

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 29 APRIL 2026

Present: Councillor Gavin (Chair), Davies (Vice-Chair), Ennis, Goss, Hornsby-Smith, Leng, Lovelock, McCann, Moore, Rowland, Tarar, Williams and Yeo.

RESOLVED ITEMS

66. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2026 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

67. QUESTIONS

Tony Page asked the following question of the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee:

Proposal for Naming of Sir John Madejski Way

“Following the recent reply by Councillor Ennis to me at Policy Committee on 13 April 2026, (set out below), would the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee confirm that a full report will be brought to Planning Applications Committee in June to allow the Planning Applications Committee, if it deems appropriate, to consider passing the necessary resolution to add the name ‘Sir John Madejski Way’ to all or parts of the A33 Relief Road?”

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY COMMITTEE

13 APRIL 2026

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 1

Tony Page to ask the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport:

Proposal for Naming of Sir John Madejski Way

The Lead Member for Climate Strategy and Transport will recollect that the full Council on 24 June 2025 unanimously agreed his resolution following the disgraceful decision of the Greenshaw Trust to remove Sir John's name from the John Madejski Academy.

In light of the final sentence of the resolution (see full text below), which resolves to seek alternative means by which his legacy to our town can be preserved, will he now initiate steps to name the A33 Relief Road, from its junction with the IDR to Junction 11, as Sir John Madejski Way?

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[The following motion was moved by Councillor Ennis and seconded by Councillor Barnett-Ward and CARRIED:

Resolved –

This Council is pleased that the ownership of Reading Football Club has been secured and we place on record our thanks and appreciation to the supporters, local MPs and organisations, such as the Sell Before We Dai campaign, led by Caroline Parker and Sarah Turner, Chair of STAR. It is their sheer commitment and energy that has saved our football club and it is right and fitting that we have a civic reception for the leaders of the campaign to save Reading Football Club as a thanks from the people of Reading.

We should also place on record our thanks to Sir John Madejski, a Freeman of the Borough, for his philanthropic work over the decades to make Reading a better place. Reading has benefitted from the work and generosity of Sir John Madejski with the building of the new football stadium in 1998, the establishment of the John Madejski gallery at the Reading museum in 1999 and the creation of the John Madejski Academy in 2006.

This Council notes with dismay the announcement by the Greenshaw Trust's to remove Sir John's name from the Academy that he funded and of which he is rightly proud. It strongly disapproves of this attempt to airbrush from history the contribution to Reading of Sir John Madejski and resolves to seek alternative means by which his legacy to our town can be preserved.]

REPLY by Councillor Ennis (Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport):

As Council noted in its Motion on 24 June 2025, Sir John Madejski worked for decades to make Reading a better place, which has also been acknowledged by this Council through the award of the Honorary Freeman title.

I therefore welcome the question and the suggestion for further recognising the contributions that Sir John has made to Reading, which has a particular connection to sport and culture and I understand why renaming a street, particularly one as significant as the A33 Relief Road, is a positive way to recognise these contributions.

The Council's Street Naming and Numbering Protocol requires any street renaming to be formally approved by the Planning Applications Committee, following consultation with Ward Councillors and local occupiers.

I will be receiving further briefings from officers on this process and to assess the implications for making these changes before a report is taken forward. As part of this process consideration will be given to any other options which could give appropriate recognition to the contribution Sir John has made to the town.

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

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“Thank you to Tony Page for his question and reminding us of the commitment made at full Council in June 2025 to find an appropriate and lasting way to mark the very considerable contribution Sir John Madjeski has made to this town and the further commitment made at Policy Committee on 13 April 2026 to initiate a consultation on the re-naming, (and as you have pointed out it isn’t the ‘re-naming of’ it is the ‘naming of’ because actually it currently does not have a name and so that should be the ‘naming of’) the A33 to ‘Sir John Madjeski Way’.

I can confirm that a consultation with the 90 plus businesses along the A33 will commence after the local elections; this will be followed by consultation with the Ward Councillors of Coley, Katesgrove and Whitley wards. However, the timetable will not allow for a thorough consultation to be completed and for any responses to be fully considered, and a report prepared in time for the Planning Applications Committee meeting on 3 June as requested in your question. But I can assure you it is our intention to bring a report to a Planning Committee in the early Autumn.”

Tony Page asked the following **supplementary question** of the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee:

“I do think that it is important that we do establish the fact that the A33 relief road does not have a name. Apparently, there are some officers who contend that it is named and that needs clearly to be put to bed one way or the other. If there is a consultation, as you have set out, I would be grateful if you could confirm that it would be on the basis of a positive proposal to add the name ‘Sir John Madjeski Way’ and, lastly, bearing in mind, Chair, that Sir John was 85 yesterday, it would be nice to get this done whilst he is still with us. Would you not agree?”

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

“Thank you Mr Page. I can confirm all of the points you have made and agree that we try and do this in as speedy but thorough a way as possible, so that we can get this sorted as soon as possible. So thank you for your question. Thank you for reminding us. Thank you.”

68. 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.

It was clarified at the meeting that a site visit in respect of application PL/26/0138 Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham was being recommended by officers. Officers also reported at the meeting that a Reserved Matters application for plots A, B and D Station Hill had been received on 27 March 2026 – PL/26/0415 refers – and that it was also proposed that a site visit be undertaken prior to the application being considered at the next Committee meeting.

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At the meeting it was also proposed by the Committee that a site visit be arranged for the following application – PL/26/0277 - Garden of 80 Whitley Wood Road.

Resolved –

That the following applications be the subject of accompanied site visits:

PL/26/0138 (FUL) – Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham

Redevelopment and demolition of buildings, erection of 51no. retirement apartments and conversion of the former School House to form 10no. general open market apartments including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping. The conversion of former gate house lodge to form 1 no. general open market dwelling.

PL/26/0415 (REM) – Plots A, B and D Station Hill

Reserved Matters application pursuant to Outline Planning Permission ref. 192032 for the development of Plots A, B and D at Station Hill, Reading, comprising the erection of two buildings to provide residential units (Use Class C3), including affordable housing, ground floor flexible commercial units (Use Class E), resident amenity space, associated landscaping and public realm works, including Station Hill Gardens and to Station Hill Square, new pedestrian routes, cycle parking, servicing, refuse storage, plant and ancillary infrastructure, with all associated works. Discharge of conditions which are triggered with the Reserved Matters Application including Conditions 54(iii), 63, 75, 76, 86, 94, 95, 96, 99, 107 and 112.

PL/26/0277 (FUL) – Garden of 80 Whitley Wood Road

Change of use of rear garden of No.80 from residential (C3) to a mixed use (sui generis) residential and childcare nursery with the erection of two outbuildings used to accommodate 15 FTE childcare spaces (Retrospective).

69. 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 three new appeals lodged since the last Committee. Appendix 2 to the report set out details of the outcomes of eight appeals that had been decided since the last Committee.

An update report was tabled at the meeting setting out officers' comments in response to the outcome of the appeal concerning Trinity Hall, South Street, as listed in Appendix 2, which had been allowed by the Planning Inspectorate.

At the meeting it was reported that a further two new appeals had been lodged on 29 April 2026 and that, since publication of the report, the Council had been notified of the outcomes of a further two appeals. Details would be reported at the next meeting.

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Resolved –

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

70. ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE - 2025-26

The Committee received a report on the work and performance of the Planning Development Management Team over the last year (1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026) with a comparison to previous years.

The Committee placed on record its thanks to Planning Officers for the consistent high quality of their work, noting in particular the quality of planning decisions, as demonstrated by the appeal outcome numbers for the 2025-26 year.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That the Committee place on record its thanks to Planning Officers for the consistent high quality of their work.

71. RESPONSES TO NATIONAL PLANNING CONSULTATIONS

The Committee received a report outlining four national planning consultations that were either currently underway or were about to or had recently closed. The report set out the Council's proposed or submitted responses to each as follows:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The report stated that the Government had published a draft, substantially revised NPPF for consultation which had run between 16 December 2025 and 10 March 2026. Due to the scale of the consultation and the time and resource constraints arising from Local Plan Partial Update hearings, officers had submitted the Council's consultation response under delegated authority. A copy of the consultation response which had been submitted by officers and which addressed those questions considered to be of relevance to Reading was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

Planning Committee Reform

The report explained that a technical consultation on proposals to reform planning committees had been published in May 2025 and that the Government had since published its response to that consultation, and had commenced a further consultation on proposed draft regulations, provisionally titled 'The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026', together with accompanying guidance. The report summarised the key elements of the proposed Regulations

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The consultation on the draft regulations had closed prior to the Committee meeting. Consequently, the Council's response had been prepared by officers, agreed with the Planning Applications Committee Chair, Vice Chair and the Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets, and had been submitted on 23 April 2026.

An update report was tabled at the meeting that set out the response that the Council had submitted to the consultation.

Consulting the Secretary of State

The report stated that a consultation was underway on proposals to expand the list of instances whereby Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) were required to consult the Secretary of State in certain circumstances for certain types of planning application. The report set out the key points that officers proposed should be included in the Council's response to the Secretary of State and sought approval to submit a response based on those points by the 4 May 2026 consultation deadline.

An update report was tabled at the meeting that set out the Council's proposed response to the consultation for approval for submission.

Fees for Planning Applications

The report stated that a technical consultation was underway on a National Default Fee Schedule which related to the ability within the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 for LPAs to set their own fees. The report explained that where local fees were not set national default fees applied and that it was these default fees that were the subject of the current consultation. The report summarised the proposals set out within the consultation to increase the application fees for certain types of common applications. The consultation also included guidance around the basis for LPAs to set fees locally.

The report set out the key points that officers proposed should be included in the Council's response to the consultation and sought approval to submit a response based on those points by the 16 May 2026 consultation deadline.

An update report was tabled at the meeting that set out the Council's proposed response to the consultation for approval for submission.

Resolved –

- (1) That the response submitted to the National Planning Policy Framework consultation, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;**
- (2) That the response submitted to the consultation on Planning Committee Reform, as set out in the Update Report, be noted;**
- (3) That the proposed response to the consultation on Consulting the Secretary of State, as set out in the Update Report, be approved;**

- (4) That the proposed response to the consultation on Fees for Planning Applications, as set out in the Update Report, be approved.**

72. PL/26/0275 - PROPOSED POLLARDING OF FOUR WILLOW TREES AT ROSE KILN LANE / LAUD CLOSE

The Committee received a report on the proposed pollarding of four willow trees, which were subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), located on Council-owned land adjacent to the Holy Brook, to the west of the A33/east of Rose Kiln Lane and to the south of Laud Street. The trees were identified as being within area G5 on plan TPO 2/05, a copy of which was included at Appendix 1. Photographs of the trees were provided at Appendix 2.

The report stated that the proposed works, which were to pollard the four trees to two metres above ground level, were necessary to appropriately manage the risk the trees presented to the nearby watercourse and to enable their retention as part of the tree-lined feature along the Holy Brook. No objections or comments had been received in response to the public notice, and the report recommended that the works be approved.

At the meeting, concern was raised that the proposed tree works were likely to disturb rats which could cause a nuisance to nearby residential properties. It was therefore agreed that an informative be added requiring consultation with the Council's Environmental Protection Team regarding potential pest control measures prior to the commencement of works.

Resolved –

That the proposed tree works be approved, subject to addition of an informative requiring consultation with the Council's Environmental Protection Team regarding the consideration of appropriate pest control measures prior to the commencement of works.

73. PL/24/0846 (FUL) - NAPIER COURT, NAPIER ROAD

The Committee received a report on the above application.

An update report was tabled at the meeting following the receipt of revised drawings, documents and rebuttals submitted by the applicant on 28 April 2026. A list of the newly submitted plans and supporting documents was included within the update report, and the update report set out additional information on Section 106 obligations.

A verbal update was provided at the meeting advising the Committee that, as set out in the update report, the applicant had submitted revised plans and supporting documents the day prior to the meeting. Officers reported that the amendments to the application were minor and included the removal of the proposed servicing bay on Napier Road, the removal of tree planters from the Mass Rapid Transit reserved strip (to be replaced with a grass verge) and the provision of additional cycle parking.

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Officers reported that there had been limited time to fully review the additional submitted information. However, having assessed the documentation over the preceding 24 hours, it was officers' opinion that the revisions did not adequately address or overcome the reasons for refusal, with the exception of reason 5 that related to cycle parking provision. Officers confirmed that the updated information demonstrated that adequate cycle parking could be accommodated within the development and therefore recommended that reason for refusal number 5 be withdrawn.

The Committee was further advised that, as set out in the update report, the applicant had indicated agreement in principle to provide certain infrastructure contributions and mitigation works. However, these had not been secured through a completed Section 106 agreement and, in the absence of such an agreement, officers recommended the other reasons for refusal remained.

Officers also requested that, as set out in the original report, should the Committee resolve to refuse planning permission, authority be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services to amend, remove, or add to the reasons for refusal as deemed necessary following the further detailed review of the newly-submitted documentation.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved –

- (1) That application PL/24/0846/FUL be refused planning permission for the reasons set out in the original report with the informatives as recommended, subject to the deletion of reason for refusal 5 (cycle parking provision);**
- (2) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to amend, remove or add to the reasons for refusal following the consideration of any revised plans or documents submitted by the applicant.**

At the end of the meeting, the Committee recorded its thanks to Councillor Lovelock, who was standing down as a Councillor, for her years of service on the Committee, including as Chair.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.30 pm)