. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens. The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identify whether they are private or communal spaces, ensure that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhance safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing.* The supporting text to the Policy sets out that *Development in central Reading will not always be expected to comply with the standards set above. Open space is nonetheless required, unless exceptional circumstances prevail, to accommodate modest sitting out areas and clothes drying facilities.*

Each of the proposed flats would be provided with a private balcony in addition to the communal areas. As discussed above, whilst the site is located outside of the Reading Central Area it is situated directly adjacent to it. In this respect it is considered that the provision of balconies together with the communal areas is sufficient quantity of amenity space provision for future occupiers of the development. However, there are significant concerns regarding the functionality and usability of the communal amenity space areas and some of the private balconies. The limited separation and scale of proposed building 2 and 3 where a large proportion of the communal amenity space would be located, as well as the northerly outlooks from the Indigo Apartments building 12m to the north are considered to result in a visually overbearing relationship to the amenity space which would be detrimental to its quality and usability. Furthermore, as discussed above the balconies to the facing elevations of buildings 2 and 3 would be subject to direct overlooking with separation distances between facing balconies of as little as 6m.

Furthermore, the functionality and usability of the private rear garden areas of the proposed four terraced dwellings to Upper Crown Street is considered to be detrimentally affected by the siting of building 2 which at 4 storeys would be positioned just 1m from the rear boundary of the private gardens. This is considered to result in unacceptable overbearing and overshadowing impact to these gardens. Whilst the separation between the rear facing windows of the dwellings and the windows to the facing elevation of building 2 is also minimal it is noted that the facing windows to building 2 would be obscurely glazed which is considered sufficient to ensure no overlooking or loss of privacy to the occupiers of the proposed terraced dwellings. If permission were to be granted, then the windows could be secured as obscurely glazed by way of condition.

As a result of the off-set siting of buildings 2 and 3 in relationship to the closest element of the Indigo Apartments building to the north, the separation distance of 12m and absence of projecting balconies to the north elevation of these buildings is, on balance, considered sufficient to prevent any direct overlooking and unacceptable loss of privacy to future occupiers of buildings 2 and 3 from the Indigo Apartments. The scale of buildings surrounding the other

boundaries of the site to Newark Street, Upper Crown Street and Southampton Street, their siting in relation to the boundary and position of windows is considered sufficient to prevent any overlooking to habitable rooms of the proposed development.

A noise assessment has been submitted with the application. This has been reviewed by RBC Environmental Protection Officers who are satisfied that the glazing specification proposed would be sufficient to protect future occupiers of the development from the external noise environment at the site. Mechanical ventilation is also proposed to those dwellings most affected by the surrounding noise environment. Environmental Protection Officers consider this to be an acceptable approach

However, it is considered that the extent of on-site car parking spaces and associated vehicle movements on the site in relation to vehicle parking spaces not connected or used by occupiers of the development would result in undue noise and disturbance that would be detrimental to the residential amenity of future occupiers as result of associated engine noise, vehicle movements, lights and noise from closing of car doors.

An air quality assessment has also been submitted with the application. RBC Environmental Protection Officers are satisfied that this demonstrates that pollutant levels at the new dwellings would be below threshold values such that further assessment or mitigation is not required, and future occupiers would not be subject to poor air quality. RBC Environmental Protection Officers are also satisfied that the air quality assessment demonstrates that the development itself would not detrimentally impact on air quality levels at and surrounding the application site.

The proposed development is on the site of a historic factory which pre-dates the current data storage and car park use of the site. RBC Environmental Protection Officers have reviewed the submitted desk top contamination study and agree with the conclusion of the study that further investigation is required. Therefore, should planning be granted a series of pre-commencement conditions are recommended to secure submission and approval of a more further contamination study and a subsequent remediation scheme if required.

A condition is also recommended to secure submission and approval of details of the bin storage arrangements for the developments including measures to protect the bins from pests and vermin.

Surrounding Occupiers

The siting of proposed building 3 directly on the west boundary of the site together with its scale is considered to result in an overbearing relationship with the adjacent buildings at 85, 87, 89 Southampton Street which are either in residential use or have been granted via 'prior approval' permission for conversion to residential use. The presentation of a blank façade of two storeys higher than these adjacent buildings is considered to present a visually dominant and overbearing form of development, particularly to no.s 85 and 89, whereby the building would obscure the outlook of existing windows which look past no. 87 towards the application site. Whilst acknowledging the existing car park building is also sited directly on the boundary the greater scale and massing of the proposed development is considered to result in harm to the adjacent occupiers.

It should be noted that there is a current planning application ref. 211636 on the site of no. 75-81 Southampton Street (former COOP Funeral Care building) to demolish an existing single storey building and construct a four-storey building of 19 flats. At the time of writing this report, this adjacent application has not been determined and is still under consideration by the Local Planning Authority. The rear of this neighbouring site directly abuts the north west corner of the application site. It is considered that the scale and siting of block 3 directly on the site boundary (as described above) would adversely impact on this site in terms of overbearing and introduction of a visually dominant structure on the boundary. Whilst the adjacent site, similar to the application site, is not allocated for development within the Reading Borough Local Plan, it is considered that siting of a building of the scale proposed directly on the shared boundary would be detrimental to and prejudice any development of the neighbouring site. Should the adjacent application be permitted, then it is considered that building 3 would adversely affect future occupiers of the site in terms of overbearing and overshadowing impacts.

Proposed building 3 also incorporates upper floor windows directly on the shared boundary facing into the sites of no. 75-81 Southampton Street and nos 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street. Whilst these windows are shown to be obscurely glazed, siting of such windows directly on a shared boundary is considered to be unacceptable and to result in a perception of overlooking to existing and future occupiers of the neighbouring sites.

The siting and scale of building 2 and the terrace of dwellings is considered such that these buildings are not considered to result in any overbearing or loss of privacy impacts to surrounding buildings on Newark Street, Upper Crown Street, Southampton Street and Indigo Apartments to the north.

A daylight sunlight assessment has been submitted with the application which assesses the impact of the development upon existing surrounding properties. The conclusions of the report set out that the impact of the proposed development upon the significant majority of habitable room windows to surrounding buildings would be negligible and would receive no less than 80% of the amount of daylight than existing, which is within recommended BRE standards. A small number of neighbouring habitable room windows have been identified as likely to receive less than 80% the amount of daylight than existing. Four windows to the Indigo Apartments building have been identified as likely to receive between 65% and 73% of their former daylight levels as a result of the proposed development (the report classifies this as a minor impact on daylighting) whilst two side facing windows to the end of terrace dwelling at no. 11 Crown Street located adjacent to the entrance to the application site has been identified as likely to receive between 49% and 61% of their former level of daylight levels (the report classifies this as a 'moderate' to 'major' impact). Whilst the above small number of infringements of daylight levels to existing surrounding buildings have been identified, overall it is considered that the impact of the development on receipt of daylight to surrounding dwellings is small. The small number of infringements identified are not considered so adverse as to warrant refusal of the application on this basis.

The unacceptable relationships identified above are considered to further demonstrate that the proposals are an overdevelopment of the site.

The construction phase of the proposed development also has potential to impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers. RBC Environmental Protection Officers have recommended conditions to secure a submission and approval of a construction method statement and to control construction hours to mitigate potential noise and dust impacts on the surrounding area.

Transport

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 site is located within the Zone 2, primary core area but on the periphery of 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 currently in use as a warehousing unit with a private car park providing 74 car parking bays on the roof provided on a lease basis to occupiers of buildings surrounding the proposed site. This existing parking is on a 999-year leases. The submitted Car Parking Plan confirms that leased spaces cannot be removed, and it is proposed to be provided off-site during the construction phase. These interim arrangements would be a civil matter between the Applicant and the leaseholders and not a matter for consideration as part of the planning application.

In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide parking provision of 2 parking spaces for each of the 4 town houses, 1 for each 1- and 2-bedroom flat and 1.5 for each 3-bedroom flat. This equates to a total 58 parking spaces (rounded up from 57.5). In addition to this visitor parking is also required at a ratio of 1 per 10 dwellings, therefore the total requirement for the development is 62 (rounded up from 61.5). The development will provide a total of 88 car parking spaces at basement level of which 67 would replace the existing leased parking spaces and 21 spaces will be provided for residents of the proposed development

The proposed parking provision falls below the Council's current adopted standards for a Zone 2 development. However, given the locality of the development and its close proximity to town and transport networks a lower parking provision can be considered, and, in this instance, the proposed 21 spaces are considered to be acceptable level of provision. Furthermore, the surrounding road network has extensive parking restrictions in place preventing unauthorised on-street parking and therefore any overflow in parking would not affect the flow of traffic on the classified road network. As the development site is located in an area where the Council's Residents Parking Permit Scheme operates, under the Borough's current parking standards, this proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area, therefore there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the town houses and flats will not be issued with resident or visitor parking permits. Should planning permission be granted this would be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition.

RBC Transport Officers advise that the proposed parking layout and size of the space is acceptable in accordance with adopted standards within the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD.

In accordance with Policy H5 and the Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026, each parking space for the proposed terrace of dwellings and 10% of the communal spaces for the flats are required to provide electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The application proposes that 12 parking spaces will be provided with electric vehicles charging points which exceeds the policy requirements. Detailed specification of the charging points and their implementation would be secured by condition should planning permission be granted.

The existing vehicular access to the site from Upper Crown Street is to be retained which will lead to the ramp to the basement parking area. The width of the access is at least 4.8m which would allow vehicles using the access to pass each other as they enter and exit and is considered to be acceptable. Any unrequired part of the existing dropped crossing will need to be reinstated and realigned with the footway. Should planning permission be granted, details of this would be secured by way of condition.

In accordance with the adopted Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development should provide 0.5 cycle parking spaces per unit and 2 storage spaces for each of the proposed terraced houses. The communal bike store for residents has been illustrated on the ground floor for 36 cycle which is considered to be acceptable. Full specifications of the cycle store would be secured by conditions if planning permission is granted. It is considered that cycle storage for the town houses can be satisfactorily accommodated within each of the dwellings and their private garden areas as opposed to a communal area.

Bin storage should comply with the Council's Waste Management Guidance's (available on the Council's website) and British Standard 5906: 2005 for Waste Management in Buildings to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. The bin store has been illustrated at basement level car park area. Tracking diagrams have been submitted demonstrating that refuse collection vehicles can access the store.

The construction phase of the proposed development is likely to impact of the surrounding highway network and therefore if planning permission were to be granted a condition would be attached to secure submission, approval and implementation of detailed Construction Method Statement.

Sustainability

Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change) requires that development proposal incorporate sustainable design practices to take account of climate change and Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) states that new development of the scale proposed should include provision of on-site decentralised energy provision where feasible/viable or where existing decentralised energy provision is present within the vicinity of the site connect to this network where feasible.

An energy and sustainability report has been submitted with the application. This proposes a number of design measures intended adapt to climate change including use of low embodied materials, on-site biodiversity enhancements, net gain in on-site landscaping, provision of a site waste management plan to ensure construction waste is recycled and re-used where possible, orientation of rooms to maximise natural daylighting to habitable spaces and use of low volume high efficiency water fittings.

In terms of on-site decentralised energy provision the submitted energy and sustainability report explores a range of options and proposes provision of air source heat pumps (ASHPs) within the development. ASHP's are one of the preferred decentralised energy options set out within the adopted Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019). Provision of Ground Source Heat Pumps has been discounted due to the spatial constraints of the site's foundations and existing utilities.

In accordance with Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) all major category new build housing is required to achieve the 'zero carbon homes' standard. The policy goes on to set out that as a minimum development should achieve a 35% improvement over the carbon emission rate set out in Building Regulations with a financial contribution to offset any remaining carbon emissions to zero. The submitted energy and sustainability report projects that the development would achieve a 39.53% improvement of carbon emission rate set out in building regulations which complies with the requirements of policy H5. If the Officer recommendation was to grant planning permission for the development, then a s106 obligation would be required to secure a financial contribution to off-set carbon emissions to zero. However, given the officer recommendation is to refuse planning permission for other reasons, completion of a s106 agreement is not being pursued and lack of such an agreement to off-set carbon emissions to zero would represent a further reason for refusal of the application.

Natural Environment

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) seeks that the Borough's vegetation cover is extended and that new development makes provision for planting within the application site.

Ecology

An ecological report and bat survey was submitted with the application which has been revised by the LPA's Ecology Adviser who agrees with the conclusions of the report that the existing building is unlikely to host roosting bats and therefore bats, a protected species, would be unlikely to be adversely impact by the proposed development.

The existing site consists of a building and hardstanding and does not contain any vegetation. The LPA's Ecology Adviser is satisfied that the proposed development would not adversely impact on any other protected or priority species. The submitted ecological report includes a nesting bird survey which did not identify any nests on site.

The application proposes a series of on-site biodiversity enhancements including soft landscaping, incorporation of swift bricks on the buildings and provision of green roofs to buildings 2 and 3.

The LPA's Ecological adviser raises no objection to the application subject to conditions to secure provision of the on-site biodiversity enhancements outlined above.

Trees

The application is accompanied by landscaping principles details which include domestic planting and hedging, communal lawned areas, green roofs, paved pedestrian and communal areas, grasscrete parking spaces and tree planting (4 x medium sized native specimen trees and 5 x ornate domestic trees). The site does not contain any existing greenery or vegetation and therefore would not affect any existing trees and the additional landscaping and tree planting proposed results in a net gain in green cover on the application site.

The proposed wildflower green roofs are particularly positive element of the proposed landscaping given it both extends the green coverage on site but it also a biodiversity enhancement, being especially helpful for bees.

Retention of the vehicle access ramp access along the eastern boundary down to the basement car park of the site limits landscaping to the western part of the site only which is considered to be a shortfall of the proposals. This together with the cramped layout in terms of the scale of buildings 2 and 3 and their limited separation (8m) in the western part of the site is considered to result in visual dominance, overbearing and tunnelling impacts to the pedestrian walkway and communal landscaped amenity areas in this part of the site. This is considered detrimental to the usability, quality and function of these areas within the development contributing to providing a poor standard of residential accommodation within the proposed development. Building no.2 at 4 storeys from street level within the site would also be set just 1m from the rear boundary of the small private garden areas of the terrace of dwelling proposed to be sited on the Upper Crown Street frontage of the site also presenting a cramped and overbearing relationship to the private rear gardens of the terraced dwellings detrimental to the functionality and usability of these spaces. The proposals are considered to fail to provide the high-quality built forms and spaces, including landscaping, required by Policy CC7.

Affordable Housing

Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) requires that within new residential development of 10 more dwellings 30% of the dwellings provided are in the form of on-site affordable housing. The proposed development is policy compliant in this respect proposing 14 dwellings (30%) as affordable housing in a mix of 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units.

If the Officer recommendation was to grant planning permission for the development, then provision of the affordable housing would be secured by way of a section 106 agreement. However, given the officer recommendation is to refuse planning permission for other reasons, completion of a s106 agreement is not being pursued and lack of such an agreement to secure a policy compliant level of on-site affordable housing provision would represent a further reason for refusal of the application.

Archaeology

Policy EN2 (Areas of Archaeological Significance) requires that the archaeological impacts of development are adequately assessed by the Applicant and that where identified remains cannot be preserved in situ they must be properly excavated and recorded in situ. A desk based archaeological assessment of the site has been submitted with the application which sets out that whilst a large proportion of the site has been disturbed there is still potential for

archaeological remain to be preserved within parts of the site. Berkshire Archaeology have reviewed the submitted desk-based assessment and concur with its conclusion. If planning permission were to be granted for the proposed development, then a condition is recommended to secure a scheme of archaeological fieldwork is carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development on site.

Employment Skills and Training

In accordance with the adopted Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013) and Policy CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) a development of this nature and scale is required to demonstrate how it is utilising local labour and contributing to skills and training for local labour in the form of a construction phase employment and skills plan associated with the development. Provision of such plan, or equivalent financial contribution, would be secured by way of section 106 legal agreement should it be recommended that planning permission be granted. However, given that planning permission is recommended to be refused for other reasons preparation and signing of a section 106 agreement has not been progressed and therefore this would represent a further reason for refusal.

Community Infrastructure Levy

In accordance with the Council's adopted CIL charging schedule residential accommodation would be liable for the levy which would be based upon the proposed floor space of 3,200m². If the applicant can demonstrate that the existing parts of the building to be demolished have been within a lawful use for a minimum continuous period 6 months within the last 3 years, then the levy required could be reduced and off-set against the floor space of the existing building.

Other

Thames Water have commented that the application site is located within 15m of a strategic sewer. Should planning permission be granted then a condition is recommended to secure submission, approval and implementation of a piling method statement prior to the commencement of development on site with the method statement to be agreed in consultation with Thames Water.

Matters Raised in Representations

Concern has been raised regarding the impact of the construction works on the structural integrity of surrounding buildings. This is not a material planning consideration and would be civil matter between neighbouring landowners. It is the responsibility of the developer to carry out construction works in a safe manner in accordance with other non-planning related legislation and adopted working practices.

Concerns have also been raised that the proposed development would negatively impact on the surrounding property values. Property values are not a material planning consideration.

Comment has been received that neighbouring properties should also have been notified of the planning application at no. 75-18 Southampton Street. Neighbour consultation has been carried out separately for this application as per the requirements of the Development Management Procedure Order. The sites have different adjoining neighbours and therefore neighbours notified will differ.

Some objectors comment that there are insufficient doctors' surgeries nearby to serve the development. As set out above the development would be CIL liable with the levy going towards infrastructure within the Borough. Lack of shops near to the development site is not a material planning consideration nonetheless the application site is located close by and within walking distance of the town centre.

All other matters raised are considered to have been addressed in the assessment section of this report above.

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE Planning Permission for the following reasons:

1. The development, as a result of the re-provision of significant number of on-site vehicle parking spaces unrelated to the proposed residential use, results in a significant proportion of the site being taken up by parking spaces and hardstanding. This, together with the scale and siting of proposed buildings 2 and 3, results in a development which appears cramped in terms of the proposed buildings within it but also in relation to existing buildings surrounding the site at no.s 75-81, 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street. The extent of hardstanding and parking spaces proposed, together with the scale and cramped layout of buildings 2 and 3 results in provision of poor-quality areas of on-site landscaping and communal open space. The layout and scale of the proposed buildings is detrimental to the usability of these spaces and provision of suitable landscaping. The re-provision of the significant number of on-site vehicle parking spaces for off-site users unconnected to the development also fails to provide a safe environment for future occupiers of the development due to the level of pedestrian and vehicle movements that would occur within the development and its buildings that would be unrelated to the residential occupiers of the site. The proposals are considered to be an overdevelopment of the site and to fail to create a safe or high-quality residential layout contrary to Policies CC7, EN14, and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

2. The siting and the layout of proposed buildings 2 and 3 would result in direct overlooking between facing habitable rooms windows to the two buildings creating a loss of privacy and overbearing form of development for future occupiers. The presence of balconies to the facing elevations exacerbates this unacceptable relationship and inadequate separation distance between the two buildings. The siting and scale of proposed building 2 would result in an overbearing form of development for future occupiers of the proposed terrace of four dwellings (building 1) to the site frontage on Upper Crown Street and would be detrimental to the usability of their private amenity spaces. The proposed development would fail to provide future occupiers with an acceptable standard of residential amenity or amenity spaces contrary to Policies CC8 and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

3. The siting of proposed building 3 directly on the west boundary of the site together with its scale is considered to result in an overbearing visually dominant relationship with the adjacent buildings at 85, 87, 89 Southampton Street which are either in residential use or have been granted prior approval for conversion to residential use. The siting of large windows directly on the boundary, whilst indicated on the proposed plans to be obscurely glazed, would result in a perception of overlooking to occupiers of these neighbouring buildings. The proposed

development would be harmful to the residential amenity of both existing and future occupiers of nos 85, 87 and 89 Southampton Street contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure provision of a construction phase and end user phase employment skills and training plan or equivalent financial contribution, provision of a policy compliant level of on-site affordable housing and a carbon off-setting contribution, the proposals fails to adequately contribute to local labour and training needs, the housing needs of the Reading Borough and to achieve zero carbon homes standards contrary to Policies CC9, H3 and H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, the adopted Employment Skills and Training Supplementary Planning Document 2019, Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2021, Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document 2019 and Planning Obligations Under Section 106 Supplementary Planning Document 2015.

Informatives:

1. This decision relates to the following plans:

- P001 Rev A - Site Location Plan
- P008 Rev B - Site Plan
- P009 Rev B - Basement
- P010 Rev B - Ground Floor
- P011 Rev B - First Floor
- P012 Rev B - Second Floor
- P013 Rev B - Third Floor
- P014 Rev B - Fourth Floor
- P015 Rev B - Roof Plan
- P016 Rev A - Building 1 Floor Plans
- P017 Rev A - Building 1 Floor Plans
- P018 Rev A - Building 2 Floor Plans
- P019 Rev A - Building 2 Floor Plans
- P020 Rev A - Building 2 Floor Plans
- P021 Rev A - Building 2 Floor Plans
- P022 Rev A - Building 3 Floor Plans
- P023 Rev A - Building 3 Floor Plans
- P024 Rev A - Building 3 Floor Plans
- P025 Rev A - Building 3 Floor Plans
- P026 Rev B - Site Elevations Sheet 1
- P027 Rev C - Site Elevations Sheet 2
- P028 Rev B - Site Elevations Sheet 3
- P029 Rev B - Site Elevations Sheet 4
- P031 Rev B - Site Sections Sheet 1
- P032 Rev A - Building 1 Elevations
- P033 Rev A - Building 1 Sections
- P034 Rev A - Building 2 Elevations
- P035 Rev A - Building 2 Elevations

- P036 Rev A - Building 2 Elevations
- P037 Rev A - Building 2 Sections
- P040 Rev A - Building 3 Elevations
- P041 Rev A - Building 3 Elevations
- P042 Rev A - Building 3 Sections
- P043 Rev A - Indigo House Stairs
- P090 Rev A - Landscape Principles and External Lighting Strategy

Received on 24th March 2022

Syntegra Car Park Management Plan ref. 20-7496
WB Planning Planning Statement Addendum ref. TR/24Jan/7847
Received on 24th March 2022

Base Energy External Daylight and Sunlight ref. 8349 Rev 2
Received on 31st May 2022

Woolf Bond Planning Planning Statement WBP Ref. 7847
Colony Affordable Housing Statement ref. 222
Syntegra Air Quality Assessment ref. 20-7496
Arbtech Preliminary Root Assessment Survey Issue 1.2
Ark Environmental Consultancy Ltd Flood Risk Assessment & SuDS/Drainage Assessment for Planning
Syntegra Energy and Sustainability Statement ref. 20-7496
Syngenta Transport Statement ref. 20-7496 Rev B
Colony Feasibility Study ref. 222/DAS/REV1

Received on 28th September 2021

Irongate Archaeological Impact Assessment ref. AH_T-DBA_Report
Received on 12th November 2021

Enviroscreen Property Assessment - ref. 222_EPO2
Received on 19th October 2021

2. The local planning authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive by advising of the concerns with proposal and providing for the opportunity for the application to be withdrawn. The applicant chose not to withdraw the application, hence the issuing this refusal notice
3. Without prejudice to any future application or appeal, the applicant is advised that reason for refusal 4 could be overcome by entering into a Section 106 Legal Agreement.
4. The applicant is advised that the refused scheme, had it been able to be approved, would have been a CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) liable development.

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04 October 2023



Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Thames
Planning Application Reference:	231094/FUL
Site Address:	Hills Meadow Car Park, George Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8DH
Proposed Development	Temporary erection of ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Christmas festival, for a period of time not to be before 15 October 2023 and not to extend beyond 21 January 2024
Applicant	Premier Winter Wonderland Events Limited
Report author	David Brett
Deadline:	07/11/2023
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to conditions as follows
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Temporary Planning Permission 2. Approved Plans 3. Opening Hours 4. In accordance with the Event Management Plan 5. External Lighting 6. Flood Risk Measures As Specified 7. Location of Permitter Fence
Informatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive and Proactive 2. Terms 3. Environmental Protection License 4. No Tree Works

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to conditions as outlined above.
- 1.2. It is recognised that the development does not contribute positively to The Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature, however, the development is temporary with the site to be restored to its original state after 21st January 2024.
- 1.3. Policy CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 states that innovative solutions to leisure provision will be encouraged, particularly those that make best of use of available The Policy goes on to describe the River Thames as a prime location for new or improved tourist attractions, and as such, this area is suitable for informal recreation and sporting uses and associated small-scale development.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application is to be determined at Planning Applications Committee as the development would generate an income for Reading Borough Council through the hiring of the site to the applicant, and by virtue of the site area falling within the 'Major' applications category.
- 2.2. The proposal site is Hills Meadow Car Park in lower Caversham. The proposal site is located within flood zone level 2, and partially within flood zone level 3. The car park is owned by Reading Borough Council and is partially used as an events space on several occasions per year for traditional fairs and circus'. Space at Hills Meadow Car Park is regularly let out by Reading Borough Council Leisure & Recreation Service for short term seasonal events during school holidays.
- 2.3. Location Plan:



3. The proposal

- 3.1. The proposed development is seeking planning permission for the temporary erection of an ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Christmas festival, for a period of time not to be before 15th October 2023 and not to extend beyond 21st January 2024. The event is to be removed by 21st January 2024. The event is to be open to the public from 11:00am to 10:00pm in accordance with the Premises Licence obtained for the Event under the Licensing Act 2003.
- 3.2. Schedule 2, Part 4, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 allows for the temporary use of land for any purpose for not more than 28 days in any Calendar year and for the provision on that land of any moveable structures for the purposes of the permitted use. Any days over and above those 28 days permitted in that calendar year require planning permission.
- 3.3. The following plans have been received (double strikethrough denotes superseded documents):
 - Location Plan
 - Block Plan
 - Proposed Site Plan
 - Event Safety Management Plan 2023/2024

- Design and Access Statement prepared by Blandy & Blandy Solicitors – REA224/7

~~— Planning Statement prepared by Blandy & Blandy Solicitors – REA224/7~~

Received on 02/08/2023

- Planning Statement prepared by Blandy & Blandy Solicitors – REA224/7

Received on 08/08/2023

4. Planning history

4.1. Application History of Proposal Site

221171/FUL – Part retrospective temporary planning permission for erection of an ice rink, with marquee structure housing skate hire (and first aid) and ancillary side stalls in connection with holding a themed Christmas festival for a period of time not to be before 16th October 2022 and not extend beyond 16th January 2023 – Application Permitted on 27/10/2022

211918/FUL – Part retrospective temporary planning permission for erection of an ice rink, with marquee structure housing skate hire (and first aid) and ancillary side stalls in connection with holding a themed Christmas festival for a period of time not to be before 24 October 2021 and not extend beyond 16 January 2022 for a period of one year. – Application Permitted on 12/01/2022

4.2. Forbury Gardens Application History – Events considered similar to the development proposed within this application

191467/FUL - Temporary erection of an ice rink, with marquee structure housing skate hire and ancillary side stalls in connection with Christmas festival for a period of time not to be before 4 November and not to extend beyond 10 January for a period of one year (2019/2020). - Application Permitted on 04/11/2019

161588/VAR - Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 4 (location of installations) of planning permission 151417 (for temporary Christmas festival), namely for amendments to the locations of the temporary installations. – Application Permitted on 10/11/2016

151897/APC - Approval of conditions 3 (Construction Method Statement) and 4 (Location of installations) of planning permission 151417. – Conditions Discharged on 11/12/2015

151417/FUL - Temporary erection of ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Christmas festival, for a period of time not to be before 1 November and not extend beyond 10 January for a period of 3 years (2015/6, 2016/7 & 2017/8). – Application Permitted on 02/10/2015

5. Consultations

5.1. The following consultation responses were received:

RBC, Transport Development Control

5.2. The site is in a central location and only a 5 minute walk from Reading Station and Bus Interchange and within 10 minutes walk of Central Reading. In NPPF terms it is in a very sustainable location. Hills Meadow public car park is located immediately adjacent to the site providing 298 Pay & Display public parking spaces. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the event would cause a detrimental impact on the local highway network.

5.3. The event safety management plan states that the event organiser has arranged the use of Hills Meadow for all parking needs and the storage of vehicles needed for the set up and take down of the event, and for maintenance and restocking during the event.

- 5.4. In view of the above, there are no transport objections to the granting of the temporary planning permission.

RBC, Environmental Protection

- 5.5. How will the event ensure that the music does in fact remain at background levels? The level of 65 dBA at the nearest resident is mentioned as a condition on the parks agreement but this is way above background level therefore the event will need to ensure that the music level is lower and not noticeable at the surrounding residents' properties.
- 5.6. I request a list/photos of the fairground rides that will be used. One particular ride where the riders go round and round and up and down (I am not sure what the ride is called) for the last two years has caused a 'crashing' type noise off site due to the mechanics and if this ride is to be used then I recommend refusal of this planning application.

RBC, Natural Environment

- 5.7. I raised concerns in both 2021 (211918) and 2022 (221171) about the potential impact on the adjacent trees and this was never properly resolved, the matter being left to an Informative last year.
- 5.8. As stated last year, whilst the submissions indicate that the proposals are entirely on the existing hard surface, which is acceptable (if this is the case), it does appear from the Proposed plan that the proposed structures impinge on the canopies.
- 5.9. No comment is provided on this by the applicant, e.g. necessary pruning, and should be clarified.
- 5.10. In addition, 8.6 of the Planning Statement says:
- 5.11. *'...the Applicant will be erecting close-boarded fencing around the Site which will be effective protective fencing for the trees to the south-east of the Site, as well as for security purposes. The fencing is approximately the same height as the Heras fencing used last year.'*
- 5.12. I assume this fencing will also prevent ANY activity relating to the proposal outside this fenced area where it may impact trees – it would be prudent to attach a condition to deal with this.
- 5.13. In addition, confirmation of the close boarded fence details and its erection are required. Heras fencing can be put on weighted feet to keep it in place, i.e. no intrusion into the ground, whereas close boarded fencing implies dug posts at regular intervals, i.e. within RPAs. Clarity is required.
- 5.14. I would suggest that a brief AMS be provided to deal with any pruning (for the proposals or fence installation), installation of fence posts into the ground (if applicable) and protection of trees, i.e. stating that no activity relating to the proposal will take place outside the fencing area (which I assume follows their red line).

RBC, Parks

- 5.15. With an active skate area owned by RBC, please can I request that the fencing for be at least 2 metres away from the perimeter skate fence for Health and Safety reasons.

RBC, Licensing

- 5.16. Licensing do not have any comments for this consultation.

Public/local consultation and comments received:

- 5.17. Three site notices were displayed at the application site for a period of 21 days.
- 5.18. Three letters were received to the application, one of which was from the Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA). As a result, the following comments were received (as summarised):

- Concerns that the development would harm trees within and surrounding the site.
- Concerns of noise and pollution arising from the development and the harm that this would bring to local residents.

6. Legal context

- 6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 6.2. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 6.3. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Policies:

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

EN7 Local Green Space and Public Open Space

EN12 Biodiversity and The Green Network

EN13 Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodland

EN18 Flooding and Drainage

TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Parking

CR1 Definition of Central Reading

CR2 Design in Central Reading

CR3 Public Realm in Central Reading

CR4 Leisure, Culture and Tourism in Central Reading

- 6.4. Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Tree Strategy (2021)

7. Appraisal

- 7.1. The main considerations are:
- Principle of Development
 - Design
 - Safeguarding Amenity

- Flooding
- Natural Environment
- Transport
- Other Matters

Principle of Development

- 7.2. Hills Meadow is designated a Local Green Space (LGS) and Public Open Space (POS) and is therefore subject to Policy EN7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Policy EN7 states that any proposals that would result in the loss of these open areas, their quality, and jeopardise their enjoyment by the public will not be permitted.
- 7.3. The proposal site is also located within The Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature and is therefore subject to Policy EN13 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Policy EN13 states that planning permission will not be granted for any development that would detract from the character or appearance of a Major Landscape Feature.
- 7.4. Whilst the above is noted, the event itself took place within the car park associated within Hills Meadow, upon hardstanding surfacing and not within the areas of Hills Meadow which contribute to the features of landscape importance. However, the event would be set against the backdrop of mature trees lining the edge of the car park.
- 7.5. Hills Meadow Car Park is located within Central Reading, the prime focus of which is for major leisure, cultural and tourism development. One of the assessment criteria for proposals within Central Reading under Policy CR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan is for development to make imaginative uses of open space and the public realm, which contribute to the offer of the centre. The temporary development at Hills Meadow Car Park is considered to make effective use of the car park in providing a seasonal leisure event, whilst expanding the offer of Central Reading. The temporary nature of the event also means any harmful impact on the landscape would not be permanent.
- 7.6. The development is also subject to Policy CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, which states that innovative solutions to leisure provision will be encouraged, particularly those that make best of use of available (often limited site area). The Policy goes on to describe the River Thames as a prime location for new or improved tourist attractions, and as such, this area is suitable for informal recreation and sporting uses and associated small-scale development.
- 7.7. The proposed development is therefore considered in line with Policy CR4, bringing a temporary, seasonal leisure attraction to the town centre. Given the temporary context of the proposed development and the location of the development within the proposal site, it is considered that proposed temporary use of the site as an events space is appropriate.
- 7.8. It is considered appropriate to condition that the use of the site will cease, and all structures be removed by 23:59 on 21st January 2024. This is to ensure that the space is restored for full public access and use.

Design

- 7.9. The proposed development seeks the temporary erection of an ice rink, Ferris Wheel, and several attractions including traders, wooden chalets and food outlets. The fairground attractions are considered utilitarian in design and typical of a seasonal event of this nature.
- 7.10. Despite the location of the event within a hard-standing car park; the structures are considered visually jarring against the verdant backdrop of Hills Meadow. It is, however, considered by officers that due to the strictly temporary nature of the event, the development would not result in lasting damage to the character and appearance of Hills Meadow in accordance with Policies CC7, EN13 and EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Safeguarding Amenity

- 7.11. As per the response from Reading Borough Council Environmental Protection; concerns have been raised regarding noise levels from music within the event, and the noise generated from rides.
- 7.12. The Event Safety Management Plan submitted for this application states that any music that is played will be for background purposes and will be kept low to avoid disturbance to the local residents. The Planning Statement states that for a maximum of 1 hour per evening, there may be carol singers or local bands playing and that noise levels will be monitored to ensure that the levels stay below 65Db.
- 7.13. In response to the comments from the Environmental Protection Team, the ride that has caused the crashing sound in previous years is not returning for this year's event. The music levels are monitored daily using the same system as previous years, and in addition this year comparative readings when the attractions are operating, and stationery will be recorded to ensure the music levels are background. The readings will be taken at different places over the area of the site.
- 7.14. The sound levels are set each day to ensure they are background level only, by means of the operator of the site, starting the sound systems prior to opening of the attractions to the public. The levels at which the music is set is below the levels of participants to the event and the organisers ensure it does not exceed the levels caused by operation of the Winter Wonderland event itself. The setting of sound levels at this point ensures that the music level is low and not noticeable at the surrounding residents' properties. The levels are set in the morning prior to opening and those levels are policed by the organisers and no individual ride is authorised to adjust the music level.
- 7.15. One of the conditions for the Premises Licence for this event states that; "The premises licence holder shall ensure that the noise level measured at least 1m from the façade of the nearest and all other noise sensitive premises (being premises where occupants are likely to suffer from excessive noise) shall not exceed 63dBA over a 15-minute period (Laeq 15 min)". It is therefore not considered reasonable to resist planning permission on the basis that breach of noise limits can be enforced against by the Environmental Protection Team.
- 7.16. A further condition for the Premises Licence requires residents of Kingfisher Place and Cardinal Close (premises that are sensitive to noise from the event) to be provided with the contact details of the Designated Premises Supervisor. This is to ensure that any issues relating to noise are reported directly to the event organisers.
- 7.17. Therefore, subject to conditions regarding opening hours, event management and external lighting, the proposal is considered in line with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Flooding

- 7.18. Hills Meadow Car Park is located within Flood Zone Level 2, and partially within Flood Zone Level 3. The applicant has addressed flood risk within the Planning Statement submitted for this application. The statement includes an extract of the floor map, demonstrating the proposal site within flood zones 2 and 3. The statement details that each attraction is raised 600mm from ground level, with the hard-standing car park itself constructed of permeable materials. The event space has been covered in plastic rola-trac and carpet to ensure ease of access for those on foot and in wheelchairs. The flood risk statement goes on to say that should the site be flooded during an event, attendees will be escorted out of the site via the George Street entrance to Hills Meadow Car Park, away from the flood zone level 3 areas to the east and south of the proposal site.

- 7.19. This flood risk statement is considered sufficient, and details enough given the temporary nature of the event and is therefore considered in accordance with Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. A condition will be attached requiring the event to be carried out in accordance with the details provided regarding flood risk management within the Planning Statement.

Natural Environment

- 7.20. As per paragraphs 5.7 to 5.14, clarification was requested by the Natural Environment Team regarding the potential impact that the event would have on trees surrounding the site. It was requested that details of any pruning required be provided, along with confirmation of the details for the close boarded fence to the perimeter of the event.
- 7.21. In response to this, the applicant has confirmed that no pruning or interference with the trees at Hills Meadow. The fencing will be erected using weighted feet and not dug posts.
- 7.22. It has been confirmed that the details provided by the applicant suitably address the concerns from the Natural Environment Team. This is subject to the condition that the close-boarded fence be erected around the perimeter of the site as defined by the red line on the location plan prior to any works commencing on site and then retained until the events use has stopped; thereafter the site should be returned to its original condition.
- 7.23. Therefore, subject to condition, the development is in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

Transport

- 7.24. As per the response received for this application from Transport Development Control, the site is located adjacent to a car park providing 298 pay & display vehicle parking spaces. It is not anticipated that the event would have a detrimental impact on the local highway network due to the temporary nature. The temporary development is therefore considered in accordance with Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

8. Equality implications

- 8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

9. Conclusion & planning balance

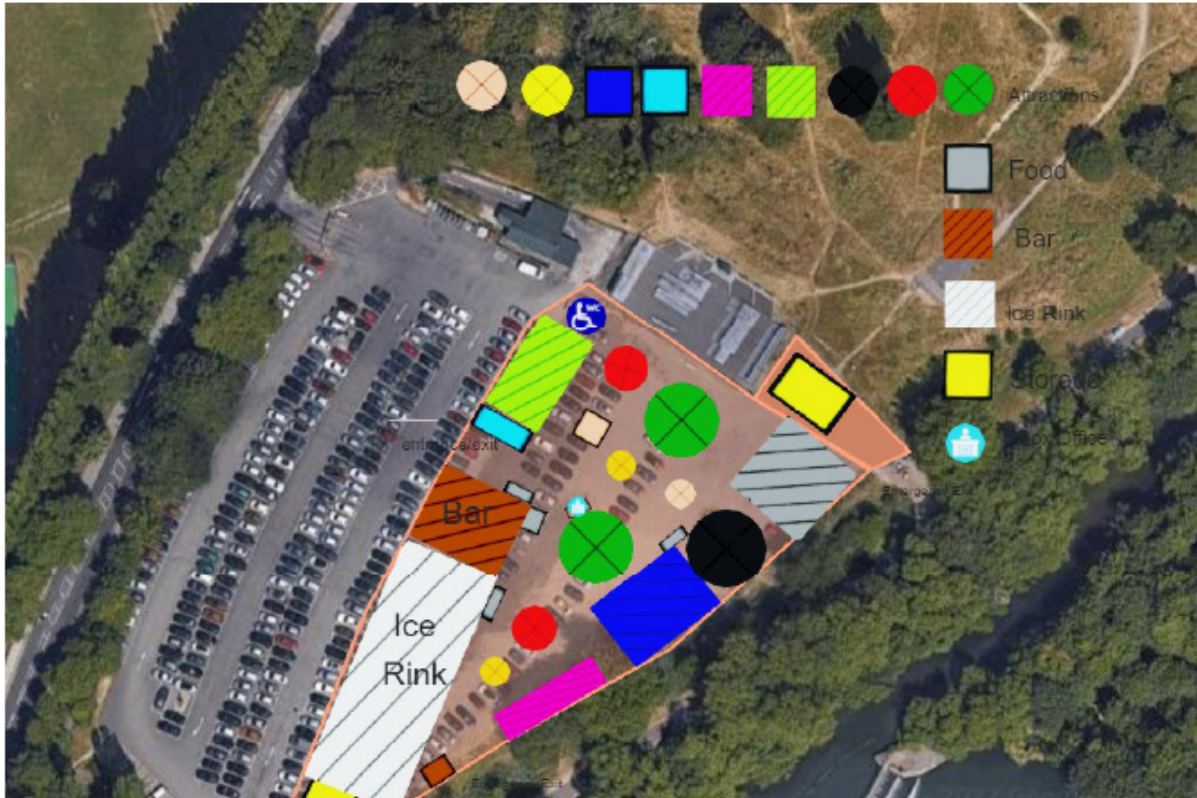
- 9.1 This application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 9.2 Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Having gone through this process officers consider that the short-term harm to the appearance of The Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature is outweighed

by the economic benefit of the event and the fact that the site will be returned to its original state after 21st January 2024.

- 9.3 It is considered that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. As such, this application is recommended for approval subject to conditions as set out above.

Plans

High Level Site Plan



04 October 2023



Reading

Borough Council

Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Whitley
Planning Application Reference:	231143/REG3
Site Address:	19 Bennet Road, Reading
Proposed Development	Proposed front extension and raising of roof line of 3 current commercial garages to align with existing adjacent workshop. Works include changes to fenestration, replacement commercial cladding and a single storey side extension.
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Ethne Humphreys – Senior Planning Officer
Deadline:	09 October 2023
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to conditions as follows:
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Limit – 3 years 2. Approved Plans 3. Materials as Specified 4. Construction Method Statement to be submitted and approved – pre-commencement. 5. Vehicle Parking as Specified 6. Cycle Parking to be submitted and approved – pre-occupation 7. Details of Sedum Roof (and Maintenance) to be submitted and approved – pre-commencement. 8. Mechanical Plant Noise Assessment to be submitted and approved – prior to installation 9. BREEAM ‘Very Good’ Interim review to be submitted and approved 10. BREEAM ‘Very Good’ Post Construction review to be submitted and approved 11. Details of PV and Air Source Heat Pumps to be submitted and approved – pre-occupation. 12. Contaminated Land Assessment to be submitted and approved – pre-commencement 13. Contaminated Land Remediation Scheme to be submitted and approved – pre-commencement 14. Remediation Scheme to be Implemented and Validation Report submitted and approved - before construction above foundation level 15. Reporting of Unexpected Contamination at any time
Informatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms and Conditions • Building Regulations • Pre-commencement Conditions • Highways • Construction

- Positive and Proactive

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This is a Reading Borough Council own Regulation 3 application for extensions to the vehicle maintenance warehouse building at the Council's depot, 19 Bennet Road.
- 1.2. The proposal will allow for larger vehicles to be worked on simultaneously and will also provide office and reception space. Better insulation will also provide more comfortable working conditions.
- 1.3. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to conditions as set out above.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application site is a Reading Borough Council owned parcel of land, in use as a depot for the Council's various departments. The site is approximately 1.7ha, located on the north of Bennet Road, with access taken directly off Bennet Road. The building to which this application relates is the vehicle maintenance workshop. The surrounding area is largely commercial and industrial in nature.
- 2.2. The site is located within a Core Employment Area (EM2d: Bennet Road) and an area of potentially Contaminated Land.



Site Location Plan (not to scale)



Existing Building

- 2.3. The application is being considered by the Planning Applications Committee due to it being a Council's own application.

3. The proposal

- 3.1. This application seeks planning permission to extend and refurbish the existing vehicle maintenance workshop from one large bay and three small bays into four large bays.
- 3.2. The enlarged building will be re-clad in thermally insulating industrial cladding with roller shutter doors to the four bays. The extension will allow a greater number, and larger size of vehicle to be worked on simultaneously than is currently possible.
- 3.3. An attached single storey extension is proposed to provide space for an office and reception area, and allows for improved facilities and welfare, such as a kitchenette, break room, locker storage and toilets. A sedum roof is proposed on the single storey extension.

4. Planning history

- 4.1. 182139/CLP Various external alterations including erection of canopy, replacement of fenestration and provision of PV panels. Permitted.
- 4.2. 111183/REG3 Installation of fuel tank with integral pump and nozzle. Permitted.

5. Consultations

Non-Statutory

- 5.1 RBC Transport – No objection subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement and provision of cycle and vehicle spaces as proposed.
- 5.2 RBC Natural Environment – No objection subject to a condition to secure submission and approval of sedum roof including maintenance.
- 5.3 RBC Ecology – No objection.
- 5.4 RBC Environmental Protection – No objection subject to condition to secure submission and approval of noise assessment for any mechanical plant that is to be provided.

Public

- 5.5 A site was noticed was displayed along the Bennet Road frontage. No letters of representation have been received.

6. Legal context

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

NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework 2023

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EM1: Provision of Employment
- EM2: Location of New Employment Development
- EM3: Loss of Employment Land
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

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

Other relevant documentation

- Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (2021)
- Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (2021)

7. Appraisal

- 7.1. The main considerations are:
- Land Use Principles
 - Design Considerations
 - Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

- Environmental Protection Matters
- Impact on Parking/Highways
- Natural Environment and Ecology
- Sustainability
- Equalities Impact

Land Use Principles

- 7.2 The site is located within a Core Employment Area as defined in Policy EM2 (Location of New Employment Development), specifically EM2d: Bennet Road. Policy EM2 requires proposals not to result in a loss of employment land.
- 7.3 This application proposes an extension to an existing workshop unit and would not result in the loss of any employment land.
- 7.4 Therefore, an extension to the existing use is acceptable, provided that other policy requirements of the Reading Borough Local Plan are satisfied.

Design Considerations

- 7.5 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks to ensure that new development enhances and preserves the local character. The policy requires a “high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located”.
- 7.6 The proposal represents a sizeable extension. However, the extension would form a continuation of the existing building and will result in a uniform appearance. The single storey side extension will be small-scale with Sedum roof and not readily visible.
- 7.7 The proposals are not considered to result in an overly intrusive or dominant addition when viewed in the context of its commercial/industrial setting. The materials will match those of the existing building, with some modern material detail to match neighbouring commercial/industrial uses which is appropriate. In accordance with Policy CC7.

Impact on neighbour Amenity

- 7.8 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) requires developments to not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing properties in terms of: Privacy and overlooking; Access to sunlight and daylight; Visual dominance and overbearing; Harm to outlook; Noise and disturbance; Artificial lighting; Vibration; Dust and fumes; Smell; and Crime and safety. Policy EN17 (Noise Generating Equipment) requires noise generating equipment to not result in adverse noise impacts to sensitive receptors.
- 7.9 The site is located in an established industrial/commercial area and is currently operational. Given this and the nature of the proposals and the surroundings, no material overbearing effects or privacy issues are considered to arise.
- 7.10 The proposal includes the provision of external plant (extract fan, heat pump and compressor) and indicative noise levels have been submitted. Based on the relatively high noise levels from the plant items, there is a possibility for residents (to the north east) to be affected. As such, a noise assessment is required to assess the impact of the plant installation on nearby sensitive uses. The Council’s Environmental Protection Officer has confirmed that this can be dealt with via condition. In accordance with Policies CC8 and EN17.

Environmental Protection Matters

Contaminated land

- 7.11 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.

- 7.12 A contaminated land investigation report has been submitted with the application which recommends a small-scale intrusive investigation to confirm the risk levels from the possible presence of contamination. The Council's Environmental Protection officer recommends the standard four-stage conditions to ensure that the possible presence of contamination is thoroughly investigated and removed/mitigated if necessary (3 of the conditions are pre-commencement). In accordance with Policy EN16.

Impact on Parking/Highways

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

- 7.14 The current layout arrangement only allows for maintenance of large vehicles in the single large workshop bay. The proposed extension will enable an increase in the capacity of the workshops to enable large vehicles to be worked on concurrently. It is anticipated that the increase in operations will allow for employment of 4 additional members of staff.

- 7.15 Tracking diagrams have been submitted to demonstrate that vehicles can safely navigate through the car park and operate without causing obstruction or restricting movements around/through the site.

- 7.16 16No. vehicle spaces are provided (4No. for each additional staff and 3No. for each service bay) and 1No. covered cycle spaces with Sheffield type stands are to be provided within the site compound. There are no Transport objections to the proposal subject to submission of a Construction Method Statement which is proposed to be secured via condition. In accordance with Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5.

Natural Environment and Ecology

- 7.17 Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) seeks to extend the Borough's vegetation cover and that development should make provision for tree planting whilst Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks proposal should include appropriate landscaping. 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.

- 7.18 A bat survey has been submitted with the application and the Council's Ecologist agrees with the conclusions that the building is unlikely to host roosting bats. As such, there is unlikely to be any harm to bats or other protected species.

- 7.19 There are limited opportunities for soft landscaping at the site. However, a sedum roof is proposed on the single storey flat roof extension which is welcomed and would assist in complying with climate and ecological policy aims. It would also be of some benefit for wildlife. There are no Natural Environment or Ecology objections to this application subject to full details of the sedum roof and its maintenance which is proposed to be secured via condition. The development is therefore considered in accordance with Policies CC7, EN12 and EN14.

Sustainability

- 7.20 Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction), supported by the Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, states that "Proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change. To meet these requirements: (...) All minor non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Very Good' standard as a minimum;"

7.21 The application submission includes commentary stating that a 'Very Good' BREEAM standard is targeted as a minimum, plus 5%. The sedum roof would also assist with rainwater management. Submission of the standard BREEAM certificates to be provided are proposed to be secured via condition (along with details of the sedum roof). This is to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards. The submission also indicates provision of PV panels and air source heat pumps in the future which would be a positive sustainability benefit and welcomed by the Council. In accordance with Policy CC2.

8. Equality implications

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

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

8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

9. Conclusion & planning balance

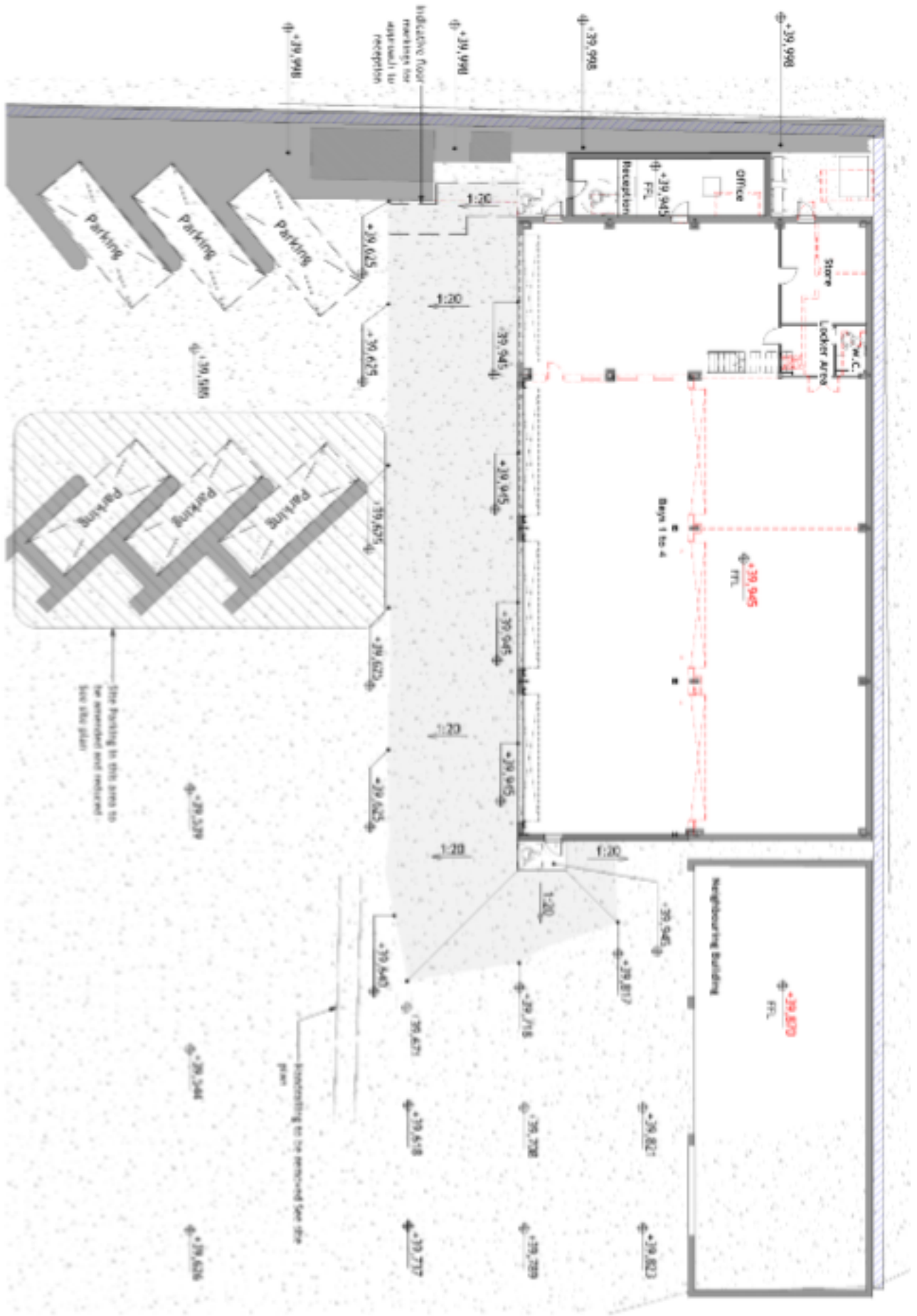
9.1 As with all applications considered by the Local Planning Authority, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

9.2 Officers consider that no material harm would arise, and the proposed works are acceptable with particular regard to the effect on the character of the area, noise impacts, sustainability and ecology and highways matters.

9.3 The application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions specified at the outset of this report.

Case Officer: Miss Ethne Humphreys

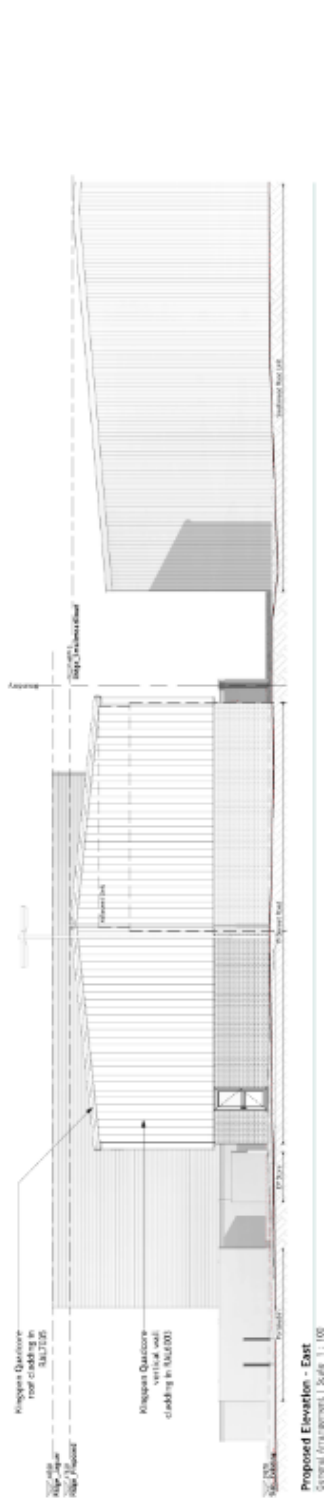
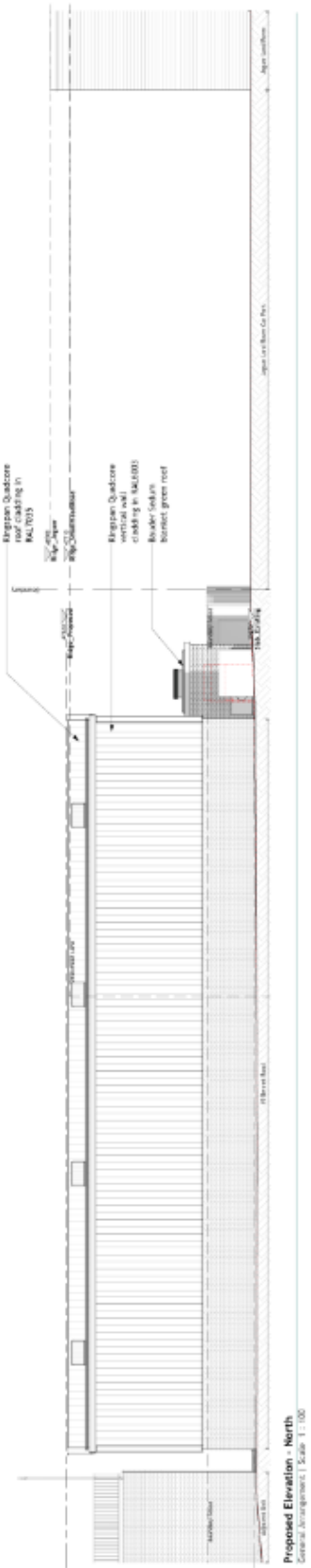
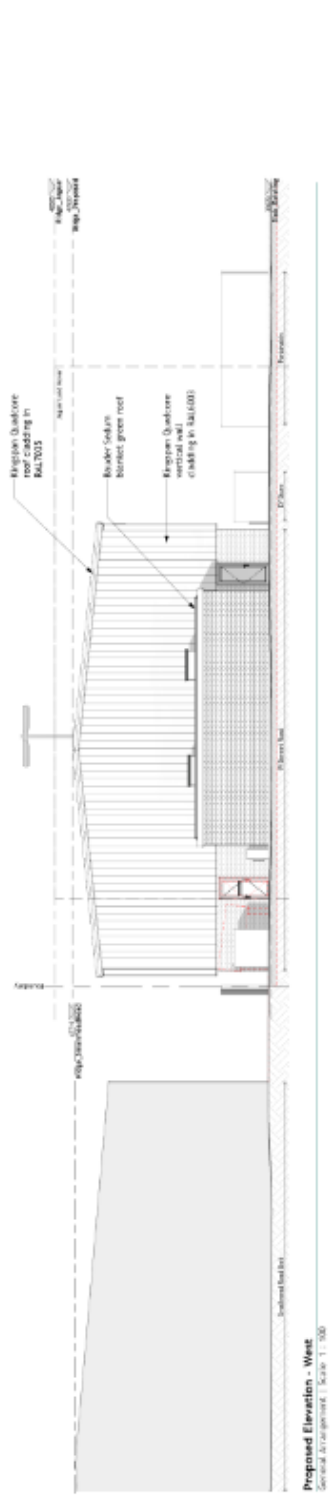
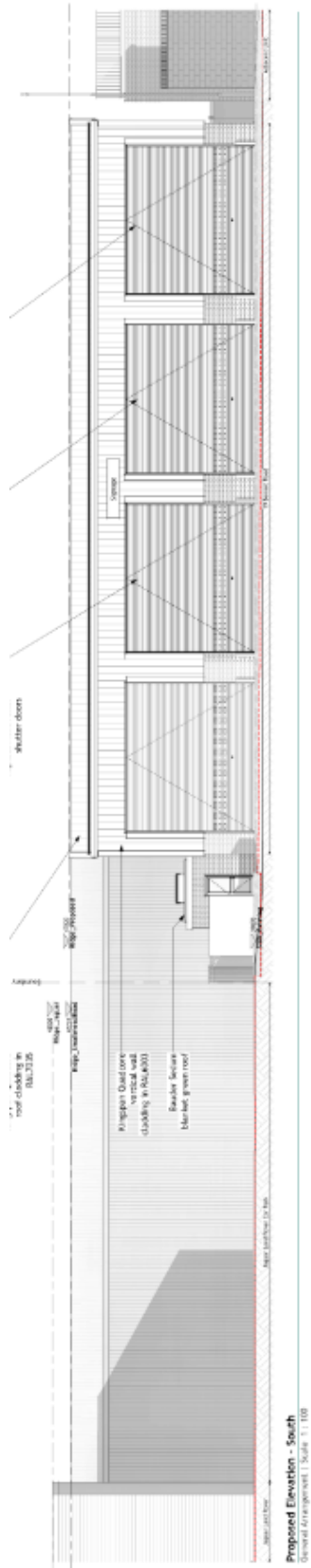
Proposed Plans shown below:



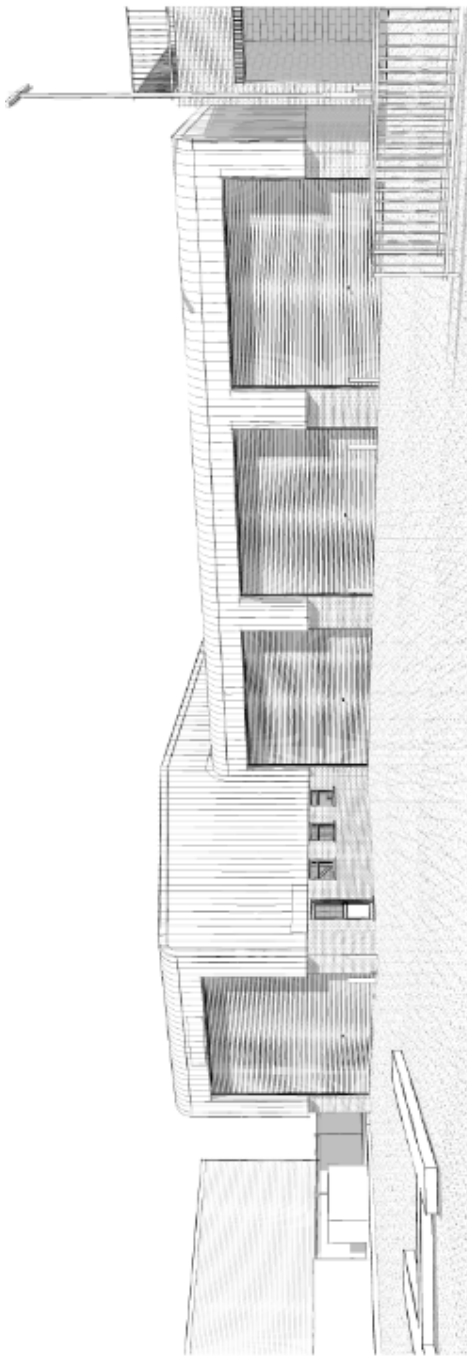
Proposed Ground Floor/Site Plan



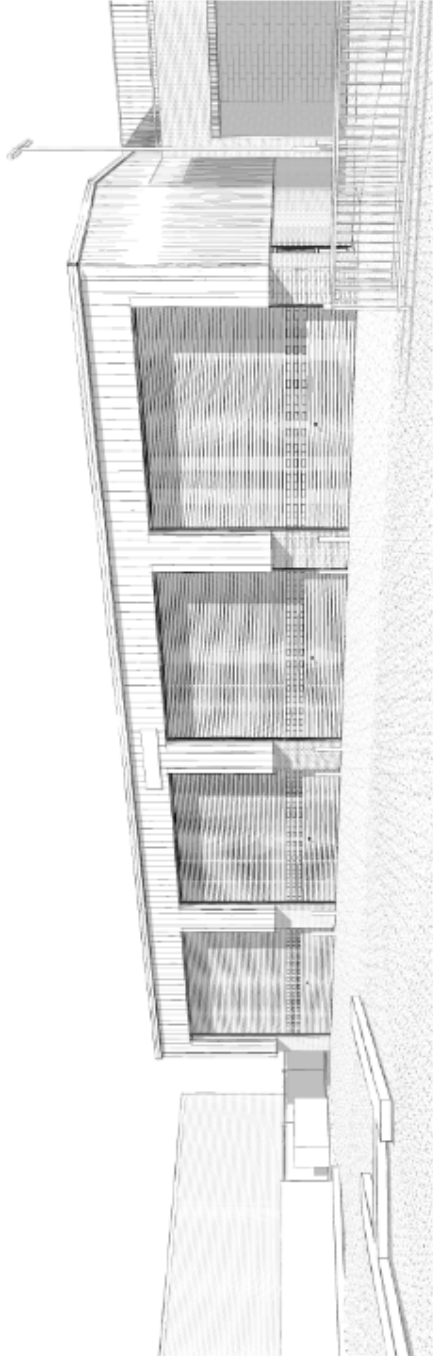
Proposed Roof Plan



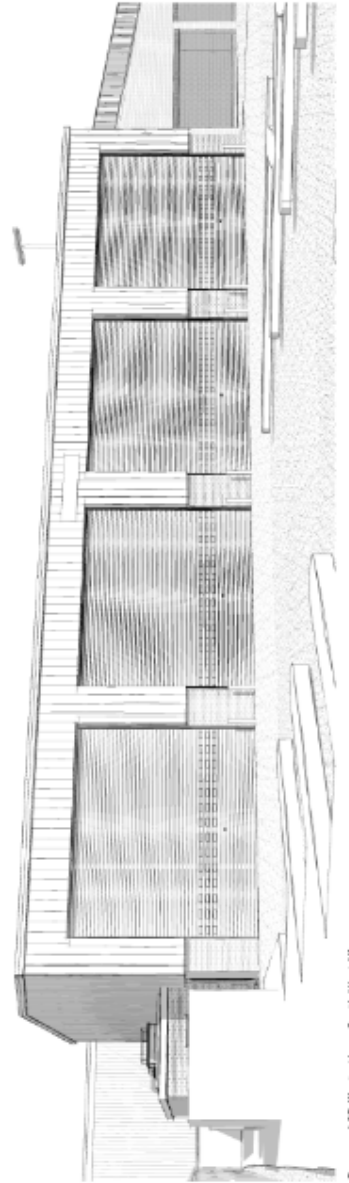
Proposed Elevations



Existing 3D Illustration - South East View
3D Illustration | Scale: 1/15



Proposed 3D Illustration - South East View
3D Illustration | Scale: 1/15



Proposed 3D Illustration - South West View
3D Illustration | Scale: 1/15

Existing and Proposed Visuals

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