

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

Direct ☎ : 0118 9372112

16 April 2024

Your contact is: **Nicky Simpson - Committee Services (nicky.simpson@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 24 APRIL 2024

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 24 April 2024 at 6.30 pm in the Reception Area, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
<u>KEY TO CODING</u>			
1. MINUTES	-		9 - 12
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-		
3. QUESTIONS	-		
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	Decision	BOROUGHWIDE	13 - 16
5. PLANNING APPEALS	Information	BOROUGHWIDE	17 - 26
6. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL	Information	BOROUGHWIDE	27 - 32
7. CONSULTATION ON SPEEDING UP PLANNING DECISION MAKING	Decision	BOROUGHWIDE	33 - 42

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8.	PROPOSED TREE WORK TO ONE PROTECTED COUNCIL TREE IN ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD, ST MARY'S BUTTS, READING	Decision	ABBEY	43 - 46
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PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

9.	231190/FUL & 231191/LBC - 20-30 KINGS ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	47 - 60
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Proposal	231190 - Change of use from E(g)(i) to F1(g) Law Courts for both The Carbon Building and Highbridge House. Fitout of the buildings for use as a Law Court, installation of a new internal lift and new plant to existing roof plant enclosure. New gate and external ramped entrance to the rear of The Carbon Building. Streetscape security features including bollards to footpaths and obscuring film to windows.
Recommendation	Application Permitted

Proposal	231191 - Listed Building Consent for alterations to Highbridge House, re-opening of opening in rear wall at ground floor and new opening at first floor level to form connections to The Carbon Building
Recommendation	Application Permitted

10.	240073/REG3 - VICTORIA PARK RECREATION GROUND, GEORGE STREET	Decision	ABBEY	61 - 70
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Proposal	Relocation of an existing childrens play area within Victoria Park and the reinstatement of the existing childrens play area to an informal open space.
Recommendation	Application Permitted

11.	201766/FUL - 40 SILVER STREET	Decision	KATESGROVE	71 - 136
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Proposal	Erection of 4 storey building to provide 23 private rental homes with associated communal facilities, surface parking, access and landscaping works.(amended)
Recommendation	Permitted subject to Legal Agreement

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GUIDE TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS Agenda Annex

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

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

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

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

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

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

Glossary of usual terms

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

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

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

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

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

Brownfield Land - previously developed land.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Scheduled Ancient Monument - Specified nationally important archaeological sites.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Guide to changes to the Use Classes Order in England.

Changes of use within the same class are not development.

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

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

Apologies: Councillors Goss

RESOLVED ITEMS

106. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

107. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Leng declared a prejudicial interest in Item 114 (240226/REG3 - Whitley Wood Modular Building) on the grounds of predetermination, as he had promoted the scheme as a local Ward Councillor.

108. 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 enable Councillors 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.

Resolved - That no new site visits be arranged.

109. 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.

Appendix 1 to the report set out details of one new appeal lodged since the last Committee. Appendix 2 to the report set out details of one appeal decided since the last Committee.

Resolved –

- (1) That the new appeal, 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.

110. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 27 MARCH 2024

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 four prior approval applications received, and Table 2 set out nine applications for prior approval decided, between 14 February and 14 March 2024.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

111. 240063/REG3 - THE HEXAGON, QUEENS WALK

Demolition of some of the existing back of house areas and erection of an extension of the existing Hexagon Theatre to provide a new studio auditorium, flexible rehearsal space, community studio with workshop space and back of house space, along with improved public realm by providing a new podium connection between the new proposed extension and Queens Walk, along with other associated works.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out information on two further consultation responses, the removal of the requirement for a legal agreement, and the Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme. It was recommended that proposed conditions relating to Air Quality Assessment, Bin stores and Contaminated Land Assessment/Remediation scheme be removed following the receipt of information from the applicant. Additional conditions regarding Land Gas, Sustainable Drainage and the Employment Skills and Training Plan were proposed.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved –

That, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, the carrying out of the development 240063/REG3 be authorised, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report, with the conditions removed and additional conditions as recommended in the update report, and an additional condition to require submission of a feasibility study on how EV Charging could be provided on site.

112. 231673/VAR - 55 VASTERN ROAD

Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to vary conditions 2 (approved drawings), 24 (unit mix), 33 (roof terrace enclosures), 35 (parking provision) and 47 (Block B glazing and ventilation) of permission 200188 (allowed on appeal under APP/E0345/W/21/3276463 on 17/03/2022 for Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road), including an increase from 4 to 5 storeys of the western wing of Block B, amendments to

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 27 MARCH 2024

the top two floors of Blocks D & E, changes to the unit mix and various other associated alterations (amended description).

The Committee considered a report on the above application. A verbal update was given at the meeting referring to the objection that the extra storey would impact on local residents' wellbeing and solar power generation and clarifying that, whilst these were material considerations, the proposal was not envisaged to significantly harmfully impact wellbeing or solar power generation over and above the original scheme.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Objector Ben Ralston, and Caroline McHardy representing the applicant, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this item.

Resolved –

- (1) That application 231673/VAR for the variation of conditions 2, 24, 33, 35 and 47 be granted, subject to the informatives set out in the report;
- (2) That the wording of conditions 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 15, 22, 31, 42 and 46 be varied as set out in the report.

113. 231607/FUL - 40 BENNET ROAD

Application for change of use from B2, to sui generis car servicing and MOT garage and/or B2, with two proposed extensions on the Northern frontage and associated alterations.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out additional information submitted by the applicant on parking and vehicle movement tracking. Amendments were proposed to the conditions and informatives and it was also recommended that the grant of planning permission be delegated to officers, as the consultation period did not close until midnight on 27 March 2024.

Comments 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 231607/FUL, subject to no substantive objections being received by midnight on 27 March 2024;
- (2) That planning permission be subject to the conditions and informatives set out in the original report, with the amendments as set out in the update report.

114. 240226/REG3 - WHITLEY WOOD MODULAR BUILDING, 29-35 LEXINGTON GROVE

Erection of Temporary Modular Community Centre for a period of three years.

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which set out an explanation of the requirement for a temporary modular building and information on amended plans for disabled parking submitted by the applicant. It was reported at the meeting that additional conditions were recommended to make provision for ecological mitigation and to require that no external lighting be installed without the prior agreement of the planning authority.

Resolved –

- (1) That, subject to no substantive objections being raised before the end of the consultation process on 3 April 2024, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised, pursuant to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, to grant temporary (three years) planning permission for application 240226/REG3;
- (2) That planning permission be subject to conditions and informatives as recommended in the original report, with the additional conditions proposed at the meeting regarding ecological mitigation and external lighting.

(Councillor Leng declared a prejudicial interest in this item on the grounds of predetermination, as he had promoted the scheme as a local Ward Councillor. He left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision.)

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.24 pm)

Planning Applications Committee

22 May 2024



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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:

No relevant applications since last PAC

2. Previously Agreed Site Visits with date requested:

- 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

24 April 2024



Reading
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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:	ABBHEY
APPEAL NO:	APP/E0345/Z/24/3339516
CASE NO:	231307
ADDRESS:	1-3 Queen Victoria Street and 148 Friar Street,
PROPOSAL:	Temporary display of an externally illuminated shroud advertisement on the upper floors of the north and east elevations until 01/10/2024.
CASE OFFICER:	Jonathan Markwell
METHOD:	Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE:	REFUSAL
APPEAL LODGED:	26.03.2024

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

WARD: Coley
APPEAL NO: APP/TPO/E0345/9178
CASE NO: 220564/TPO
ADDRESS: 7 Portway Close
PROPOSAL: Fell one Lime tree
CASE OFFICER: Sarah Hanson
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: Allowed
DATE DETERMINED: 18 March 2024

WARD: TILEHURST
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/X/23/3315074
CASE NO: 221325
ADDRESS: 30 Westwood Glen, Reading
PROPOSAL: Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a Proposed Caravan (movable) to be used as ancillary accommodation
CASE OFFICER: David Brett
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED: 15.03.2024

WARD: WHITLEY
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/C/23/3325167
CASE NO: Enforcement Appeal
ADDRESS: Land at 85 & 87 Longships Way
PROPOSAL: The breach of planning control as alleged in the notice is without planning permission, the change of use of 85 Longships Way, Reading RG2 0AJ and 87 Longships Way, Reading RG2 0AJ combined into a single dwellinghouse
CASE OFFICER: David Lloyd
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED: 15.03.2024

WARD: THAMES
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/21/3289748
CASE NO: 200328
PROPOSAL: Outline planning permission with details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. A demolition phase and phased redevelopment (each phase being an independent act of development) comprising a flexible mix of the following uses, Residential(Class C3 and including PRS), Offices (Use Class B1(a), development in Use Classes A1, A2, A3(retail), A4(public house), A5(take away), D1 and D2(communitiy and leisure), car parking, provision of new plant and renewable energy equipment, creation of servicing areas and provision of associated services, including waste, refuse, cycle storage, and lighting APPEAL AGAINST NON-
DERMINATION
CASE OFFICER: Alison Amoah
METHOD: Made by Minister of State for Housing, Planning and Building Safety on behalf of the Secretary of State

DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED:21.03.2024

WARD: KATESGROVE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/23/3315618
CASE NO: 220258
ADDRESS: 220 Elgar Road South, Reading
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
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED: 2.04.2024

WARD: KENTWOOD
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3313424
CASE NO: 220637
ADDRESS: Scours Lane, Tilehurst, Reading
PROPOSAL: Sc Proposed development a Drive-Through restaurant (Use Class E (a,b) and Sui Generis Hot Food Take Away, Car Parking, enhanced landscaping and Access Arrangement Sours Lane, Tilehurst, Reading
CASE OFFICER: Ethne Humphreys
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: ALLOWED
DATE DETERMINED:02.04.2024.

WARD: CAVERSHAM
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/23/3328159
CASE NO: 230158
ADDRESS: Junction Of", Cromwell Road and Henley Road, Caversham, Reading
PROPOSAL: Application for prior notification of Proposed 5G telecoms installation - 15m street pole ancillary equipment cabinets and associated ancillary works.
CASE OFFICER: Ryan Allen
METHOD: Written Representation
DECISION: DISMISSED
DATE DETERMINED:09.04.2024.

WARD: ABBEY
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/Z/24/3339516
CASE NO: 231307
ADDRESS: 1-3 Queen Victoria Street and 148 Friar Street,
PROPOSAL: Temporary display of an externally illuminated shroud advertisement on the upper floors of the north and east elevations until 01/10/2024.
CASE OFFICER: Jonathan Markwell
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: WITHDRAWN
APPEAL LODGED: 09.04.2024

APPENDIX 3

Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

220564/TPO 7 Portway Close, Tilehurst
220637/FUL Scours Lane, Tilehurst

Ward: Coley

Appeal No. APP/TPO/E0345/9178

Planning Ref: 220564/TPO

Site: 7 Portway Close, Tilehurst, Reading, RG1 6LB

Proposal: Application to fell one Lime tree in the rear garden

Decision level: Delegated

Method: Written Representation

Decision: Appeal ALLOWED

Date Determined: 18th March 2024

Inspector: A Tucker BA (Hons) IHBC

Site description:

The application site relates to 7 Portway Close; the tree in question being a mature Lime tree situated in the rear garden. The property has been extended to the rear, the extension confirmed to be 'permitted development' through application 170055/CLP, following a 2014 application for a rear extension being withdrawn, partly on tree grounds. The entire rear garden has been decked.

Reasons for refusal:

The Lime tree in question has been protected since 1964, prior to the houses in Portway Close being constructed; the most recent TPO being made in 2001 as a result of the review of the original TPO. It was unfortunate that the house was built without allowing greater space for the future growth of the tree. The concern over the relationship between the tree and the house / garden has been exacerbated by the decision of the then owner in 2017 to build a rear extension, thereby bringing living accommodation closer to the tree and reducing the size of the garden in which it sits further. This was then worsened by the installation of decking meaning the Lime is now within a less than ideal decked area, rather than a larger garden, as it was.

In amenity terms, the tree remains highly visible in the surrounding area due to its significant height, being considerably higher than the roof of the houses, and can be seen from Littlecote Drive to the west, A4 Berkeley Avenue to the south and within Portway Close. It makes a significant contribution both individually and to the general verdant character of the area.

In view of the fact that there is no reasonable opportunity for a replacement specimen tree to be planted in the immediate area in order to mitigate the removal of the tree, the removal of the tree would result in the permanent loss of tree canopy cover at Portway Close.

Officers consider that the extension shows poor judgement, especially given the concerns previous occupiers & owner raised regarding the suitability of the tree's location, heightened by this extension. However, the appellant bought the property with this extension and decking in place and with the tree being evident and protected. The acceptability of the tree should therefore have been considered in purchasing the property. A recent appeal dismissal (ref APP/TPO/E0345/8541), also relating to a mature Lime tree in close proximity to a house, addressed this particular issue, with the Inspector stating:

'I agree that the tree is the dominant feature at the front of the property. However, it is likely that the relationship between the tree and the house and garden, given its maturity, would have been a similar one when the property was purchased and occupied. It is likely that this relationship, the protected status of the tree and its future growth would have been a consideration at that time for the appellant.'

Given the significance of the tree in question and that the situation with the tree and house/decking had not changed since purchase of the property, or since this matter was considered last year (a similar application to fell was refused), officers refused the felling of the

Lime tree. The reasons put forward were not considered to outweigh the significant amenity value that would be permanently lost from the felling of the tree.

Main Issues:

The Inspector identified that the main issue was:

- The effect of the felling of the tree on the character and appearance of the area, and whether sufficient justification has been demonstrated for the works.

The Inspector observed that:

'The local area has a good proportion of mature tree cover that gives it a verdant character and appearance and helps to break up the impact of development'.

And that:

'The Lime is of a substantial height with a good overall form. It rises well above the height of the dwelling to the extent that it is prominent to view from Portway Close. It can also be viewed easily from Berkley Avenue and Littlecote Drive. It contributes to the verdant and mature character and appearance of the area and in this context has considerable amenity value. The loss of the Lime would have a considerable impact on the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, any reasons given for the work need to be convincing'

The Inspector noted the small size of the garden, which is dominated by the Lime, worsened by its location west of the property. In relation to the rear extension, this was observed by the Inspector, but it was considered that the dominating impact of the Lime would be very similar if the extension was not present, as the garden would still be small. The Inspector acknowledged that the appellant would have been aware of the Lime when purchasing the property and that the pruning work consented by the Council would modestly improve the situation. However, the Inspector considered that:

'its continued retention to be unreasonable given the simple facts relating to its scale and position relative to the dwelling and its small garden'

Summary:

In summary, the Inspector acknowledged that with any application to fell protected trees, a balancing exercise needs to be undertaken, and the reasons put forward for felling weighed against the resultant loss to the amenity of the area. The Planning Practice Guidance makes clear that in general terms, the higher the amenity value of the tree and the greater any negative impact of the proposed works on amenity, the stronger the reasons needed before consent is granted. The Inspector agreed that the amenity value of the Lime is considerable but that the reasons given for its felling were compelling and carried considerable weight; the conclusion being that they *'outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the area'*

The Inspector further confirmed that a condition would not be attached for a replacement tree as such a tree would have to be so small, given the size of the garden, and would have limited visibility given the terraced nature of the dwellings, that it would not mitigate the loss of the Lime.

For these reasons the Inspector ALLOWED the appeal.

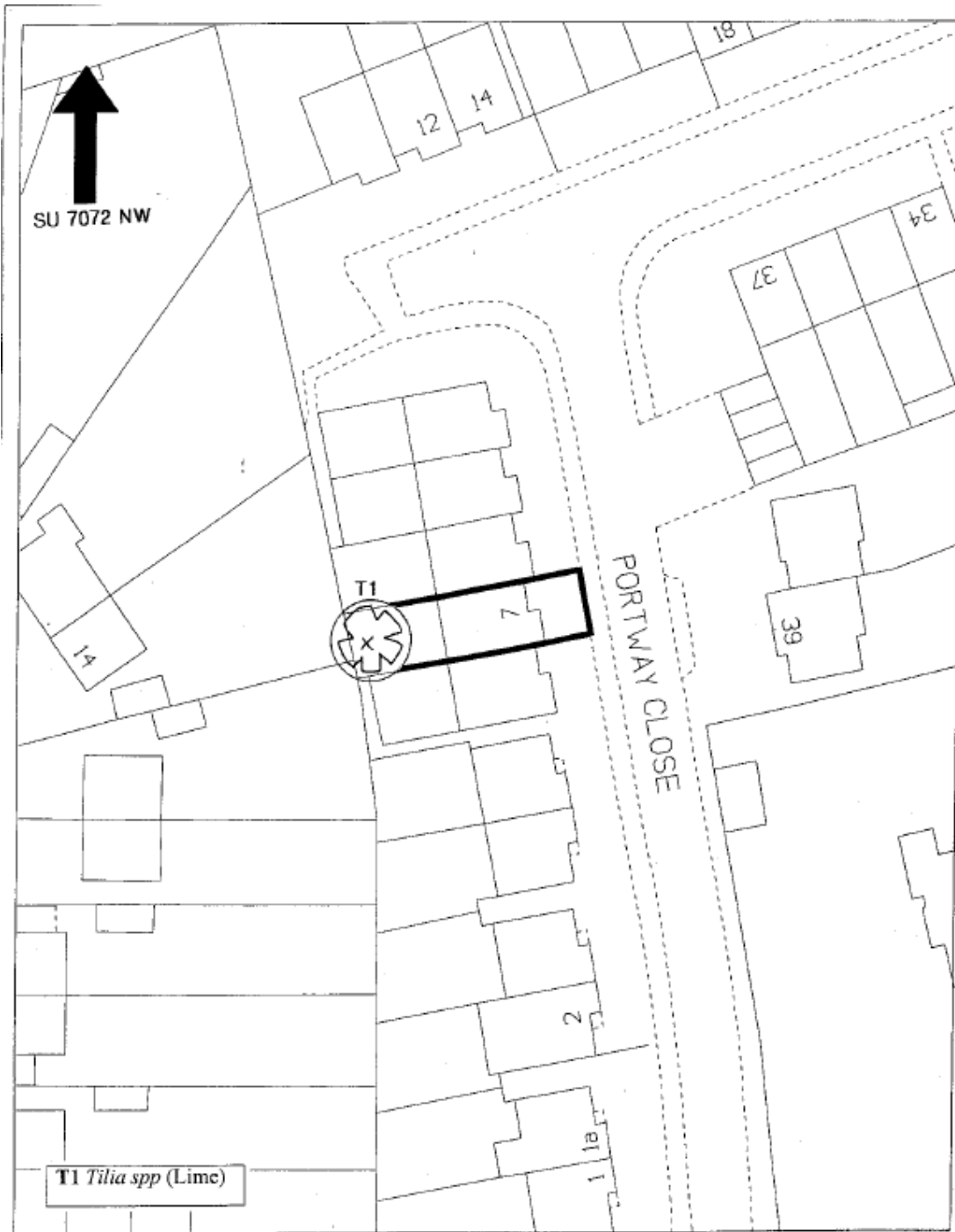
Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services Comment:

The Inspector agreed with Officers on the importance of the tree and the significant amenity value that will be lost as a result of its felling. However, on balance, the reasons put forward in support of felling were considered to outweigh this harm.

The lack of a requirement for a replacement is disappointing. Whilst it is accepted that such a replacement would not fully mitigate the loss of the Lime, replacement planting would have been welcome in view of the aims of the adopted Tree Strategy.

Case Officer: Sarah Hanson

TPO Plan:



Title: Tree Preservation Order – 7 Portway Close, Reading.

Date: MARCH 2001

Org No. E2037

Scale: 1:500



Reading
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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View from Berkeley Avenue:



View from Littlecote Drive:



View from Portway Close:



READING BOROUGH COUNCIL: APPEAL DECISION REPORT

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 24th April 2024

Ward: Kentwood

Appeal No: APP/E0345/W/22/3313424

Planning Ref: 220637/FUL

Site: Scours Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AX

Proposal: Proposed is drive-through restaurant (Use Class E (a,b)) and sui generis hot food take away, car parking, enhanced landscaping and access arrangements

Decision level: Committee decision on 07/09/2022

Method: Written representations

Decision: Appeal Allowed

Date Determined: 27/03/2024

Inspector: N Robinson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The appeal site related to an undeveloped, grassed parcel of land located to the south of Scours Lane, near the junction of Oxford Road, Wigmore Lane and Norcot Road.

1.2 In September 2022 the Planning Applications Committee concurred with the officer level recommendation to refuse planning permission for reasons summarised as:

1. Loss of undesignated open space, harm to character and appearance of the area and fragmentation of Green Links
2. Absence of legal agreement to secure proposed mitigating landscaping and wildlife habitat enhancements

1.3 The applicant appealed against this decision to the Planning Inspectorate.

2 SUMMARY OF DECISION

2.1 The Inspector considered the main issues to be:

- The effect of the proposal on the function of the green link and
- The character and appearance of the area and whether the proposal would deliver adequate landscape mitigation and wildlife enhancements

2.2 The Inspector acknowledged the open, grassed nature of the site, agreeing that it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and that it has a high visual amenity value. The Inspector agreed that the Green Links provide visual relief to the area.

2.3 The Inspector agreed that trees within the site (to be removed), have high amenity value and make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. The Inspector concluded, however, that on-site replacement planting proposed would adequately compensate for the trees to be lost, as well as resulting in a net gain in trees within the site as a whole.

2.4 The Inspector acknowledged that the proposal would result in an encroachment of built form at a key junction of Green Links. However, he concluded that as connectivity to other parts of the Green Link would remain, the proposal would not result in its fragmentation. The Inspector concluded that proposed planting and wildlife enhancements would enhance the biodiversity value and visual amenity of the site and that such measures would mitigate any harm arising from the encroachment into the Green Link.

2.5 The Inspector acknowledged that the proposal would introduce development within the prominent area of open space. However, he concluded that the proposed planting would retain a visual buffer to the highway without diminishing the softening function and visual relief provide by the site currently.

2.6 In overall conclusion, the Inspector concluded that the proposal would not result in a

fragmentation of the Green Link, would not harm the integrity and function of the wider Green network and would not harm the character and appearance of the area. The Inspector concluded that proposed on-site planting would enhance the visual amenities of the site and natural environment. Furthermore, the Inspector concluded that no S106 legal agreement was required to secure off-site ecological mitigation, as proposed on-site planting would provide an acceptable net gain.

Other Matters

2.7 Whilst not forming a reason for refusal of the application, the Inspector considered the impact of the proposals on flood risk, due to an objection received by the Environment Agency through the appeal process. The Inspector concluded that the risk of flooding had been properly considered, with no harm arising in this respect.

2.8 The Inspector also commented on other matters raised by third parties (but not considered as reasons for refusal by the Council), in relation to additional traffic, cooking odours, rodent problems, competition from nearby food operators and retail sequential test. None of the other issues were of a concern to the Inspector.

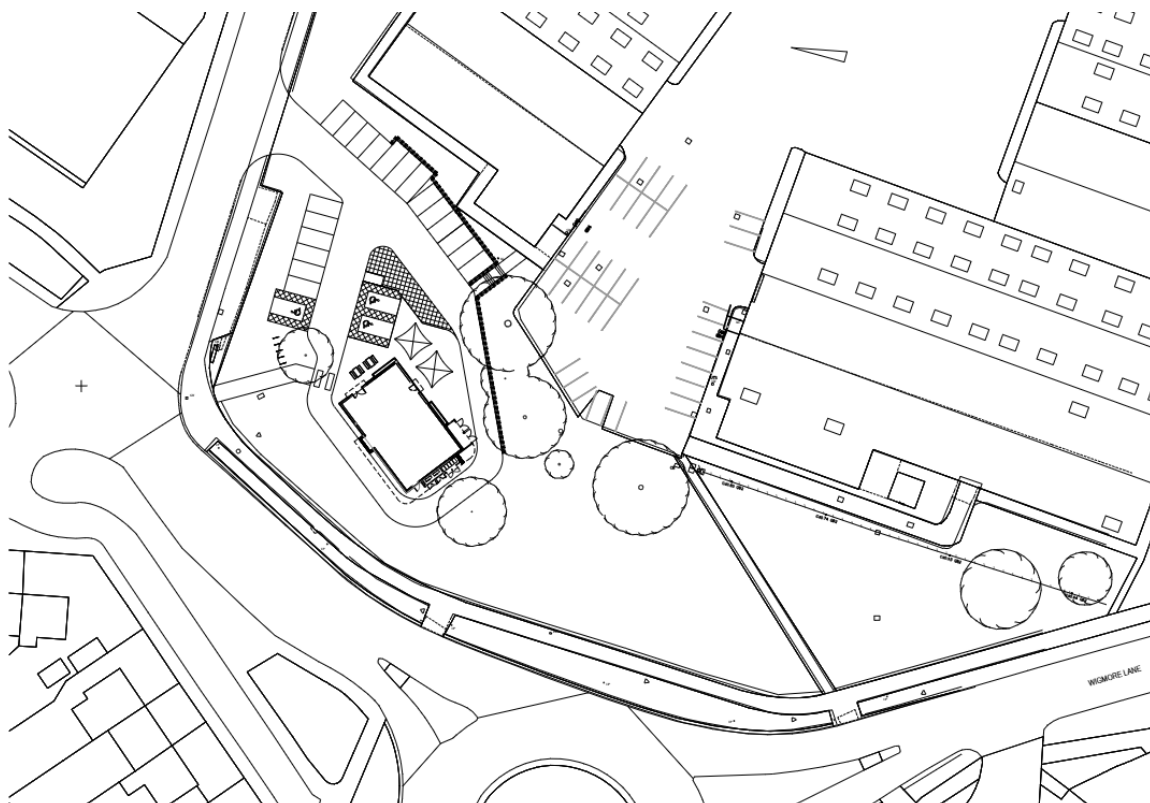
Conclusion

2.9 The Inspector disagreed with all the Council's reasons for refusal and concluded that the appeal should succeed. The majority of conditions imposed align with those recommended by officers during the course of the appeal. The Inspector did not consider a S106 legal agreement to be necessary to secure tree planting beyond the site boundary.

Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services Comment:

Having considered the Inspectors findings, officers remain of the view that the proposal would be visually harmful and this is therefore a disappointing decision. However, the Inspector has addressed all material considerations in his decision and is entitled to reach a different conclusion on the merits of the case.

Case officer: Ethne Humphreys



Planning Applications Committee



Reading
Borough Council
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24 April 2024

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 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 £1,888,297, made up of the following:

(Class E (formally office) Prior Approvals - £ 1,703,370

Householder Prior Approvals - £93,040

Retail Prior Approvals - £16,840:

Demolition Prior Approval - £6,623

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 - £2942

Figures since last report:

Class E (formerly office) Prior Approvals - £656

Householder Prior Approvals - £220

- 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 14 March 2024 to 12 April 2024

Type:	How many received since last report:	Loss in possible fee income:
Householder Prior Approvals	2	£220
Class E Prior Approvals	2	£656
Demolition Prior Approval	0	£
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	n/a
Prior Notification	0	n/a
Telecommunications Prior Approval	0	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	£
TOTAL	4	£876

Table 2 - Applications decided since 14 March 2024 to 12 April 2024

Type:	Approved	Refused	Not Required	Withdrawn	Non Determination
Householder Prior Approvals	0	0	0	0	0
Class E Prior Approvals	0	0	0	2	0
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	2	0	0	0	0
Prior Notification/ Other	0	0	0	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Dwellings on detached block of flats	0	0	0	0	0
Householder Additional Storey	0	0	0	0	0
New 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	2	0	0	2	0

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Planning Applications Committee

24 April 2024



Reading
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Title	CONSULTATION ON SPEEDING UP PLANNING DECISION MAKING
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	Inclusive Economy
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To agree that officers should provide the responses to the consultation questions at Appendix I as set out in an Update Report to be provided.

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To advise Committee about a current consultation by the Government on ideas to speed up the process for making planning decisions. The consultation is available to view at [An accelerated planning system - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/accelerated-planning-system)
- 1.2 The consultation paper is generally looking at ways to restrict the use of extensions of time to the long established 13 weeks for major applications and 8 weeks for all other types with a penalty requiring local planning authorities (LPA) to refund fees if the target date is not met. The deadline for responding to the consultation is 1 May 2024.
- 1.3 Officers are preparing responses and these are to be provided in an Update Report. The list of questions are set out in Appendix I.

2. Background

2.1 The current consultation seeks views on proposals to:

1. introduce a new Accelerated Planning Service for major commercial applications with a decision time in 10 weeks and fee refunds if this is not met
2. change the use of extensions of time, including ending their use for householder applications and only allowing one extension of time for other developments, which links to a proposed new performance measure for local planning authority speed of decision-making against statutory time limits
3. expand the current simplified written representations appeals process for householder and minor commercial appeals to more appeals

4. implement section 73B for applications to vary planning permissions and the treatment of overlapping permissions

3. Proposed changes

3.1 Introduce for major commercial applications an option of paying a higher fees for an Accelerated Planning Service with a decision time of 10 weeks and fee refunded if this is not met.

3.1.1. The supporting text for the consultation explains that local planning authorities will be required to offer an Accelerated Planning Service for major commercial applications. In exchange for paying a higher planning fee the LPA will be required to determine these applications within 10 weeks (rather than the 13-week statutory time limit), with a guarantee that the fee would be refunded if the application is not determined within this timescale. The consultation also seeks opinion on how this could work.

3.1.2 Officers understand that the intention of the higher fee is to help to pay for more staff to meet the shorter timescales for without it most planning offices would struggle. If planning offices do not have the capacity to process applications in time currently it will not help to make the timescale shorter and then still have to refund fees after 10 weeks of work (potentially) if a deadline is not met. As Councillors know it is often the applicants who want the extra time to respond to an objection raised or who delay an application by not providing necessary information. The consultation seems to ignore the hurdle of applications sometimes needing to be decided by a Committee and that the frequency of these meetings for most LPAs would make achieving a 10 week decision timetable challenging.

3.1.3 The higher planning fee would be set by central government. As far as the fee refund is concerned government are proposing that either all or a proportion of the statutory application fee must be refunded by the LPA to the applicant if the application is not determined within the 10-week timescale, even if an extension of time has been agreed. This is different to the existing Planning Guarantee where a refund is not provided if an extension of time has been agreed.

3.2 End the use of extension of time for householder applications and only allowing one extension of time for other developments

3.2.1 The consultation paper accepts that the introduction of allowing an extension of time agreement has been a good thing by allowing more time for the consideration of important issues raised during the application process and to enable changes to be made to make a scheme acceptable. As currently, if an application is determined within an agreed extended time period, it is deemed to be determined 'in time' it does not count against the overall performance of a local planning authority.

3.2.2 The change is proposed due to concerns that some authorities are using extensions to delay in decision-making to mask poor performance and an easy way to not attempt to determine applications within the statutory time limit.

- 3.2.3 To curb the use of extensions unless justified it is proposed that for major applications 50% or more of applications should be determined within the statutory time limit and for non-major applications 60% or more of applications should be determined within the statutory time limit.
- 3.2.4 Performance will be monitored and those authorities that fail to meet the above are at risk of being designated and the ability to make planning decisions removed from them .
- 3.3 The consultation also includes proposals to expand the current simplified written representations appeals process for householder and minor commercial appeals to more appeals and minor changes to s.73 permissions.

4. Officer comment

- 4.1 To be provided in an Update Report.

5. Contribution to strategic aims

- 5.1 New development that meets adopted policy requirements and the consideration of applications for prior approval and planning permission contribute to creating a healthy environment with thriving communities and helps the economy within the Borough, identified as the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan.

6. Community engagement

- 6.1 Statutory consultation takes place on planning applications and applications for prior approval. The Council's website also allows the public to view information submitted and comments on planning applications and applications for prior approval.

7. Equality impact assessment

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

8. Environmental and climate implications

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

9. Legal implications

9.1 There are no apparent legal implications arising from the proposals in the consultation.

10. Financial Implications

10.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report although we welcome the commitment in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to increase application fees which will help to better resource the planning service. The additional pressures on the planning service of requiring decisions within the deadlines, and the financial and other penalties for not doing so have the potential to impact on the Council financially. The requirement for additional staffing will be a financial impact

Appendix 1 – Questions to be Responded to (recommended answers to be provided in an Update Report).

Question 1. Do you agree with the proposal for an Accelerated Planning Service?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 2. Do you agree with the initial scope of applications proposed for the Accelerated Planning Service (Non-EIA major commercial development)?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 3. Do you consider there is scope for EIA development to also benefit from an Accelerated Planning Service?

Yes / No / Don't Know. If yes, what do you consider would be an appropriate accelerated time limit?

Question 4. Do you agree with the proposed exclusions from the Accelerated Planning Service – applications subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment, within the curtilage or area of listed buildings and other designated heritage assets, Scheduled Monuments and World Heritage Sites, and applications for retrospective development or minerals and waste development?

Yes / No / Don't Know

Question 5. Do you agree that the Accelerated Planning Service should:

a) have an accelerated 10-week statutory time limit for the determination of eligible applications

Yes / No / Don't know. If not, please confirm what you consider would be an appropriate accelerated time limit

b) encourage pre-application engagement

Yes / No / Don't know

c) encourage notification of statutory consultees before the application is made

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 6. Do you consider that the fee for Accelerated Planning Service applications should be a percentage uplift on the existing planning application fee?

Yes / No / Don't know. If yes, please specify what percentage uplift you consider appropriate, with evidence if possible.

Question 7. Do you consider that the refund of the planning fee should be:

a. the whole fee at 10 weeks if the 10-week timeline is not met

- b. the premium part of the fee at 10 weeks if the 10-week timeline is not met, and the remainder of the fee at 13 weeks
- c. 50% of the whole fee at 10 weeks if the 10-week timeline is not met, and the remainder of the fee at 13 weeks
- d. none of the above (please specify an alternative option)
- e. don't know

Please give your reasons

Question 8. Do you have views about how statutory consultees can best support the Accelerated Planning Service?

Please explain

Question 9. Do you consider that the Accelerated Planning Service could be extended to:

- a. major infrastructure development

Yes / No / Don't Know

- b. major residential development

Yes/ No / Don't know

- c. any other development

Yes / No / Don't know. If yes, please specify

If yes to any of the above, what do you consider would be an appropriate accelerated time limit?

Question 10. Do you prefer:

- a. the discretionary option (which provides a choice for applicants between an Accelerated Planning Service or a standard planning application route)
- b. the mandatory option (which provides a single Accelerated Planning Service for all applications within a given definition)
- c. neither
- d. don't know

Question 11. In addition to a planning statement, is there any other additional statutory information you think should be provided by an applicant in order to opt-in to a discretionary Accelerated Planning Service?

Question 12. Do you agree with the introduction of a new performance measure for speed of decision-making for major and non-major applications based on the proportion of decisions made within the statutory time limit only?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 13. Do you agree with the proposed performance thresholds for assessing the proportion of decisions made within the statutory time limit (50% or more for major applications and 60% or more for non-major applications)?

Yes / No / Don't know If not, please specify what you consider the performance thresholds should be.

Question 14. Do you consider that the designation decisions in relation to performance for speed of decision-making should be made based on:

- a) the new criteria only – i.e. the proportion of decisions made within the statutory time limit; or
- b) both the current criteria (proportion of applications determined within the statutory time limit or an agreed extended time period) and the new criteria (proportion of decisions made within the statutory time limit) with a local planning authority at risk of designation if they do not meet the threshold for either or both criteria
- c) neither of the above
- d) don't know

Please give your reasons

Question 16. Do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements for the new measure for assessing speed of decision-making performance?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 17. Do you agree that the measure and thresholds for assessing quality of decision-making performance should stay the same?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 18. Do you agree with the proposal to remove the ability to use extension of time agreements for householder applications?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 19. What is your view on the use of repeat extension of time agreements for the same application? Is this something that should be prohibited?

Question 20. Do you agree with the proposals for the simplified written representation appeal route?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 21. Do you agree with the types of appeals that are proposed for inclusion through the simplified written representation appeal route? If not, which types of appeals should be excluded from the simplified written representation appeal route?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 22. Are there any other types of appeals which should be included in a simplified written representation appeal route?

Yes / No / Don't know. Please specify.

Question 23. Would you raise any concern about removing the ability for additional representations, including those of third parties, to be made during the appeal stage on cases that would follow the simplified written representations procedure?

Yes / No / Don't know. Please give your reasons.

Question 24. Do you agree that there should be an option for written representation appeals to be determined under the current (non-simplified) process in cases where the Planning Inspectorate considers that the simplified process is not appropriate?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 25. Do you agree that the existing time limits for lodging appeals should remain as they currently are, should the proposed simplified procedure for determining written representation planning appeals be introduced?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 26. Do you agree that guidance should encourage clearer descriptors of development for planning permissions and section 73B to become the route to make general variations to planning permissions (rather than section 73)?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 27. Do you have any further comments on the scope of the guidance?

Question 28. Do you agree with the proposed approach for the procedural arrangements for a section 73B application?

Yes / No / Don't know. If not, please explain why you disagree

Question 29. Do you agree that the application fee for a section 73B application should be the same as the fee for a section 73 application?

Yes / No / Don't know. If not, please explain why you disagree and set out an alternative approach

Question 30. Do you agree with the proposal for a 3 band application fee structure for section 73 and 73B applications?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 31. What should be the fee for section 73 and 73B applications for major development (providing evidence where possible)?

Question 32. Do you agree with this approach for section 73B permissions in relation to Community Infrastructure Levy?

Yes / No / Don't know

Question 33. Can you provide evidence about the use of the 'drop in' permissions and the extent the Hillside judgment has affected development?

Question 34. To what extent could the use of section 73B provide an alternative to the use of drop in permissions?

Question 35. If section 73B cannot address all circumstances, do you have views about the use of a general development order to deal with overlapping permissions related to large scale development granted through outline planning permission?

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Planning Applications Committee

24 April 2024



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PROPOSED TREE WORK TO ONE PROTECTED COUNCIL TREE IN ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD, ST MARY'S BUTTS, READING
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Sarah Hanson, Natural Environment Officer
Lead councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Ward	Abbey
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To approve the proposed tree works subject to no substantive objections being received within the consultation period.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. To report to Committee on proposed work to one Horse chestnut tree; that being T11 of TPO 10/06 (copy of TPO plan attached – Appendix 1).

2. Policy context

- 2.1. The Council's Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

- 2.2. These themes are underpinned by "Our Foundations" explaining the ways we work at the Council:

- People first
- Digital transformation
- Building self-reliance
- Getting the best value
- Collaborating with others

- 2.3. Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council's website](#). These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

2. Background

- 2.1 The tree is one of many protected in the Churchyard and maintained by the Council under a long-standing agreement with the Diocese. It has previously

been pollarded; the appropriate management for such trees being to re-pollard on a regular basis, normally every 3-5 years. An inspection by Reading Borough Council's Tree Surveyor in Streetscene identified some decay and cavities ((also noted on previous surveys) and concluded that re-pollarding was due and prudent. On 14 March 2024 an application was received from the Tree Surveyor seeking consent for the re-pollarding of the Horse chestnut (application reference 240336).

- 2.2 The work is in line with good arboricultural practice, the tree being historically managed as a pollard.
- 2.3 As the Council-maintained tree in question is subject to a Tree Preservation Order, a formal tree works application is required for the works to be approved.
- 2.3 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires applications for works to protected Council owned or maintained trees to be decided by a Committee of the Council which is not responsible for managing the land to which the application relates.
- 2.4 The law also requires a public notice to be displayed for at least 21 days giving details of the proposed works and contact details for any comments to be sent.
- 2.5 For information only, a crown reduction is proposed to the non-TPO Holm Oak on the north-east corner of the Church, back to previous pruning points. This is in line with good tree management, particularly given the fungal fruiting bodies present and increasing decay.

3. Result of consultation

- 3.1 A site Notice was attached to the Horse chestnut tree on 12 April 2024 and will be left for the required 21-day period. An update on any public comments received so far will be provided at Planning Applications Committee.

4. Conclusion and recommendation

- 4.1 The works proposed are necessary in order to appropriately manage this tree. Subject to no substantive objections or comments being received as a result of the public notice, it is recommended that the works be approved.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Preparing, serving confirmation and contravention of TPO's are services dealt with by the Council's Legal Section.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 None of this report. It is understood that works to the tree would be funded by the Council from existing budgets.

7. Equality impact assessment

- 7.1 None required.

8. Contribution to strategic aims

8.1 The aim of the TPO's is to secure trees of high amenity value for present and future generations to enjoy. Trees have multiple environmental benefits creating cleaner, greener and more attractive places to live. This contributes to creating a healthy environment as identified as one of the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan. See Section 2 of this report for more information.

9. Environmental & Climate implications

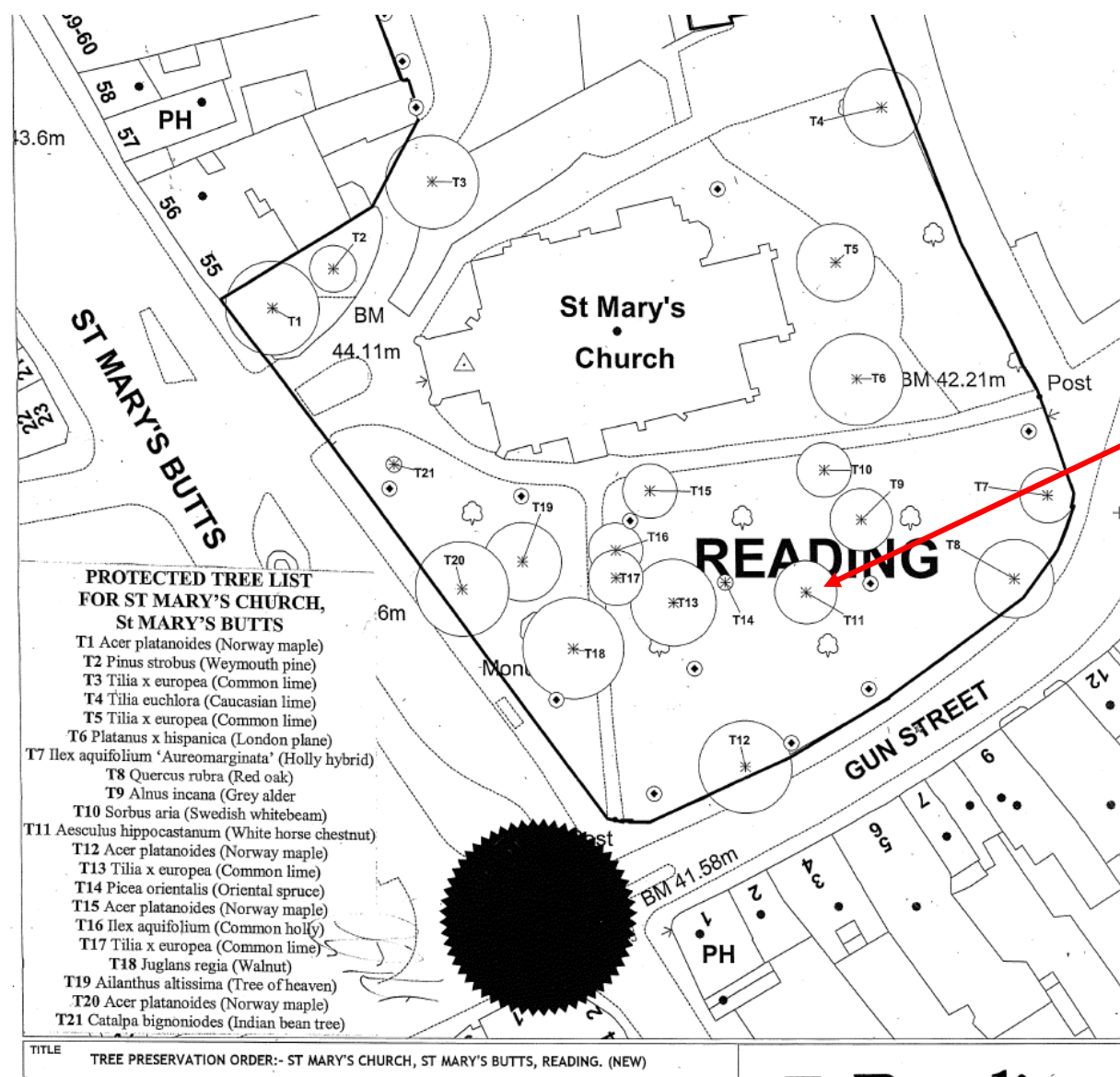
9.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

9.2 Trees have multiple environmental benefits that include flood alleviation, wildlife benefits, air pollution mitigation and air cooling. The proposed works are not expected to substantially impact the tree's contribution to these multiple environmental benefits, as the intention of the works is to enable the tree to be retained in preference to felling.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.1 Register of Tree Preservation Orders

Appendix 1 - TPO 10/06 (plan)





T11 Horse Chestnut



non-TPO Holm Oak (for information only)

24 April 2024



Reading

Borough Council

Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	231190/FUL and 231191/LBC
Site Address:	20-30 Kings Road, Reading
Proposed Development	<p>231190/FUL Change of use from E(g)(i) to F1(g) Law Courts for both The Carbon Building and Highbridge House. Fitout of the buildings for use as a Law Court, installation of a new internal lift and new plant to existing roof plant enclosure. New gate and external ramped entrance to the rear of The Carbon Building. Streetscape security features including bollards to footpaths and obscuring film to windows.</p> <p>231191/LBC Listed building Consent for alterations to Highbridge House, re-opening of opening in rear wall at ground floor and new opening at first floor level to form connections to The Carbon Building</p>
Applicant	Ministry of Justice
Report author	Ethne Humphreys
Deadline:	An extension of time has been agreed with the applicant until 26 th April 2024
Recommendation	GRANT full planning permission GRANT listed building consent
Conditions (summary) (to include)	<p><i>231190/FUL</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Limit – 3 years 2. Approved plans 3. No development shall commence on site until details of the method of storage and proposed re-use of all original bricks have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All bricks shall be stored and re-used in accordance with the approved details at all times thereafter. 4. No development shall commence on site until details of the privacy films have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details at all times thereafter. 5. No development shall commence on site, including any works of demolition, until a site specific Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Works in accordance. 6. The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until all bicycle parking facilities have been provided in

accordance with the approved plans. The facility shall be kept available for bicycle parking at all times thereafter.

7. The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until all vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The spaces shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter.
8. The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until the refuse and recycling storage facility has been implemented fully in accordance with those details shown on the approved plans. The facility shall be vermin proof and retained solely for storage of refuse and recycling at all times thereafter.
9. Notwithstanding the submitted details, no development shall commence on site until drawings showing the position of all bollards to be installed within the footway have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No bollard shall be installed otherwise than in accordance with the approved details at any time.
10. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development not previously identified, development shall be halted on that part of the site the contamination reported in writing to the Local Planning Authority.
11. No mechanical plant shall be installed until a noise assessment of the proposed mechanical plant has been submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Installed in accordance.
12. No development shall commence on site until a copy of an Interim BREEAM Certificate in accordance with the BREEAM Sustainability Standard demonstrating compliance with a minimum standard of BREEAM 50% Very Good rating has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development in accordance.
13. The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until a copy of a Final BREEAM Certificate in accordance with the BREEAM Sustainability Standard following a post-construction stage review carried out by a licensed assessor has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
14. No construction, demolition or associated deliveries shall take place outside the hours of 0800hrs to 1800hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 0800hrs to 1300hrs on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays without prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.
15. No materials or green waste produced as a result of the clearance of the site, demolition works or construction works associated with the development hereby approved shall be burnt on site.
16. Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking or re-enacting

	<p>that Order with or without modification), the premises shall be used for Class F1(g) Law Court Use only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in the same Use Class of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification.</p> <p>17. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved an End User Phase Employment, Skills and Training Plan (ESP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority</p> <p><i>231191/LBC</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Limit Listed Building 2. Works specified 3. No development shall commence on site until details of the method of storage and proposed re-use of all original bricks have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All bricks shall be stored and re-used in accordance with the approved details at all times thereafter. 4. No development shall commence on site until details of the privacy films have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details at all times thereafter. 5. All new external and internal works and finishes, and any works of making good, shall match the existing original fabric in respect of using materials of a matching form, composition and consistency, detailed execution and finished appearance, except where indicated otherwise on the drawings hereby approved.
<p>Informatives</p>	<p><i>231190/FUL</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms and Conditions • Building Regulations • No signage approved; requires advertisement consent • Pre-commencement Conditions • CIL • Highways • Access Construction • Construction • Encroachment • Positive and Proactive <p><i>231191/LBC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms and Conditions • Building Regulations • For the avoidance of doubt, no other works are approved except those as authorised by this Consent • Positive and Proactive

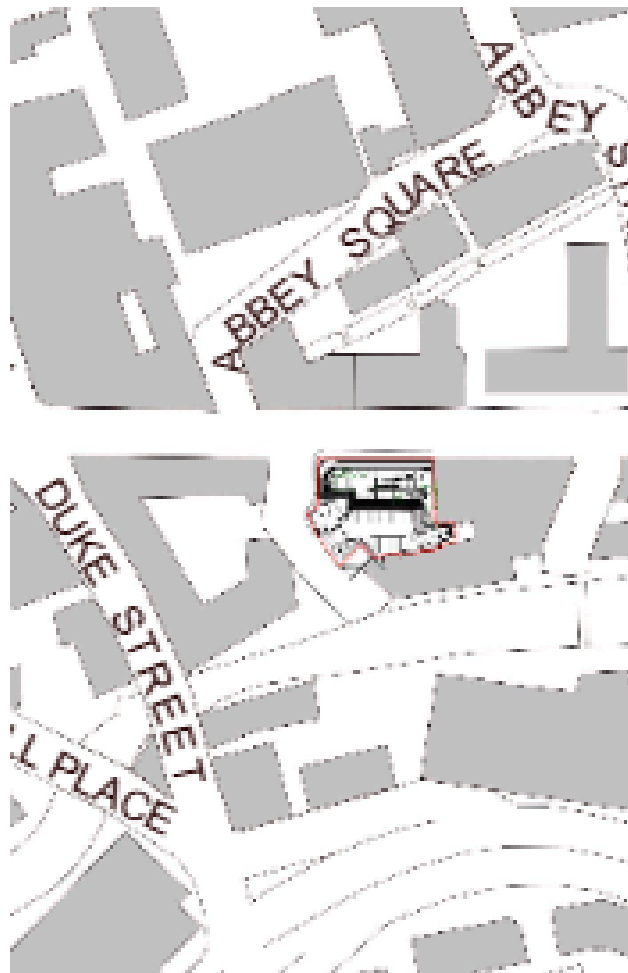
1. Executive summary

The proposal seeks planning permission and listed building consent for the change of use of the Carbon Building and Highbridge House from office use to law court to locate the County and Family Courts.

- 1.1 The proposals would have no unacceptable heritage impacts, nor would there be any unacceptable impacts on neighbouring properties nor adverse transport impacts. There are no significant detrimental effects of the proposal and as such the proposals are recommended for approval subject to the conditions as set out above.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1 The site relates to 20-30 Kings Road located on the corner of Kings Road and Highbridge Wharf. The main building frontage faces onto King's Road, with the main entrance facing west towards the city centre at the corner of King's Street. The site consists of two buildings; the Carbon Building which is a five storey office building and Highbridge House, a three storey Grade II listed building and dates from the early 19th century with traditional red brick, timber sash windows and tiled roof. The most notable feature is the stone portico over the front door.



Site Location Plan (not to scale)



Front view of the site

2.2 The Carbon Building was until recently used as an office building however it is currently unoccupied since it was refurbished in 2020 together with the adjoining Highbridge House. The two buildings are connected by an internal link at ground floor level however this was blocked during the recent refurbishments.

2.3 The site is within the central area of Reading Borough. The site is just north of the River Kennet and falls within an area of archaeological potential and an Air Quality Management Area. Part of the site on the western side falls within the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The area is characterised by large buildings mainly in retail and commercial office use.

2.4 The Listing for Highbridge House is as follows:

“HIGH BRIDGE WHARF 1. 5128 House at rear of Nos 18 and 20 Kings Road SU 7173 SE 3/499 II 2. Early C19 detached. 3 storeys. 3 bays, glazing bar sashes. Red brick with stone cills and stone courses over 2nd floor to flat eaves. Hipped slate roof with 4 side chimneys. Projecting Greek Doric porch with fluted columns etc and entablature. 6 panel door with plain rectangular overlight. Ground floor windows blocked and sliding garage doors inserted between.”

2.5 The application is being considered at Planning Applications Committee as the floorspace exceeds 1000sqm.

3. The Proposal

The proposal is for the change of use from Class E(g)(i) office to Class F1(g) Law Court. The proposal includes the following:

- A new ramped entrance to the rear of the building and a new canopy
- A new ramp to the side of Highbridge House
- Change in fenestration using obscured window films to the existing glazing
- Streetscape security features such as bollards
- New gated entrance into the car park to replace the existing and provide level access into the side entrance of Highbridge House

In addition, internal works would include partitioning of internal floor spaces to create smaller office spaces and installation of an internal lift within the Carbon building. New plant equipment would also be installed/

Other works include reopening of the old connection between the two buildings and a new first floor structural opening to form a new link between the buildings.

4. Planning history

4.1 The site history is extensive. However, the most recent and relevant is considered to be:

171428/FUL Various external alterations to Kings Wharf including new ground floor entrance on corner of Kings Road and Highbridge Wharf, canopy at first floor level, louvres at first to fourth floor level, removal of roof level rotunda and partial removal of ground floor entrance attached to Highbridge House, new cycle storage and associated works. Permitted.

171429/LBC Various internal and external alterations to Highbridge House, including partial removal of existing attached entrance to Kings Wharf. Permitted.

171815/FUL Installation of 2 condenser units at roof level of the link building between Kings Wharf and Highbridge House, and associated works. Permitted.

171816/LBC Internal and external alterations associated with installation of 2 condenser units at roof level of the link building between Kings Wharf and Highbridge House, and associated works.

5. Consultations

Statutory & Non-Statutory

5.1 Conservation Officer: Further to revised plans, no objection, subject to conditions. Discussed further below.

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

5.3 Environmental Protection: No objection, subject to conditions. Discussed further below.

5.4 Conservation Area Advisory Committee: No comments received.

5.5 Reading Civic Society: No comments received.

Public:

5.6 Notification letters were sent to nearby properties, a site notice was displayed, and a press notice published. No neighbour letters of representation have been received.

6. Legal context

- 6.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 6.2 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 6.4 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).
- 6.5 Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

- 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 and beautiful places
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaption to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
- EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy

- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
- CR1: Definition of Central Reading
- CR2: Design in Central Reading

Supplementary Planning Documents

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

Other relevant documentation/guidance/legislation

- Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal
- Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic England, 2016)
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015b)
- Principles of Conservation (Historic England, 2008)
- Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015)
- National Design Guide: Planning practice for beautiful, enduring and successful places (2019)

7 Appraisal

Land Use Considerations

- 7.1 The NPPF states that LPAs should “encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value”.
- 7.2 The site is not located within the office core and nor is it within a core employment area. Nevertheless., the buildings would remain in employment use and there are no in-principle land use issues, subject to other material considerations discussed below.

Design and Heritage Considerations

- 7.3 Policies CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks to ensure that new development enhances and preserves the local character and Policy CR2 (Design in Central Reading) seeks to acceptable relationships between buildings in the town centre are created. Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) states that historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced and Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) states that the special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced and that development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 7.4 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2023 details that decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment.

- 7.5 Paragraph 205 of the NPPF 2023 details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 7.6 Paragraph 206 of the NPPF 2023 details 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.
- 7.8 Paragraph 208 of the NPPF 2023 details 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 including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.9 The site is surrounded by multi storey retail and commercial office buildings with varying designs and styles comprising a mix of both traditional red brick Victorian buildings and contemporary modern structures.
- 7.10 The majority of the proposed external works would be limited to the rear of the site and not considered to have any adverse impact on the character of the building nor harm the appearance of the immediate surrounding area.
- 7.11 Detailed section and plan drawings in relation to the proposed works to the rear elevation/rear wall of the listed building were requested and provided during the course of the application. Internally, the proposed modified openings at the ground and first floor rear walls would refer to the original door and windows with larger area resulting in little loss of historic fabric. It was noted during the site visit that the existing modern decorative brick slip lining is blocking the original brickwork of the listed building. The revised proposal includes removal of this unsympathetic feature, repairing and exposing the original wall. As such, this would contribute to the historic and architectural interest of Highbridge House, balancing the low-level harm on historic fabric. The Council's Conservation Officer concludes that the impact of the internal works would cause neutral harm to the significance of the listed building.
- 7.12 Externally, revisions made to the proposed ramp mean it would be modest in scale with a simple design and appropriate materials. It would not attach to or touch Highbridge House, which is appropriate. The design and material specification for the new timber and timber clad gates is acceptable.
- 7.13 The Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed that the proposals would result in no substantial harm to the special historic and architectural interest of the listed building, with minimal/limited harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 7.14 Conditions are proposed requiring details and sample of the proposed privacy film/reflective screening. In accordance with Policies CC7, EN1 and EN3.

Residential Amenity

- 7.15 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to ensure development does not cause harm to the living environment of existing properties, in terms of loss of privacy, overlooking and visual dominance, amongst other matters. Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water

Resources) seeks to protect surrounding occupiers from the impact of pollution. Policy CR6 (Living in Central Area) seeks to safeguard neighbour amenity from potential noise disturbance.

- 7.16 Given the nature of the proposals, they are not considered to result in any material loss of amenity to any nearby property through overbearing effects or loss of privacy.
- 7.17 Obscure films are proposed to be added to existing windows for operational privacy, given the nature of the proposals. This is not considered to significantly reduce natural light for users of the buildings.
- 7.18 A condition is proposed to be attached requiring submission of a noise assessment prior to installation of any mechanical plant. There are no Environmental Protection objections to the proposals. In accordance with Policies CC8, EN15 and EN17.

Transport

- 7.19 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 Parking Standards and Design SPD sets out guidance in respect of parking provision.
- 7.20 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.
- 7.21 The proposed development site is accessed via Highbridge Wharf from Kings Road which is part of the Red Route 'no stopping' corridor. Directly outside the property fronting Kings Road is a loading bay and pay and display and disabled bays. The Council's Residential Permit Scheme also operates in the surrounding area, thereby restricting unauthorised on street parking.
- 7.22 Policy TR5 states that development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport. Local parking standards are set out in the RBC, Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which takes into account the accessibility of the site. There are no adopted parking standards for this type of use. Therefore, the proposal is considered on its own merits considering business operations and local circumstances such as access to public transport, the availability of parking and on-street parking regulations.
- 7.23 The site currently provides 16 parking spaces and the proposal illustrates 14 parking spaces which includes 1 disabled bay located within the car park at the rear of the site.
- 7.24 Considering the sustainability of the site, Transport Officers are satisfied that the proposed change of use is unlikely to have a significant impact on the trips and parking demand generated by the premise. On street parking in the vicinity of the site is either restricted or regulated. The site is in close proximity to public car parks and, therefore, any increase in parking demand would not be accommodated on street. In view of this the proposed parking provision is acceptable. Notwithstanding, confirmation was sought

as to whether parking spaces are currently used by any residential units, and if it is to be used for staff only. The applicant confirmed that the adjacent residential units, Mayflower Court, have parking located under the building. Currently the parking for The Carbon Building is located within its own segregated boundary, with no access to residents.

- 7.25 The proposals include bollards to be located at 1.2m centres around the perimeter of the Carbon Building on the public footway. Transport officers confirmed that the proposal would need to identify that the bollards would be 450mm away from the kerb edge and that the footway would be retained (with footway width no less than 2m).
- 7.26 Transport officers confirmed that a layout plan would need to be submitted, to fully identify the impacts to the disabled bays. Revised plans were submitted reflecting the bollard alterations, as well as demonstrating the setting out on the pavements of the bollards. Transport officers confirmed that the bollard type is acceptable, and that adequate disabled access would be maintained but that additional drawings are required to show 450mm clearance from the kerb to the protruding edge of the bollard. It is considered that this can be dealt with via condition.
- 7.27 Pedestrian ramps are proposed for access to the building. The applicant confirmed that the proposed ramps comply with relevant British Standards Guidance in respect of disabled access which is appropriate.
- 7.28 Replacement gates are proposed and have been shown opening into the site which is acceptable as they would not obstruct the pavement when open.
- 7.29 The site currently provides 16 cycle storage spaces which are to be retained and are in covered and secure units. These would be for staff. Space for public cycle parking is limited due to security requirements.
- 7.30 Bin storage has been provided near the gates entrance. Refuse collection arrangements would be private which is typically standard for commercial use. Transport officers are satisfied that sufficient space exists, and that collection/storage would not harm highway safety.
- 7.31 A Construction Method Statement will be required given the town centre location. There are no Transport objections to the proposals, in accordance with Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5.

Sustainability

- 7.32 Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) requires new development to reduce the consumption of resources and materials and includes that *“All minor non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM ‘VERY GOOD’ standards, as a minimum”* and that *“Conversions to residential should incorporate water conservation measures.”*
- 7.33 The application submission confirms that it is targeting BREEAM ‘very good’, and a requirement to meet this standard will be secured via condition. In accordance with Policy CC2.

Contaminated Land

7.34 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.

7.35 The rear of the site lies on the site of an historic works. Environmental Protection officers recommend that should contamination be found at any time when carrying out the development, that works stop and the applicant submits an assessment to the LPA for review. This will be secured via condition.

Employment, Skills and Training Plan

7.36 As the scheme has a gross internal floorspace greater than 1000sqm it would be required to provide an Employment Skills and Training Plan for the 'User Phase', or equivalent financial contribution. In this instance the applicant has specified their intention to provide a site specific ESP. The exact form is, at the time of writing, under discussion with Reading UK CIC (who delivers ESPs on the behalf of the Borough Council). It is proposed in this instance, as it will not require a financial contribution to be secured, for this to be secured by a suitably worded condition rather than secured through s106 legal agreement.

Equality implications

7.37 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.

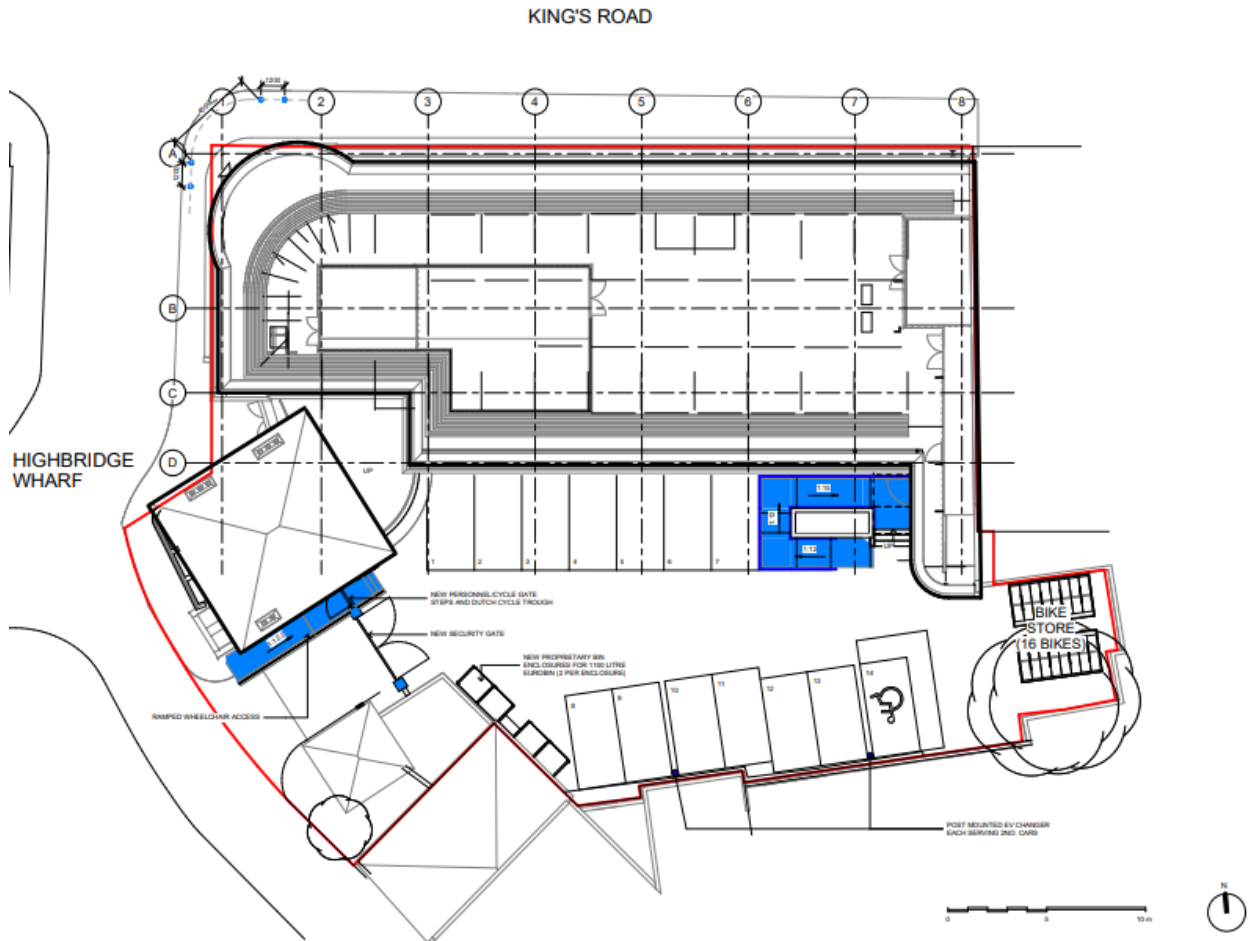
7.38 The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have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

8 Conclusion & Planning Balance

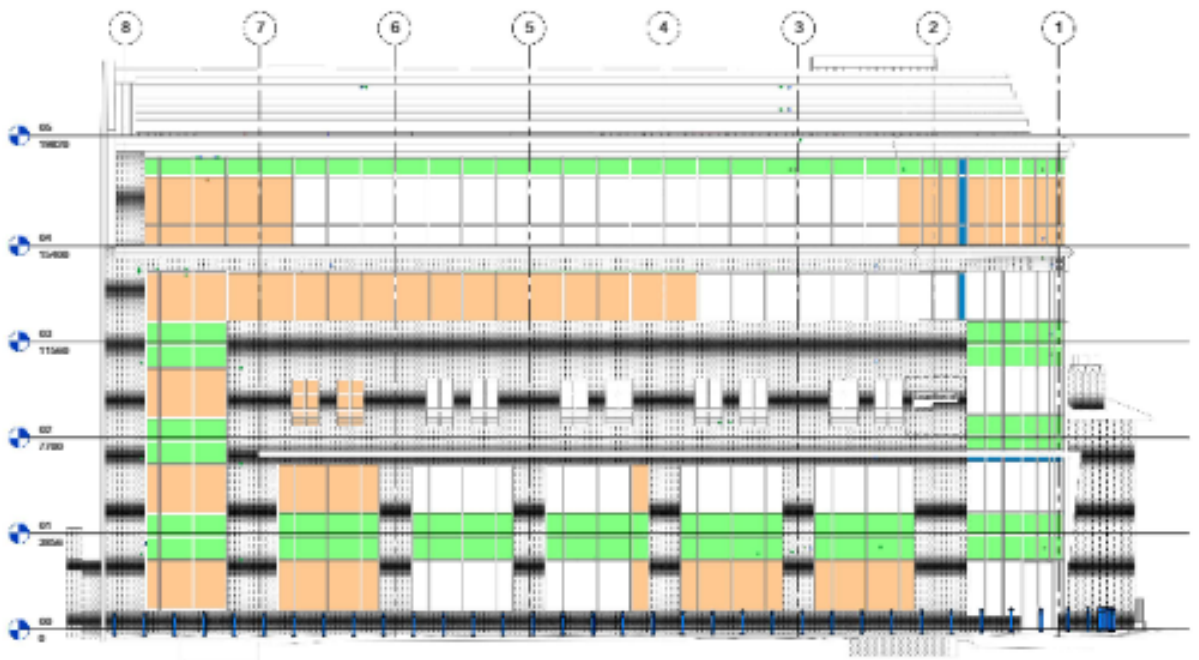
8.1 As with all applications for planning permission, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

8.2 The proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above, including the preservation of the listed building, the proposed use and the effect on local amenity and highway safety. The proposals would be acceptable in terms of environmental sustainability and would be acceptable in terms of equality. As such, full planning permission and listed building consent is recommended for approval.

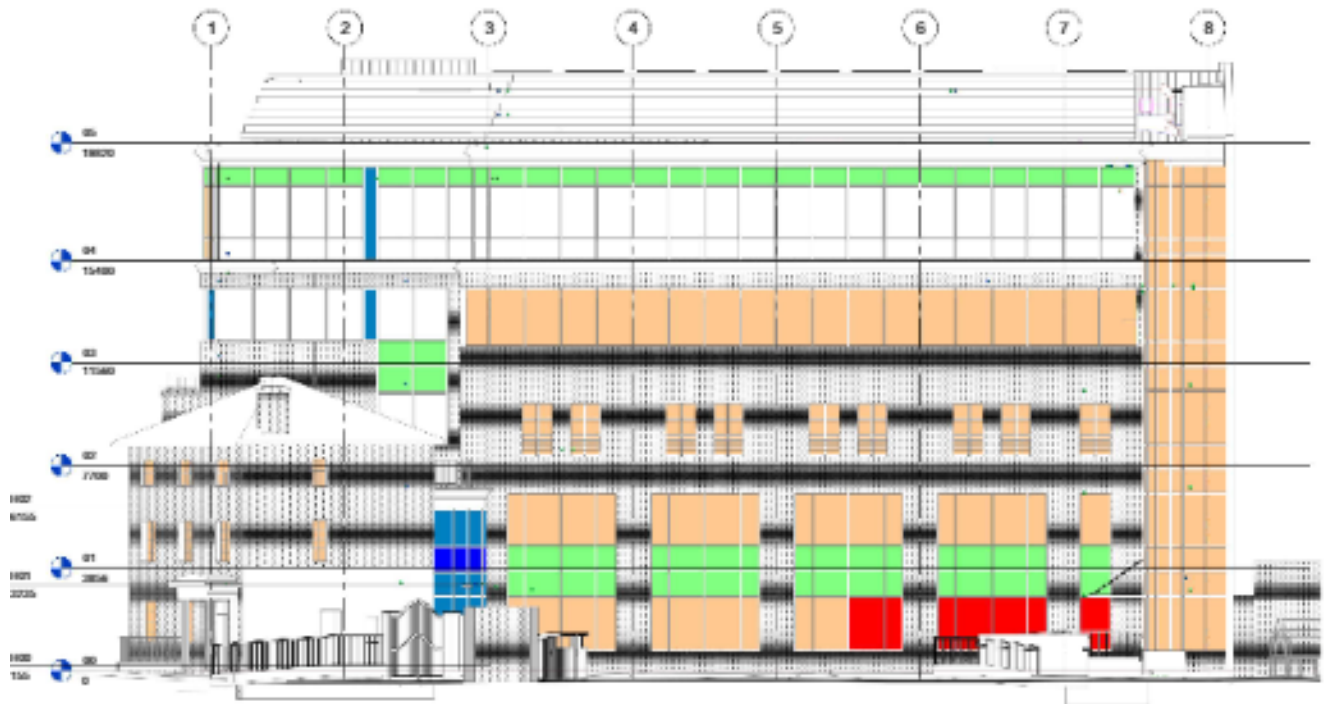
Proposed Plans shown below:



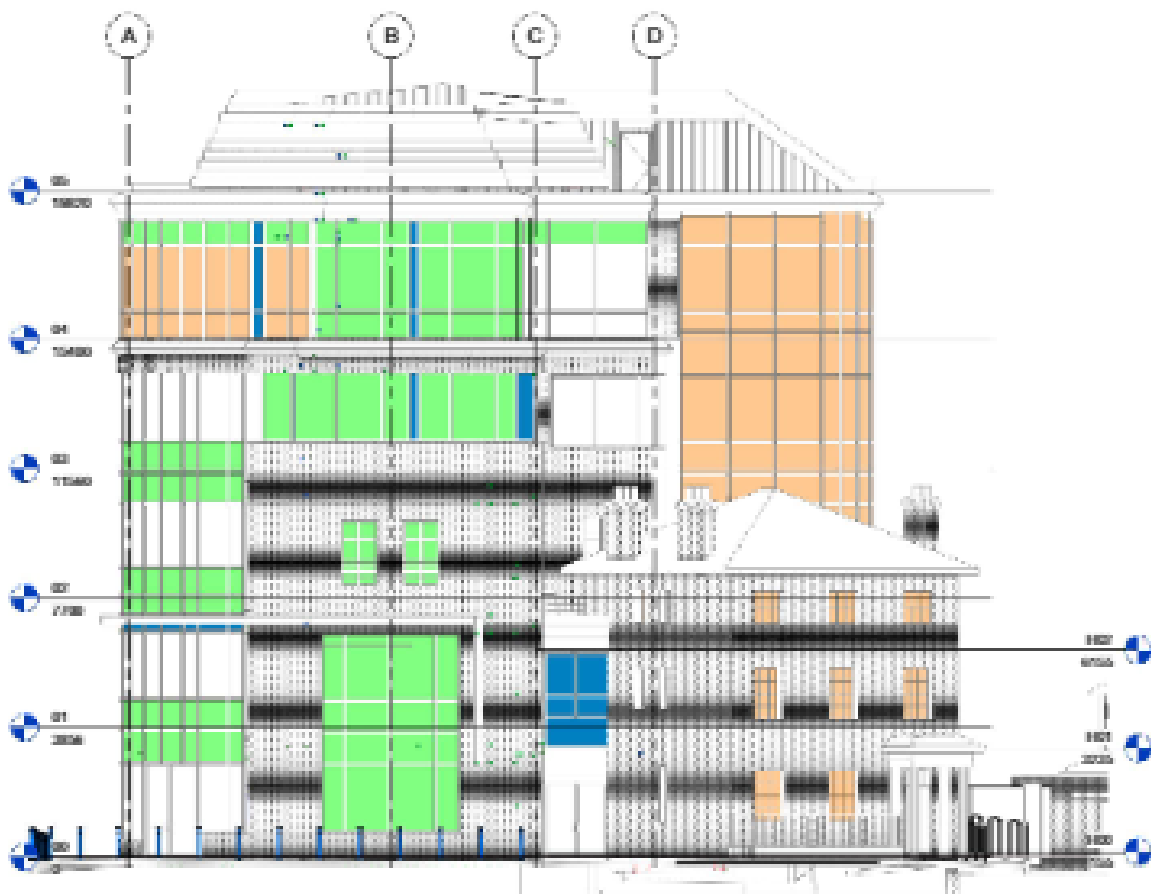
Proposed Site Plan



North Elevation Proposed



South Elevation Proposed



West Elevation Proposed

24 April 2024



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	240073/REG3
Site Address:	Victoria Recreation Park, George Street, Reading RG1 7HL
Proposed Development	Relocation of an existing children’s play area within Victoria Park and the reinstatement of the existing children’s play area to an informal open space.
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Marcie Rejwerska
Deadline:	26/04/2024 (Extension of time)
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to conditions as follows:
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Limit Standard 2. Approved Plans 3. Details of play equipment and materials to be submitted prior to commencement – height not to exceed 8m above ground level. 4. Arboricultural Method Statement (as specified) prior to commencement 5. Landscaping and planting details for 38 new trees to be submitted to secure Biodiversity Net Gain as outlined in submitted calculations prior to commencement 6. Contaminated land assessment to be submitted prior to commencement 7. Contaminated Land remediation scheme to be submitted and implemented prior to commencement (or in accordance with timetable). 8. No external lighting
Informatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Terms 2. Pre-commencement conditions 3. Building Control 4. Complaints about construction 5. Archaeology 6. CIL not liable 7. Positive and proactive - approval

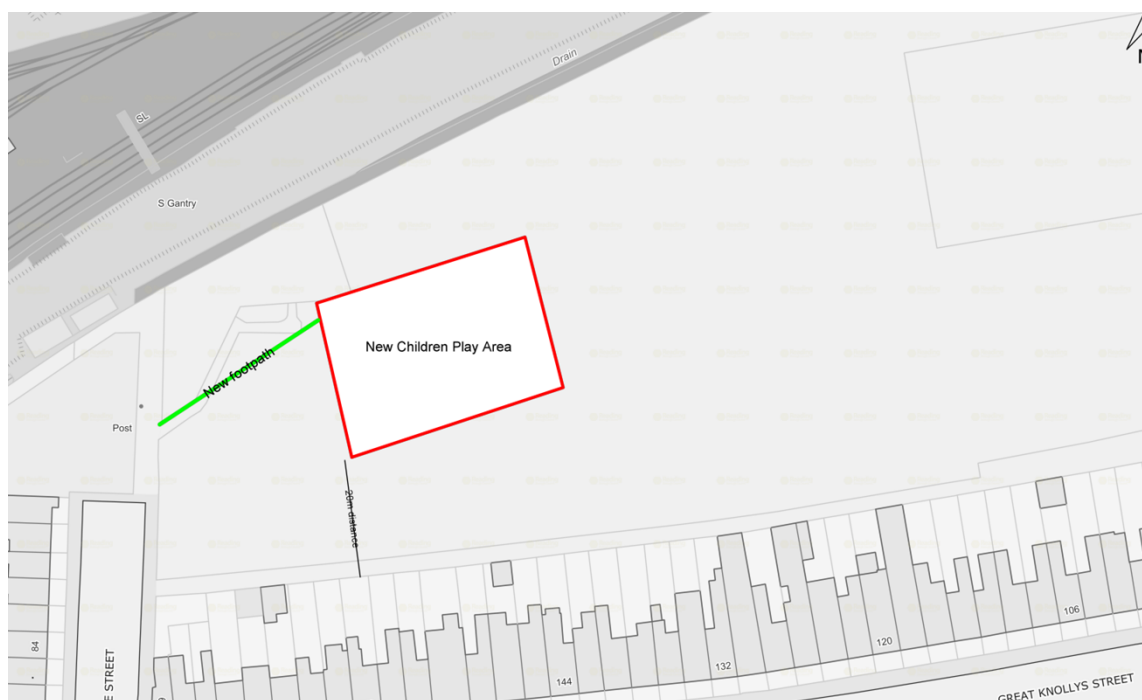
1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This report refers to the proposals for replacement and relocation of the playground at Victoria Recreation Park. The existing playground is nearing the end of its viable use and is made unsafe due to ground lifting as a result of the roots of the mature Lime trees in the park. The proposal includes the relocation of the playground away from the mature trees with new play equipment, and the existing playground area to be reinstated as grassland.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application is referred to Committee owing to it being works to land owned by the Council, and the application has been submitted by the Council's Environmental & Commercial Services team.
- 2.2. The application site comprises the public park north of Great Knollys Street, accessed from George Street to the west, and Hodsoll Road to the east. The park is bounded by railway tracks to the north. The park is identified within the Local Plan as a public open space under Policy EN7Wh. There is an existing playground in the north-west corner of the park, which is the subject of this application, and a MUGA field on the east side of the parking which is used by the neighbouring Civitas Academy.
- 2.3. The surrounding area is predominately residential, with the park bounded by properties on Great Knollys Street to the south, and George Street to the west. Civitas Academy is located on the east side of the park.
- 2.4. The current play area measures approx. 468.5m² and contains play equipment appropriate for small children. There are a number of mature Lime trees within the playground which are causing uplift of the hard surface creating a trip hazard. The play equipment itself is at the end of its life cycle and requires replacement.
- 2.5. There is play equipment to the east of the playground outside the hard-surface area, for bigger children including a zipline. This area is maintained as grassland. This informal play area measures approx. 750m².

Site location plan:



3. The Proposal

- 3.1. Planning permission is sought for relocation of the formal playground and installation of new playground equipment. The location of the existing playground is to be reinstated as grassland/mulch to improve the conditions for the existing trees. The proposal also includes realignment of the footpath from George Street to the playground.
- 3.2. The area of the proposed playground combines the area of the existing formal and informal play areas and will have a total area of 988m² and will provide play equipment for toddlers and juniors.
- 3.3. Limited details of the proposed play equipment have been provided as the final design and installation will depend on the outcome of a tender process. Some indicative information has been provided, such as that the ground surface is to be permeable tarmac, and the play equipment would be made of recyclable materials.
- 3.4. Submitted plans and documentation:
 - Planning Statement, dated January 2024, received 19/01/24
 - Flood Map for Planning, dated 22/11/23, received 19/01/24
 - Flood Risk Assessment, received 19/01/24
 - R3624/c Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, dated February 2024, received 08/02/24
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, Habitat Condition Assessment, John Wenman Consultancy, dated 23/02/24, received 26/02/24
 - Site Layout Plan, dated 01/03/24, received 01/03/24
 - 03596Rv4 Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement, Tamla Trees, dated March 2024, received 27/03/24

4. Planning history

- 4.1. 141490 – Demolition of existing light industrial units on the land to the east of Hodsoll Road and construction of a new 2FE Primary School including 200m² of community facilities along with the demolition of two temporary buildings and associated hard standings on Victoria Park – Application approved by Planning Applications Committee
- 4.2. 151304 – Application for approval of details reserved by condition (141490) – Split decision
- 4.3. 200881 – Application for approval of details reserved by condition 22 (surfacing and ground works for junior multi-sports playing pitch) of planning permission red. 141490 – Conditions discharged
- 4.4. No other relevant planning history.

5. Consultations

- 5.1. Non-Statutory
 - RBC Environmental Protection – The proposal is closer than the existing playground to residential dwellings therefore minimum buffer zone must be achieved as per Fields in Trust guidance. Recommended pre-commencement conditions relating to contaminated land.
 - RBC Natural Environment – No objections to Rev4 of the submitted AIA/AMS subject to compliance condition.

- RBC Access Officer – No objections
- RBC Leisure Services – No comments received.
- Ecology – Biodiversity Net Gain calculations accepted but detailed of the scheme of landscaping is required; pre-commencement condition recommended to secure this.
- Network Rail – No objections raised.

5.2. Public

- The following neighbouring properties were consulted by letter:
 - 74-94, 61 George Street
 - 92-172 Great Knolly's Street
 - Civitas Academy
 No letters of representation received.
- A site notice was erected on site on 31/01/2024.

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
- EN7 Local Green Space and Public Open Space
- EN12 Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN17 Pollution and Water Resources
- OU1 New and Existing Community Facilities

Appraisal

- 6.4. The main considerations are:
- I. Principle of development
 - II. Design and appearance

- III. Amenity
- IV. Trees and biodiversity
- V. Other matters

I) Principle of development

- 6.5. The NPPF (para. 7) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development with three overarching objectives; an economic objective; a social objective and an environmental objective. The social objective is to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities, by ensuring (amongst other things) that accessible services and open spaces reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.
- 6.6. Policy OU1 of the Local Plan states that "proposals for new, extended or improved community facilities will be acceptable, particularly where this will involve co-location of facilities on a single site". Policy CC7 states development will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to "...meeting a wide range of needs".
- 6.7. Policy CC7 continues that development will "address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily".
- 6.8. The proposal is to relocate the existing playground to a new location within the park with improved access and equipment suitable for children of all abilities along with reinstatement of the existing playground back into informal open space. The principle of development is therefore considered acceptable and in line with locally adopted policies.

II) Design and appearance

- 6.9. As outlined earlier in the report, it is not possible to confirm the exact play equipment that would be installed in the new playground as the scheme will be offered for tender to specialist playground supplier companies with only one supplier selected. However, emphasis will be on a design that is accessible to children of all abilities. Because of the tender process, the applicant is only able to provide details of location, the ground surface, and the maximum height of the central play unit (8m). The proposed playground would be enclosed by a fence, the details of which are also to be confirmed by the applicant at a later stage.
- 6.10. As the proposal is set within a park which has existing play areas and an existing formal playground, the height and type of equipment is unlikely to be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and Officers are therefore satisfied that the exact details of the proposed play equipment are not required to determine the application at this stage and that the matter can be dealt with by condition. A condition recommended requiring details of the proposed equipment to be submitted and approved in writing prior to commencement.

III) Amenity

- 6.11. Policy CC8 states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties in terms of:
 - Privacy and overlooking;
 - Access to sunlight and daylight;
 - Visual dominance and overbearing effects of development;
 - Harm to outlook;
 - Noise and disturbance;

- Artificial lighting;
 - Vibration ;
 - Dust and fumes;
 - Smell;
 - Crime and safety.
- 6.12. The proposed playground would be located closer to the residential dwellings on Great Knollys Street than the existing playground. The Fields in Trust guidance outlines that playground of up to 1000m² should have a minimum of 20m buffer distance from the nearest residential sensitive receptor (ie. habitable rear façade of dwellings). The proposed layout of the playground has been amended to achieve this buffer distance, which is now in excess of the recommended 20m from properties on Great Knollys Street.
- 6.13. The maximum height of the equipment is not considered to raise any concerns of visual dominance as the south side of the park is lined by mature trees, screening the park from view of the properties on Great Knollys Street. The location and max. height of the play equipment is therefore considered to have minimal impact on residential amenity.
- 6.14. On this basis, the proposal is not considered to result in harm to the amenity of nearby residential properties, in accordance with Policy CC8.

IV) Trees and biodiversity

- 6.15. The amended Arboricultural Impact and Method Statement demonstrates that no existing trees require pruning or removal within the existing playground area. An existing stump has already been removed by the RBC Arborist team due to public safety concerns. The proposal is wholly outside the Protected Root Area of the retained trees, save for the new footpath which is not considered to put the trees at risk.
- 6.16. Biodiversity net gain calculations were also submitted to demonstrate that the new playground location is a low-value grassland, and that a 10.18% net gain will be achieved through biodiversity enhancements including the planting of nine new trees on the northwest and south boundary hedge lines. The full details of the proposed planting are to be secured via pre-commencement condition.

V) Other matters

- 6.17. The existing and proposed play areas are within Flood Zone 2 (likelihood of annual fluvial flooding is between 0.1% and 1%). Environment Agency data also shows the site to be at Low Risk of surface water flooding (likelihood of 1% annual probability). As such, all new hard surfaces are proposed to be permeable tarmac. This is considered sufficient and acceptable.
- 6.18. Council Records show that the site lies within contaminated land from a historic oil spill on the northeast corner of the park. Conditions are recommended to secure a contaminated land assessment to give an indication as to the likely risks and to determine whether remedial action is required.
- 6.19. The proposal provides replacement facilities in a similar location and therefore there it is not considered that there is likely to be a significant increase in traffic generation in the area.
- 6.20. The applicant contacted Berkshire Archaeology directly prior to submission of the application to confirm that an informative is sufficient in this instance to state that in the event of any potential archaeology finds they should be immediately reported to Berkshire Archaeology and all works ceased until an assessment can be made.

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. 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 the proposal will improve the current playground provision to allow children of all abilities to enjoy the facilities and is therefore an improvement on the current playground design.

8. Conclusion

- 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 proposed works are acceptable as they would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residential properties, would preserve trees and secure additional tree planting and would improve the playground facilities for the local community.
- 9.3 As such, this application is recommended for approval for Planning Permission subject to the recommended conditions.

Plans & Appendices

1. Existing access from George Street



2. Existing playground



3. Pre-development ecological map



4. Post-development ecological map



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24 April 2024



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Katesgrove
Planning Application Reference:	201766/FUL
Site Address:	40-68 Silver Street, Reading
Proposed Development	Erection of 4 storey building to provide 23 private rental homes with associated communal facilities, surface parking, access and landscaping works. (amended)
Applicant	Silver Street Developments Ltd
Report author	Alison Amoah - Principal Planning Officer
Deadline:	Original deadline 20 th March 2021, but an extension of time has been agreed with the applicant until 24 th May 2024
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 24 th May 2024 (unless officers on behalf of the AD PTPPS agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).
S106 Terms	<p>Affordable Housing</p> <p><u>Affordable Private Rent Units</u></p> <p>To secure affordable housing on site consisting of six units (26% provision) comprising 4no. 2-bedroom 3 person units and 2no. 3-bedroom 4 person units at Affordable Private Rent. The rent shall be no more than 80% of market rent and capped at Local Housing Allowance inclusive of service charge, and the nominations to these units will be via a Nominations Agreement via Reading Borough Council's Housing Team.</p> <p>Affordable Private Rent Housing must be provided in perpetuity.</p>

Deferred Payment Mechanism for Affordable Private Rent Units

Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution to secure payment towards provision of affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough equivalent to remaining 4% should profitability of the scheme improve. Mechanism calculation: NOT to take place until 6 months following the first occupation of 75% of all units (equating to 6 months after first occupation of the 17th unit in this case), but before the date 12 months after first occupation of the 17th unit in this case) with the following inputs fixed:

- Gross Development Value (GDV) determined as part of the assessment of viability at the time of planning permission to be granted: £6,267,329
- Total Build Costs determined as part of the assessment of viability at the time of planning permission to be granted: £5,052,521
- Benchmark Land Value (BLV) determined as part of the assessment of viability at the time of planning permission to be granted: £433,200
- Developer profit as a % of GDV determined at the time of planning permission to be granted: 17.5%
- Deficit determined at the time of planning permission to be granted: No deficit

In accordance with the formula within Appendix 4 of the Affordable Housing SPD.

'Clawback' Mechanism for the Sale of Affordable Private Rented Units

Following the Build to Rent covenant period of 20 years or in the event that a covenant is ceased within the 20-year period, all affected units to become Social Rent or Affordable Rent tenure with rents set no higher than LHA (or last published LHA increased by Consumer Price Index where LHA no longer exists). The affected Affordable Housing units to be offered for sale to a Registered (affordable housing) Provider. In the event that a Registered (affordable Housing) Provider is not secured for the provision of Affordable Housing on site, the units are to be offered to the Council to be provided by the Council as Affordable Housing. In the event that neither a Registered Provider nor the Council can come forward to provide Affordable Housing on-site, the developer to pay to the Council an equivalent financial contribution to be agreed by the Council and not less than 50% of the Gross Development Value of the Affordable Housing unit/s for the provision of Affordable Housing

elsewhere in the Borough. To be calculated (the mean average) from two independent RICS valuations to be submitted to and agreed by the Council prior to first occupation of any build to rent housing unit. In this event, the sum is to be paid prior to first occupation of any build to rent housing unit and index-linked from the date of valuation.

Should the application site subsequently be extended/ altered to create further residential units then a contribution towards affordable housing would apply on a cumulative basis also taking into account this application.

'Clawback' Mechanism for the Sale of Market Rent Units

In the event that the owner of a build to rent development sells or otherwise transfers some or all of the units so that they no longer qualify as build to rent under some agreed variation to the terms of this agreement, the developer shall provide a valuation of the Build to Rent accommodation immediately prior to the sale/transfer and a valuation of the value following the change to non-Build to Rent. A financial contribution equal to 15% of the uplift in GDV shall be paid to the Council within 3 months of sale/transfer.

General Build-to-Rent Provisions

To meet the requirements as set out in Policy H4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan:

- *“Secured in single ownership providing solely for the rental market for a minimum 20-year term [from occupation] with provision for clawback of affordable housing contributions should the covenant not be met;*
- *Provide tenancies for private renters for a minimum of three years with a six-month break clause in the tenant's favour and structured and limited in-tenancy rent increases agreed in advance;*
- *Provide a high standard of professional on-site management and control of the accommodation;*
- *Provide a commitment to high-quality rental arrangements, through meeting Reading Borough Council's voluntary Rent with Confidence Standards or equivalent measures.*

Further detailed as follows:

- Single management company. Council to be notified of details.
- To provide and maintain the Communal Facilities as identified on the plan to be annexed to the S106 legal agreement. Rights of access to Communal Facilities, including charges and terms of use, to be the same for all residents regardless of tenure.
- Service charges – All rents to be inclusive of service charge but exclusive of utility bills and council tax. Service charges to be set as such a level as to cover the costs of services to which the charge relates and no more.
- At the end of the Build to Rent Covenant Period the Communal Facilities to continue to be provided and managed.

Employment, Skills and Training

Secure a construction phase Employment Skills and Training Plan or equivalent financial contribution of £4,080 towards local skills and labour training as calculated in accordance with the Council's Employment, Skills and Training SPD (2013). Contribution to be paid prior to commencement of the development.

Zero Carbon Offset – All Dwellings

Zero Carbon Offset as per SPD 2019 to provide a minimum improvement for each individual dwelling in regulated emissions over the Target Emissions Rate (TER) in the 2013 Building Regulations, plus a S106 contribution of £1,800 per remaining tonne towards carbon offsetting within the Borough (calculated as £60 per tonne over a 30 year period).

As-built SAP calculation for each individual dwelling to be submitted for approval within 6 months following practical completion.

Contribution based on SPD formula below towards carbon offsetting projects calculated for each individual dwelling based on approved SAP calculation to be paid to the Council prior to the occupation of the first dwelling:

TER CO2 m2/yr less 35% Co2 m2/yr = 65% of TER

	<p>65% of TER x total square metres= total excess CO2 emissions annually x £1,800 = S106 contribution</p> <p>Transport</p> <p>Applicant to enter into a S278 agreement in relation to amendments to car parking bays and loading bay, and the provision of 3 no. trees to be located within the public highway as shown on approved Drawing no: PL_101 Rev P, dated 13/3/24 - Ground Floor Plan, received 14th March 2024, to be provided prior to occupation.</p> <p>The developer to provide and fund the provision of a car club bay, to include the procurement of a car club vehicle, for the bay on Silver Street, for a duration of 5 years. To be provided prior to occupation.</p> <p>Contribution of £7,500 towards Traffic Regulation Orders necessary to provide a car club bay and to alter the existing waiting restrictions. To be paid prior to occupation.</p> <p>Trees</p> <p>A contribution of £1614 for the maintenance of the 3 no. street trees for a period of 5 years.</p> <p>General</p> <p>Contribution towards monitoring costs plus a separate commitment to pay the Council's reasonable legal costs in connection with the proposed S106 Agreement will be payable whether or not the Agreement is completed.</p> <p>All financial contributions Index-Linked from the date of permission.</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 submission and approval of materials. 4. Pre-occupation provision of access control measures and CCTV as approved.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Pre-occupation provision of all energy measures set out in the Energy and Sustainability Statement hereby approved. 6. Pre-commencement 'Design Stage' SAP. 7. Pre-occupation 'As Built' SAP. 8. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a Sustainable Drainage Strategy. 9. Pre-occupation provision of Sustainable Drainage Strategy. 10. Pre-occupation provision of approved vehicle parking. 11. Pre-occupation provision of approved vehicle access. 12. Pre-occupation provision of approved cycle parking. 13. Pre-occupation EVCP (electric vehicle charging points) layout and detailed specification to be submitted and approved. 14. Pre-occupation stopping up of the existing access and abandoned immediately after the new access has been brought into use. The footway(s) and verge shall be reinstated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. 15. Parking permits. 16. Parking permits. 17. Pre-occupation submission and approval of bin stores. 18. Waste Management Plan to be submitted and approved prior to occupation. 19. Pre-commencement construction method statement (including Transport and EP based requirements) to be submitted and approved. 20. 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) 21. Compliance condition relating to no burning of materials or green waste on site. 22. Pre-commencement submission of a noise assessment and mitigation measures and pre-occupation implementation. 23. Pre-occupation implementation of remediation measures and submission and approval of a remediation validation report. 24. Compliance condition relating to discovery of any unidentified contaminated land. 25. No mechanical plant to be installed unless a noise assessment and mitigation scheme has been submitted and approved.
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	<p>26. Provision of approved landscaping scheme no later than during the first planting season following the date when the development is ready for occupation.</p> <p>27. Pre-occupation submission and approval of a Landscaping Management Plan.</p> <p>28. Pre-occupation submission and approval of Green roof details including maintenance arrangements and installation prior to occupation.</p> <p>29. Prior to commencement details of a minimum of eight swift bricks and four bat boxes/brick/tiles to be built into the walls of the new building(s) to be submitted and approved, installed prior to first occupation and retained thereafter.</p> <p>30. No external lighting to be installed other than that shown on the approved plans, unless details, have been submitted and approved.</p> <p>31. Pre-installation submission and approval of PV details and installation prior to first occupation.</p> <p>32. No use of roof except for maintenance.</p> <p>33. Provision of obscure glazing/fixed shut windows prior to first occupation.</p> <p>34. Provision of all communal areas shown on approved plans for use by all tenants prior to 1st occupation and retention at all times thereafter.</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. Terms and conditions 2. Building Regulations approval required 3. Encroachment 4. Damage to the highway and works affecting the highway 5. Access construction 6. Pre-commencement conditions 7. S106 8. Complaints about construction 9. Community Infrastructure Levy 10. Noise insulation between residential properties 11. Positive and Proactive Statement

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposal is recommended for approval subject to the conditions set out above.
- 1.2 The proposal relates to a currently vacant brownfield site to be redeveloped for a single residential block comprising 23 flats, parking, and landscaping. The proposal would have no unacceptable impacts on neighbouring properties and would have no adverse transport impacts. It would secure affordable housing and the effective use of this vacant and derelict plot. There are no significant detrimental effects of the proposal, and it is considered that it accords with adopted policies and is recommended for approval.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The application site is on the western side of Silver Street previously occupied by a tall single storey commercial building (40 Silver Street) and a two-storey I-shaped commercial building (62-68 Silver Street), both demolished a number of years ago.
- 2.2 To the west of the site is Rimaud House, which is a 3no. storey residential block at an elevated position approximately 2m higher than the application site. At the north-west, the site immediately adjoins no 69 Upper Crown Street, a two-storey end of terrace house. Immediately to the north is a block of flats called Platinum Apartments which is 2.5 storeys with a third floor of accommodation in the roof, which has private amenity space and parking to the rear (west). To the south of the site is a further residential block of flats and the gardens serving Hawk Cottages.
- 2.3 Silver Street is a one-way street, with vehicles passing in a north to south direction and there is a layby in front of the site. Formerly, the vehicular access to the site was via two dropped kerbs at either end of the site's frontage, along with pedestrian access.
- 2.4 The area is predominantly residential with a mix of traditional terraces and semis, but there are some commercial premises in the area. There is no one single prevailing architectural style which characterises the area, but the majority of the buildings are traditional brick and tile construction. There are a range of different building styles, heights, ages of property and materials, with large scale modern flat blocks located north of the site towards the town centre, and around the site

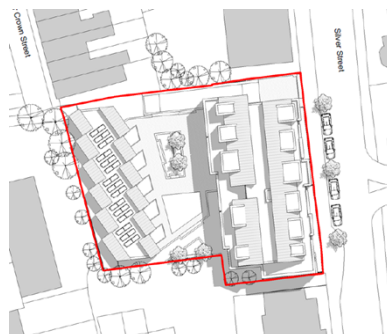
3-4 storey flats, 2-3 storey courtyard offices (Windsor Square) and to the south 2-3 storey Victorian terraces.

- 2.5 Opposite the site is a 61-unit student scheme, also owned by the applicant, more recently developed and which is a part 4 and part 3 storey building of modern appearance.
- 2.6 The site lies within an area that has less than 10% tree canopy cover as identified within the Council's adopted Tree Strategy and within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) (Policy EN15) and Area of Archaeological Potential (Policy EN2).



Site Location Plan

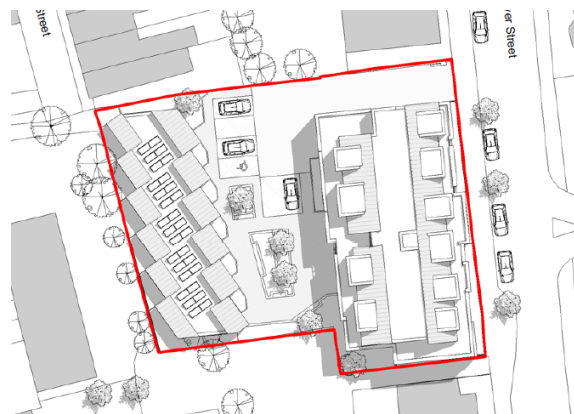
- 2.7 Permission was granted in 2015 (now lapsed) for a single building comprising 15 flats (40 Silver Street) and since that time both properties at 40 Silver Street and 62-68 Silver Street have been demolished and there have been a number of refused student housing schemes, and related dismissed appeals (see history section below).
- 2.8 This application has been under consideration for an extended period as there were a number of concerns with the original submitted proposal which was for the erection of 4 storey and 2 storey buildings to provide 39 private rental homes with associated communal facilities, basement parking, access and landscaping works. This comprised a main block of 33 flats (9x studios; 14x 1 beds and 10x2 beds) to the Silver Street frontage and a smaller building of six 2 bed terraced houses to the rear of the plot.



Originally submitted proposed site plan Dec 2020

2.9 An email from the agent on 24/5/21 advised that further to updated costings for the basement that this element of the scheme would create a significant effect on the viability of the scheme. A number of amendments were, therefore, made to the original two building submission (received 7/6/21), comprising:

- The removal of the basement parking with the resulting impact on the courtyard landscaping/ amenity from relocated parking spaces, albeit at a much-reduced number;
- A reduction to the front building to increase the space to Platinum Apartments;
- A reduction in the number of apartments and increase in the size of the units;
- A revised mix to include some 3 bed units; and
- Adjustments to the internal layout of the front building so that the proposed common room would not share a lobby with one of the proposed apartments.



Amended Site Plan 4/8/21

2.10 Discussions were ongoing between the Planning Officer, and the applicant/agent and some further changes were made 5/7/21, 7/7/21, 4/8/21 and 6/8/21 including an increase in the space between the front flatted block and the rear terraced block, a reduction in the number of terraces, and a small adjustment to the private amenity space serving the terraces. However, officers considered that the amendments were not sufficient to achieve a supportable scheme at that time and fundamentally that the proposed scheme would be overdevelopment of the site and required a reduction in the scale of buildings and siting within the plot. Key areas of concern were:

- The relationship of the rear block to the rear boundary and the resulting extremely limited, and, in our view, not pleasant private amenity space for the proposed houses as well as poor outlook, especially at ground floor level to the rear.

- The distance/ relationship between Block A and the houses (Block B) to the rear, and the shared parking/ amenity space, which provides limited setting and amenity space and that there would be an overbearing effect from Block A on Block B.
- Lack of space to be able to provide meaningful landscaping and tree planting within and to the front of the site (within the red line), which is considered to not meet relevant policies.
- Relationship between the blocks to the existing residential units at 69 Upper Crown Street and Platinum apartments and effects on daylight and sunlight

2.11 It was agreed that an amended scheme, which removed the rear building and reintroduced landscaping/ amenity space and parking to the rear of the building, could be considered as an amendment under this application.

2.12 Prior to a resubmission of information for a one building scheme, draft plans were submitted on 24/11/21 for a 28-dwelling scheme with 11 car parking spaces (1 accessible space), set back for trees to the front, and landscaping/amenity space. The proposed mix was for 20x1 beds/studios, 7x2 beds; and 1x3 bed. Officers provided advice and comments on 4/4/22 regarding:

- The need to improve the mix of unit sizes;
- Revised daylight/sunlight assessment to demonstrate that the proximity to Platinum Apartments and the revised set back of the building would not have differing and more detrimental effects than previous schemes with regards to Platinum Apartments and 69 Upper Crown Street;
- Assignment of parking spaces to specific units;
- Access to roof areas at third floor would not be supported, because of likely loss of privacy and overlooking to surrounding dwellings;
- Requirement for defensible space to the ground floor windows and the overall communal space should provide meaningful and pleasant spaces, which would be enclosed and sufficiently separate from the parking spaces and vehicular access;
- Net biodiversity gain where possible;
- Safe pedestrian access to cycle and bin stores;
- S106 obligations to include Affordable housing, construction skills and zero carbon to meet Policy H5.

2.13 Following this an amended scheme comprising 1 building of 28 flats was submitted (11/8/22) with the building set further back from Silver Street to allow tree planting within the site; rear parking and communal amenity

space; a revised mix of units; and amendments to reduce the bulk of the upper levels at the rear corner nearest Platinum Apartments. During further negotiation, and as a result of consultee comments and neighbour consultation, the final amended scheme for 23 flats is presented for committee consideration as set out under Section 3 'Proposal' below.

2.14 The application is a 'major' development (a residential scheme of 10 units and over) and, therefore, referred to the Planning Applications Committee.

3 PROPOSAL

3.1 The final amended scheme is summarised as follows:

- A Private Rented Scheme (PRS also known as Built to Rent)¹ for 23 flats comprising 4 no. 3 beds, 11 no. 2 beds, and 8 no. 1 beds with the following GIA floor areas:

Apartment Type Schedule		
Flat Number	Name	Area

Level 0

00_01	1B2P Flat	50 m ²
00_02	2B3P Flat	61 m ²
00_03	3B4P Flat	78 m ²
00_05	2B3P Flat (Acc.)	62 m ²

Level 1

01_01	2B3P Flat	61 m ²
01_02	2B3P Flat	61 m ²
01_03	2B3P Flat	62 m ²
01_04	1B1P Flat	39 m ²
01_05	1B1P Flat	39 m ²
03_09	2B3P Flat	61 m ²
03_14	3B4P Flat	74 m ²

Level 2

02_03	2B3P Flat	62 m ²
03_15	2B3P Flat	61 m ²
03_16	2B3P Flat	61 m ²
03_17	2B3P Flat	61 m ²
03_20	3B4P Flat	74 m ²
03_21	1B1P Flat	39 m ²
03_22	1B1P Flat	39 m ²

Level 3

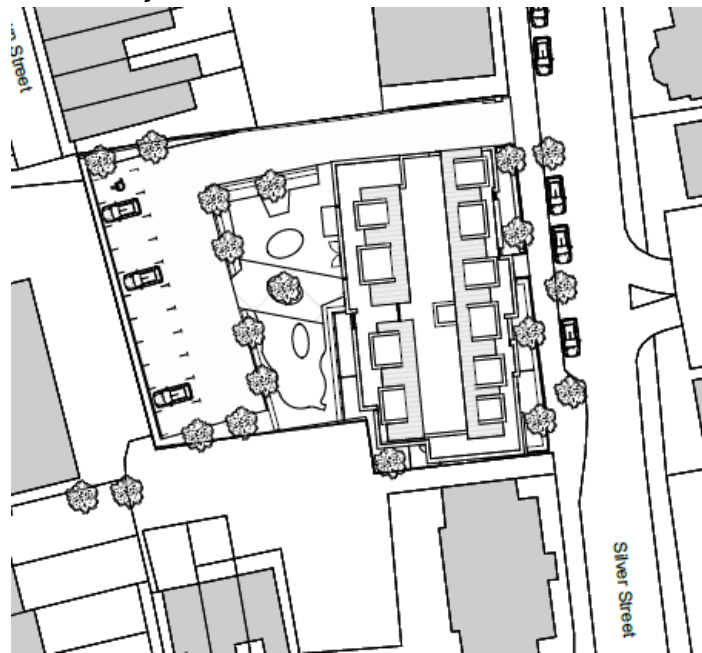
03_01	1B1P Flat	37 m ²
03_02	3B4P Flat	77 m ²
03_03	1B1P Flat	37 m ²
03_04	2B3P Flat	62 m ²
03_05	1B2P Flat	50 m ²

Grand total: 23

¹ PRS development is often now funded on an institutional basis as long term property assets owned and managed.

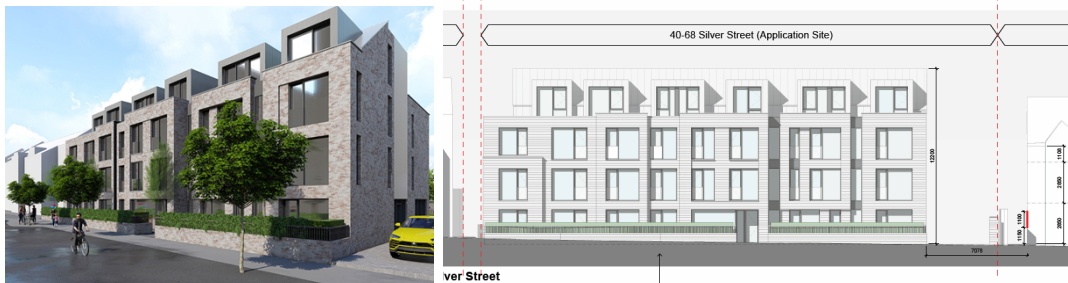
- Communal lounge and a reception area.
- 11 car parking spaces (including one accessible space) and EVCP.
- Rear communal amenity space, landscaping and tree planting, tree planting to the front within the site and 3 no. street trees
- 40 no. cycle spaces.
- Car club space

3.2 The scheme would create one block of 12.2m in height over 4 floors, set from the northern boundary with Platinum Apartments by 4.4m and wall to wall distance of just over 7m.



Amended Proposed Site Plan

3.3 The proposed external surfaces would be fair faced brick, standing seam metal roof and dark grey/ brown aluminium window frames.



3.4 Submitted Plans and Documentation:

(Final existing and proposed plans only included below)

- Drawing no: PL_003 dated 10/11/17 - Existing Location Plan, received 10th December 2020

- Drawing no: PL-002, dated 18/11/20 - Existing Site Plan - [shows previous buildings at no.40 and no. 62-62], received 10th December 2020
- Drawing no: PL_000 Rev E, dated 13/3/24 - Location Plan [Proposed Block Plan], received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_001 Rev F, dated 13/3/24, received 14th March 2024 - Site Plan [Proposed]
- Drawing no: PL_101 Rev P, dated 13/3/24 - Ground Floor Plan, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_102 Rev J, dated 13/3/24 - First Floor Plan, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_103 Rev K, dated 13/3/24 – Second Floor Plan, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_104 Rev L, dated 13/3/24– 3rd Floor Plan, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_105 Rev I, dated 13/3/24 – Roof Plan, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_110 Rev F, dated 1/8/22 – Elevation – Block A_ Silver Street, received 11th August 2022
- Drawing no: PL_111 Rev F, dated 7/8/22 – Elevation – Block A_ Courtyard, received 11th August 2022
- Drawing no: PL_113 Rev E, dated 13/3/24 – Elevations – North and South, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_115 Rev B, dated 1/8/22 - Section A & B, received 11th August 2022
- Drawing no: PL_200 Rev A, dated 24/7/22 – Façade Detail Elevation, received 24th March 2023
- Drawing No: PL_501 Rev C, dated 13/3/24 – Area Schedules, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: 102 Rev I, dated 24/1/24 - Landscaping Layout with Services Overlaid, received 26th January 2024
- Drawing no: 202 Rev E dated 7/7/23 - Planting Plan, received 26th February 2024
- Drawing no: 301 Rev E, dated 24/1/24 – Trees in Hard Landscaping Details, received 26th February 2024
- Drawing no: PL_301 Rev B, dated 13/3/24 – Level 0_Access Control – Security, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_302 Rev B, dated 13/3/24 - Level 1_Access Control – Security, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_303 Rev B, dated 13/3/24 - Level 2_Access Control – Security, received 14th March 2024
- Drawing no: PL_304 Rev B, dated 13/3/24 - Level 3_Access Control – Security, received 14th March 2024

Other Documents received:

- Affordable Housing Viability Report, dated 7/2/23, prepared by S106 Affordable Housing, received 24th March 2023
- Air Quality Assessment, Document ref: AQ0684, dated October 2019, prepared by Gem Air Quality Ltd, received 7th January 2021
- Combined Phase 1& Phase 2 Ground Investigation Report, document ref: 1227-003-002, dated 26/9/2019, prepared by Westlakes Environmental, received 10th December 2020
- Daylight and Sunlight Report V1.2 dated 3/3/23, prepared by Delva Patman Redler, received 24th March 2023
- Design and Access Statement, dated 22/3/23, prepared by Studio NQ, received 24th March 2023
- Drainage Strategy, Ref: 1227-002-007 dated 16/10/23, prepared by Westlakes Engineering, received 18th October 2023
- Energy and Sustainability Statement Rev A dated April 2022, prepared by QED, received 11th August 2022
- Letter from Haslams dated 31/5/22 received 11th August 2022
- Planning and Heritage Statement, dated March 2023, prepared by GW Planning, received 24th March 2023
- Transport Statement dated 7/2/23, Document ref: R-20-0086-01E, prepared by Evoke, received 24th March 2023

3.5 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):

In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form. The development would be CIL liable and estimated as £292,601 (based on 1,632 GIA at 2024 rate of £179.29).

4 PLANNING HISTORY

40 Silver Street

150885/FUL - The proposed redevelopment of 40 Silver Street, demolition of existing light industrial building and erection of 14 flats 8x2bed & 6x1 bed, including 14 parking spaces and landscaping – Approved 21/3/16

162232/PREAPP - Student accommodation comprising 67 studio rooms with ancillary areas. Total floor space 2432m² – Observations sent 20/3/17

172218/FUL - Demolition of existing building and erection of a part 3 and part 4 storey (plus basement level) building to provide 62 studio rooms (sui generis use class) with associated ancillary space and landscaping works – Refused 9/2/18. Reasons:

“1. The proposed development due to the height and bulk of Block A, the cramped layout between the blocks and the dominating design would result in the site appearing over developed and a harmful addition to the streetscene, of detriment to the character and appearance of the area. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy CS7 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy and para. 17 of the NPPF.

2. The proposed development due to the height, position and bulk (of Block A in particular) will result in the loss of amenity for neighbouring residents through overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and noise and disturbance arising from the use of this small site to accommodate 62 students. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy DM4 of the Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document.

3. The proposed development would lead to a concentration of student accommodation in this area that would detrimentally impact on the lives of adjoining occupiers and would fail to provide a mixed and balanced community contrary to the aims of Policy CS15, NPPF para.50 and emerging Policy H12.

4. In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure:

i) an acceptable mitigation plan or equivalent contribution towards the provision of Employment, Skills and Training for the construction phase of the development,

ii) a contribution of £5,000 towards the changes to the parking restrictions to facilitate access into the development,

iii) a travel plan and highway alterations,

iv) a restriction on occupancy to students only, and

v) implementation of the student accommodation management plan;

the proposal fails to provide adequate controls over the use of the development, including its highways and other travel impacts, contrary to Policies DM4, DM12, CS20, CS22, CS23 and CS24 and the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011. The proposal also fails to contribute adequately to the employment, skills or training needs of local people with associated socioeconomic harm, contrary to Policies CS3, CS9, DM3 and the Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013).”

This was appealed – Ref: APP/E0345/W/3199747 – Dismissed 29/10/18, relating to overdevelopment of the site; harmful to the character and appearance of the area; harmful to the living conditions of the adjoining occupiers; no substantive evidence to demonstrate a specific need for student housing in this location nor that it would provide an appropriate density and mix of residential development.

180725/DEM - Application for prior notification of proposed demolition – Given 25/2/19

182150/PREAPP - Erection of a three storey (plus basement level) building to provide student studio rooms. Approx 1700m2 GEA. Comments from Design Review Panel provided 1/2/19 and other consultee comments 8/3/19.

40-68 Silver Street

190449/FUL - Erection of part 1, part 2 and part 4 storey (plus basement level) buildings to provide 79 student studio rooms (sui generis use class) with associated ancillary space and landscaping works – Refused 11/9/2019 for the following reasons:

- 1. The proposed development, due to the combination of the bulk and height of Block A, the spacing between Block A and B, and the dominating design with development on three sides of the plot, would result in the site appearing over developed and a harmful addition to the streetscene, of detriment to the character and appearance of the area. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy CS7 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy and Section 12 of the NPPF.*
- 2. The proposed development, due to the height, position and bulk (of Block A in particular), will result in the loss of amenity for neighbouring residents through overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and noise and disturbance arising from the use of this small site to accommodate 79 students. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy DM4 of the Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document.*
- 3. The proposed development, due to the relationship between the Blocks and the overall layout and movement through the site, will result in detriment to the amenity of proposed residents in terms of how they would experience the external courtyard space and internal space through overlooking, loss of privacy and noise and disturbance. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy DM4 of the Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document.*
- 4. The proposed development would lead to a concentration of student accommodation in this area that would detrimentally impact on the lives of adjoining occupiers and would fail to provide a mixed and balanced community contrary to the aims of Policy CS15, NPPF para.91 and emerging Policy H12.*

5. *It has not been clearly demonstrated how this proposal for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) meets an identified need that cannot be met on those sites identified within the Emerging Local Plan for student accommodation or on sequentially preferable sites. The loss of this site to student accommodation would further reduce the Council's ability to meet its housing need within its own boundaries. The proposal therefore does not comply with Policy H12 of the Emerging Local Plan and conflicts with the aims of the NPPF para.68.*

6. *Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the scheme would be appropriate in the Air Quality Management Area and is therefore contrary to Policy CS34 of the Reading Borough Core Strategy and Policy DM19 of the Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document.*

7. *The layout does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of vehicle parking which could result in on-street parking on Silver Street during the arrivals and departure period at the beginning and end of term. This would adversely affect road safety and the flow of traffic in conflict with Core Strategy Policy CS24 and Sites and Detailed Policies Document Policy DM12.*

8. *In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure:*
 - i) an acceptable mitigation plan or equivalent contribution towards the provision of Employment, Skills and Training for the construction phase of the development,*
 - ii) a travel plan and highway alterations,*
 - iii) a restriction on occupancy to students only,*
 - iv) implementation of the student accommodation management plan,**the proposal fails to provide adequate controls over the use of the development, including its highways and other travel impacts, contrary to Policies DM4, DM12, CS20, CS22, CS23 and CS24 and the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011. The proposal also fails to contribute adequately to the employment, skills or training needs of local people with associated socio-economic harm, contrary to Policies CS3, CS9, DM3 and the Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013).*

Appeal into 190449 ref: APP/E0345/W/20/3248604 – Dismissed 15th January 2021 upholding the following refusal reasons:

No. 2 – with respect to the harmful effect on the outlook and loss of light to the windows in the side of Platinum House; No. 3 – In terms of the ground floor student warden unit, which would suffer from excessive

noise and disturbance, to the detriment of the living conditions of the occupant; No.5 and No.7

200098/PREAPP – Pre-application advice for proposed new Build-To-Rent development – File note of meeting provided 7/1/21



200919/FUL - Erection of part 2 and part 4 storey (plus basement level) buildings to provide 71 student studio rooms (sui generis use class) with associated ancillary space, access and landscaping works. (Resubmission of application 190449). – Refused 14/1/2022 for the following reasons:

1. *It has not been clearly demonstrated how this proposal for Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) meets an identified need that cannot be met on those sites identified within the Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan for student accommodation or on sequentially preferable sites. The loss of this site to student accommodation would further reduce the Council's ability to meet its housing need within its own boundaries. The proposal therefore does not comply with Policy H12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and conflicts with the aims of the NPPF para.68.*
2. *In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure:*
 - i) *an acceptable mitigation plan or equivalent contribution towards the provision of Employment, Skills and Training for the construction phase of the development;*
 - ii) *a travel plan and highway alterations including the required traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to amend the waiting restrictions within the layby on Silver Street to allow the modification of the vehicular access;*
 - iii) *a restriction on occupancy to students only; and*
 - iv) *implementation of the student accommodation management plan, the proposal fails to provide adequate controls over the use of the development, including its highways and other travel impacts, contrary to Policies CC8, CC9, TR1 and TR3. The proposal also fails to contribute adequately to the employment, skills or training needs of local people with associated socio-economic harm, contrary to Policy CC9 and the Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013).*

3. *There has been a failure to demonstrate the acceptability of the scheme in terms of sustainable drainage and attenuation of localised flooding for all rainfall events, contrary to Reading Borough Local Plan Policy EN18.*

62-68 Silver Street

04/01465/FUL (041374) - Renovation and extension of existing building to provide 4 flats and a ground floor B1(a) office – Refused 2/2/2005

06/00708/FUL (061413) - Renovation and extension of existing building to provide 4 flats and B1(a) office on ground and first floor – Approved, subject to S106 legal agreement, 10/8/2006

11/01016/PREAPP (111690) - Pre-application advice for conversion to student accommodation – Observations sent 7/9/2011

11/01917/FUL (110915) - Renovation and extension of existing building to provide student accommodation (16 no. self-contained rooms) – Approved, subject to S106 legal agreement, 28/09/2012

171165/FUL - Conversion of existing building to residential use plus additional two floor of accommodation to provide 6no. two bedroom flats plus parking, cycle storage and bin storage – Withdrawn 20/3/19 (on submission of current application 190449)

190242/DEM - Application for prior notification of proposed demolition – Given 17/3/19

79 Silver Street – student site on opposite side of Silver Street

170785/FUL - Demolition of existing building and erection of a part 3 and part 4 storey (plus basement level) building to provide 56 student studio rooms (sui generis use class) with associated ancillary services and landscaping works – Approved, subject to S106 legal agreement, 10/1/2018

180075/VAR - Demolition of existing building and erection of a part 3 and part 4 storey (plus basement level) building to provide 56 student studio rooms (sui generis use class) with associated ancillary services and landscaping works without complying with condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission 170685 to introduce a larger basement area to allow an increase to 61 student studio rooms – Approved, subject to S106 legal agreement, 21/6/2018

181150/NMA - Non-Material Amendment to planning consent 180075 for changes to approved plans at -1 level to allow for the merging of 2

studios in to 1 flat and new studio flat in place of sub-station. No additional rooms provided – Agreed 6/8/2018

181819/NMA - Non-Material Amendment to planning consent 180075 VAR for changes to approved plans to allow the building to be clad in part brick/part render. – Agreed 14/11/2018

191023/NMA - Non-material amendment to planning application 180075 for changes to positioning of approved roof windows – Agreed 15/8/2019.

5 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 RBC Archaeology – All necessary archaeological mitigation works have already been conducted at the site and nothing further is required in light of the amended plans.
- 5.2 **Planning Officer Note:** When the buildings were demolished this was in accordance with demolition (prior notification) approvals, and these were subject to the implementation of archaeological investigation in accordance with schemes that were agreed with Berkshire Archaeology.
- 5.3 Ecology Adviser – This application is for the erection of private rental homes with associated ancillary space, parking, access, and landscaping.
- 5.4 The proposed development is in a predominantly urban location and is unlikely to affect protected species. However, in accordance with paragraph 180 of the NPPF, which states that “opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged” a condition should be set to ensure that enhancements for wildlife are provided within the development.
- 5.5 The Planning statement states:
“[.]that attention should focus on the development of eco enhancement measures as part of the new proposals. As detailed in the landscaping strategy and details this can include tree planting, planting within proposed courtyard and boundary landscaped areas, and also the provision of Hirundine boxes to encourage swifts and house martins.”
- 5.6 This part of Reading supports a population of swifts whose numbers have declined in recent years in part to a lack of nesting sites which are found in buildings and the proposed development represents an

opportunity for habitat enhancement to benefit swifts as well as other birds, bats and insects.

- 5.7 The landscaping plan/strategy appears to be outline only and the standard landscaping condition should be set to ensure that full details are agreed with the council. Subject to the landscaping condition and a condition regarding swift bricks, bat boxes/ bricks/ tiles there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.
- 5.8 RBC Transport – *Comments on the original 1 building scheme for 28 flats received 11/8/22* - The revised proposals include the construction of a three-storey apartment block to the east of the site facing Silver Street with a rear courtyard car park on the western side of the site. The development comprises:
- 4 x studio / one person apartments;
 - 15 x one-bedroom / one person apartments;
 - 1 x one-bedroom / two person apartment;
 - 4 x two-bedroom / three person apartments;
 - 3 x two-bedroom / four person apartments;
 - 1 x three-bedroom / four person apartment;
 - Reception and Management Suite with communal mailboxes and storage room;
 - 44sqm Common Room;
 - 11 Surface Level Car Parking Spaces;
 - Car Club and 2 additional parallel parking bays on -street; and
 - 40 cycle parking spaces.
- 5.9 The application site is located on the western side of the A327 Silver Street, a one-way section distributor road, which carries southbound traffic out of Reading to J11 of the M4 and other parts of South Reading including Reading University. Inbound traffic to the town centre would travel via Southampton Street, the A327 northbound route.
- 5.10 The majority of roads in the vicinity of the site either have single or double yellow line parking restrictions in place or are restricted to resident permit holders only between 08:00-20:00. Silver Street has “No Waiting” parking restrictions (DYL) preventing on-street parking and peak hour loading bans between 8.15-9.15am and 4.00-6.15pm. A layby currently runs across the site frontage and there are currently two access points which are protected by “No Waiting” parking restrictions (DYL). The layby is currently unregulated.
- 5.11 The application site is outside the town centre area but is located within 700m of the Central Core Zone. Bus stops are located on Silver Street and London Street within 200m of the site providing frequent premier

bus services to and from the town centre, and other areas in South Reading. An on-street southbound cycle lane is provided on Silver Street on the western side of the carriageway and a northbound cycle lane is provided on Southampton Street. The site is therefore accessible to good public transport links, town centre services and employment areas.

Access

- 5.12 Silver Street is part of the “A” road network carrying between 9,000 and 10,000 vehicles a day and is one of the main routes out of central Reading to the south. Therefore, any proposals need to comply with the Council’s adopted Design Guidance for Residential Accesses on to Classified Roads.
- 5.13 Vehicular access to the central parking courtyard will be provided via the existing dropped kerb to the north of the proposed building. A minimum width of 4.3m will be provided which exceeds the minimum width required for two cars to pass. No gates are illustrated on the proposed site plans.
- 5.14 The other existing access into the site will need to be stopped up and the footway reinstated to line and level to be covered by condition.
- 5.15 Pedestrian access will be provided along the site frontage onto Silver Street either via the main reception foyer.

Servicing

- 5.16 For most developments located on a classified road, servicing should take place within the site. The Transport Statement asserts that *“On-street parking bays are provided along Silver Street and the proposals include the provision of two additional on-street bays which can be utilised for any visitor parking requirements as well as delivery and servicing vehicles.”* However, if the on-street bays are occupied by parked cars then refuse collection would be required to take place from the traffic lane which could have a detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network. Therefore, this point should be addressed to ensure there is no impact on the public highway through on- street servicing.
- 5.17 A refuse store is provided internally at the north end of the apartment block with capacity for eight 1100 litre Eurobins. It is envisaged that the refuse vehicle will wait on Silver Street, and management staff at the site will bring the bins to the front of the development and return the empty ones to the store on collection days. However, the Council’s Waste department should be consulted on this application to determine

whether the arrangements comply with their requirements before determining this application.

Parking Provision

- 5.18 The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 space per 1-2 bedroom unit. A lower parking provision can be considered when the development poses no detriment to highway safety.
- 5.19 A total of 11 surface level parking spaces (including one disabled bay) will be provided at the rear of the site at a ratio of 0.39 spaces per unit. The parking provision for the development is acceptable in this instance considering the location of the site (to Reading Town Centre) and the parking controls in the area. However, there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the flats would not be issued with resident parking permits which should be secured through the conditions and informative placed on the consent.
- 5.20 Policy TR5 of the Local Plan also states any developments of at least 10 spaces must provide an active charging point (1 space for every 10 spaces). Therefore, in accordance with RBC standards, one parking space will be equipped with an 'active' electric vehicle charging point.
- 5.21 To support a lower car parking provision, the site also proposes one on-street car club space on Silver Street. The Highway Authority are of the view that providing the car club on the Public Highway would be of benefit given that it would not only serve the application site but the wider area. The reason for this is that it becomes more accessible to the general public therefore increasing usage and giving the car club(s) more of an opportunity to be successful. To facilitate this the applicant would be required to contribute £7,500 towards a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) so that the car club space/bay can be provided on the Highway. In line with the Council's Parking Standards and SPD, the car club should be provided and funded by the developer for a duration of 5 years.
- 5.22 The proposed development will provide a total of 40 cycle parking spaces, the equivalent of 1.42 cycle spaces per dwelling. The higher provision of cycle storage will also encourage residents to use cycling as their main mode of transport to and from the site and will further reduce the need for car journeys associated with the site.

- 5.23 Secure and covered cycle parking will be provided within the site, located on the southern side of the vehicular access to the north of the site. The cycle storage area will be equipped with 20 two-tier stackers (providing space for 40 bicycles) located at ground floor level.

Construction Method Statement

- 5.24 The applicant should be aware that there would be significant transport implications constructing the proposed building in this location. If this application is approved, a Construction Method Statement is required and should be approved before any works commence on-site.
- 5.25 The recommended conditions are as follows: CMS to be submitted and approved; vehicle parking to be provided as specified; vehicular access to be provided as specified; cycle parking to be provided as specified; refuse and recycling to submitted and approved; access closure with reinstatement; no automatic entitlement to parking permits; and details of EVCP. The S106 obligations would be: S278 agreement in relation to the provision of 3 no. trees to be located within the public highway along with an associated obligation to maintain the trees for a period of 5 years; Provision and funding of a car club bay on Silver Street for a duration of 5 years; Contribution of £7,500 towards Traffic Regulation Orders necessary to provide a car club bay and to alter the existing waiting restrictions.
- 5.26 **Planning Officer Note:** Amended information was received 24/3/23. Transport provided the following further comments on 16/6/23:
- 5.27 I have reviewed the amended plans and reviewed the revised Transport Statement dated 7/2/23, by Evoke Transport, received 24/3/23.
- 5.28 The Transport Statement (para 3.5.4) states that *“A 12m loading bay is proposed directly outside the site which will be used for delivery and servicing movements associated with the site and neighbouring developments, as requested by RBC in recent comments.”*
- 5.29 However, I have reviewed the swept path analysis in Appendix C and it does not appear an RBC Refuse vehicle could easily enter and exit the loading bay. Swept path analysis demonstrate whether vehicles have adequate space to undertake movements without putting pedestrians in danger, damaging highway infrastructure, or coming into conflict with other vehicles. The swept path analysis indicates that the refuse vehicle cannot complete its manoeuvres without the front of the vehicle overrunning the tree pit. In addition, the rear of the vehicle will overspill onto the carriageway as it cannot fully access the bay in forward gear (see image below). Feedback is required from waste services as they requested the loading bay.

- 5.30 The car club bay is marked as 7554mm in length, therefore, there is scope to reduce the length of the car club bay and make the loading bay longer to enable refuse vehicles to be able to pull into the loading bay more easily.
- 5.31 **Planning Officer Note:** Amended drawings were provided on 13/7/23 to show an increased length of the service/ loading bay. Transport requested that updated tracking diagrams be submitted to demonstrate that a refuse vehicle could enter and exit the loading bay to meet Transport and Waste management requirements.
- 5.32 The Transport Officer confirmed that *“A 12m loading bay is proposed directly outside the site which will be used for delivery and servicing movements associated with the site and neighbouring developments. A revised tracking diagram has been submitted to demonstrate that an RBC Refuse vehicle could easily enter and exit the loading bay without the front of the vehicle overrunning the tree pits or carriageway. It is stated the management staff at the site will bring the bins to the front of the development and return the empty ones to the store on collection days. The Council’s Waste department should provide final comments on the size of the bin store.”*
- 5.33 RBC Environmental Protection – Confirmation that the comments provided under the previous application 200919 would still apply and that there would be no objection subject to conditions for the submission and approval of a noise assessment to protect the dwellings from environmental noise including a mitigation scheme; mechanical plant noise assessment if applicable; submission and approval of a construction method statement; limitation of construction hours; no burning of waste on site; implementation of approved remediation strategy and validation report; reporting of unexpected contamination and sound insulation informative.
- 5.34 200919 comments were: “Noise impact on development - A noise assessment should be submitted in support of applications for new residential proposed in noisy areas.
- 5.35 The noise assessment will be assessed against the recommendations for internal noise levels within dwellings and external noise levels within gardens / balconies in accordance with BS 8233:2014 and WHO guidelines for Community Noise. The report should identify any mitigation measures that are necessary to ensure that the recommended standard is met.
- 5.36 Where appropriate, the noise assessment data should also include noise events (LAMax) and the design should aim to prevent noise levels from noise events exceeding 45dB within bedrooms at night. Noise levels above 45dB are linked with sleep disturbance.

Internal noise criteria (taken from BS8233:2014)

Room	Design criteria	Upper limit
Bedrooms (23:00 to 07:00)	<30dB LAeq,8hour	
Living rooms (07:00 – 23:00)	<35dB LAeq,16hour	
Gardens & Balconies	<50dB LAeq,T	<55dB LAeq,T

- 5.37 As a noise assessment has not been submitted, and the proposed development is by a busy road, I recommend a condition is attached to any consent requiring a noise assessment to be submitted prior to commencement of development and any approved mitigation measures implemented prior to occupation to show that recommended noise levels in the table above can be met.
- 5.38 The noise assessment will need to identify the external noise levels impacting on the proposed site.
- 5.39 Noise mitigation is likely to focus on the weak point in the structure; glazing. Given that the acoustic integrity would be compromised should the windows be opened, ventilation details must also be provided, where mitigation relies on closed windows. Ventilation measures should be selected which do not allow unacceptable noise ingress and should provide sufficient ventilation to avoid the need to open windows in hot weather, however non-openable windows are not considered an acceptable solution due to the impact on living standards.
- 5.40 I recommend the following conditions: Sound Insulation from External Noise
- 5.41 Noise between residential properties – sound insulation of any building - an informative is suggested.
- 5.42 Air Quality - Increased exposure - The air quality assessment submitted with the application demonstrates that the air quality at the development will be within the EU limit values therefore no mitigation is required.
- 5.43 Contaminated Land - The phase 1 and 2 contaminated land investigation has noted some sources of contamination in made ground which will require removal and residual made ground not to be used in areas of landscaping. The remediation strategy is included within the report. Recommended conditions below, which are required to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination: Implementation of Approved Remediation Scheme; Reporting of Unexpected Contamination.
- 5.44 Construction and demolition phases - We have concerns about potential noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and

demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses).

- 5.45 Fires during construction and demolition can impact on air quality and cause harm to residential amenity. Burning of waste on site could be considered to be harmful to the aims of environmental sustainability.
- 5.46 The following conditions are recommended: Construction Method Statement; construction hours of working; No burning of waste
- 5.47 Bin storage – rats - There is a widespread problem in Reading with rats as the rats are being encouraged by poor waste storage which provides them with a food source. Where developments involve shared bin storage areas e.g. flats and hotels there is a greater risk of rats being able to access the waste due to holes being chewed in the base of the large wheelie bins or due to occupants or passers not putting waste inside bins, or bins being overfilled. It is therefore important for the bin store to be vermin proof to prevent rats accessing the waste. I recommend a condition regarding the submission and approval vermin proof bin storage.”
- 5.48 RBC Natural Environment (Trees) – The Officer originally provided comments on 8/2/21 and this related to the original scheme of 2 buildings, basement car park and a courtyard amenity space. The specific issues they raised at that time related to the following:
- Need for space to be accommodated on the frontage for tree planting. The site is within the AQMA, a low canopy ward and a ‘treed corridor (ref Tree Strategies)
 - The scheme proposes new street trees, outside the site and within the Highway in build-outs – previous advice was not positive, and including trees within the red line should be the default position, but if it can be demonstrated that it would not be feasible then a contribution on Council land could be appropriate. Assuming an appropriate argument is presented to agree the principle of off-site planting, we would obviously need to check whether planting on the Council pavement is practically possible, i.e. are services (above or below) in the way. No decision on the application should be made before it is confirmed whether planting is feasible. The applicant should liaise with Highways / Parks and investigations made. If planting is possible on RBC land and it’s been accepted that agreeing a contribution for off-site planting is reasonable in this case, then it will be acceptable. Input over the costs to be secured within a S106 will have to be determined and should incorporate a high specification

hard landscape tree pit for each tree. Further advice can be given at a later stage.

- Without demonstrating justification, feasibility and acceptability of the details, the application is not acceptable in landscape terms. It is disappointing that the Landscape statement lacks any details about this planting other than indicative locations.

5.49 **Planning Officer Note:** Significantly amended plans were received on 7/6/21, which included:

- Removal of the basement;
- Removal of communal landscaped area to the courtyard; and
- Provision of ground level parking.

5.50 The Natural Environment (Trees) Officer advised that the revisions were not acceptable, and in summary commented as follows:

- The underground parking is now omitted, with the parking now within the internal courtyard space meaning that the previous landscaped amenity space / courtyard is now completely omitted. This is a wholly negative change resulting in negligible planting within the site.
- The elevation appears to indicate tree planting within the curtilage to the frontage, but this is not on the Ground Floor Plan and all plans should be consistent.
- As the site is within low canopy cover ward, within the AQMA and on a 'treed corridor' development must include extensive planting, including tree planting, and where this is not feasible alternative greening, e.g. green walls and roofs, must be incorporated. In terms of landscaping / greening, the latest revisions fail to meet the requirements of policy or adopted strategies (also ref BAP and Climate Emergency Strategy), hence are not supported.
- In relation to the off-site trees, the principle of SUDs with trees build-outs have been agreed and detailed tree pits specifications need to be submitted for consideration. Without these, the off-site tree planting will not be considered and tree planting within the site on the frontage will be required, which is likely to require a greater set back. Lack of trees on the frontage (inside or outside the site) will be unacceptable.

5.51 **Planning Officer Note:** Further amended plans were received 11/8/22 and Natural Environment Officer confirmed (6/12/22) that in principle the development would be acceptable from a tree and landscaping perspective, but that further information was required summarised as follows:

- The proposals re-introduce the rear courtyard and tree planting on the frontage (within the site) so are positive from that respect.
- The flat roof element does not include a green roof; a lost opportunity.
- Plans are not consistent – 6 trees are shown on the frontage on the Landscape Layout, but 4 are shown on all other plans.
- No species palette has been provided for consideration and to demonstrate what would be feasible in the narrow planting strip shown to the frontage. Tree pits here will need to be designed to allow sufficient soil volume.
- There is insufficient tree pit detail for the proposed highway trees. The tree pits here will require specialist design to provide a good soil volume, e.g. by the use of root cells and could (as per agreed in principle by highways) look to be SuDs tree pits. Companies such as GreenBlue Urban can assist with such tree pits design.
- Tree pit details and soil volume will be required for the proposed trees in planters within the courtyard.
- Species should meet the native or wildlife friendly criteria, as well as providing a mix of family, genus and species for diversity.
- The location of services runs should be considered now to demonstrate no conflict with the indicated landscaping.

5.52 **Planning Officer Note:** Further comments were provided by Natural Environment Officer (15/6/23) further to amended plans received 24/3/23 summarised as follows:

- The Site Plan shows 4 trees on the site frontage (within the site) and 3 within the street (Highways land), along with planting elsewhere on site incorporating another 10 trees. This is not consistent with the Landscape plan which shows 6 (very small) trees on the site frontage.
- Incorporation of the street trees is a positive aspect and agreeable in principle. To secure monies for this planting scheme, we need to agree more details prior to a decision. To move this matter on, I suggest that GreenBlue Urban are invited to a site meeting with relevant officers to discuss the design for the street trees so that they can then provide a quote to be used for S106 purposes. RBC would then assess the cost of the trees (if not provided by GB Urban) and maintenance.
- No planting palette has been provided, as previously requested.
- The Roof plan does not include green roofs. As per comments from Transport DM, the SuDs design should aim, as a default, to be landscape led. This could incorporate a blue-green roof to address the request for a green roof and landscape led SuDs together.

- Tree pit details and soil volume information has not been provided.
 - Clear existing and proposed – all services and all routes are required.
- 5.53 **Planning Officer Note** - Further amended plans were received on 13/7/23 to show: revised street tree positions on Silver Street allowing increased length of service/ loading bay; introduction of a green/ brown (sedum) treatment of the central flat area of roof; and a full planting schedule. The Natural Environment Officer provided further comment (8/8/23). This comprised detailed comments on the specific species and proposed form of trees, soil volume, request for details of root barriers, tree pit design and proposed green roof; latest drainage and other service layouts.
- 5.54 There was ongoing dialogue between the Natural Environment Officer and the applicant's landscape consultant, and further amendments and clarifications were provided.
- 5.55 Further amended revised plans were received on 26/1/24 and the Natural Environment Officer comments of 5/2/24 confirmed that the plans were acceptable save for a minor amendment to tree pit details. Further amended details were received on 26/2/24, which the Natural Environment Officer confirmed are acceptable. Recommended conditions are for hard and soft landscaping to be implemented in accordance with the approved plans, the submission and approval of a landscape management plan, as well as a relevant obligation in the S106 to secure the off-site tree planting by the applicant and for the applicant to pay a financial contribution for the ongoing maintenance of the trees for a period of 5 years.
- 5.56 **RBC SUDS Manager (Local Lead Flood Authority – LLFA)** – Comments on the March 2023 amendments - The proposed sustainable drainage scheme results in a reduction in run off when compared to the existing run off from the site and as such is acceptable in principle. However, it is noted that the proposed design is still based on the original development layout [i.e. 2 buildings and basement car parking] that has been revised quite considerably and as such a revised drainage design would be required to suit the current scheme. This is, however, something that could be dealt with by way of a condition given the submitted information confirms that a reduction in run off from the site would be facilitated by the proposals.
- 5.57 The proposed drainage scheme, although dealing with the SuDs hierarchy in part as detailed in the NPPG and listed below, does not fully

address the infiltration element of the hierarchy and does not address Policy EN14 or EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

- *into the ground (infiltration);*
- *to a surface water body;*
- *to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;*
- *to a combined sewer.*

5.58 The applicant is therefore required to review how the SuDs proposals can meet the following 'Wherever possible, SuDS provision should maximise ecological benefits, link into the existing Green Network, incorporate tree planting and landscaping and avoid damage to existing significant trees, including through changes to the site hydrology'.

5.59 With the above in mind I am happy to agree to the principle of the SuDs proposals, but further details must be provided to address the above and as such I am happy to accept the proposal subject to the following conditions: sustainable drainage to be approved and implementation of the approved scheme.

5.60 **Planning Officer Note:** An amended Drainage Strategy was submitted and the LLFA Officer provided the following further comments (2/11/23):

5.61 The proposed sustainable drainage scheme results in a reduction in run off when compared to the existing run off from the site and as such is acceptable in principle however as detailed within the drainage report a detailed design is still required.

5.62 With the above in mind I am happy to agree to the principle of the SuDs proposals but further details must be provided to address the above and as such I am happy to accept the proposal subject to conditions.

5.63 **Planning Officer Note:** Further to the submission of plans to show the drainage strategy for the site area and the overall drainage network the SUDS Officer confirmed acceptability of the proposed scheme subject to conditions requiring the approval of a Sustainable Drainage Strategy and the pre-occupation implementation of the approved strategy.

5.64 Thames Valley Police – Crime Prevention Design Advisor – *Original comments 1/2/21* - I consider some aspects of the design and layout to be problematic in crime prevention design terms and therefore, with specific reference to the location of the post boxes and concerns regarding Physical security and access control offer the following recommendation.

5.65 Given the location of the development I believe the attachment of an access control strategy condition will ensure the sustainable safety and security of the development, safeguarding future residents.

- 5.66 **Recommendations: Postal boxes:** My only comments at this juncture would be to relocate the post boxes from the private residential core to the communal lobby, where mail can be delivered whilst maintaining the safety and security of the building.
- 5.67 **Physical security Condition:** Physical security and access control into and throughout the development will be critical in creating and sustaining a ‘*Safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime will not undermine quality of life or community cohesion*’. I request that a condition be included.
- 5.68 **Planning Officer Note:** the TVP provided some advice as to the measures which would need to be included:
- compartmentalisation of each floor within the development via physical security measures. This enables residents to identify visitors and prevent unauthorised access into the private parts of the buildings whilst maintaining a safe and secure distance.
 - External Communal entrance and communal lobbies should include specific types of door sets with access controlled via the use of electronic remote release locking systems with audio/visual link to each apartment.
 - Bin and cycle store doors and external sliding doors and roller shutters must be robust.
 - Detailed plans and locations of Formal surveillance (CCTV) cameras
- 5.69 Plans were originally received on 9/2/21 to show proposed access control and CCTV and a relocation of letter boxes. At that time TVP confirmed that these were acceptable. Amended plans showing the access controls and CCTV within the context of the amended scheme were provided. A condition is recommended requiring the implementation of such measures in accordance with approved plans.
- 5.70 **RBC Waste** – “Capacity - for 28 flats on the standard fortnightly collection, we would provide:
- 4 x 1100L bins for general waste
 - 5-6 x 1100L bins for recycling
 - 2-3 x 240L bins for food waste
- 5.71 The document states that they have space for 8 x 1100L bins in total which would be too small for this number of bins. They would either need a bigger bin store or have a weekly collection through trade waste.
- 5.72 I do have concerns regarding the refuse vehicle having to wait on Silver Street, whilst the bins are emptied. The vehicle should be able to pull in/over. With Silver Street being a single carriage way the build-up of traffic whilst the bins are being loaded is an issue.

- 5.73 The document advises that the management staff will bring the bins out and return after collection; due to the walking distance this would need to be upheld.”
- 5.74 **Planning Officer Note:** The amended scheme for 23 flats was further reviewed and the Waste Officer confirmed that for a standard collection (i.e. fortnightly for general waste and recycling and weekly for food waste) that the overall proposed bin storage capacity would be insufficient. However, for weekly commercial collections the space shown would be sufficient for the required capacity of 3 x 1100L for general waste, 5 x 1100L for recycling and 2 x 240L for food waste. They also advised that there would need to be rotation of bins once full, as the internal arrangement would only allow for the front two to be accessible. The agent confirmed that the applicant was intending to arrange a weekly trade waste collection, either from the Council (if this service is available) or via a private contractor and the bin store and related on site management arrangements have been designed for weekly refuse collection. An enlargement of the loading bay on Silver Street and tracking plans adequately demonstrated that a refuse vehicle could pull off the main carriageway for collection. The agent also confirmed that a management team would rotate the bins and present them for collection. A condition is recommended for the submission and approval of a Waste Management Plan to address the specific requirements.

Public

- 5.75 The following properties were notified of the application by letter:
- 63-69 Upper Crown Street (odd)
 - Stirling House – Flats 1-18
 - Windsor Square Nos. 1-8
 - Platinum Apartments Flats 1-20
 - Hawk Cottages nos. 1-5
 - Rimaud House, Iliffe Close Nos 1-5
- 5.76 Further letters were sent when amended plans were received in August 2022 and March 2023.
- 5.77 The summary of objections received is as follows:

Design

- A 4 storey dwelling is also out of keeping for this area as the flats opposite are 3 storey as are those next to it; other flats in the area mostly two / max three storey so no there is no precedence for a 4 storey building.

Amenity

- Loss of privacy [to Platinum Apartments and Stirling House flats].

- Overbearing especially to the lower sections of Platinum Apartments; Large, obtrusive building.
- Impact on daylight and sunlight to surrounding buildings including those opposite - The sun currently travels across the south facing wall of the building, which is where our lounge/kitchen is located. On this wall are the windows for this room, so a building of 3 or more stories would block this light and make our main living area very dark [Platinum Apartments]; Overshadowing to Platinum Apartments; the ground floor living room of Platinum Apartments does not have a larger Juliette balcony window to help mitigate light loss.

Proposed Residential Use

- The development has the same provisions as the refused student scheme and there is no requirement for further student flats at this location; It would appear the plans were amended to make these flats more residential, however the common area within the building would suggest otherwise.
- It should be for self-contained flats.
- Transient neighbours whether they are students or not tend to have a lack of consideration and respect for neighbours at the base level but students in particular seem to have a total disregard, lack of awareness and a contempt for people around them.
- There would be constant noise and disruption from students.

Transport and Parking

- The road is rather dangerous with most cars speeding past the building with no regard for the cycle lane or pedestrians, not to mention the excessive noise they cause. Accidents will increase when these flats are built. Both roads next to it have cameras or speed bumps this road needs one of these measures as people tend to race up Silver Street already?
- Insufficient parking already and more flats will lead to additional congestion and problems parking; lack of proposed parking which will add to the already frustrating parking situation.
- Silver Street is already a very busy road with constant traffic. The road is in disrepair and as a result the building suffers from traffic vibrations constantly (it's not just big lorries, every bus and large van makes the building shake).
- What are the plans to solve the lack of free parking for residents in area?

Suggested Alternative Uses

- Already too many flats on this road and insufficient commercial sites and green space. Should be a commercial site again to allow micro

mobility e cargo trike businesses, to reduce the footprint of cars, and make our city greener.

- What are you doing to create employment in the area?
- There are no children's play parks in the centre of Reading you have to go towards the river, university or Palmer Park. This would be a great use of this space to put a children play park here; a green space for the community would be a better option for the site than yet another building.

Infrastructure

- Serious lack of adequate facilities nearby.

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 "Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development".
- 6.2 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). 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
- 5. Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- 8. Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities
- 9. Promoting Sustainable Transport
- 11. Making Effective Use of Land
- 12. Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places
- 14. Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

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
 CC4: Decentralised Energy
 CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
 CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
 CC7: Design and the Public Realm
 CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
 CC9: Securing Infrastructure
 EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
 EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
 EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
 EN15: Air Quality
 EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
 EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
 EN18: Flooding and Drainage
 EM3: Loss of Employment Land
 H1: Provision of Housing
 H2: Density and Mix
 H3: Affordable Housing
 H4: Build to Rent Schemes
 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

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

- Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)
- Affordable Housing SPD (2021)
- Planning Obligations Under S106 SPD (2015)

Other relevant documents:

- Reading Borough Council Tree strategy (2021)

7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Land use principles

- Design Considerations and Effect on Character
- Density and Mix
- Impact on Amenities of Adjoining Occupiers and Future tenants
- Natural Environment
- Transport/ Parking
- Environmental Matters
- Flood Risk & Drainage
- Sustainability
- S106
- Other
- Equalities impact

Land use principles

- 7.1 Policy CC1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) requires a positive approach to development that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which lies at the heart of national policy (NPPF).
- 7.2 The three overarching objectives defined in the NPPF, to achieving sustainable development are economic, social and environmental. With regard to the economic role, the proposal would contribute to economic activity through the construction period. The provision of additional housing would meet the social objective and landscaping and measures to enhance biodiversity would support the environmental objective.
- 7.3 The location of the site is dominated by residential uses with some offices and other commercial uses. It is an accessible location on the edge of the town centre and the redevelopment of this brownfield site for a residential use would be acceptable in principle, representing a sustainable development and an effective reuse of the site. This would accord with the NPPF's principle of making effective use of land (Para. 123) and Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) housing policies (Policy H1) by contributing towards housing provision to 2036 and build to rent housing (private rental - Policy H4). It would create some local employment opportunities (during the construction phase).
- 7.4 The previous use of the site was for employment, however the principle of the loss of the commercial use for residential use was accepted with the granting of the now lapsed planning permission for residential (15 flats) at 40 Silver Street (150885/FUL) and student housing (16 units) at 62-68 Silver Street (11/01917/FUL).

- 7.5 Although the principle of the use and location are considered acceptable this would be subject to satisfactorily meeting other policy requirements as addressed further below.
- 7.6 The amended scheme has been assessed in the context of the previous refusals and appeal decisions and the lapsed residential scheme (150885 – part of the site at 40 Silver Street)

Design Considerations and Effect on Character

- 7.7 Policy CC7 requires that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.
- 7.8 The proposed amended scheme comprises a single 4 storey building to the Silver Street frontage. It would have three storeys with a fourth set back with dormer windows. With respect to the height and appearance in the streetscene it is proposed with a mono-pitched roof, with inset flat roofed dormers. The overall design is groups of projecting sections with corresponding dormers above, with a variation in building line to break up the mass of the frontage. The proposal is for a contemporary appearance using fair faced brick, feature recessed panels, brick cills, standing seam zinc roof and aluminium windows and ventilation louvres.
- 7.9 The proposal would bring the built form to the front of the site and align with adjacent plots and the prevailing building line on the street, whilst still ensuring landscaping and tree planting of the frontage within the site as well as street tree planting to further enhance the public realm.
- 7.10 The overall height would be 12.2m above ground level, which is consistent with the maximum height of previous, albeit refused, schemes (190449, 200919) and officers considered the overall height to be acceptable, and this did not form a specific reason for refusal at that time.
- 7.11 The proposed scheme sits lower than the highest point of Platinum Apartments to the north and is of a similar height to Hieatt Close to the south (11.0m). It is, therefore, considered to be an acceptable height within the context of the neighbouring buildings and the wider area.
- 7.12 In terms of character and appearance the Inspector into the 190449 appeal considered that the height and massing of the front block would be comparable in scale to the neighbouring buildings and would complement the street scene along Silver Street.
- 7.13 The building's set back reduces any degree of dominance.

7.14 The contemporary appearance of the proposal, which includes projecting bays and staggered front building line with dormers above, is similar to that presented under the previous schemes 190449 and 200919 (extracts below), albeit the bays and dormers are slightly wider and with a slightly different arrangement.



7.15 Although more contemporary than most other buildings within the area there is a recently built, very similar scheme, at no. 79 Silver Street (owned by the applicant) which is student housing, and indeed the adjacent buildings at Hieatt Close and Platinum Apartments include similar elements to the proposal with respect to staggered building lines and projecting elements with flat roof dormer features.

7.16 The type of design as shown in the proposed scheme was considered acceptable under the previous applications on this site.



Hieatt Close to the south



Platinum Apartments to the north

7.17 The layout of the site with the main block to the front with amenity and parking to the rear, and the depth of the building, is very similar to the last approved residential scheme for part of the application site (40 Silver Street - 150885 – see approved site plan below).



Approved ground floor plan 150885



Proposed ground floor plan

- 7.18 The recognition of the need to set the building away from Platinum Apartments was set out in the appeal decision for the refused and appealed scheme of 190449. The proposed scheme would achieve good set off to Platinum Apartments which is ca 7m between side walls compared to 4m under 190449, and is similar to the previous 200919 scheme, where the set off was considered acceptable. Further information with respect to amenity impacts is set out under that section below.
- 7.19 There would be good back- to- back distance to Rimaud House to the west, whilst the siting of the building would accord with the adjacent building block pattern.
- 7.20 The landscaping, amenity space, and boundary planting would improve the overall appearance of the site compared to its previous commercial appearance and as a current unused site.
- 7.21 In terms of the proposed materials' palette this would include traditional materials with some contemporary detailing included a grey multi-brick with recessed windows, aluminium dark grey/brown finish to window frames and a metal standing seam roof including cladding to dormer roofs.

Zinc clad dormer and roof (indicative image)



- 7.22 It is considered that the proposals would be acceptable in their scale, mass, appearance and overall design and would, therefore, be in accordance with Policy CC7 and the principles of high-quality design set out in the NPPF.

Density and mix

- 7.23 Policy H2 requires density to be informed by the character of the area accessibility, high quality design, efficient use of land and amenity for existing and proposed residents.
- 7.24 Policy H2 also states that *“Wherever possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing set out in figure 4.6, in particular for family homes of three or more bedrooms. 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.”*
- 7.25 Policy H4 requires build to rent schemes to provide for a mix of unit sizes in accordance with Policy H2.
- 7.26 The total site area is 0.136ha and the density proposed would equate to ca 169.7 dwellings per hectare. This is comparable with the adjacent Platinum apartments which equates to ca 140 dwellings per hectare (20 units on a 0.143ha site) and is much lower than 1-9 Hieatt Close of 290 dwellings per hectare (9 units on 0.031ha). The indicative density ranges for urban sites, as set out in Fig 4.5 of the RBLP, is 60-120 dwellings per hectare, but the policy allows for different factors to influence an appropriate density including the character in terms of density of an area. It is therefore, considered that this would be an appropriate density level and very similar to the previous approval for 40 Silver Street (150885).
- 7.27 In terms of housing mix the amended scheme now includes 4 no. 3 beds and 11 no. 2 beds, equating to 17.4% and 47.8% respectively. Although the number of 3 beds does not meet policy, the supporting text to Policy H2 (para 4.4.9) accepts that *“homes with two or more bedrooms, capable of accommodating families, represent the majority of the need”* and the proposal would offer over 65% as 2 or 3 bedrooms. Policy H2 does state such compliance should have *“regard to all other material considerations”*. As the proposal would not provide 50% 3 bed units there would be a degree of harm in respect of meeting this specific housing need, albeit it would contribute towards overall housing provision and provide some larger units. This harm will need to be weighed against the wider benefits of the scheme.
- 7.28 The sizes of the units would meet the national space standards, as set out in the supporting text to Policy H5.

Impact on Amenities of Adjoining Occupiers and Future tenants

- 7.29 Policy CC8 states that *“Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:*
- Privacy and overlooking;
 - Access to sunlight and daylight;
 - Visual

dominance and overbearing effects of a development; • Harm to outlook; • Noise and disturbance; • Artificial lighting; • Vibration; • Dust and fumes; • Smell; • Crime and safety;....” And “The position of habitable rooms, windows and outdoor living spaces will be particularly important. A back-to-back distance of 20 metres between dwellings is usually appropriate...”.

- 7.30 Policy H10 requires that dwellings be provided with “*functional private or communal open space....., 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.... 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.*”

Privacy and Overlooking

- 7.31 The majority of the proposed windows would be east or west facing, i.e. towards the rear or towards Silver Street and would be at sufficient distance, and with respect to Rimaud House, which is to the west of the site, would be on lower ground than it, to not cause concerns regarding the loss of privacy and unacceptable overlooking to those properties to the rear and opposite the site
- 7.32 There would be a few side facing windows to the north towards Platinum Apartments at a distance of ca 7m, but these would be narrow openings and would include translucent film to avoid direct overlooking, albeit the upper part of the window could be opened. The opening part would be side hung to offer a view towards Silver Street and would be restricted to open no wider than 30 degrees to preclude direct views towards Platinum Apartments.
- 7.33 There would be the potential for overlooking of the rear windows of the proposed building and private communal amenity space from Rimaud House, which is at an elevated level compared to the site. However, there are existing trees along the shared boundary and there would be a distance of 29.7m between the buildings and 19.7m to the edge of the amenity space, which is considered to meet standard back-to-back distances and would not cause a detrimental relationship and one which is not considered to be unusual for an urban site.
- 7.34 The depth of the building is relatively comparable with adjoining plots and balconies etc have been removed and considered that sufficient separation to not create unusual or detrimental effects with respect to overlooking. It is usual to have some overlooking, direct and oblique views between sites especially in an urban context, and there are already existing situations of such relationships, e.g. Platinum Apartments to the rear of and the amenity spaces of Upper Crown Street.

Access to Sunlight and Daylight

- 7.35 Many of the neighbour objections relate to concern over loss of daylight and sunlight, but in particular to the side windows at ground, first and second floors of Platinum Apartments to the north.
- 7.36 The NPPF (para. 129) states that *“when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).”*
- 7.37 An amended Daylight and Sunlight Assessment was submitted and models the effect of the proposal on the windows of neighbouring buildings. The assessment includes review of the daylight to the proposed dwellings using the illuminance method², and the effect on the daylight and sunlight of neighbouring dwellings using the Vertical Sky Component (VSL - total amount of skylight available), no skyline (NSL - which measures the area within a room that can receive direct sunlight and the distribution around the room), and Annual Probable Sunlight Hours (APSH – amount of sunlight reaching a room calculated as a percentage of annual probable sunlight hours at the centre of its windows).
- 7.38 This is based on the guidance within the BRE ‘*Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice*’ (third edition, 2022).
- 7.39 The Assessment sets out that *“the BRE guide states that its default numerical guidelines are not mandatory, and must be interpreted flexibly, because natural daylight is only one of many factors in site layout design. In certain circumstances, such as city centres or areas with modern high-rise buildings, a higher degree of obstruction may be unavoidable if new developments are to match the height and proportions of existing buildings.”*
- 7.40 Paragraph 5.1 of the Assessment identifies that Appendix f of the BRE Guide states *“In assessing the loss of light to existing windows nearby a local authority may allow the vertical sky component (VSC) and annual probable sunlight hours (APSH) for the permitted scheme to be used as alternative benchmarks. However, since the permitted scheme only exists on paper, it would be inappropriate for it to be treated in the same way as an existing building and for the developer to set 0.8 times the values for the permitted scheme as benchmarks”*.

² BRE Guide The minimum recommended target illuminance level (lux) for room types in UK dwellings is 100 lux for bedrooms, 150 lux for living rooms and 200 lux for kitchens. As the living/kitchen/dining areas have the kitchens to the rear of the room a target of 150 lux has been used in the assessment.

- 7.41 The Assessment includes assessing the scheme against the now lapsed approved residential scheme (150885) and using this for 'alternative target values'.
- 7.42 The proposed building has been set away from Platinum Apartments at a very similar distance to the previous permission (150885 wall-to wall distance of 7.09m compared to 7.2m) for the reason of reducing the effects of loss of daylight/ sunlight on the Platinum Apartments. The conclusion of the Assessment is that based on an assessment of the proposed scheme against the existing baseline that there would be some adverse effects on the existing side facing windows at Platinum Apartments. However, when using the approved scheme as the baseline the effects would be almost the same as the previous approval.
- 7.43 When assessed against the previous approved scheme the results demonstrate that all six neighbouring properties would continue to meet BRE target values or VSL, NSL and /or APSH reduction of no more than a 2% absolute change when compared against the extant consent target values. This is not considered to be material in nature. There would be a small number of rooms which would experience a slight gain in daylight due to the different configuration of the roof compared to the previous permitted scheme.
- 7.44 The rooms in Platinum Apartments, that the affected windows serve, are open plan kitchen/living dining areas which also have windows to the front facing Silver Street. As an urban site is it inevitable that the proposal will be positioned close to existing buildings, which in turn will change the context in respect of shading, daylight and views. The Assessment illustrates that the proposal would not have significant adverse impacts on the residential amenities of the neighbouring properties and the close-by habitable spaces. On balance, therefore, when also considering the needs of ensuring an efficient use of the site and a design which is appropriate in its overall scale for the specific site, the proposal is considered acceptable.
- 7.45 In terms of the Assessment of the proposed scheme against the existing position, 5 no. of the side windows at Platinum Apartments, which serve 3 no. living/kitchen/ dining spaces, which, as stated above, are rooms which also have windows to Silver Street, would experience loss of daylight as measured using the Vertical Sky Component (VSC), with 2 of the windows having a 'significant effect'. However, the VSC method assesses each window individually and for planning purposes (and as within the BRE guidance) spaces with more than one window should be considered in overall daylight terms. When assessed by the NSL and APSH methodologies the rooms at Platinum Apartments would continue

to meet BRE guidance in terms of overall daylight for the rooms, and all rooms would also continue to meet BRE guidelines in relation to sunlight.

- 7.46 The assessment confirms that there will be no significant loss of daylight or sunlight to Rimaud House, 69 Upper Crown Street and Heatt Close.
- 7.47 The conclusion is that the proposed development will not cause undue harm on the neighbouring residential dwellings and in the context of an urban setting, can be considered acceptable in planning terms.
- 7.48 In terms of daylight to the proposed flats the Assessment shows that 57 of the 65 rooms assessed would satisfy the BRE guidelines for daylight illuminance. Of the eight rooms which fall below guidance the median illuminance would be at least 85 lux. Seven of these are lounge/kitchen diner spaces with kitchens to the rear of the space, and in all cases the main living area would see the minimum lux level for the space. This level of compliance in this urban site is considered acceptable.
- 7.49 For sunlight to the new dwellings the analysis shows that 61 of the 65 rooms assessed will satisfy the guidelines and those falling below are bedrooms. The BRE guide recommends that for dwellings at least on habitable room and preferably a living room should receive at least 1.5hrs of sunlight on 21st March. All 23 units would contain living rooms which would meet this criteria.

Visual Dominance and Overbearing Effects

- 7.50 The building is considered to be an appropriate scale for this location and the set-back upper floor, and articulated frontage, contribute towards reducing any overbearing effects. There is good separation to the boundaries and the building footprint is similar to the surrounding pattern of development. It would not dominate the wider area visually.

Harm to Outlook

- 7.51 The surrounding residents will have an altered outlook and in particular from the side facing windows at Platinum Apartments. It should be noted that these rooms also have windows facing towards Silver Street. With the siting of the building sufficiently away from Platinum Apartments, but whilst ensuring an acceptable density of development for this site, it is considered that this outlook would not be unduly harmed and would not create an acceptable relationship at this urban site.
- 7.52 The remaining surrounding buildings are at a much greater distance from the proposed scheme or do not have windows directly facing the site.

Noise and Disturbance

- 7.53 The proposed scheme would introduce new units to the site and this would inevitably be accompanied by some noise and disturbance, but this is within the context of a busy urban environment including a busy road. It is not considered that the use of the site for 23 flats would create an unusual level of noise and disturbance compared to similar developments nearby.
- 7.54 It is worth noting that the Appeal Inspector, referring to the previous refused scheme 190449, did not consider that there would be harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupants by reasons of noise disturbance, overlooking and loss of privacy and that was a scheme for 79 student rooms across 2 main buildings and a link building.
- 7.55 Unlike previous student schemes bins and cycle storage is not adjacent to the boundary with Platinum Apartments and would be fully integrated into the building. This would remove any previous officer concerns regarding noise and disturbance and odour, albeit this concern was not shared by the Inspector at that time.

Lighting

- 7.56 This would be limited to low level bollard and access lighting, however, a condition is included requiring submission of details should further external lighting be sought.

Crime and Safety

- 7.57 Following comments from TVP Crime Prevention Design Advisor the amended proposal includes access controls and CCTV. The proposed building would have active management from a small management suite by the main entrance, and would have access controls (pass key) into the building as well as a CCTV system covering the car parking and courtyard. A condition is recommended requiring the implementation of such measures in accordance with approved plans. This would accord with Policy CC8 and NPPF paras. 91b and 127b.

Amenity Space

- 7.58 With regard to private and communal outdoor space Policy H10 states that flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens.
- 7.59 The proposal includes a rear communal amenity space of ca 290sqm, which when balanced against the requirements for parking spaces and landscaping to the boundaries and to the frontage, is considered to be an acceptable provision within this urban site and comparable to that

present at Platinum Apartments. This would combine with the internal communal room, which would open directly onto this space.

- 7.60 It is considered that the proposals would be acceptable in respect of the amenity of future occupiers and also the effects of the development on the amenity of surrounding uses, in accordance with Policies CC8 and H10.

Transport/Parking

- 7.61 Policies TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy), TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway related matters), and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking related matters relating to development.
- 7.62 The amended proposal includes 11 no. car parking spaces including EVCP and disabled space, and 40 no. cycle spaces. Access would be from one of the existing accesses on Silver Street and there would be the provision of a car club space and 2 on-street parking bays to the frontage on Silver Street.
- 7.63 The Transport Officer has confirmed that subject to conditions relating to the pre-occupation provision of vehicle access, car parking, cycle parking and EV spaces, pre-commencement submission and approval of bin storage, submission and approval of a Construction Method Statement, stopping up of existing accesses and S106 obligations regarding car club, traffic regulation order and trees with the highway, the scheme would be acceptable and would accord with Policy TR1, TR3, TR4 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Environmental Matters

- 7.64 Noise – Policy CC8 and EN16 require development to not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.
- 7.65 The development itself is not expected to generate any significant external noise impacts. With respect to environmental noise from Silver Street the main issue raised by the EPO is whether new residents will have an acceptable noise environment. A condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval and implementation of a noise assessment and mitigation measures.

- 7.66 Air Quality – Policy EN15 states that *“Development should have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality.”*
- 7.67 An Air Quality Assessment has been submitted and the Environmental Protection and Nuisance Officer (EPO) has confirmed that the air quality at the development would be within EU limit values and, therefore, complies with Policy EN15.
- 7.68 Contaminated land – Policy EN16 states that *“development will only be permitted on land affected by contamination where it is demonstrated that the contamination and land gas can be satisfactorily managed or remediated so that it is suitable for the proposed end use and will not impact on the groundwater environment, human health, buildings and the wider environment, during demolition and construction phases as well as during the future use of the site.”*
- 7.69 A full ground conditions survey was carried out following demolition works. The EPO has confirmed that the scheme would be acceptable with the inclusion of conditions for implementation and verification of the remediation scheme and a compliance condition relating to discovery of any unidentified contaminated land.

Flood Risk & Drainage

- 7.70 Local Plan Policy EN18 (Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems) states, *“.....All major developments must incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as appropriate and in line with the Government’s Technical Standards.....Runoff rates should aim to reflect greenfield conditions and, in any case, must be no greater than the existing conditions of the site.”*
- 7.71 The submitted Drainage Strategy states that the ground conditions at the site vary and that there is relatively low permeability and given the space restrictions it is recommended that the use of a soakaway as permanent solution for surface water drainage is not recommended, therefore alternative SuDS comprising a green roof and bio retention areas is proposed. The surface water will be directed to a cellular attenuation tank located proposed within the parking area and from there it would discharge to the existing surface water sewer within Silver Street. The surface water would be attenuated and discharged at the reduced brownfield rate of 5.0l/s.
- 7.72 The Strategy also states that *“The site surface water drainage would be designed to provide adequate capacity not to flood for a 1 in 30-year storm plus climate change (+35%) event and such that flood water generated from a 1 in 100 year plus climate change storm event (+40%)*

shall be constrained within the site boundary so not to cause off-site flooding. The risk of flooding elsewhere should therefore not be increased as a result of the development proposals.”

- 7.73 Reducing surface water run off further, by using permeable paving, would be investigated further during the detailed design stage.
- 7.74 The foul water would be collected in a private network and discharged to an existing combined sewer.
- 7.75 The SUDs Officer has confirmed that subject to conditions for the pre-commencement submission of approval of a Sustainable Drainage Strategy and the pre-occupation implementation of the approved strategy that the scheme is acceptable and accords with Policy EN18.

Natural Environment

- 7.76 Policy EN12 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 states that Reading's vegetation cover will be extended. Policy CC7 sets out that good design should incorporate appropriate landscaping.
- 7.77 The submitted landscaping scheme includes 17 no. new trees within the site and 3 no. street trees along with new hedge and shrub planting including to the boundaries and planting within the courtyard amenity space.
- 7.78 During the course of the application there were a number of amendments made to the landscaping scheme and the issues raised are set out in the consultation section above. Fundamentally the improvements secured were the setting back of the building and enhanced tree establishment systems through tree pits and soil volumes, as well as improved tree species to maximise canopy spread.
- 7.79 The applicant would implement the street trees under a S278 agreement and would provide a financial contribution, secured through a S106 obligation, for RBC to undertake the ongoing maintenance, for a period of 5 years.
- 7.80 The Natural Environment (Tree) Officer confirmed that the overall amended scheme would be acceptable subject to recommended

conditions for pre-occupation provision of the approved landscaping scheme and pre-commencement submission and approval of a landscape management plan as well as the S106 obligation for the street trees. In addition, a materials condition is recommended, which would relate to hard landscape materials and external lighting.

- 7.81 The Ecologist advised that as the site has no real ecological benefits at present that a full ecology survey was not required, and the focus has been on achieving a landscaping strategy that would include native and wildlife friendly species and tree planting. In addition, a condition is recommended requiring the submission and approval of a detailed scheme for swift bricks and bird and bat boxes/ bricks/tiles around the building.
- 7.82 The proposed scheme also includes for a green roof, the details of which would be secured via condition and this would contribute towards adaptation to climate change and SuDS through landscaping (Policy EN18 and supporting text).



Proposed Landscape Layout

- 7.83 It is considered that the proposed landscaping scheme would enhance the visual appearance of the site and enhance the biodiversity value of the site. This would, therefore, subject to the above recommended conditions, accord with Policies EN12, EN14 and CC7.

Sustainability

- 7.84 The overarching sustainability policy, Policy CC2 requires proposals for new development to reduce the consumption of resources and materials and states that *“Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.”*
- 7.85 Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change, requires that *“all developments demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change.”*
- 7.86 Policy CC4: Decentralised Energy also requires development to demonstrate how consideration has been given to securing energy for the development from decentralised sources. Supporting text in para. 4.1.19 states that this policy would mainly apply in Central Reading.
- 7.87 Policy CC5 requires minimisation of waste during construction and the life of the development.
- 7.88 Policy H5 sets a number of requirements for the design and construction of new homes, allowing some flexibility where compliance would make a scheme unviable: Achieve the higher water efficiency standard under Building Regulation 36(3); All major development to be designed to achieve zero carbon homes. Supporting text (para. 4.4.6) states that where homes are not designed to be carbon neutral *“this will mean as a minimum a 35% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the 2013 Building regulations plus a contribution of £1,800 per tonne towards carbon offsetting within Reading”*
- 7.89 An Energy and Sustainability Statement has been submitted which states that there would be a ca 36% reduction in carbon emissions and the commitment to contribute towards carbon offsetting in according with the policy and supporting SPD. This would be secured through a S106 legal agreement obligation.
- 7.90 The Statement identifies that due to the distance to the potential local district heating network current cluster areas being considered, located within the town centre, it would not be viable to connect to these due to the distance and the cost to extend the network to this site.
- 7.91 The proposal, therefore, is to utilise energy efficiently and generate some of the energy needed on site through the use of heat pump systems and PV.

7.92 The structure would achieve high thermal insulation standards and a number of low energy and passive strategies would be adopted to reduce the demands for heating and mechanical ventilation and air conditioning. These include:

- Avoiding undue solar gain/ cooling needs by solar control on windows.
- Minimising electrical demand by achieving good daylight levels.
- Enhanced glazing specification with good U-value (insulation) and G-value (solar absorption) performance.
- High standards of air tightness for heated areas.
- Mechanical & Electrical Systems.

7.93 In terms of energy efficiency measures the proposal would include:

- Use of centralised air source heat pumps.
- Low energy lighting and efficient lighting controls.
- providing low temperature hot water.
- Providing mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR).
- On-site generation from rooftop PV panels.
- A building management system to reduce energy wastage e.g. shutting off heating and lighting to unoccupied rooms.

7.94 There would be water saving sanitary ware and the use of a proportion of sustainable timber, recycled and other materials and waste management plans for construction and the use of the building.

7.95 A sustainable drainage strategy and the introduction of new trees and planting will improve attenuation of surface water run-off and improved eco habitat compared to the former wholly hard surfaced commercial site.

7.96 The proposed hard landscaping paving material would provide a permeable surface.

7.97 Overall it is considered that the proposal would meet the policy requirements of Policies CC2, CC3, CC5 and H5 and the SPD, subject to a condition requiring the implementation of the stated measures, an obligation within the S106 for carbon offsetting and a condition requiring the submission and approval PV details.

S106

7.98 In accordance with Policies CC2, CC9, H3, H4, and H5 the following obligations would be sought:

- Affordable Housing

- Build-to Rent – to meet Policy H4 requirements and Affordable Housing SPD
- Employment Skills and Training Plan - construction
- Carbon Off-Setting financial contribution based on a formula
- Transport – S278 highway works and £7,500 for Traffic Regulation Order
- Street tree provision and ongoing maintenance
- Monitoring and legal costs

7.99 Policy H3 requires *“on sites of 10 or more dwellings, 30% of the total dwellings will be in the form of affordable housing; provision should be made on site in the first instance with a financial contribution being negotiated to make up the full requirement as appropriate. In all cases where proposals fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open-book approach will be taken and the onus will be on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.”*

7.100 Policy H4 for Built to Rent schemes specifically states that such schemes should *“provide 30% on-site affordable housing, either in accordance with Policy H3 and any relevant Supplementary Planning Document; or in the form of Affordable Private Rent Housing as defined and set out in a relevant Supplementary Planning Document.”*

7.101 The applicant submitted a viability assessment which initially included no provision for affordable housing. Further to review and negotiation by the Council’s appointed consultant and RBC’s Assets Team, a final scheme was agreed to secure 26% on-site affordable housing provision for a build to rent scheme comprising 4no. 2-bedroom 3 person units and 2no. 3-bedroom 4 person units at discounted market rent. The rent shall be no more than 80% of market rent and capped at Local Housing Allowance, along with deferred payment contributions or 30% fully policy compliant scheme for market housing scheme and for both the cascade mechanism in the event that a Registered (affordable Housing) Provider were not secured. The recommended obligation also includes for a contribution to affordable housing in the event a site were altered to create further residential units.

7.102 Policy H4 sets out a number of criteria, as follows, which developments of self-contained, private rented homes need to provide, and these would be secured through obligations within the S106 legal agreement:

- *“Secured in single ownership providing solely for the rental market for a minimum 20-year term with provision for clawback of affordable housing contributions should the covenant not be met;*

- *Provide tenancies for private renters for a minimum of three years with a six-month break clause in the tenant's favour and structured and limited in-tenancy rent increases agreed in advance;*
- *Provide a high standard of professional on-site management and control of the accommodation;*
- *Provide a commitment to high-quality rental arrangements, through meeting Reading Borough Council's voluntary Rent with Confidence Standards or equivalent measures; ...*
- *Provide 30% on-site affordable housing, either in accordance with Policy H3 and any relevant Supplementary Planning Document; or in the form of Affordable Private Rent Housing as defined and set out in a relevant Supplementary Planning Document."*

7.103 Policy CC9 includes a high priority for obligations which meet economic development services and infrastructure, including employment, skills and training development initiatives. As a major category residential development, and in line with the adopted Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013), the development is expected to provide a construction phase employment and skills plan, working in conjunction with REDA, to demonstrate how it would benefit the local employment market, or an equivalent financial contribution towards local skills and training, which would equate to a total of £4,080 calculated as £2500 x GIA sqm (1632Sq m in this case) /1000 (3% would be used to support the role of the Skills for Business Coordinator).

7.104 Policy H5 requires carbon offsetting financial contributions where schemes would not achieve carbon neutral homes. This would be in accordance with the formula within the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

7.105 There would be a S278 for highway alterations to provide for three trees within the public highway. The provision of off-site trees would accord with Policy CC9 which states that *"Other measures, should also be considered where a specific need is identified and justified including environmental improvements outside the Central Area, including off-site street tree planting."*

7.106 There would also be the requirement for the provision and funding of a car club bay on Silver Street for five years and £7,500 towards Traffic Regulation Orders necessary to provide a car club bay and to alter the existing waiting restrictions. This would provide an alternative to owning a private car and an alternative method for sustainable transport in accordance with Policy TR1.

7.107 The applicant has confirmed their commitment to these obligations, which would be part of a S106 legal agreement.

7.108 The above obligations would accord with Policies CC9, H3, H4, H5, TR1, TR3 and the Employment, Skills and Training SPD (2013).

Other

7.109 Policy H5 requires developments over 20 units to provide 5% of units to be wheelchair user units in line with Part M Building Regulations 4(3). One of the ground floor 2 bedroom units would be a wheelchair accessible unit and the accessible parking space would be in a central position to ensure suitable access to the building.

7.110 In terms of waste collection arrangements, the development would not have space for on-site servicing and therefore waste collection would be from the 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 as it would rely on the bins being brought to the kerbside. RBC Transport Officers have confirmed that the loading/servicing bay to the front of the site would be sufficient for a refuse vehicle to pull off the carriageway.

7.111 The Waste Team has confirmed that the scheme would be acceptable subject to a weekly commercial collection arrangement, as proposed by the applicant, and the requirement for a Waste Management Plan condition to ensure that details are secured, including that bins would need to be presented to the roadside and be rotated within the bin store by a management company, due to the internal bin store layout.

Equalities Impact

7.112 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 In accordance with the NPPF the proposal would result in sustainable development, utilising previously developed land in a sustainable location. The principle of development for housing would be acceptable and it would contribute towards meeting housing requirements (Policy H1, H4 and NPPF).
- 8.2 The landscaping scheme, which includes tree planting to the frontage both within the site and within the street, would enhance the appearance of the site and the wider area.
- 8.3 The trees, planting and the proposed green roof would improve the sustainable drainage. The inclusion of PV on the roof along with other energy saving measures and on-site air source heat pumps would generate some of the energy requirements of the site and the measures proposed including high thermal insulation standards and low energy and passive strategies would achieve around 36% savings in annual carbon dioxide emissions.
- 8.4 The proposal would have some limited harm with respect to: some loss of daylight and sunlight to some of the units within Platinum Apartments, albeit this is comparable to the effects of the previous approved residential scheme; slightly below full policy compliant affordable housing provision (26% compared to 30% requirement); and below the required residential mix in terms of the number of 3-bed units (Policy H2). The proposal does represent a compromise and the benefits of achieving an effective and efficient use of the site, with a viable option to bring this vacant site back into use, the provision of additional housing in an accessible location, SuDs, enhancement of the appearance of the site, and ecological benefits, has been balanced positively against the harms identified.
- 8.5 It is considered that the scheme would address all material matters and the benefits of the scheme would outweigh the harms. The application is, therefore, recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and the satisfactory completion of S106 legal agreement.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

Proposed Plans shown below:

Proposed Site Plan



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



Proposed Second Floor Plan



Proposed Third Floor Plan



Proposed Roof Plan



Proposed Elevations and Section



① Street Elevation - Silver Street long elevation
1:200



② Street Elevation - Silver Street
1:100



⑥ Elevation 6 - North
1:100



⑤ Elevation 5 - South
1:100



③ West Elevation - Block A
1:100



① Section A - A
1:100



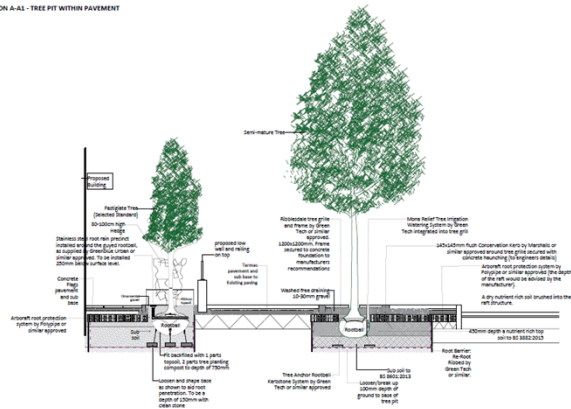
② Section B - B
1:100



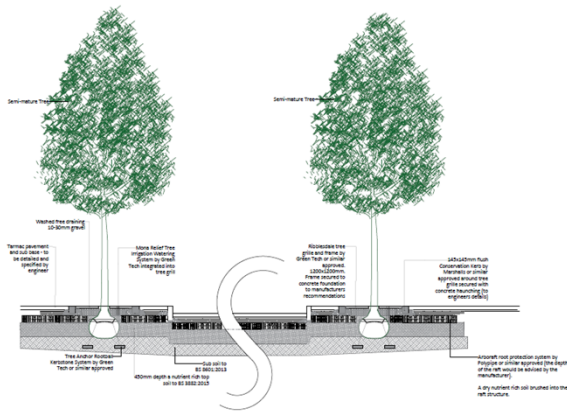
Landscape Layout (as above)

Tree Pits

SECTION A-A1 - TREE FIT WITHIN PAVEMENT
1:50



SECTION B-B1 - TREE FIT WITHIN PAVEMENT
1:50

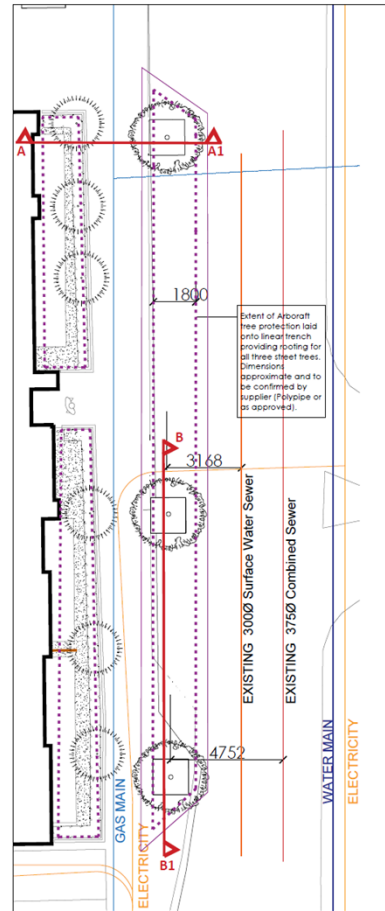


TREE NOTES (in accordance with BS 8543:2014)

Handling and Storage

- The lifting of bare root and rootballed trees should take place only in the dormant season
- Ground conditions at the time of lifting should be favourable; the ground should not be waterlogged, excessively dry or frozen. Particular attention should be paid to the protection of root systems in drying winds and from direct sunlight
- Container-grown and containerised trees can be dispatched at any time of the year, irrespective of the time of year when such trees are dispatched, the fibrous roots in the container should hold the compost ball together once the container is removed, if the compost ball falls apart, the tree should be rejected as there has been inadequate root development
- The length of time that trees are held in temporary storage should be kept to a minimum. There are occasions when rootballed trees are lifted during the dormant season and stored for supply at a later date. Such trees should be stored in an upright position and irrigated until dispatched

PLAN TO SHOW EXTENT OF UNDERGROUND ROOT PROTECTION
1:100



CGIs





② Street Elevation - Silver Street
1:100





View from South West

View from North West



View from South East

View from East

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