

To: Councillor Gavin (Chair)
Councillors Davies, Dominguez, Ennis,
Foster, Hornsby-Smith, Leng, McCann,
Moore, Saadat, Stevens, Williams and Yeo

Direct ☎ : 0118 9372744

29 September 2026

Your contact is: **Andrew Wood - Committee Services (andrew.wood@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 7 OCTOBER 2026

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 7 October 2026 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-		
2. MINUTES	-		9 - 14
3. QUESTIONS	-		
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	Decision		15 - 18
5. PLANNING APPEALS	Information		19 - 24
6. CHANGES TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE	Decision		25 - 44
7. NEW NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)	Information		45 - 50
8. PROPOSAL TO RENAME A SECTION OF THE A33	Decision	COLEY; KATESGROVE; WHITLEY	51 - 60

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9.	PL/26/1238 - FELLING OF ONE OAK TREE TO REAR OF 26 WINTERBERRY WAY, CAVERSHAM	Decision	CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS	61 - 66
10.	LOCAL LISTING REPORT - FORMER COACH HOUSE AT 64 TILEHURST ROAD	Decision	BATTLE	67 - 82
11.	LOCAL LISTING REPORT - THE TGWU SIGNAGE ON 89 SOUTHAMPTON STREET	Decision	KATESGROVE	83 - 94

PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

12.	PL/26/0958 (FUL/REG3) - ABATTOIRS ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	95 - 158
	Proposal: Extension of the temporary planning permission, as approved under PL/21/1010, for the now constructed and fully operational 40 no. sleeping units and 3 no. support units for rough sleepers until 31st March 2028. (amended) Recommendation: Grant, subject to conditions.			
13.	PL/26/1116 (FUL) - HILLS MEADOW CAR PARK, GEORGE STREET, CAVERSHAM	Decision	THAMES	159 - 172
	Proposal: Temporary erection of ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Winter Wonderland festival, for a period of time not to be before 11 October 2026 and not to extend beyond 20 January 2027. [Amended description]. Recommendation: Grant, subject to conditions.			
14.	PL/26/0783 (FUL/REG3) - 5 CONWY CLOSE, TILEHURST	Decision	TILEHURST	173 - 180
	Proposal: Change of use from a domestic integral single garage into living accommodation. Recommendation: Approve, subject to conditions.			

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Agenda Annex

GUIDE TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

Glossary of usual terms

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

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

Apartment - 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.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – A mandatory national requirement that development provide a 10% uplift for biodiversity, measured using standard metrics.

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 Gavin (Chair);

Councillors Davies (Vice-Chair), Dominguez, Ennis, Hornsby-Smith, Leng, McCann, Moore, Saadat, Stevens, Williams and Yeo

Apologies: Councillor Foster

RESOLVED ITEMS

25. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 22 July and 12 August 2026 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

26. 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 additional site visits be arranged at this time.

27. 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 five new appeals lodged since the last Committee. Appendix 2 to the report set out details of eight appeals decided since the last Committee.

It was requested that in future the report include which appeals had been validated and were therefore viewable on the Planning Inspectorate's system at the time of writing.

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, be noted;
- (3) That in future the report include which appeals had been validated and were therefore viewable on the Planning Inspectorate's system at the time of writing.

28. DEFERRED PAYMENT MECHANISMS

The Committee received a report on the degree to which deferred payment mechanisms had led to financial contributions towards affordable housing in cases where a policy-compliant level of affordable housing could not be provided. A list of legal agreements with financial contributions was attached at Appendix 1 together with any contributions made through a deferred payment mechanism.

The report explained that deferred payment mechanisms were a standard tool, used by local authorities and accepted by the industry in cases where a development could show that the viability assessment demonstrated to officer satisfaction that a development would not be viable if a policy compliant (for example 30% for developments of ten dwellings or more) level of affordable housing was provided, either through dwellings on site or a financial contribution. These mechanisms used a later viability calculation to assess whether sale values had increased or build costs decreased leading to an increase in actual profit that could be shared between the developer and the Council in the form of an off-site financial contribution.

Since 2012, 55 planning permissions had been granted in Reading with a deferred affordable housing mechanism in one form or another. Of these, nine agreements had made a payment under the review mechanism, with all but one below the maximum cap value specified in the agreement. A further four agreements had reached the relevant trigger point, but no payment had resulted from the submitted information (two were currently being audited to confirm this). The remaining agreements had either expired from a planning permission perspective or had yet to reach the relevant trigger point for assessment. Early in the reporting period, the offsite contribution had been generally closer to policy compliance, but more recently there had been an increased number of agreements with a reduced contribution or no initial off-site contribution at all.

The deferred payment mechanisms had generated £5.5m over this period, including £3.5m from Kennet Island and £1.6m from Kings Point (now Verto), which were permissions from 2012 and 2015 respectively. Over the same period offsite financial contributions had in total secured £31m and delivered £16m from 346 agreements, so deferred payment mechanisms represented a small but important part of the overall financial contributions.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

29. PL/26/0958 (FUL/REG3) - ABATTOIRS ROAD

Extension of the temporary planning permission, as approved under PL/21/1010, for the now constructed and fully operational 40 no. sleeping units and 3 no. support units for rough sleepers until 31st March 2028. (amended).

The Committee considered a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting that gave details of additional consultation responses received from Council Planning (Natural Environment) and Environmental Protection officers and which recommended an additional condition for a litter management strategy.

A verbal update was given at the meeting explaining that two public consultation responses had been received by the 8 September 2026 consultation deadline, but not in time for officers to review the comments, discuss with appropriate parties and provide a full assessment for the Committee's consideration. It was therefore recommended that consideration of the application be deferred until the next meeting.

Resolved –

That consideration of application PL/26/0958 (FUL) be deferred to allow officers to assess the consultation responses.

30. PL/25/0705 (DOV) - LAND AT MADEJSKI STADIUM, SHOOTERS WAY

Proposed S106 Deed of Variation in Relation to Planning Application Reference PL/16/0199.

The Committee considered a report on the above application.

A verbal update was given at the meeting correcting an error in the report, explaining that the applicant was RFC Prop Co Ltd not Reading Borough Council.

Comments were received and considered.

Resolved –

That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to agree a Deed of Variation to amend Schedule 6 Clauses 5 and 6 to the S106 Legal Agreement number 4308 associated with planning permission PL/16/0199 as recommended in the report.

31. PL/25/1570 (ADJ) - HALL FARM, CHURCH LANE, ARBORFIELD (LODDON GARDEN VILLAGE) & PL/25/1651 (ADJ) - LAND NORTH OF MOLE ROAD AND CHURCH LANE, NEWLANDS FARM

PL/25/1570/ADJ - Proposal: Hybrid planning application 252498 (part in full, part in outline) comprising outline application for: up to 2,800 residential units to include up to 100 custom and self-build plots; 2 primary schools (up to 3 forms of entry) to include early years provision and 1 secondary school (up to 12 forms of entry); one District Centre, to incorporate up to 11,000m² of Class E (Commercial, Business and Service, to include a food store of around 2,500m²), and Class F (Local Community and Learning); one Local Centre, to incorporate up to 2,400m² of Class E; a Sports Hub to include sports pitches and pavilion space; up to 4,250m² of further Class E, Class F, and sui generis development to include commercial, health care and public house; associated green infrastructure, landscaping, public open space, play areas, and ecological enhancement measures; 20 gypsy and traveller pitches; drainage and flood alleviation measures to include Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and engineering measures within Loddon Valley for the River Loddon; associated highway / transport / supporting infrastructure including spine

road, pedestrian and cycle connections; associated utilities, infrastructure, and engineering works, including the undergrounding of overhead lines and an electricity substation; up to 0.5ha of land adjoining St Bartholomew's Church for use as cemetery. All matters reserved other than access, incorporating: access to highways, incorporating: a new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access to Lower Earley Way via a new 4th arm to the Meldreth Way roundabout; a new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular bridge over the M4; a new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular bridge over the River Loddon; a new vehicular access to the A327 Reading Road, via a new arm to the Observer Way roundabout; a new pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access to Thames Valley Science Park; Phase 1 of internal roads including pedestrian / cycle routes, associated infrastructure, drainage and landscaping.

PL/25/1651/ADJ - Outline planning application with all matters reserved other than principal access from Mole Road, for up to 430 dwellings, associated infrastructure to include a connection through to the proposed Spine Road, ref. 252498, new pedestrian cycle link connecting Byway ARB03 Carter's Hill Lane and Byway ARB08 Ellis's Hill, associated landscaping to include formal and informal public open space, biodiversity enhancements and associated utilities, infrastructure, and engineering works.

The Committee considered a report on adjacent authority consultations from Wokingham Borough Council regarding the above applications.

A verbal update was given at the meeting correcting an error in the report, explaining that the references to Paragraphs 116 and 117 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in the recommended reason for objection were from the old NPPF and these should be updated to Policies TR4 and TR6 of the new NPPF.

Resolved –

- (1) That Wokingham Borough Council be informed that Reading Borough Council raised an objection to both applications PL/25/1570 and PL/25/1651 for the following reason:
 - Insufficient information has been submitted with the planning application to enable the highways, traffic and transportation implications of the proposed development to be fully assessed (this includes insufficient information relating air quality (AQMA) impacts upon Reading from additional traffic resulting from the development and arboricultural and noise impacts from off-site highway mitigation works proposed to take place within Reading). From the information submitted, it is considered that the additional traffic likely to be generated by the proposal would adversely affect the safety and flow of users of the existing road network within Reading, contrary to Policy CP6 of the Adopted Wokingham Core Strategy and Policies TR4 and TR6 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- (2) That Wokingham Borough Council be informed that Reading Borough Council (RBC) requested for both applications PL/25/1570 and PL/25/1651 that:

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 9 SEPTEMBER 2026

- (a) There should be appropriate provision within the proposal, or through suitable off-site mitigation measures, to address the demands of new residents in terms of education, health and leisure facilities, in order to ensure that the proposal does not negatively impact on the infrastructure within RBC and that there should be appropriate liaison with RBC and other relevant organisations in the delivery of appropriate infrastructure provision to support the proposal. Such provision should be appropriately phased to support the level of development coming forward. If it cannot be demonstrated to RBC's satisfaction that suitable mitigation would be provided and secured by WBC as part of the proposals, then RBC may require contributions towards similar facilities within the south of the Borough that could be impacted by the additional housing proposed so close to Reading.
- (b) In the event that WBC is minded to approve, RBC would need to be party to any s106 agreement(s) that secures mitigation measures within Reading Borough.
- (3) That Wokingham Borough Council be sent a copy of the report for their information and use.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.18 pm)

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Planning Applications Committee 07 October 2026	 Reading Borough Council Working better with you
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Title	POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee
Report author	Mark Worringham, Planning Policy Manager and Acting Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Council priority	Not applicable, but still requires a decision
Recommendations	The Committee is asked to: 1. note this report and any officer recommendations for site visits. 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 can be unaccompanied but 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, mainly major, applications recently received that may be presented to Committee for a decision and which Officers consider Councillors would benefit from visiting to inform decision making. If agreed, you will be advised whether the visit should be accompanied or not and then later advised of a date when Officers are ready to bring a report to Committee. Appendix 2 lists those sites that have previously been agreed by Committee should be visited before making a decision.

- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 Often it is 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.
- 2.6 It is also possible for officers to suggest, or Councillors to request, a visit to a completed development to assess its quality.

3. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 3.1 The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:
1. Promote more equal communities in Reading
 2. Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
 3. Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
 4. Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
 5. Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
- 3.2 In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:
1. Putting residents first
 2. Building on strong foundations
 3. Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities
 4. Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
 5. Being proudly ambitious for Reading
- 3.3 Full details of the Council Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website - [Council plan - Reading Borough Council](#). These priorities and the Council Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.
- 3.4 The processing of planning applications contributes to delivering a sustainable and healthy environment and helping the economic, cultural and vibrant success for Reading Borough.
- 3.5 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—
1. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 2. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 3. 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. Health Implications

- 7.1 None arising from this report.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 None arising from this report.

9. Financial Implications

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

10. Timetable for Implementation

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

11. Background Papers

- 11.1 There are none.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Potential Site Visits. List of applications received that may be presented to Committee for a decision in due course

- None

Appendix 2 - Previously Agreed Site Visits with date of PAC when requested:

- PL/26/0277, Garden of 80 Whitley Wood Road – agreed by PAC on 29 April 2026 that an accompanied site visit be arranged – **this application was refused under delegated powers on 24 September. The call-in was in the event that approval was proposed.**

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Planning Applications Committee 07 October 2026	 Reading Borough Council Working better with you
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Title	PLANNING APPEALS
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Report author	Mark Worringham, Planning Policy Manager and Acting 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 with summary reports provided.

3. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 3.1 The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:
 1. Promote more equal communities in Reading
 2. Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
 3. Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
 4. Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
 5. Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
- 3.2 In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:
 1. Putting residents first
 2. Building on strong foundations
 3. Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities

- 4. Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
- 5. Being proudly ambitious for Reading
- 3.3 Defending planning appeals made against planning decisions contributes to creating a sustainable and healthy environment with supported communities and helping the economy within the Borough as identified as the priorities within the Council 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 (lists of applications viewable on our website).

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—
 - 1. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
 - 2. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - 3. 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 reporting on appeals lodged and decided to 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 Health Implications

- 7.1 The decision to note the appeals lodged and decided will not have a differential impact on health. Implications for health may be a matter that is considered as part of the relevant appeals.

8 Legal Implications

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

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 Public Inquiries and Informal Hearings are more expensive in terms of officer and appellant time than the Written Representations method. Either party can be liable to awards of costs. More guidance about costs awards is in MCHLG's [Planning Practice Guidance](#).

10 Timetable for Implementation

Not applicable.

11 Background Papers

There are none.

APPENDIX 1

Appeals Lodged:

WARD: Southcote
APPEAL NO: 6015961
CASE NO: PL/26/0594
ADDRESS: 7 Glennon Close, Reading, RG30 3HT
PROPOSAL: Change of use from Residential Dwelling (Class C3b) to Residential Care Home (Class C2)
STATUS: Valid

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided:

WARD: Abbey
APPEAL NO: 6014625
CASE NO: PL/26/0588
ADDRESS: 65A Bedford Road, Reading, RG1 7EX
PROPOSAL: Rear elevation dormer extension and internal alterations
CASE OFFICER: Nathalie Weekes
METHOD: Written representations
DECISION: Dismissed

The Inspector found that the proposed rear dormer would appear very large and bulky, and as a result would both unduly dominate its host property and would be an overly large and incongruous feature in the street scene. The decision is also notable due to specifically citing the policy (DP3) on principles for well designed places in the new NPPF in dismissing the appeal.

WARD: Caversham
APPEAL NO: 6007941
CASE NO: PL/25/1020
ADDRESS: Land between 75 and 99 Star Road, Caversham, Reading
PROPOSAL: Construction of a terrace of four 3-bedroom 2.5 storey dwellings, parking, and hard and soft landscaping.
CASE OFFICER: Ethne Humphreys
METHOD: Written representations
DECISION: Dismissed

In terms of flooding, the Inspector decided that as he was not aware of any sequentially preferable sites in terms of flooding, the development passed the 'sequential test' with

regard to its location within Flood Zone 3a. However, he was not satisfied that there would be an ability to easily access safe areas, nor was he satisfied that the issue of displacement of floodwater had been addressed. Overall, he concluded that the proposal was not safe in flood terms and would not avoid increased risk of flooding elsewhere. He found that the repetitious design, bulk and massing and small gardens would contribute to a development which was not well-designed, would not provide sufficient amenity space and would not allow for meaningful soft landscaping. He found that the arrangement of parking spaces was not suitable in terms of highway visibility. Whilst there was engagement from the Appellant in terms of affordable housing viability, no s106 unilateral undertaking was provided, therefore he concluded that there was conflict with Policy H3. On biodiversity, the Inspector accepted that the small gardens would not allow for on-site BNG improvements, but was satisfied that this could be addressed with an off-site BNG condition. Overall, the Inspector concluded that the advantages of a brownfield redevelopment and the identified shortfall of housing supply did not outweigh the harm he had identified in respect of flood risks and design. Officers welcome this decision which accords with the majority of the shortcomings of the scheme which led to its refusal.

WARD: Kentwood
APPEAL NO: 6004809
CASE NO: PL/25/0102
ADDRESS: 1029 Oxford Road, Tilehurst, Reading
PROPOSAL: Development of new building to provide 2no.2 bedroom and 6no. 1 bedroom flats along with the creation of 6 parking spaces and associated landscaping following the demolition of the existing building.
CASE OFFICER: Anthony Scholes
METHOD: Written representations
DECISION: Dismissed

The Inspector discussed various aspects of the design and bulk of the proposed building in some detail and concluded that it would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. He was not satisfied that the development would provide adequate living conditions to adjacent properties, or sufficient outlook/privacy for the proposed flats themselves. The Inspector was content that the development was suitable in highway/parking terms. In this particular case, he considered that there was not a requirement for three-bedroom units. The Inspector noted that the Appellant had set out an affordable housing offer and had presented this within a s106 unilateral undertaking, however, he noted that the LPA had highlighted various deficiencies with it (including its enforceability), and he therefore made no detailed commentary on the matter as he was dismissing the appeal on the Grounds above. A separate application for costs from the Appellant was also dismissed. Whilst it would have been helpful for the Inspector to have provided a judgment in relation to affordable housing, this is nevertheless a pleasing decision, where the Inspector considered that the benefits of the scheme (mix, unit supply, sustainable location) did not overcome the significant design shortfalls he identified.

WARD: Tilehurst
APPEAL NO: 6002960 & 6002961
CASE NO: PL/25/1394 & PL/25/1403
ADDRESS: Pavement outside The Triangle, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 4RN
PROPOSAL: Proposed installation of 1no. new BT Street Hub, incorporating 2no. digital 75" LCD advert screens, and associated BT Phone Kiosk removal.
CASE OFFICER: Huimin Chen
METHOD: Written representations
DECISION: Dismissed

These are part of a series of BT Street Hub appeals and we will report on these collectively when all decisions are received.

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Planning Applications Committee

07 October 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	Changes to Planning Applications Committee
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee, Executive Director Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
Report author	Mark Worringham, Planning Policy Manager / Acting Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Council priority	Secure Reading's economic & cultural success
Recommendations	1. To note the report. 2. To agree the Guidance on Referrals to Planning Applications Committee as a basis for determining which applications should be referred to Committee by the nominated member and nominated officer.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. New Regulations come into force on 31 October 2026 that make important changes to how planning committees are to operate. This report provides an outline of the changes, as well as the consequential changes to the Council's Constitution. It also proposes approval of a Guidance on Referrals to Planning Applications Committee (PAC) which would give more certainty on which applications would be expected to pass the 'Gateway Test' for referral to PAC.

2. Background

- 2.1 As part of the government's planning reform agenda, changes have been made to how planning committees are to operate. Draft regulations for the operation of planning committees were consulted upon in March and April 2026, and the Council provided a response, which was outlined in the report for Planning Applications Committee on 29 April 2026 (see update report for the full response).
- 2.2 Following the consultation, The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 were made in July and come into force on 31 October. These make substantial changes that affect planning committees, as follows:
 - Schedule 1 of the Regulations specifies types of application that would always be delegated to officers (unless an 'own-interest' application) which are as follows:
 - Minor commercial or residential applications
 - Householder applications
 - Applications for permission in principle
 - Non-material amendments
 - Modification or discharge of planning obligations in connection with a Schedule 1 development
 - Certificates of appropriate alternative development (for the purposes of assessing compensation for compulsory purchase)
 - Certificates of lawfulness

- Biodiversity gain plans
- Reserved matters applications other than for large development (500 dwellings or 50,000 sq m or more)
- Applications for discharge of planning conditions
- Applications for prior approval
- Schedule 2 of the draft Regulations lists types of applications that may be determined by a planning committee as follows:
 - An application for planning permission that is not a householder, minor residential or minor commercial application
 - Listed building consents or variation or discharge of conditions on LBCs
 - Applications for planning permission associated with a LBC
 - Variation or removal of conditions
 - Retrospective planning applications
 - Modification or discharge of planning obligations in connection with a Schedule 1 development
 - Reserved matters applications for large development
 - Applications for express consent to display advertisements
 - Works to protected trees
- The decision on whether Schedule 2 applications are referred to a committee is made by a nominated member (usually the committee Chair) and nominated officer (usually a senior planning professional) depending on whether the proposal passes a 'Gateway Test' in that it raises:
 - one or more issues of economic, social or environmental significance to the local area, or
 - one or more significant planning matters having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations.
- If the nominated officer and nominated member cannot agree on the above the application would be delegated to officers to determine.
- Planning functions not listed in either Schedule would be down to the authority's constitution to determine whether it would be determined by a committee.
- This approach means that councillors can no longer call an application in to be determined by the respective planning committee.
- 'Own-interest' applications (i.e. applications made by the authority, an officer or member of the authority or where they otherwise have an interest) may be referred to committee.
- That planning committees be limited to 13 members.

2.3 The Council meeting on 13 October will consider an amendment to the Constitution that brings it into line with the new Regulations with regards Planning Applications Committee (PAC). These changes include the following:

- Identifying the nominated member, which will be the Chair of PAC with the Vice Chair and Lead Member for Planning to substitute in the event of absence.
- Identifying the nominated officer, which will be the Head of Planning/Development Manager with Planning Team Leaders to substitute in the event of absence.
- Establishing that those 'own-interest' applications that will be referred to PAC will be those submitted by the Council, a member of the Council, or an officer of the Council on Corporate Management Team or engaged by Planning or Legal, and defining which types of 'own-interest' application will be automatically referred to PAC¹

¹ For instance this will exclude certificates of lawfulness where the decision is one of legal fact and prior approvals where the timescales do not generally allow time for committee determination before the proposal benefits from deemed consent.

- Continuing to delegate certain items to officers despite being Schedule 2 applications that could under the Regulations be determined by committee, largely in line with the existing Constitution, such as listed building consent (unless major) and advertisement consent.
- 2.4 Any applications determined after 31 October will need to comply with the Regulations and the new Constitution, affecting decisions made at November PAC and thereafter.
- 2.5 In summary, the main implications of the changes are as follows:
- There are no more councillor call-in powers to PAC
 - There are three possible routes for an application
 - Automatically delegated to officers
 - Automatically referred to PAC (only own-interest applications)
 - Decision required by nominated member and nominated officer as to whether the application passes the 'Gateway Test' for referral to PAC
 - There will be a need to the nominated officer and nominated member to meet regularly to ensure that the route an application will take is established early on.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 Committee is asked to note the changes in the Regulations and Constitution.
- 3.2 In addition, the decision by the nominated member and nominated officer as to whether an application will pass the 'Gateway Test' and therefore be referred to PAC will be of great importance. The Council will need to record the basis on which this decision will be made, keep a record on the website and periodically report these decisions to PAC (likely on a quarterly basis).
- 3.3 Due to the importance of these decisions they will need to be robust and made on a consistent basis. For this reason, a draft Guidance on Referrals to Planning Applications Committee document has been produced which would give much greater clarity about when an application is expected to be referred to committee or not and would form the basis for the decision by the nominated member and nominated officer. Committee is asked to agree this Guidance (Appendix 1).
- 3.4 Under the Guidance, any residential planning application of 10 dwellings or more will still be referred to PAC because it would be a development for which an on-site affordable housing contribution would be expected, and affordable housing is clearly an issue of economic and social significance to the local area.

4. Contribution to strategic aims

- 4.1 The Council Plan (2025-2028) identifies five priorities for the Council over the next three years. These are:
- Promote more equal communities in Reading
 - Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
 - Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce Reading's carbon footprint
 - Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
 - Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future.
- 4.2 Ensuring that decisions made by PAC or by officers are robust and follow appropriate legislation and guidance will help to achieve economic, social and environmental objectives as well as ensuring that the Council is fit for the future.

5. Community engagement

- 5.1 The forthcoming changes are likely to have some detrimental impacts on community engagement through the loss of the call-in powers for councillors, but this is as a result of the new legislation. There is also likely to be a general reduction in the number of applications that come to PAC, primarily due to the new Regulations.

6. Equality impact assessment

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

6.2 There are no direct equality implications of this report.

7. Environmental and climate implications

7.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). The Planning and Building Control functions are essential in helping to address the Climate Emergency through ensuring that development is undertaken to the highest possible environmental standards in line with national regulations and local policies.

7.2 There are no direct environmental or climate implications of this report.

8. Health implications

8.1 There are no direct implications for health of changes to the route by which decisions are made.

9. Legal implications

9.1 The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 were made in July 2026 and come into force on 31 October 2026 and form the legislative basis for these changes. Decisions made after 31 October that are not in accordance with the Regulations will not be lawful.

10. Financial Implications

10.1 There are no direct financial implications of this report. It is likely that compliance with the Regulations and Constitution, including deciding on application routes and reporting requirements, will need some additional officer time, but this has not been quantified and no additional staffing requirements have been identified.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Reading Borough Council's Constitution sets out the rules on which types of planning application will be determined by officers and which could be determined by Planning Applications Committee. The Constitution was amended in October 2026 in response to The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 which made a number of significant changes to how planning committees are to operate.
- 1.2 Among the most significant changes in the Regulations was the division of types of planning application into Schedule 1 applications and Schedule 2 applications.
- 1.3 Schedule 1 applications would always be delegated to officers to determine unless they are 'own-interest' applications, i.e. applications made by the Council or an officer or member of the Council, or where they otherwise have an interest. The Constitution therefore reflects that, unless they are an 'own-interest' application, these types of application (including minor planning applications) would always be dealt with by officers.
- 1.4 Schedule 2 applications could be dealt with by Committee where it is agreed by a nominated member and nominated officer that a 'Gateway Test' is passed. The Gateway Test is that that the application (a) raises a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations and/or (b) raises an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area.
- 1.5 Under the Regulations, it is therefore something of a case-by-case decision whether or not an application will be determined by Committee. However, the Council recognises that greater certainty is required on whether an application is likely to go to Committee or not, because that may make a significant difference to the timelines for determination. There also needs to be a consistent basis for the nominated officer and member to make a decision on whether or not to refer an application, and minimise the scope for challenge of the process. This Guidance has therefore been prepared to give that greater certainty and consistency.

2. Determination routes

- 2.1 Routes for determination of different types of planning application are set by two considerations:
 - The Regulations; and
 - The Council's Constitution.
- 2.2 As outlined in Section 1, the Regulations divide types of application into Schedule 1 and Schedule 2, with Schedule 1 applications to be delegated to officer decision in all cases (unless own-interest) and with Schedule 2 applications to be subject to a decision by the nominated officer and nominated member about whether the Gateway Test is passed for referral to committee.
- 2.3 The Council's Constitution has been amended to ensure that it complies with the Regulations. However, it does add some additional elements which particularly include:
 - Defining the circumstances in which an own-interest application will be determined by committee (see section 7 for more information on own-interest applications); and
 - Delegating additional matters to officers, such as advertisement and non-major listed building consents.
- 2.4 Appendix 1 contains a table showing the determination routes for each type of application as a result of both the Regulations and the Constitution.

3. Nominated member

- 3.1 The nominated member is a defined role in the Regulations and has responsibility for agreeing with the nominated officer whether an application should be referred to Committee.
- 3.2 The nominated member is identified in the Constitution as being:
- The Chair of Planning Applications Committee; or
 - In the event that the Chair of Planning Applications Committee is absent or is the applicant for or otherwise has an interest in the application to be considered for referral, the Vice Chair of Planning Applications Committee;
 - In the event that the Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Applications Committee are absent and/or are the applicant for or otherwise have an interest in the application to be considered for referral, the Lead Member for Planning and Assets.
- 3.3 For the purposes of interpretation, absence of a defined member means that they are not available to make a decision for a period of at least a week.
- 3.4 As set out in the constitution, if the nominated member is an applicant for, or otherwise has an interest in, a planning application that is being considered for referral to Committee, the nominated member role for that application will pass to the Vice Chair, or, in the event of their absence, the Lead Member for Planning and Assets. Likewise, if the Chair is absent and the Vice Chair has an interest in an application, the nominated member role for that application will pass to the Lead Member for Planning and Assets.

4. Nominated officer

- 4.1 The nominated officer is a defined role in the Regulations and has responsibility for agreeing with the nominated member whether an application should be referred to Committee.
- 4.2 The nominated officer is identified in the Constitution as being:
- The Head of Planning/Development Manager; or
 - In the event that the Head of Planning/Development Manager is absent or is the applicant for or otherwise has an interest in the application to be considered for referral, a Planning Team Leader.
- 4.3 For the purposes of interpretation, absence of a defined officer means that they are not available to make a decision for a period of at least a week.
- 4.4 As set out in the constitution, if the nominated officer is an applicant for, or otherwise has an interest in, a planning application that is being considered for referral to Committee, the nominated officer role for that application will pass to a Planning Team Leader.

5. Process for agreement of nominated officer and nominated member

- 5.1 The nominated officer and nominated member will need to meet at least once every two weeks to review newly-submitted applications that fall within the categories that the Constitution states may be referred to Committee, unless there are no applications to discuss. This can be in person or virtually. This will ensure that clarity on the determination route will be provided at the earliest possible juncture. The decision will be communicated to the case officer as soon as possible, who will then inform the applicant and any other relevant parties.
- 5.2 The nominated officer and nominated member will endeavour to reach agreement on a decision whether the application should be referred based on the Gateway Test in the Regulations and its

interpretation in this Guidance. In the event that agreement cannot be reached, under the Regulations the application must be delegated to officers.

- 5.3 A ward councillor should not lobby the nominated officer directly on whether an application should be referred to Committee. If such requests are to be made they should be to the nominated member but they will need to clearly explain why the Gateway Test is triggered (see paragraph 6.4).

6. Interpretation of the Gateway Test

- 6.1 The following types of application are set out in the Constitution as to be determined by Planning Applications Committee subject to the nominated officer and nominated member agreeing that the Gateway Test is passed.
- Full or outline applications relating to major development
 - Reserved matters applications relating to a large outline permission
 - Section 73 applications (variation of condition) relating to major development
 - Deeds of variation of Section 106 agreements relating to major development
 - Applications for listed building consent associated with a major development
 - Variation of condition of listed building consent associated with a major development.
- 6.2 'Major' development is as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), referred to as the DMPO. At the time of writing, this is as follows:
- (a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits;
 - (b) waste development;
 - (c) the provision of dwellinghouses where—
 - (i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or
 - (ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i);
 - (d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or
 - (e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more;
- 6.3 A 'large outline' is as defined in The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026, i.e. development for either or both of:
- (a) the provision of 500 or more dwellings;
 - (b) the provision of a building or buildings where the floorspace to be created by the development is 50,000 square metres or more;
- 6.4 The two Gateway Test criteria are that the application
- (a) raises a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations and/or
 - (b) raises an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area.
- 6.5 There is substantial overlap within those two criteria, given that the development plan generally deals with issues of significance to the local area. There is also significant scope for interpretation

and, as it could be argued that almost any application could fulfil criterion (b). The 'local area' is considered to mean the Borough rather than a smaller area within the Borough such as a particular street.

- 6.6 This section sets out matters that will be likely to trigger one or both of (a) and (b), and matters that are unlikely to do so.

Matters that would generally trigger the Gateway Test

- 6.7 If one or more of the following apply to an application which the Constitution states may be referred to Committee (generally major applications and associated listed building consent applications) then the application is likely to pass the Gateway Test for referral.
- 6.8 The consideration against the test should relate to the full development proposed. If two applications are closely associated and are proposed at the same time (e.g. a planning application and listed building consent application for the same development) and only one application triggers the test, in general both applications should be referred to Committee to ensure that the interrelationship of the two applications is considered at the same time.
- 6.9 For clarity, the matters set out below do not in any way restrict what Planning Applications Committee can consider once an application is referred to it.

Where a policy requirement for affordable housing would apply

- 6.10 Reading has very high levels of need for affordable housing, which has been calculated at 406 affordable dwellings per year, almost half of the overall housing need. Securing affordable housing from new development is extremely challenging, and the level provided each year falls well short of the identified needs. Affordable housing is a key matter for the development plan and is both a social and economic issue of great significance to the local area.
- 6.11 Therefore, any major application where policy would expect a contribution towards affordable housing would generally be referred to Committee. As well as applications for 10 or more dwellings, it should be noted that, under paragraph 1.6 of the Affordable Housing SPD, it includes co-living and new build houses in multiple occupation, as well as in certain circumstances² student accommodation, residential care or other specialist provision or serviced apartments.
- 6.12 Any application that would vary a major application or a Section 106 agreement to alter the level of affordable housing already agreed would similarly need to be referred to Committee.

Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers or Travelling Showpeople

- 6.13 Reading has a shortfall against its identified needs for accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, and cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of sites. Therefore, a major application for provision of such accommodation (which would usually be as a result of exceeding the area threshold) is generally a matter of significance for the development plan as well as being a significant social issue.

New retail or built leisure floorspace outside a designated centre of at least 1,000 sq m

- 6.14 Where development of over 1,000 sq m of retail or leisure facilities would be located outside a designated centre, the Local Plan confirms that this could potentially have an impact on existing centres and would therefore trigger the need for an impact assessment. This would therefore be highly likely to be a significant matter in relation to the strategy of the plan, which is based around a hierarchy of these centres. In the case that the commercial (i.e. E class use) is not specified

² Where they (a) they are being developed on an allocated housing site or a site where residential development and affordable housing provision would have been anticipated; or (b) in the case of an apart-hotel, arrangements for accommodation allow tenancies of more than 3 months.

and would not therefore be controlled by condition, it should be assumed that this could qualify as retail or built leisure floorspace.

New office floorspace outside the town centre or the A33 corridor of at least 2,500 sq m

- 6.15 The Local Plan directs office development of over 2,500 sq m to the town centre or A33 corridor as locations which are well-served by high levels of public transport. Office development of this scale outside the defined locations would therefore raise a significant issue in terms of the spatial strategy of the Local Plan.

New employment floorspace (other than offices) outside a core employment area of at least 2,500 sq m

- 6.16 The Local Plan directs employment development (other than offices) of over 2,500 sq m to the designated core employment areas. This is to ensure that they are in areas that reduce impacts on other parts of the town and offer the most sustainable location for these uses. Employment development of this scale outside the defined locations would therefore raise a significant issue in terms of the spatial strategy of the Local Plan.

New floorspace other than dwellinghouses of at least 5,000 sq m

- 6.17 Regardless of location, a development of 5,000 sq m or more will, in the context of a geographically small urban Borough such as Reading, raise significant environmental, social and/or economic issues for the area, and would therefore be expected to pass the Gateway Test. This will include office, other employment and retail and leisure uses that are located in accordance with plan policies. It will also include communal residential uses that are not dwellinghouses within the C3 use class, such as student accommodation, residential care or co-living.

Loss of employment land in a core employment area

- 6.18 The core employment areas have been designated in the Local Plan as they are the areas which are of greatest importance for Reading's economy. These areas are often under pressure from other uses which would potentially generate higher value on a particular site but would have an overall detrimental effect on the local economy. As such, a loss of such land would represent a significant economic issue and a significant issue for the Local Plan and would therefore pass the Gateway Test.

Buildings of five storeys (or equivalent) or more

- 6.19 Despite the density of some modern development, Reading remains primarily a low-rise town across most of its area including much of the town centre. Therefore, in most cases development of five storeys or more will be relatively prominent within its context, and will therefore likely result in a significant environmental effect in its local area (which could be positive or negative) and therefore trigger the Gateway Test. However, the nominated member and officer will generally also want to consider the local context of the proposal when making a decision on referral. An equivalent height to five storeys is around 15m. This should be measured from ground level and exclude mezzanines and any storey which is a roof-top machinery or plant area or consists exclusively of machinery or plant rooms.

Loss of all or part of a designated heritage asset or a locally-listed building

- 6.20 Designated heritage assets including listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments and conservation areas are essential elements of the character of Reading, and therefore loss of all or part of such assets would be a significant environmental and social issue, not least because such losses are highly unusual. This is also the case for locally-listed buildings, which have already been identified as being of particular significance to Reading through an

established process. In addition, PAC has responsibility for designation of locally-listed buildings, and their loss or partial loss would be relevant to a previous Committee decision.

Development in a conservation area

- 6.21 Major new development within a conservation area will almost inevitably raise a significant environmental issue for the local area as those conservation areas have been identified for their particular historic character and wider importance. Development of that scale within a conservation area is highly unusual and could have significant negative or positive implications for the wider historic environment of Reading, and would therefore be expected to be referred to committee.

Development that would result in significant carbon emissions that will not be mitigated

- 6.22 The Council declared a climate emergency in February 2019 and set out its targets for a zero carbon Reading by 2030. The Council's planning policies contain strong measures to ensure that new development contributes to this aim, and for clarity, this statement does not cover development that is in accordance with those policies or falls slightly below them for justifiable reasons. However, some forms of development may intrinsically result in substantial additional carbon emissions due to their nature (which may include certain forms of waste development or new data centres) and the impact on zero carbon emissions would therefore be a significant environmental issue for the area.

Loss of designated open space or areas of recognised biodiversity significance

- 6.23 Certain areas are recognised within the Local Plan as being of particular environmental importance and plan policies are clear that those areas should be protected. Designated open space (either local green space or public open space) and areas of recognised biodiversity significance (which includes but is not limited to local wildlife sites, priority habitat and ancient woodland) are clearly shown on the Proposals Map and policies are categorical about their retention, which means any loss will be both a significant environmental issue and a significant issue for the Local Plan.

Change in number of school places

- 6.24 Where a major application would involve a change in the number of school places on offer in the Borough it will significantly affect the offer of education facilities in a small geographic area, whether positively or negatively, with likely knock-on implications for other schools. This therefore represents a significant social issue and would inevitably need to be considered by Committee.

Change in amount of healthcare floorspace

- 6.25 Healthcare infrastructure is one of the key infrastructure issues identified in the Local Plan and associated Infrastructure Delivery Plan, in particular primary healthcare where there is an identified need for additional provision. Any change to existing levels of healthcare provision is therefore a significant issue for the Local Plan and, if part of a major application, would need to be considered by Committee. For clarity, this will apply to floorspace which is already or is specifically proposed to be healthcare use, not to general E class floorspace which could potentially be used for healthcare as part of that use class.

Development within the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone for AWE Burghfield

- 6.26 The presence of AWE Burghfield close to Reading's boundaries and the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) covering part of South Reading is a key issue for the Local Plan as it creates a significant constraint on development. It is also a significant social issue for Reading due to the probability of development having implications for emergency planning in the local

area. As a result, major development in the DEPZ will be expected to fulfil the tests for referral to Committee.

Departures from the development plan

- 6.27 A major proposal that departs from the development plan is one which does not accord with at least one significant provision of the adopted Local Plan or Minerals and Waste Plan. Examples would be an alternative development on an allocated site, a loss of land which is protected for a specific purpose or a proposal which fails to achieve a clear policy requirement. Such a proposal would clearly raise a significant planning matter with regard to the development plan.

New or extended proposals for minerals extraction

- 6.28 There are no active minerals workings in Reading Borough. However, there are deposits of sand and gravel and sharp sand and given the urban nature of the Borough any future proposals for extraction are likely to be in close proximity to residential areas and would therefore raise significant environmental issues. In addition, there are significant needs for the winning of minerals in the area covered by the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan. Therefore any proposal for new or extended minerals extraction would be likely to pass the Gateway Test.

New proposals for waste development of greater than 1,000 sq m

- 6.29 The Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan does not specifically allocate sufficient sites to meet all of the area's waste management needs and instead identifies a number of employment areas where waste provision will be appropriate, depending on other policies. This includes a number of areas in Reading. Due to the difficulties in allocating enough sites to meet needs, major waste proposals will be a significant issue for the minerals and waste plan and likely to pass the Gateway Test.

Reserved matters applications associated with a large outline

- 6.30 Reading is a geographically small, densely developed Borough and developments of the 'large' scale (i.e. 500 dwellings or 50,000 sq m) will almost inevitably give rise to issues of social, environmental or economic importance through their detailed design and layout, even if the outline has already been agreed. In general, developments of this scale will include taller and denser buildings visible for significant surrounding areas, and there are unlikely to be many cases in which reserved matters on a site of this scale will not trigger the Gateway Test.

Deed of variation of a Section 106 agreement that substantially alters the agreed Heads of Terms

- 6.31 In general, the Heads of Terms of a Section 106 agreement relating to a major application have been agreed by Planning Applications Committee in the first instance. If these are proposed to be substantially altered this would be likely to have been of importance to the decision that was made. As such, a deed of variation that substantially alters these Heads of Terms would likely need to be referred to Committee.

Matters that would not generally trigger the Gateway Test

- 6.32 If an application which the Constitution states may be referred to Committee (generally major applications and associated listed building consent applications) falls within one of the following categories then the application is unlikely to pass the Gateway Test for referral.

Temporary use of land

- 6.33 Planning applications for temporary use of land do on occasion exceed the threshold to be considered a 'major' development due to the land area. However, they are much less likely to

trigger significant social, environmental or economic issues or any issues around the development plan than applications for permanent use and would generally not be referred to Committee.

Variation of condition (S73) that does not significantly alter the use, appearance or impact of a development

- 6.34 If a Section 73 application does not propose making significant changes to an existing permission then it is unlikely to raise a significant additional social, economic or environmental issue for the town. To some degree this will need to be a case by case judgement and will depend on the issues arising in the original application, but the presumption would be that it would not come to committee in most cases. However, if the Section 73 application would alter or remove the affordable housing contribution this is likely to need to be considered by Committee.

Deeds of variation of a Section 106 that do not substantially alter the original Heads of Terms

- 6.35 In general, the Heads of Terms of a Section 106 agreement relating to a major application have been agreed by Planning Applications Committee in the first instance. If the agreed Heads of Terms would be unchanged there should be no need to refer a deed of variation to Committee.

7. Own-interest applications

- 7.1 The following types of application are set out in the Constitution as to be determined by Planning Applications Committee if they are applications by the Council, by an officer or member of the Council, or where the Council, an officer and/or a member otherwise have an interest, and where the nominated officer and nominated member agree to refer to Committee:
- Applications for full or outline planning permission
 - Reserved matters applications
 - Section 73 (variation of condition) applications
 - Deeds of variation of Section 106 agreements
 - Applications for advertisement consent
 - Applications for listed building consent
 - Applications for permission in principle
 - Biodiversity gain plan applications
 - Applications for works affecting trees protected by tree preservation order
- 7.2 The above types of application would be referred to Committee in all cases where they are submitted by the Council or where the Council otherwise has a significant interest, including a financial interest.
- 7.3 The above types of application would also be referred to Committee in all cases where they are submitted by a member of the Council or where a member otherwise has a significant interest, including a financial interest.
- 7.4 In the case of officers, not all officers are sufficiently involved in the Planning process that an application would need to be referred. Therefore, the above types of application would be referred to Committee where an officer in one of the following categories has submitted the application or otherwise has a significant interest, including a financial interest:
- An officer who sits on the Council's Corporate Management Team;
 - An officer or another individual engaged by the Council's Planning service; or

- An officer or another individual engaged by the Council's Legal service.

7.5 The following types of application will be delegated to officers even if they are own-interest applications:

- Certificates of lawfulness – existing
- Certificates of lawfulness – proposed
- Prior approval
- Discharge of condition (of a planning permission or listed building consent)
- Non-material amendment
- Works to trees in a conservation area

8. Committee and delegated reports

8.1 Both committee reports and officer delegated reports should include a short statement outlining the reasons an application is delegated to officers or is being decided by Committee. Recommended formats are shown in Appendix 2.

9. Reporting

9.1 The Statutory Guidance states that a record should be kept of the cases considered by the nominated officer and member for referral to committee and what the outcome and reasons were, and that this should be made available on the website and regularly reported to Committee. The Council will bring a quarterly report under Part 1 to Committee on this matter, which will be available on the website, but a separate list of relevant cases will be maintained on the website and kept up to date on at least a monthly basis. This will contain the following information:

- Application details
- Decision on referral
- Date of decision on referral
- Officer responsible for decision
- Member responsible for decision
- Summary of reason for decision
- Committee date (where relevant).

Appendix 1: Determination routes for different types of application

A1.1 Table A1.1 summarises the route that different types of application will need to follow to be determined in line with both the Regulations and the Constitution.

Table A1.1: Determination routes for different types and scales of planning application

Type of application	Scale	Route unless 'own interest'	Route if 'own interest'
Advertisement consent		Delegated decision*	Committee decision
Biodiversity gain plan		Delegated decision**	Committee decision
Certificate of lawfulness - existing		Delegated decision**	Delegated decision*
Certificate of lawfulness - proposed		Delegated decision**	Delegated decision*
Deed of variation of S106	Major	Consider for referral to Committee	Committee decision
	Non-major	Delegated decision**	Committee decision
Discharge of condition		Delegated decision**	Delegated decision*
Discharge of condition of listed building consent		Delegated decision**	Delegated decision*
Listed building consent	Major	Consider for referral to Committee	Committee decision
	Non-major	Delegated decision*	Committee decision
Non-material amendment		Delegated decision**	Delegated decision*
Permission in principle		Delegated decision**	Committee decision
Planning application (full/outline) other than retrospective	Major	Consider for referral to Committee	Committee decision
	Minor	Delegated decision**	Committee decision
	Other	Delegated decision*	Committee decision
	Householder	Delegated decision**	Committee decision
Planning application (full/outline) (retrospective)	Major	Consider for referral to Committee	Committee decision
	Minor	Delegated decision**	Committee decision
	Other	Delegated decision*	Committee decision
	Householder	Delegated decision**	Committee decision
Prior approval		Delegated decision**	Delegated decision*
Reserved matters	Large (over 500 dwellings or 50,000 sq m)	Consider for referral to Committee	Committee decision
	Other (less than 500 dwellings or 50,000 sq m)	Delegated decision**	Committee decision
Section 73 (variation of condition)	Major	Consider for referral to Committee	Committee decision
	Non-major	Delegated decision**	Committee decision
Variation of condition of listed building consent	Associated with major development	Consider for referral to Committee	Committee decision

	Associated with non-major development	Delegated decision*	Committee decision
Works to protected trees		Delegated decision**	Committee decision
Works to trees in conservation area		Delegated decision*	Delegated decision*

**Delegated as a result of the Constitution*

***Delegated under Schedule 1 of the Regulations*

Appendix 2: Template statements for committee reports and delegated reports

- A2.1 This appendix sets out paragraphs that can be included in either a committee report or a delegated officer's report to outline why that route has been followed. In these paragraphs, text in [grey and brackets] would need to be amended for each application.

Schedule 1 applications other than own-interest applications

- A2.2 Applications that fall within Schedule 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 and which are not an own-interest application are delegated to officers. Schedule 1 applications include the following:

- Householder planning application (not including retrospective)
- Minor full or outline planning application (not including retrospective)
- Reserved matters application associated with an outline application that is not a 'large outline permission', i.e. 500 dwellings and/or 50,000 sq m floorspace.
- Application for permission in principle
- Section 73 application relating to a Schedule 1 application
- Application for non-material amendments
- Deed of variation for a planning obligation associated with a Schedule 1 application
- Application for a certificate of lawfulness of existing use
- Application for a certificate of lawfulness of proposed use
- Application for approval of a biodiversity gain plan
- Application for prior approval

- A2.3 The delegated officer report should include a statement based on the following:

"This is a [type of application] which falls within Schedule 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026. It is not an own-interest application and is therefore to be delegated to officers in all cases."

Schedule 1 applications that are own-interest applications

- A2.4 The Regulations allow applications that fall within Schedule 1 to be considered by Committee if they are own-interest applications, i.e. applications made by the Council or by an officer or member of the Council or where they otherwise have an interest. However, this does not mean that they are automatically brought to Committee, and the Council's Constitution makes further provisions.

- A2.5 The following types of application are delegated to officers by the Constitution even if they are own-interest applications:

- Application for a certificate of lawfulness of existing use
- Application for a certificate of lawfulness of proposed use
- Application for prior approval

- A2.6 Therefore in cases where the Constitution delegates the decision to officers the delegated officer report should include a statement based on the following:

"This is a [type of application] which falls within Schedule 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026. Although the

Regulations allow such applications to be referred to committee if they are own-interest applications, the Council's Constitution delegates this type of application to officers even in the case that it is an own-interest application."

- A2.7 In other cases where the application is an own-interest Schedule 1 application, the application will be determined by Planning Applications Committee, and the committee report should include a statement based on the following:

*"This is a [type of application] which falls within Schedule 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026. However, as it [has been submitted by the Council]/[has been submitted by an officer on the Council's Corporate Management Team]/[has been submitted by an officer engaged by the Council's Planning service]/[has been submitted by an officer engaged by the Council's Legal service]/[has been submitted by a member of the Council]/[is an application in which the Council has an interest]/[is an application where an officer on the Council's Corporate Management Team has an interest]/[is an application where an officer engaged by the Council's Planning service has an interest]/[is an application where an officer engaged by the Council's Legal service has an interest]/[is an application where a member of the Council has an interest] **[Delete as appropriate]** it is an own-interest application of a type which the Constitution states would fall to be considered by Planning Applications Committee."*

- A2.8 More detailed information on when an application will qualify as an 'own-interest' application is set out in Section 7.

Schedule 2 applications other than own-interest applications

- A2.9 Applications that fall within Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026 may be referred to committee if they pass the gateway test in the Regulations. Schedule 2 applications include the following:

- Major or other full or outline planning applications
- Reserved matters applications associated with an outline application that is a 'large outline permission', i.e. at least 500 dwellings and/or 50,000 sq m floorspace.
- Application for listed building consent
- Application for variation of condition of a listed building consent
- Planning application associated with an application for listed building consent or variation of condition of a listed building consent
- Section 73 application relating to a Schedule 2 application
- Retrospective planning application
- Deeds of variation for an obligation associated with a Schedule 2 application
- Application for advertisement consent
- Application for works to a protected tree

- A2.10 However, under the Council's Constitution, certain of these applications are delegated to officers unless they are own-interest applications. These are:

- Full or outline planning application that is not major
- Section 73 application unless associated with a major planning application
- Deed of variation of planning obligation unless associated with a major planning application
- Retrospective planning application unless it is major
- Application for listed building consent unless associated with a major planning application

- Application for variation of condition of listed building consent unless associated with a major planning application
- Application for advertisement consent
- Application for works to a protected tree

A2.11 If the application falls within the list in paragraph A2.10 and is therefore delegated to officers to determine, the delegated officer report should include a statement based on the following

“This is a [type of application] which falls within Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026. Although the Regulations allow for this type of application to be referred to committee where the nominated officer and member agree that it fulfils the criteria specified in the Regulations, the Council’s Constitution delegates this type of application to officers.”

A2.12 If a Schedule 2 application is not in the list in paragraph A2.10, a decision will be made by the nominated officer and nominated member as to whether it should be referred to committee on the basis of the Gateway Tests in the Regulations. These are set out in paragraph 6.4 of this guidance. The decision will need to be explained in the delegated or committee report.

A2.13 If the decision is to refer the matter to Committee, the committee report should include a statement based on the following:

*“This is a [type of application] which falls within Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026. The Regulations and Council’s Constitution allow for this type of application to be referred to committee where the nominated officer and member agree that it fulfils the criteria specified in the Regulations. On [date] the nominated officer and member agreed to refer this matter to Planning Applications Committee because it [raises a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations]/[raises an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area] **[Delete as appropriate]**. This is because [add reasoning]”*

A2.14 If the decision is not to refer the matter to Committee, the delegated officer report should include a statement based on the following:

“This is a [type of application] which falls within Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026. Under the Regulations and Council’s Constitution this type of application is to be delegated to officers unless the nominated officer and member agree that it fulfils the criteria specified in the Regulations. On [date] the nominated officer and member agreed that this matter would not be referred to Planning Applications Committee because it does not raise a significant planning matter having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations or raise an economic, social or environmental issue of significance to the local area. This is because [add reasoning]”

Schedule 2 applications that are own-interest applications

A2.15 Under the Constitution, all types of application that fall under Schedule 2 of the Regulations (see list in paragraph A1.9) will be determined by Planning Applications Committee in the event that the application is an own-interest application, i.e. an application made by the Council or by an officer or member of the Council or where they otherwise have an interest. The committee report should include a statement based on the following:

“This is a [type of application] which falls within Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Discharge of Local Planning Authority Functions) (England) Regulations 2026. As it [has been submitted by the Council]/[has been submitted by an officer on the Council’s Corporate

*Management Team]/[has been submitted by an officer engaged by the Council's Planning service]/[has been submitted by an officer engaged by the Council's Legal service]/[has been submitted by a member of the Council]/[is an application in which the Council has an interest]/[is an application where an officer on the Council's Corporate Management Team has an interest]/[is an application where an officer engaged by the Council's Planning service has an interest]/[is an application where an officer engaged by the Council's Legal service has an interest]/[is an application where a member of the Council has an interest] **[Delete as appropriate]** it is an own-interest application of a type which the Constitution states would fall to be considered by Planning Applications Committee."*

Planning Applications Committee

07 October 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	National Planning Policy Framework
Purpose of the report	To note the report for information
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee, Executive Director Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
Report author	Mark Worringham, Planning Policy Manager / Acting Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Council priority	Deliver a sustainable & healthy environment & reduce Reading's carbon footprint
Recommendations	To note the report.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. A new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 17 August 2026. The NPPF is the document that sets out the government's national planning policy, and it is an important consideration in both determining applications and formulating policy. This report summarises the main changes of significance to Reading.

2. Background

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the comprehensive document setting out the government's policy on planning matters. The previous version was produced in 2024, but a consultation was undertaken on a proposed new version between 16 December 2025 and 10 March 2026, to which the Council responded. The Council's response was reported to Planning Applications Committee on 29 April 2026 (Minute 71 refers).
- 2.2 Following this consultation, the government published a new version of the NPPF on 17 August 2026. This replaces the previous version as well as a number of other national policy documents such as Planning Policy for Traveller Sites and various written ministerial statements. It is a material consideration in decision making as of the date of publication.
- 2.3 The new version is significantly different from previous versions in format, as it is now arranged around specific policies drafted in the style of development plan policies, whereas previous versions were simply set out in a number of paragraphs. This included dividing policies into plan-making and decision-making policies.
- 2.4 The original intention was that the decision-making policies would take the form of 'National Development Management Policies' that would have had the same status as the development plan and would have replaced more general development management policies in local plans. However, this intention was abandoned and they are instead expressed as national policies without having the original intended status.

3. Significant changes relevant to Reading

Plan-making

- 3.1 Policy PM1 sets the policy expectations for Spatial Development Strategies for the first time, which are the high-level sub-regional plans which will identify growth, infrastructure and investment

priorities. Reading is expected to be part of the Thames Valley SDS area including the other Berkshire authorities, Swindon, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, but the Regulations that will define the areas have not yet been published. The approach to SDSs in the NPPF was largely as expected in terms of setting out a broad spatial strategy for growth, setting housing needs for individual local authorities and planning for strategic investment and infrastructure, but the main change is that the expectation is that local housing needs will now be set for 25 years as opposed to the 20 years originally proposed.

- 3.2 Policy for local plans is set out in PM2, and this is based around the new plan-making system set out in Regulations earlier this year. This seeks to reduce the length and complexity of local plans down to a vision, up to ten measurable outcomes, policies on the amount of development, allocations and broad locations for growth, other designations, setting levels of affordable housing and infrastructure contributions, and should only include other policies where they support allocations or address specific local issues. In addition, the minimum plan period has been reduced from 15 to 10 years.
- 3.3 Supplementary plans (which replace supplementary planning documents) are dealt with in policy S4. Their role has already been restricted by legislation, but the NPPF seems to restrict these even further. For instance, their role in law can include design requirements generally, but the NPPF includes more restrictive wording that supplementary plans can set “clear design expectations that support the delivery of development”.
- 3.4 The duty to co-operate, which has already been withdrawn for plan-making, is replaced by generalised requirements for co-operation in policy PM10 and the need to produce statements of common ground in policy PM11, although it is important to note that the spatial development strategies are more significant in replacing the duty.
- 3.5 The tests of soundness for examining local plans have been amended. The test of being ‘justified’ is replaced by ‘appropriate’, and a new test around conformity with the spatial development strategy is introduced.
- 3.6 A very significant change to affordable housing policy is that the NPPF has a different emphasis on seeking affordable housing contributions from non-major development (less than 10 dwellings). It states that local plans should set out requirements for the type and mix of affordable housing needed, including the minimum proportion of Social Rent homes required as part of major development, but no longer specifically prevents local authorities from seeking affordable housing from smaller developments.
- 3.7 Plans should also define a settlement boundary, as this will allow the application of other policies in the NPPF. Reading’s Local Plan has not identified a settlement boundary for a number of years, although it would very likely largely follow the Borough boundary.
- 3.8 Policy L1 includes more detail on expectations for what plans should do to ensure the most efficient use of land, including estate regeneration, underutilised retail and business sites and surplus transport infrastructure including car parks and service facilities, which the existing Local Plan already largely complies with.
- 3.9 Specific reference is included to Detailed Emergency Planning Zones around nuclear sites in policies relating to both plan-making (P1) and decision-making (P5), whereas these facilities were never specifically referred to in past versions.
- 3.10 A new requirement for plans to be based on a ‘proportionate heritage assessment’ and be supported by a local heritage list has been introduced in policy HE1.

Development Management

- 3.11 The most significant change for development management (which the NPPF refers to as ‘decision-making’) in Reading is that the presumption in favour of sustainable development has been significantly changed so that the ‘tilted balance’ that was an outcome of its predecessor would no longer be of relevance, at least for Reading. Instead, there are two relevant policies:
 - A general presumption in favour of sustainable development (policy S3) including that proposals that accord with both an up-to-date development plan and the NPPF decision-making policies should be approved without delay; and

- Policy S4 which states that proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies. There is more detail on what this would mean in practice, but the policy refers only to local policy where a site is allocated or specifically protected.
- 3.12 As a result the 'tilted balance' within a settlement (which would mean almost all of Reading) is replaced by a presumption in favour of development which prioritises national policies over most local policies. It remains to be seen how this can operate in practice when the legal basis for decision making is still the Local Plan, but it is clearly an attempt to substantially reduce policy constraints on development in urban areas, and will be important for the Council's decision making.
- 3.13 This ties in with another element of the NPPF which is the statement in Annex A that development plan policies that are materially inconsistent with the NPPF should be given very little weight unless they were examined and adopted against this version of the Framework. Again, this seeks to promote national policy to a status that could potentially be seen as inconsistent with the legislation, and this is likely to be the focus of future case law.
- 3.14 Much of the publicity around the new NPPF has been around the importance of development around railway stations. However, this is of very limited significance for Reading because it is in relation to the following:
- proposals outside settlements (policy S5)
 - proposals in the Green Belt (policy GB7)
 - establishing a minimum density of 35 dwelling per hectare around well-connected stations or 45 dwellings per hectare around stations with twice the frequency of a well-connected station (policy L3), which are levels well below the density of the vast majority of new development in Reading.
- 3.15 There are general policies around decision-making and there are a few notable elements such as the need for major developments to provide a concise planning statement and the emphasis on pre-application discussions for major development but much less so for minor developments (DM1). There is also a policy (DM2) requiring that local validation lists require certain information to support the national policies, but much of this is information that is usually required in any case. Policy DM3 emphasises that statutory and internal consultees should only be consulted where necessary and that decisions should not be delayed for a consultation response other than in specified circumstances.
- 3.16 Policy CC3 on adaptation to climate change now for the first time takes account of the risk of wildfires and incorporate measures such as firebreaks into development.
- 3.17 In terms of affordable housing, policy HO8 states that developments should meet or exceed affordable housing requirements. There was no explicit statement to this effect in the previous version, which concentrated mainly on what the plan should say rather than what a development should do.
- 3.18 There are now some fairly general development management requirements for specialist housing (policy HO9) which includes student and large scale communal provision (such as co-living).
- 3.19 Policy L2 on making efficient use of land emphasises existing policy around making best use of land in settlements and on previously-developed land, but does include wording supportive of higher buildings at street corners and additional units within residential curtilages which may have some tension with local policies on design or development in residential gardens. Likewise, there is a reference in policy L3 to development for residential or mixed use in a settlement contributing to an increase in the density of the area in which they are situated.
- 3.20 The wording around school places has been somewhat altered. Whilst the 2024 NPPF gave 'great weight' to early years, schools and post-16 facilities, these are now attributed 'substantial weight' alongside other public service or community infrastructure.
- 3.21 Policy N2 now specifically requires the incorporation of swift bricks into developments.

- 3.22 There have been changes made to how the development management policies regarding heritage operate. In particular, the concept and rules around 'less than substantial harm' have been removed, which will mean less clarity on how these more limited impacts will be weighed. However, there is now more useful wording on how to weigh impacts on non-designated assets, which would include locally listed buildings.
- 3.23 In general terms, the phrase 'substantial weight', used only twice in the previous NPPF (for use of brownfield land and harm to the Green Belt) is referred to 19 times for different matters in the new version. This will raise the issue of how matters accorded substantial weight will be balanced in practice when in conflict with one another.
- 3.24 The glossary includes a definition for 'medium' development (10-49 dwellings on a site of up to 2.5 hectares) which emerges from previous consultations. However, no policy in the NPPF applies differently to medium development than to any other major development.
- 3.25 Five-year housing land supply also now works in a slightly different manner, in that a buffer of 20% needs to be incorporated where a local plan was examined against a pre-2024 version of the NPPF (as our Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) has been) and the annual average housing requirement is less than 80% of the national standard method. As it stands, the LPPU figure is 85% of the standard method, but the standard method figure changes each year as affordability ratios are published, and this could well push the LPPU figure below the 80% threshold in the future, making it much more challenging to demonstrate a five year supply.

4. Main implications for Reading

- 4.1 The publication of the new NPPF has no implications for the progress of the emerging LPPU, as this was examined under the 2023 version of the NPPF due to transitional arrangements that are still in place. Implications will be felt in future versions of the Local Plan or other policy documents.
- 4.2 In terms of development management, the NPPF is relevant to all decisions made after its publication. This means that Inspectors in ongoing appeals are already enquiring about its relevance, and it also means that it needs to be taken into account where a planning application has a resolution to grant from PAC but the decision has not yet been issued. Officers are considering this carefully on a case by case basis.
- 4.3 Regarding more specific implications, the NPPF is relatively new, and its implications may not fully become apparent on first reading. However, officers have identified a number of matters which are likely to be of particular importance.
- The reduction of the minimum plan period to ten years will make it more straightforward to plan to meet development needs given that anticipated completion rates tend to tail off towards the end of the 15 year period as delivery becomes more uncertain.
 - It is likely that many of our existing SPDs would not fulfil the NPPF's restricted view on what a supplementary plan should cover, which would mean needing to ensure that key elements are within the Local Plan itself wherever this is possible rather than directly replacing a SPD with a supplementary plan. However this may be difficult in practice as the Local Plan itself is expected to become more streamlined. For clarity, existing SPDs will remain in place as long as the emerging Local Plan Partial Update does.
 - The presumption in favour of development in settlements seeks to prioritise national policies in these locations, which will mean that we may face continued challenges applying our own local policies where they diverge from national policies, and will mean that we will also need to ensure that decisions are linked to national policies wherever possible. However, conflicts between the NPPF and our own local policies are likely to be very limited.
 - It will additionally be complicated to weigh national policies when making decisions not least because so many areas now carry 'substantial weight'.
 - Some wording in the NPPF seems likely to continue to result in applicants seeking ever higher densities in particular around increasing height at street corners, dwellings within residential curtilages and generally contributing to an increase in densities.

- Although the Council's local policy seeking affordable housing from all sizes of development has continued to be supported at examination and appeal the removal of the specific restriction on seeking a contribution from sites of less than 10 dwellings will nonetheless be highly significant for future iterations of the plan and the resulting financial contributions that are vital for continued provision of Local Authority New-Build.
- There is a risk that the approach to demonstrating a five year supply of housing land will cause issues for Reading if the standard method figure increases as a result of newly published data to the extent that the figure in the Local Plan Partial Update is less than 80% of the standard method.

5. Contribution to strategic aims

5.1 The Council Plan (2025-2028) identifies five priorities for the Council over the next three years. These are:

- Promote more equal communities in Reading
- Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
- Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce Reading's carbon footprint
- Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
- Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future.

5.2 National planning policy in conjunction with local policy will help to meet most of these objectives through securing economic, social and environmental objectives.

6. Community engagement

6.1 There are no community engagement implications of this report.

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 There are no direct equality implications of this report.

8. Environmental and climate implications

8.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). The Planning and Building Control functions are essential in helping to address the Climate Emergency through ensuring that development is undertaken to the highest possible environmental standards in line with national regulations and local policies.

8.2 There are no direct environmental or climate implications of this report.

9. Health implications

9.1 Chapter 16 of the NPPF (containing policies HC1-HC8) deals with promoting healthy communities. Much of the content of this chapter is broadly in line with the previous version of the NPPF.

10. Legal implications

10.1 Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF will be considered as a material consideration within this context, although it should be noted that, as set out in paragraph 3.13, the NPPF includes wording that

development plan policies that are materially inconsistent with the NPPF should be given very little weight. This could be taken to be inconsistent with the legal basis for decision-making.

11. Financial Implications

11.1 None of this report.

Planning Application Committee

07 October 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	Proposal to rename a section of the A33
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Louise Duffield, Executive Director of Resources
Report author	Heather Porter, Data and GIS Manager
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Council priority	Not applicable, but still requires a decision
Recommendations	The committee is asked: 1. To note the consultations undertaken in relation to the proposal to rename a section of the A33, and the responses received; 2. To consider the report and make a decision to either: • Proceed to rename a section of the A33, from the junction with Rose Kiln Lane, south to the roundabout joining with Basingstoke Road (as set out in Appendix 1 of the report); or • Retain the existing street name designation.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. At the full meeting of Reading Borough Council in June 2025, and following the decision by a Multi-Academy Trust to rename the former John Madejski Academy School in Whitley, the Council resolved 'to seek alternative means by which his legacy to our town can be preserved'.
- 1.2. As a result, a proposal to rename a section of the A33 between Rose Kiln Lane and Basingstoke Road roundabout as John Madejski Way was developed, subject to consultation and a report to this committee.
- 1.3. The proposed change would impact approximately 20 properties through an associated change of address.
- 1.4. None of the directly affected properties responded to the consultation. Four comments were submitted by residents, and four responses were received from Ward Councillors. A summary of these responses is provided in the report, and are attached in full in the appendix.
- 1.5. Under the Council's Constitution and Street Naming and Numbering Protocol, this Committee has responsibility for street naming. Therefore, the Committee is asked to consider the consultation responses and make a decision on the proposal.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1. At the full meeting of Reading Borough Council in June 2025, the Council resolved to:

- Place on record it's thanks to Sir John Madejski, a Freeman of the Borough, for his philanthropic work over decades to make Reading a better place, including 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 School in 2006.
 - Note with dismay the announcement by the new Multi-Academy Trust to remove Sir John's name from the Academy that he funded
 - Seek alternative means by which his legacy to our town can be preserved.
- 2.2. The Council has therefore undertaken two consultations to rename a section of the A33, from the junction with Rose Kiln Lane, south to the roundabout joining with Basingstoke Road. The proposal is that this part of the road be renamed John Madejski Way.
- 2.3. The site map (Appendix 1) illustrates the proposed section of road to be renamed and properties which would be impacted as a result of the change.

3. Impacts of the Proposed Change

- 3.1. Renaming a road is a significant change which also requires the official addresses of any properties on that road to be changed. If the road is renamed as proposed, approximately 20 properties will be required to change their address; the properties are predominantly commercial.
- 3.2. An address change can have practical implications for residents, businesses and public services including:
- the need to adjust records with utility providers (e.g. gas, electricity, water, broadband)
 - the need to update documentation and personal or business records (e.g. bank accounts, insurance policies, vehicle records, subscriptions)
 - requirement to update business materials (e.g. signage, stationery, marketing materials)
 - Notifying customers, suppliers and delivery companies of the change.
- 3.3. People or businesses impacted may also need to seek professional advice for changes to legal documents such as property deeds or leases.
- 3.4. It is likely that some of these changes will cause residents and businesses to incur costs.
- 3.5. It is possible that the current postcodes used by properties may change. Postcodes are assigned by Royal Mail, and the change in address may trigger a postcode update.
- 3.6. The Council's Street Naming and Numbering protocol states that renaming existing streets is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the Emergency Services. We have not received notification from the Emergency Services that the current road name is causing issues.

4. Consultation with Potentially Impacted Residents and Businesses

- 4.1. The first consultation was a consultation of residents and businesses that would be impacted by the implementation of the proposed change.
- 4.2. Potentially impacted properties were sent an invite to take part in the consultation by post. The consultation was open between 25th May and 12th July 2026, a six-week period.

- 4.3. No responses were received from residents, businesses and key stakeholders who were directly approached for comment.
- 4.4. Four responses to the consultation were received from residents of Reading who were not directly approached. Officers believe that this correspondence was a result of the media reporting on the case. From these comments, one resident supported the proposal and three opposed it. The anonymised responses are provided in Appendix 2.

5. Consultation with Ward Councillors

- 5.1. A consultation with ward Councillors from the potentially impacted wards was subsequently undertaken.
- 5.2. Four responses were received from the consulted Councillors; two from Katesgrove Ward, one from Coley Ward and one from Whitley Ward. None of the responses from Ward Councillors supported the proposal. The full responses can be found in Appendix 3.

6. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 6.1. Street Naming and Numbering is a statutory function of the Council.

7. Community Engagement

- 7.1. Consultation with potentially impacted residents and businesses, and ward Councillors was undertaken, as outlined previously in this report.

8. Equality Implications

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

9. Health Implications

- 9.1. A Health Impact Assessment is not required for this proposal.

10. Legal Implications

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

11. Financial Implications

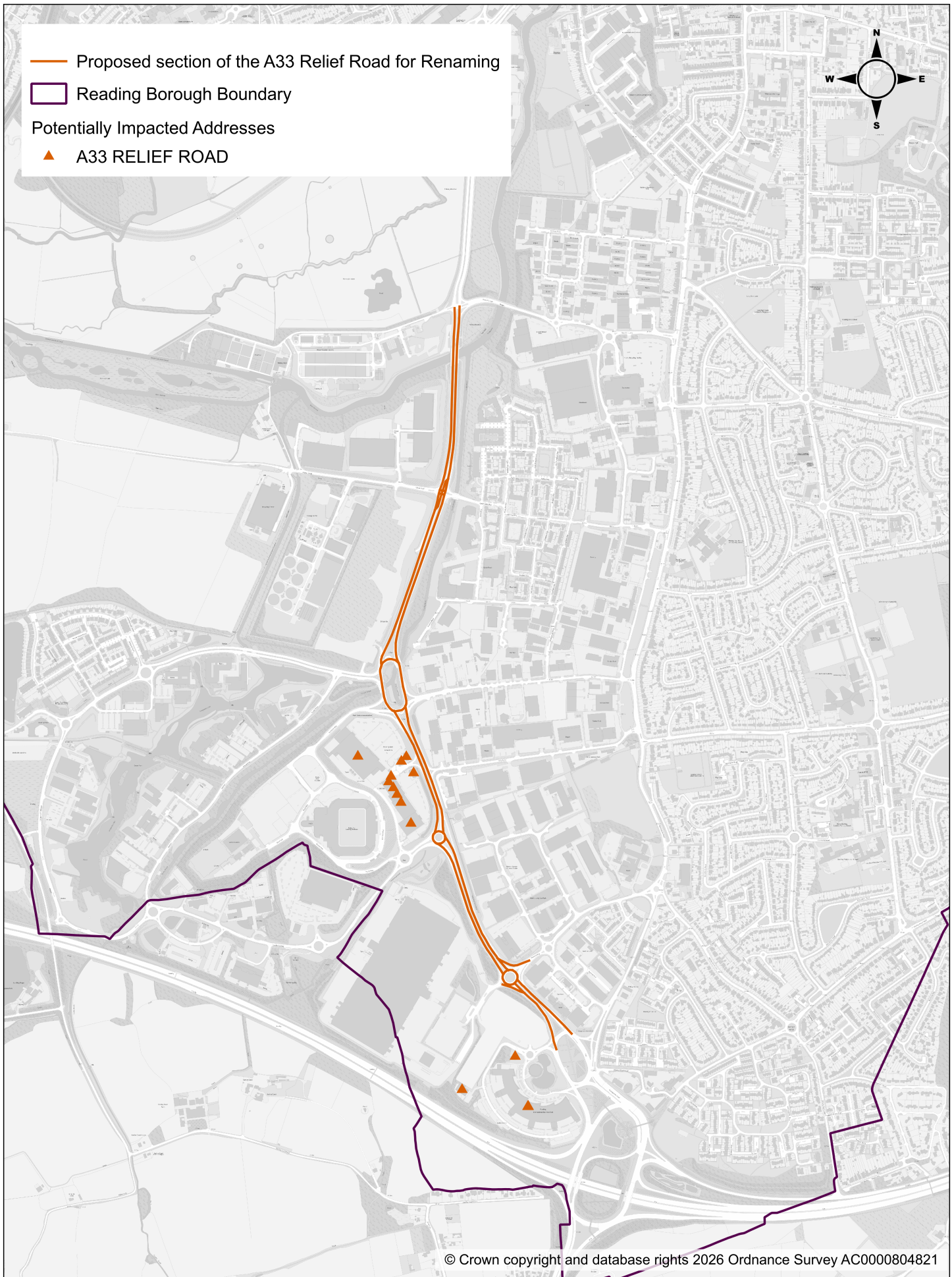
- 11.1. New signage would be required for any new street name. The cost of this is estimated as £4,000 due to the number of junctions along the proposed section of road to be renamed. This cost will need to be met from within the existing highways budgets.

12. Timetable for Implementation

- 12.1. If accepted, the proposal will be input into the Local Street Gazetteer for submission to GeoPlace within the first week of November. The Local Land and Property Gazetteer will subsequently be updated and residents notified of the change to address. As this process requires input from Royal Mail, we cannot confirm exact timelines but anticipate this should be completed by the end of November based on current working practices.
- 12.2. The installation of street name plates takes 3-4 weeks to complete once the order is placed.

Appendices

1. Site Map



2. Responses from the Consultation with Potentially Impacted Residents and Businesses

Response 1

What a waste money, time and effort.

How about you ask the residents of Reading to comment on the state of our roads(pot holes), lane markings, ridiculous and unnecessary bus lanes, getting the town regenerated to somewhere people want to come and spend money, rather than being a town full of flats/apartments that are not affordable for all!

I'm sure the road will always be known as the Basingstoke Road if you've lived here long enough, just like the The Broad Street Mall, forever known as The Butts Centre!

Response 2

Yes, Yes, Yes!

I was gutted when Reading FC were forced to sell the Stadium naming rights and so to have the main road going into Reading and passing the stadium, named in his honour would be wonderful.

Response 3

I am writing as a Reading resident to formally object to the proposal to rename the section of the A33 between Rose Kiln Lane and the Basingstoke Road roundabout as "John Madejski Way".

I would like to make clear that my objection is not a criticism of Sir John Madejski or a denial of his significant contribution to Reading. His role in supporting Reading Football Club, local business, education and charitable causes is widely recognised and appreciated.

My concern is whether renaming a major public highway is an appropriate use of the Council's street-naming powers.

The A33 is one of Reading's principal transport corridors and has a well-established identity that is understood by residents, businesses, visitors and road users. The purpose of road names should primarily be to provide clarity, consistency and ease of navigation. I do not believe there is a sufficiently strong public interest case for changing the identity of a major route for commemorative purposes.

Public reports of the discussion leading to this proposal suggest that the selected stretch was chosen in part because it is administratively easier to rename than other roads. In my view, administrative convenience is not a compelling reason to alter the name of a key transport corridor.

I am also concerned that a number of councillors have already publicly expressed strong support for the proposal before the consultation has concluded. While councillors are naturally entitled to hold and express views, I hope that all responses received during this consultation will be considered objectively and that the outcome has not been predetermined.

Furthermore, I am not aware of any clear evidence that a majority of Reading residents support this proposal. While many residents admire Sir John Madejski and are grateful for his contributions to the town, that does not automatically mean that renaming a major road is the most appropriate form of recognition.

If the Council wishes to honour Sir John Madejski, I would encourage consideration of alternative forms of civic recognition that would avoid changing the identity of an important road while still acknowledging his contribution to Reading.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the proposal to rename this section of the A33 as "John Madejski Way" be rejected.

Please record this correspondence as a formal objection to the consultation.

Response 4

Could I ask if there is a cost involved in the naming of the road, if so, how much?

3. Responses from the Consultation with Ward Councillors

Response 5, from Katesgrove

I would like to add my support for the rejection of this proposal. At a time when council resources are stretched, and that stretch is regularly impacting core services, the voluntary diversion of officers time and resources to vanity projects like this is not justified. Putting inconvenience, expense and inconvenience upon the residents have the road for the same purpose is no more justifiable.

Sir John is a wealthy man who can and does manage his own legacy. As a town we can be very grateful to him without diverting resources away from helping residents whose needs are more fundamental. I'm sure Sir John will appreciate and understand this.

Response 6, from Katesgrove

I don't see the need to rename the road.

However things are usually named after people posthumously so should we considered honouring someone who contributed to the town but is no longer with us? Assuming it has to be renamed.

Response 7, from Whitley

My view and that of some residents that I have talked to in the ward is that this is an admirable way to honour Sir John Madjeski, but it is not effective in the holistic way of things, as people would always call the road A33, just like the stadium; it is still called by the locals and others John Madeski Stadium. Also, the road is a major road which is commercially and personally used by many as a Class 1 road. There are other roads, squares, or places that we could honour Sir John Madjeski as an icon of his time, and we should find out what other cities/towns are doing. With how people are feeling about the Cost of Living at the moment, especially in Whitley Ward (the most deprived area), it would really upset many people if there is a financial allocation.

Response 8, from Coley

I agree with several of the public responses in that:

It is unnecessary to rename the road. It is known as the A33.

It is unusual to rename a road after someone who is still alive.

The same person has already had a school named after him in return for his donation.

Has John Madejski donated to certain Reading causes in return for a prominent road name? If so, this needs to be more clearly in the public eye. If there is no money involved this time, then it would seem to be free advertising.

If it must be renamed to make Rose Kiln Lane easier to understand, how about naming it posthumously after someone who made a large contribution to Reading? "Palmer Street", or "Stripes Way" after the warming stripes developed at our university?

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Planning Applications Committee

7 October 2026



Reading
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Title	FELLING OF ONE OAK TREE REAR OF 26 WINTERBERRY WAY, READING
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee
Report author	Sarah Hanson, Natural Environment Officer
Lead councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Council Priority	Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
Ward	Caversham Heights
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To approve the proposed tree work subject to no substantive objections being received.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. To report to Committee on the proposed felling of one Council Oak tree rear of 26 Winterberry Way - T6026 of TPO 333 (map extracts provided in Appendix 1).

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. Local Plan policy EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLANDS includes the aim for
'Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading's vegetation cover will be extended'.
- 2.2. The protection of Council trees where appropriate to do so contributes to this policy aim.
- 2.3. The Reading Borough Council adopted Tree Strategy (2021) sets 12 Objectives, which can be viewed here: [Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy, March 2021](#) . Appropriate management of Council, protected trees meets the aims of Objective 1.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1 The Oak tree is located on Council land to the rear of 26 Winterberry Way. A recent inspection of the Oak advised the following:

07N6: *Large fungal fruiting body (Laetiporus sulphureus) seen at approx 5m whilst on Winterberry way. Fungus is growing on the main stem directly below cavity and included union with high likelihood of catastrophic limb failure resulting in significant potential for large sections of tree to fail into garden or building due to close proximity. Additionally a large wound on east side from lightning strike compounding issue.*

Given the findings, a tree works application was submitted and received on 17 September 2026 – reference PL/26/1238 – seeking approval to fell the tree. The proposal is to leave a 5m monolith (trunk) for wildlife, rather than felling to ground level.

- 3.2 For information, a second Oak (ID:0GHZ) nearby was identified as being dead and notice of felling has been provided. Formal approval is not required in this case. Again, a monolith (3m) is being left for wildlife value.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 The works proposed are necessary in order to appropriately manage the risk the tree presents to the adjacent residents. The consultation period would come to an end after the Committee meeting, but given the safety issues presented by the condition of the tree it is not considered appropriate to wait until the November meeting of PAC. Subject to no substantive objections being received as a result of the public notice, it is recommended that the works be approved.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. Trees within the Council's ownership improve the quality of its open spaces and provide multiple environment benefits, including improvement of air quality. The retention, planting and appropriate management of Council trees promotes a sustainable and healthy environment in Reading and helps to reduce its carbon footprint, one of the five priorities of the Council Plan 2025/28.

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. Trees have multiple environmental benefits that include flood alleviation, wildlife benefits, air pollution mitigation and air cooling. The replacement planting overall represents a net gain in tree number hence contributed to the Council's aims.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. A site Notice was placed outside 26 Winterberry Way on 18 September 2026 and left for the required 21-day period, i.e. until 12 October 2026.
- 6.2. The application has also been available to view via Public Access

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. No implications identified.

8. Health Implications

- 8.1 Trees have significant benefits for both physical and mental health, but on this occasion the condition of the tree presents a risk to the health and safety of residents.

9. Other Relevant Considerations

- 9.1. None

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1. Service and administration of Tree Preservation Orders falls under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012.
- 10.2. Preparing, serving confirmation and contravention of TPO's are services dealt with by the Council's Legal Section.
- 10.3. Determination of applications affecting work to protected trees is delegated to officers except where the proposal has been submitted by or on behalf of the Council.

11. Financial Implications

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

12. Timetable for Implementation

- 12.1. Once issued, tree work approvals last for a period of 2 years, i.e. must be carried out within that period.

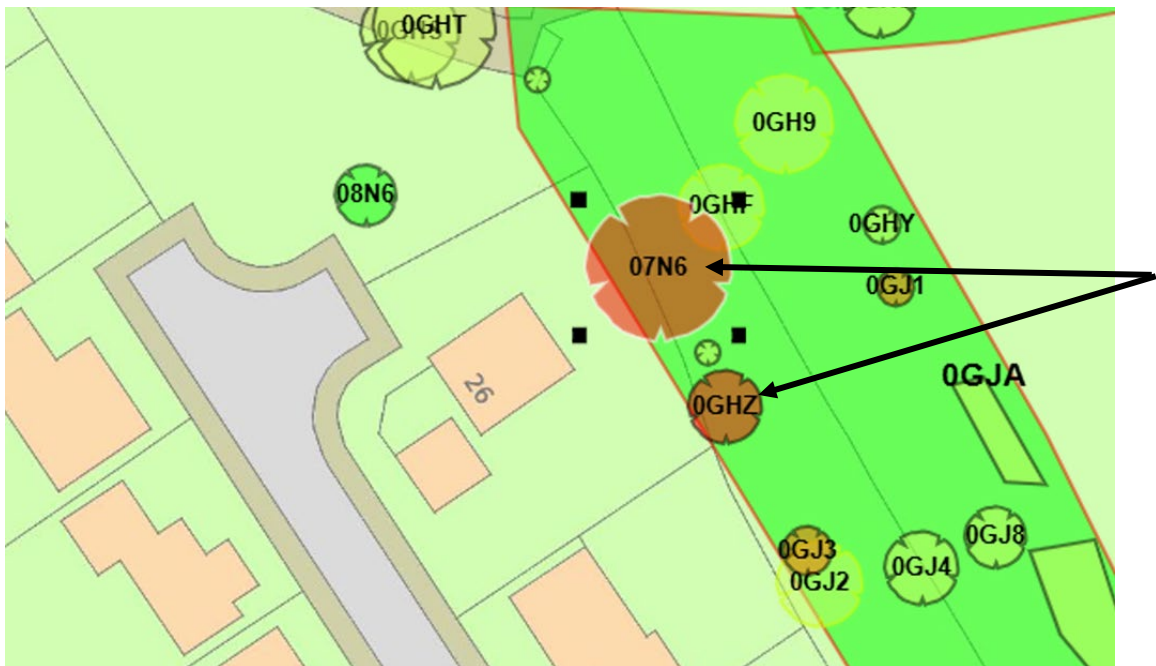
13. Background Papers

- 13.1. Register of Tree Preservation Orders

Appendices

1. iShare extract showing protected trees & Location Plan from Arbortrack
2. Photograph

Appendix 1 – iShare extract & Location Plan from Arbortrack



Appendix 2



T6026 / 07NG

Planning Applications Committee



Reading
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07 October 2026

Title	LOCAL LISTING REPORT – Former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Burcu Can Cetin, Conservation Officer
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Ward	Battle Ward
Address	St Edwards School, 64 Tilehurst Road, Reading, RG30 1EH
Recommendations	To agree that Former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road be added to the List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. To report on a proposal to add the former coach house at 64 Tilehurst Road to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures. The report identifies the building as being of local historical and architectural importance and makes an assessment based on the Council's published Local List criteria for inclusion on the list.

2. Policy context

- 2.1. Reading Borough Council maintains a List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures ('the Local List'). Its purpose is to recognise the buildings and structures which do not meet the criteria for national listing, but are nonetheless significant to the heritage of the local area. It was agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 that decisions on additions to the Local List should be made at PAC.
- 2.2. The criteria for considering additions to the Local List are set out in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019).

3. The proposal

- 3.1. A nomination was received on 14/07/2026 to add the former coach house at 64 Tilehurst Road to the Local List Consultations for the second time, as a historic nomination dated 25/01/2023 for this asset has not been processed. Consultations have been carried out for the recent nomination in accordance with the agreed process, and this report sets out the recommended action.
- 3.2. Situated on the north side of Tilehurst Road, the nominated asset is an early Victorian coach house of a detached villa at 62 Tilehurst Road, known as Fremington House, which has been in use for St Edwards School at 64 Tilehurst Road since the 1940s. The building has a simple rectangular form under a pitched slate roof. Constructed of red and grey polychromatic brickwork arranged in horizontal bandings with red-brick dressings, quins, and decorative brick detailing at the eaves, its prominent gable facing Tilehurst Road has a tall first-floor opening reflecting its former ancillary/service use. When perceived from the street, it visually relates to the neighbouring locally listed building at No. 62.



Image of the former Coach House of No. 62 within St Edward's Prep School at 64 Tilehurst Road

- 3.3. The nomination form received identifies the significance of the building as follows:
- 3.4. "Principle for Selection for the Local List - (b) 1840 - 1913: any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance:

The coach house/ stable block originally within the curtilage of a detached early Victorian property, at 62 Tilehurst Road, now forms part of St Edwards School at 64 Tilehurst Road. The coach house would appear to have been built at the same time as the house and is constructed of similar materials. No 62 was added to the local list in 2022 (LL24). When the nomination of No 62 was approved by the Planning Applications Committee it was noted that the coach house would be worthy of nomination for group value with the house and that a paper should be brought forward to a future committee meeting. (see PAC 7 December 2022 decision details for item 66 <https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=143 &MId=4900>). 62 Tilehurst Road with the coach house/stable block is significant because of its age, as part of a cluster of houses at the top of Western Elms Avenue and its unusual banded brickwork. The buildings appear on the Board of Health maps of 1853 and so must be at least of that date. On the OS Map published 1883 it is named as Fremington House. By the time of the 1865 directory the street address of Fremington House is given as Western Elms Avenue and the occupier is Mr W H W Staveley as it is in 1888 (Staveley). In 1899 William Hubert Sale Fosbery MD lived there, still with a street address of Western Elms Avenue. By 1914 he had been joined by Amédée V Salmon, Professor of French. By 1972, 62 Tilehurst Road was occupied by H M Lyons, M Mitchell and Andrew N Mozley, so as today may already have been converted to flats. William Henry Wackerell Staveley is recorded in the 1881 census as a dentist born in Camelford in Cornwall. In 1851 he had been living in Market Place, No. 10 according to Slater's 1852 Berks directory. The father of William H W Staveley was George Staveley of Bideford in Devon. There is a village called Fremington six miles from Bideford and Fremington House there is now a care home. THIS NOMINATION WAS FIRST SUBMITTED ON 25 JANUARY 2023

References Architects - Sidney M Gold (1999). A Biographical Dictionary of Architects at Reading. Occupants of the house - Street directories – Reading Borough Council Library digitised copies or University of Leicester digitised copies. Census records – via findmypast.co.uk Staveley family origins - Reading Mercury 18 July 1903 p1. Re William Henry Staveley deceased. (Son of W H W Staveley and his wife Francis née Sims)

Historic Interest:

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

Don't know.

(a) Historic Association (ii) The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest:

Don't know.

Architectural Interest:

(b) Innovation and Virtuosity (i) The building or structure has a noteworthy quality of workmanship and materials:

St Edward's School, no 64, originally known as Ordsall, is dated 1891 and the architect was G W Webb. It was built between Fremington House and Leopold House. The brickwork of the coach house is mainly composed of only two colours, grey and red in bands with a pattern of red and cream brick below the eaves. The pattern is simpler than that of the house. It has a pitched slate roof. The window / door to the hayloft has been replaced with modern glazing in a wooden frame and a UPVC doorway beneath. UPVC windows have been inserted into the west wall. To the east there is a lean to and a large extension to the school buildings along what is now the boundary wall with 62 Tilehurst Road. It is not possible to get a view of the rear of the coach house which is on school grounds and is not visible from the public highway. It is possible that it is used as a school kitchen as there is a sign on the gate directing deliveries to the Western Elms Avenue entrance.

(b) Innovation and Virtuosity (ii) The building or structure is the work of a notable local/national architect/engineer/builder:

WE HAVE TICKED THE YES BOX BECAUSE WITH 'DON'T KNOW' DETAILS CANNOT BE ADDED. POSSIBLE JOSPEH MORRIS LINK. The architect is unknown although Joseph Morris was responsible for some additions in 1860 to Fremington House for Mr Staveley. Leopold House of 1875, originally on the adjacent plot but now demolished, is also ascribed to him.

(b) Innovation and Virtuosity (iii) The building or structure shows innovation in materials, technique, architectural style or engineering:

The banded brickwork make it a very unusual property.

(c) Group Value (i) The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area:

The property has group value together with 62 Tilehurst Road and 24 Southcote Road opposite both of which are locally listed. The building together with the house occupied a prominent corner plot at the junction of Tilehurst Road, Southcote Road and Western Elms Avenue. North from here Western Elms Avenue descends down to Oxford Road. Properties on the southern end of the avenue are older than those further north."

4. Consultations

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

- Wishford P6 Ltd. (landowner);
- Battle ward councillors;
- Baker Street Area Neighbourhood Association;
- Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee;
- Reading Civic Society; and
- West Reading Together.

4.2. Further to the first response from the landowner asking for the nomination file (details) and additional time to comment on the nomination, the following objection has been received on 16/09/2026:

“Thank you for your further response and for providing the additional documents. We have now reviewed the nomination form and appendices in detail, and I would like to formally restate our objection to the proposed local listing of 64 Tilehurst Road.

Having taken advice, our concerns have increased rather than diminished. The CAAC has not engaged with the school or its management team at any stage, and the nomination form itself incorrectly states that the owner is unknown. This lack of consultation is particularly concerning given that St Edward’s Prep is an operational school, a significant business rates payer, and a site with safeguarding requirements.

Turning to the substance of the nomination, the documents provided materially weaken the case for local listing:

- *The CAAC’s own submission confirms extensive modern alterations to the former coach house, including UPVC windows, modern glazing, lean-to structures, and substantial extensions. These changes mean the building no longer retains its original architectural integrity.*
- *The nomination relies heavily on conjecture, with multiple “don’t know” responses and speculative references to possible architects. This does not meet the evidential threshold required under EN1, EN4 or the NPPF.*
- *The justification offered is based largely on “group value” with neighbouring properties. However, No. 62 has been converted into flats with modern external additions, the coach house has been significantly altered, and Leopold House—part of the supposed group—has been demolished. The group value argument is therefore no longer applicable.*
- *The nomination acknowledges that the building is now part of the school’s operational infrastructure and used as pre-prep classrooms. It is not a standalone heritage asset but an adapted functional building essential to the running of a modern school.*
- *The appendices confirm that the rear of the building is not visible from the public realm. As such, its heritage value is not publicly appreciable, which is a key consideration for local listing.*
- *The photographs and maps provided show a building that has been heavily altered over time, with extensions and modern materials that significantly diminish any historic character.*

From a policy perspective, paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to give “great weight” to the need to create, expand or alter schools to ensure sufficient choice of school places. The proposed listing would hinder the school’s ability to operate efficiently, maintain its buildings, and manage costs at a time when budgets are already under pressure due to increased wages, business rates, and the imposition of VAT.

For all these reasons, we object to the proposed listing in the strongest possible terms.”

- 4.3. The response below in support of the nomination has been received from the Reading Civic Society:

"I can see it makes lots of sense as it will link it to the Local Listing No 24 and as the appendix show it sits as part of the built environment in that junction area of Southcote Road, Western Elms and Tilehurst Road.

(...)

I suspect however that the suggestion that this is the kitchen is probably correct. However some of the attached images (check the windows) in Appendix 2) perhaps indicate one floor could be a class room.

However the site is very space constrained and there is not another obvious building for the kitchen. The assembly hall is on the ground floor slightly along from the curved roof so it could make sense.

I was in a function space on the ground floor at the end of the garage (curved roof) some years ago. For our Look Draw Build@Reading Station we delivered this in 2025 to St Edwards school. A couple of the class rooms we were in were on the 1st floor beyond the curved roof.

However mere minor details

We agree it makes sense to include the garage in the Local List."

- 4.4. No response has been received from the Battle Ward councillors.
- 4.5. No response has been received from the Baker Street Area Neighbourhood Association.
- 4.6. No response has been received from the Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee. They made the initial nomination.
- 4.7. No response has been received from West Reading Together.

5. Assessment

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

5.1. Exclusions

- 5.1.1. The Local Plan specifies that a building should not be considered for the Local List where it is already part of a conservation area, scheduled monument or subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest. The former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road is not within any of these existing designations and can therefore be considered against the other criteria.

5.2. General principles

- 5.2.1. The former coach house dates from the early Victorian period and, therefore, needs to be considered against the following general principle:

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

- 5.2.2 The Council's research into the locally listed historic villa at 62 Tilehurst identifies it as dating from about 1853, and expressly describes the coach house/stables as an associated structure. Despite the alterations which are believed to have been made since the opening of St Edward's School in the 1940s and as apparent from the historic map showing the reduction of the original curtilage of No. 62 Tilehurst Road, the original

coach house character of the nominated asset has not been erased. Although it is noted that the windows and doors are largely modern, openings on the side elevations have been altered, bargeboards were replaced, and extensions to the side and rear were erected; given the local listing criteria do not require that the building must be completely unaltered and the historic envelope, scale, roof form, original construction materials and the characteristics of the coach house remain sufficiently legible, it is considered that the nominated asset meets the general principle. As provided within the nomination file and stated by the landowner, the interventions have reduced the building's architectural integrity and partly obscured its originality; however, the surviving fabric represents a substantial part of its historic and architectural character in local context.

5.3. Significance

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

Historic Interest

a. Historical Association

- i. The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event.*
- ii. The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest.*

- 5.3.2. On the nomination file, it is stated that there is a historic interest. However, no strong justification or evidence has been provided. The Council's research also adds no further information about the historic association of the former coach house in the Reading context. As such, the nominated asset does not meet this criterion.

b. Social Importance

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

- 5.3.3. The former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road is not considered to fulfil this criterion.

c. Industrial Importance

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

- 5.3.4. The former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road is not considered to fulfil this criterion.

Architectural Interest

a. Sense of place

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

- 5.3.5. Whilst the nomination file does not find that the sense of place criterion is met by the former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road, it is the Council's view that this is one of the strongest characteristics of the asset. The Coach House is essentially a simplified

ancillary interpretation of the same architectural language of 62 Tilehurst Road. The red/grey polychromatic brick banding is not incidental, and patterned brickwork forms Reading's historic environment, which is highly noticeable in mid- to late-19th-century suburban development. The Council considers it part of Reading's particular sense of place.

b. Innovation and virtuosity

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

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

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

5.3.6. It is considered that the nominated asset only fulfils criterion (i) because the building is not exceptionally elaborate, as one would expect of a service building. However, the deliberate use of contrasting grey and red brick bands, carefully detailed corners and eaves give considerably more architectural treatment than a purely utilitarian stable building. There is a moderate value of quality of workmanship and materials for the former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road.

5.3.7. Although Joseph Morris has been mentioned for the additions to the villa at 62 Tilehurst Road in 1860, the available evidence does not establish that he designed the coach house.

c. Group value

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

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

5.3.8. This is the second strongest characteristic of the former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road. The coach house has both historic functional group value and architectural group value with the locally listed 63 Tilehurst Road. As mentioned before, historically the nominated asset served the villa, and architecturally it employs a simplified version of the villa's design and appearance. The relationship therefore is not only the architecture of the main principal residence but also the way such a substantial suburban villa functioned, with its service building.

5.3.9. The significance survives even though the plots have subsequently been divided and the coach house is now incorporated within St Edward's School. It is acknowledged that the modern additions to the building and the existing timber fence weaken the relationship between the two buildings. But from the public realm, when viewed from Tilehurst Road, the former Coach House and the locally listed villa still can be read together, and their shared appearance is obvious.

5.3.10. For information, when 62 Tilehurst Road was locally listed in 2022 it was agreed that the Coach House and 62 Tilehurst Road formed a group possessing "a unified architectural or historic value to the local area."

5.4. Conclusion of assessment

5.4.1 The former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road to the locally listed villa at 62 Tilehurst Road qualifies for addition to the Local List because it:

- Is not within a conservation area, scheduled monument or area subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest [amend if necessary if a

building within a CA but not identified as of townscape merit, or a building covered by Article 4 is being considered];

- Dates from between 1840 - 1913: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are of clearly-defined significance in the local context and where elements that contribute to its/ their heritage significance remain substantially complete;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its sense of place;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its innovation and virtuosity;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its group value.

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

6. Contribution to strategic aims

6.1. The Council Plan 2025-28 identifies five priorities:

- Promote more equal communities in Reading
- Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
- Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce Reading's carbon footprint
- Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
- Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future

6.2. Local listing of buildings and structures helps to achieve the Healthy Environment theme of the Corporate Plan, by helping to retain those buildings that contribute towards making Reading a more attractive place to live and connect Reading's residents to the town's past.

7. Environmental and climate implications

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

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

8. Community engagement

8.1. Details of the consultation carried out are set out in section 4 of this report. The scope of consultation to be carried out on proposals for addition to the Local List was part of the local listing process agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 (Minute 56 refers).

9. Equality impact assessment

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

10. Health implications

10.1 No health implications have been identified of the recommended decision.

11. Other relevant considerations

11.1 None of this report.

12. Legal implications

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

13. Financial implications

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

14. Timetable for implementation

14.1. Not applicable.

15. Background papers

15.1. There are none.

Appendices

- 1. Location map**
- 2. Relevant photos and illustrations submitted in the nomination**
- 3. Proposed local list text**

Appendix 1: Location map



64 Tilehurst Road

Nominated for addition to the Local List

Scale 1: 1250



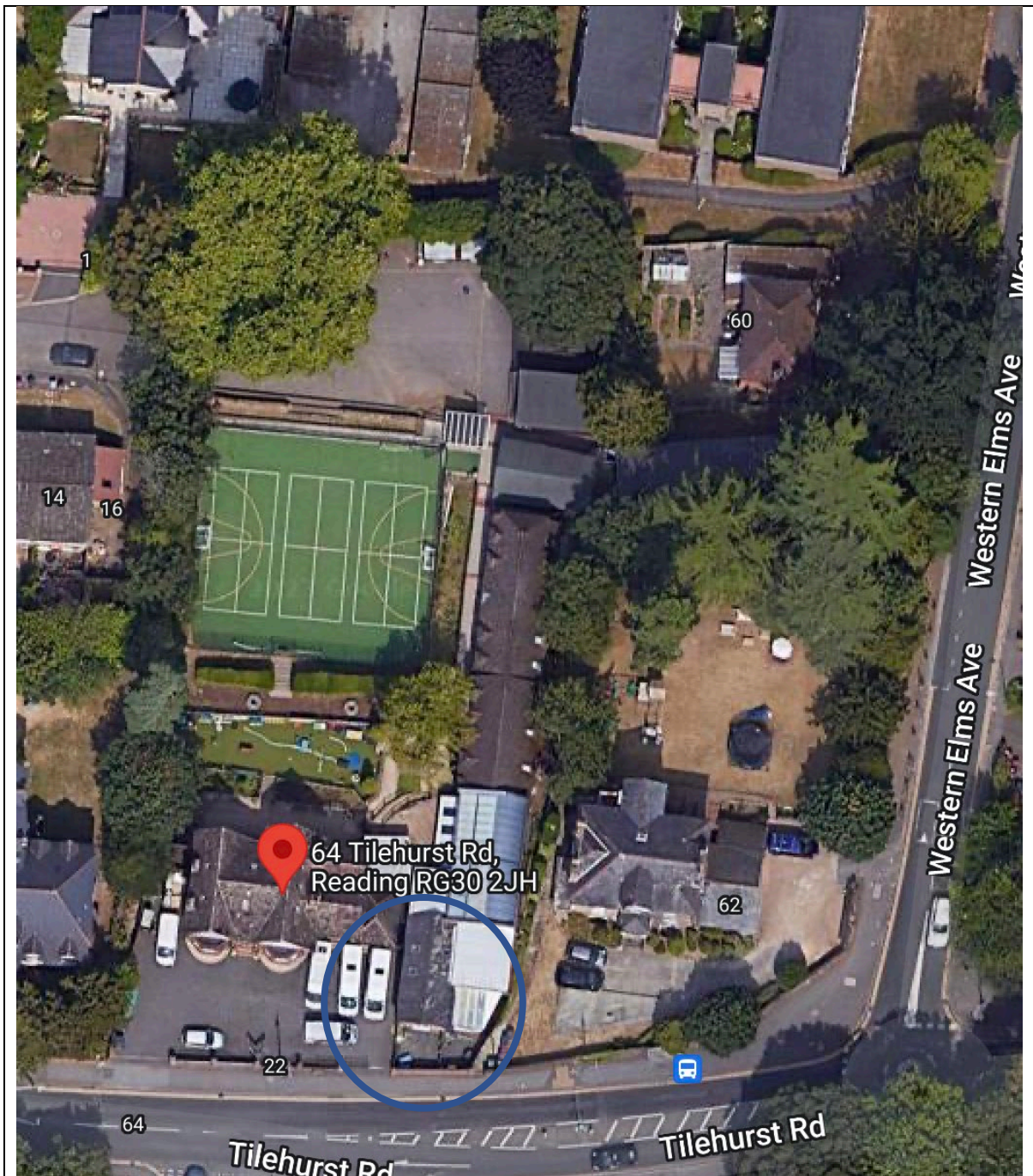
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Appendix 1

This is a detailed historical map of a residential area in London. The map shows a grid of streets and numerous buildings. A blue circle highlights a specific building labeled 'Freemason's Hall'. Other labeled buildings include 'Leopold House', 'Denmark House', 'Tinsbury House', and 'Gordon Lodge'. A 'Recreation Ground' is also visible. The map includes various annotations such as 'B.M. 196.0', 'B.M. 211.0', and '174.1'. The streets are labeled with names like 'TILBURY' and 'SUMMERFIELD'. The map is oriented with North at the top.

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Aerial view of 62 Tilehurst Road from Google Earth. Coach house circled to the west of the house.

Illustrations of 64 (& 62) Tilehurst Road



64 Tilehurst Road – stable/coach house – originally part of No 62. From the west.



Coach house from the street in front of 62 Tilehurst Road. Note the extension between the building and the boundary, there are also extensions to the rear.



Coach house with No 62 in the background. From the south



L to R 64 to 62 Tilehurst Road. From the south.



Junction of Southcote Road and Tilehurst Road with 64 – 62 Tilehurst Road on the left and locally listed 24 Southcote Road on the right. From the south.



24 Southcote Road (1865) in December 2022 following refurbishment from the west.

Appendix 3: Proposed local list text

Mid-19th century former coach house, historically associated with Fermington House, 62 Tilehurst Road, a locally listed villa. The building is of red and grey polychromatic brickwork, arranged in distinctive horizontal bands with red brick dressings and decorative brick detailing beneath the eaves. It has a one-and-a-half-storey under pitched roof of slate with a prominent gable to the front, occupying a tall first-floor opening reflecting its original use. Although later alterations include replacement windows and doors and modern extensions, the historic form, scale and substantial areas of characteristic masonry remain legible.

The building is of local architectural and historic interest as a surviving ancillary building associated with Fermington House. Its brickwork provides a strong visual and architectural relationship with the principal house and is characteristic of Reading's 19th-century suburban style. The former Coach House at 64 Tilehurst Road and Fremington House at 62 Tilehurst Road have particular group value, illustrating the historic development and functioning of the original villa property.

Planning Applications Committee

07 October 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	LOCAL LISTING REPORT – The TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Burcu Can Cetin, Conservation Officer
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Ward	Katesgrove
Address	89 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2QU
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: To agree that the TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street not be added to the List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. To report on a proposal to add the TGWU (Transport and General Worker's Union) Signage on 89 Southampton Street to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures. It is considered that the nominated signage does not meet the criteria for locally listed buildings and structures as defined under Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, 2019.

2. Policy context

- 2.1. Reading Borough Council maintains a List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures ('the Local List'). Its purpose is to recognise the buildings and structures which do not meet the criteria for national listing, but are nonetheless significant to the heritage of the local area. It was agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 that decisions on additions to the Local List should be made at PAC.
- 2.2. The criteria for considering additions to the Local List are set out in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019).

3. The proposal

- 3.1. A nomination was received on 09/07/2026 to add the TGWU Signage at 89 Southampton Street to the Local List. Consultations have been carried out in accordance with the agreed process, and this report sets out the recommended action.
- 3.2. The signage of the offices for Transport & General Workers Union, dated 1989/1990, is located on the southern flank wall of the modern building.



The nominated TGWU Signage at 89 Southampton Street (image is from Google Street View)

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

3.4. **Nomination details:**

"In 1989 the Transport & General Workers Union moved from premises on 36 King's Road where it had been since the 1954 to new premises on the ground and first floors of 89 Southampton Street. The opening and unveiling of a plaque took place in February 1990 by Mr Ron Todd general secretary 1985-1992 and Mayor, Councillor Maureen Lockey. The plaque was probably inside the building (Evening Post 7 February 1990). The T G W U lettering on the side of the building and a similar sign on the front which was illuminated were originally allowed by advertising consent 890102 in May 1989. Although the description of the application is for two illuminated signs, the plans show only one to be illuminated. The plans also show the layout of the office accommodation on two floors. At some point the TGWU lettering on the front was replaced by a T & G sign and a T & G sign added to the side of the building. In 2007 the TGWU merged with Amicus to form Unite. The T & G sign on the front of the building was removed sometime between September 2012 and July 2014 but the larger sign on the side and TGWU lettering remains and is worthy of protection in situ as a record of Reading's trade union history. The building is now flats. The signage is a heritage asset as defined by Planning Practice Guidance because of its historic interest as it '...provide[s] meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity'. [ref Historic England Advice Note No 7 – Local Heritage Listing] Although Reading does not have any features such as signage on a building that have been locally listed there are precedents in other authorities: • An early twentieth century clock on the wall of 27 Silver Street in Enfield • Two ghost signs in Hackney: Blooms Piano sign in Shoreditch and the Fountain Pen sign on Church Street, Stoke Newington Although this local listing nomination is for the signage not the building in itself, we have attempted to respond to all relevant questions."

"THIS NOMINATION WAS FIRST SUBMITTED ON 17 JULY 2023 Many of the sites associated with the history of Reading's trade union movement have all but disappeared. Some other examples of those that survive and those that have been lost below. They may be worthy of local listing and/or a 'blue plaque'. This list is not

exhaustive. • The building occupied (1914-1924) by the Trade Union Club at 40 Oxford Road still exists. • 36 King's Road the offices of the TGWU from 28 June 1954 (Reading Standard 25 June 1954) is one of the buildings that makes up the House of Flavours. • The Trade Union Club at the eastern end of Minster Street, occupied since 1924, was demolished in the 1980s. The club moved to Chatham Street in 1985 but closed in 1995. (<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/education/educational-images/trades-union-club-reading-berkshire-2863>) Some buildings are protected as they are listed • In early 1943 the TGWU had a temporary office on the top floor the W I Palmer Memorial Building on West Street which is a listed building. (Reading Standard 5 March 1943)”

Historic interest details:

“The signage is one of the few remaining physical remnants of Reading’s Trade Union history. The TGWU (1922-2007) was an important union in Reading. Its members were employed in Reading businesses such as transport companies and the Courage Brewery. We have not established when and by whom the logo was designed. The signage has a rarity value in situ as the union has now merged to form Unite and new signage is in use on premises. The TGWU is mentioned in Reading press in 1922, soon after its formation, in relation to fair pay to carmen (carters and drivers). There was a strike by employees of C & G Ayres in February 1922 over a reduction in carmen’s pay (Reading Standard 11 February 1922). The need for fair pay to carmen of haulage contractors employed by the Council was discussed at a Reading Town Council meeting on Tuesday 6 February 1922. This was based on a letter to the Town Clerk from the district organiser of the TGWU and a statement from the Borough Surveyor on wages paid (Reading Standard 10 February 1922). For a history of the early Trade Union Movement in Reading to 1945 please see: Labour in Biscuit Town. The growth of a social movement to 1945. Keith Jerrome 2001 MA thesis A fight for life and liberty. A History of Reading Trades Council. Keith Jerrome 1981 Reading Museum Blog ‘The Fight for Life and Liberty’: <https://www.readingmuseum.org.uk/blog/fight-for-life-and-liberty> A history of the Transport and General Workers Union - <https://www.unitetheunion.org/who-we-are/history/the-history-of-the-tg/> NB: At this stage we have not been able to contact anyone with direct knowledge of the TGWU at this time.”

“The building was occupied for around 20 years as the offices of the Transport & General Workers Union in Reading and therefore played an influential role in the life of Reading’s trade union community and industrial and business life.”

Architectural interest details:

“89 Southampton Street is one of a complex of 3 buildings that were erected in the c.1980s to replace a short row of shops between the Co-op funeral services building and the Customs & Excise offices. The details on the building reflect the Georgian architecture of the nearby listed buildings at 92-96 Southampton Street.”

4. Consultations

4.1. The following were consulted on the proposed addition to the Local List:

- Katesgrove ward councillors;
- Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee;
- Reading Civic Society; and
- Katesgrove Community Association

4.2. No responses were received.

5. Assessment

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

5.1. Exclusions

- 5.1.1 The Local Plan specifies that a building should not be considered for the Local List where it is already part of a conservation area, scheduled monument or subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest. The TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street is not within any of these existing designations and can therefore be considered against the other criteria.

5.2. General principles

- 5.2.1 The TGWU signage on 89 Southampton Street dates from 1989/1990 and therefore needs to be considered against the following general principle:

d. post-1939: Any building, structure or group of buildings where the elements that contribute to its/ their exceptional heritage significance in the local context are wholly complete and unaffected by inappropriate changes.

- 5.2.2 The nominated signage is considered not to demonstrate exceptional heritage significance, as they do not appear to be a unique design example of 1990s signage. The emblem is a reproduction of TGWU's standard corporate identity, which is also used on TGWU buildings, as shown below.



TGWU Bristol Office, 2007 (Left) and TGWU Central Office Transport House in London, 2005 (Right) (from [Transport and General Workers' Union - Wikipedia](#))

The nominated signage is considered not to demonstrate exceptional heritage significance. The building at 89 Southampton Street is modern and was neither designed nor originally constructed for the TGWU; therefore, the signage lacks a strong relationship with its original architectural and functional context. As a post-1939 building or structure, it does not appear to possess the exceptional significance required by the Council's Local List selection criteria. In addition, the association of signage is incidental to a period of occupancy in this building rather than integral to the building's architecture or historic identity.

5.3. Significance

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

Historic Interest

a. Historical Association

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

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

- 5.3.2 The TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street is not considered to fulfil this criterion. Although the use of the ground floor of the building by TGWU creates an association, this is not 'prolonged and direct', and it is considered that the union's occupation of 20-25 years alone does not establish this. From the nomination file, it is noted that the building at 36 King's Road was used by the TGWU between 1954 and 1989, and the historic photograph of that time shows that the nominated signage cannot be directly associated with that building.



King's Road, Reading, c. 1983. The south side. No. 36 (office of the Transport and General Workers' Union, with "T. & G. W. U." on the fascia, and part of No. 34 (Dunster and Morton, estate agents). 1980-1989: photograph by Terry Allsop (from the Reading Library's Online Archive)

b. Social Importance

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

- 5.3.3 The TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street is not considered to fulfil this criterion. There is not sufficient evidence submitted or found that this particular signage or building at 89 Southampton Street played an influential role in the life of the Reading community or acted as an important social or organisational focal point. The nominated signage expresses Reading's late twentieth-century social and labour history as an isolated piece of former corporate branding. The TGWU's later dissolution does not, by itself, make this signage socially important.

c. Industrial Importance

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

- 5.3.4 The TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street is not considered to fulfil this criterion.

Architectural Interest

a. Sense of place

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

- 5.3.5 The TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street is not considered to fulfil this criterion. The building hosting the TGWU signage is modern and residential, and the standard corporate signage is not evidently representative of a style characteristic of Reading.

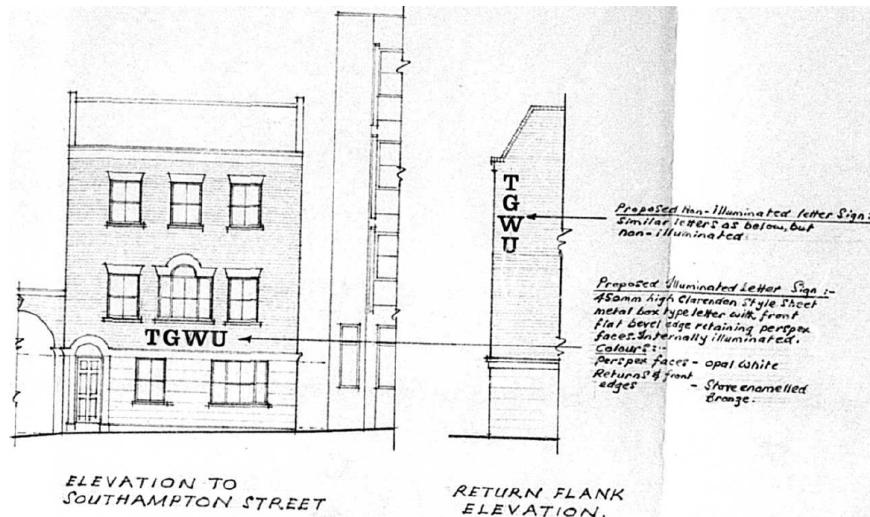
b. Innovation and virtuosity

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

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

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

- 5.3.6 The TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street is not considered to fulfil this criterion. It is not demonstrated that the nominated signage is bespoke or a unique design. No notable designer, architect or maker has been identified. From the planning history, it is noted that the lettering on the side elevation of the building was consented on 18 May 1989. However, there is no information about the design/designer of the nominated signage.



Drawings from the consented signage in 1989, ref. PL/89/0102 (89/00513/ADV)

c. Group value

- i. The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.
- ii. The buildings/structures are an example of deliberate town planning from before 1947.

5.3.7 The TGWU Signage on 89 Southampton Street is not considered to fulfil this criterion. Whilst in the nomination file it is stated that “*The details on the building reflect the Georgian architecture of the nearby listed buildings at 92-96 Southampton Street.*”, the design of the subject modern building is rather pastiche in appearance and without the architectural language of the 1980s. It appears that it was influenced by the Grade II listed 92-96 Southampton Street; however, this does not give the building a group value. The listed building dates from 1813-1814 and was designed by a known architect, Richard Billing. Additionally, the two buildings have no strong visual relationship. The building at 89 Southampton Street, due to its scale, height and appearance, does not create a contradictory element on the street. It does not share the same period, characteristics and heritage value as the listed terrace. Therefore, it is not agreed that the nominated asset forms a group which, as a whole, has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.



View of the nominated signage on 89 Southampton Street, the listed building at Nos 92-96 is circled (from Google Street View, September 2024)

5.4. Conclusion of assessment

5.4.1 The TGWU signage on 89 Southampton Street does not qualify for addition to the Local List because it:

- Dates from after 1939 and the elements that contribute to its exceptional heritage significance in the local context are not wholly complete and are affected by inappropriate changes, because it is not considered to demonstrate exceptional heritage significance;
- Does not contribute to the heritage of the Borough in terms of any of the defined criteria in the Local Plan.

5.4.2 The nominated signage is considered neither a particular design to Reading nor specifically a 1990s design, as it appears to have considerably older origins within the TGWU's visual identity. While the scale of the signage may be less common, similar signage is noted in other cities. The building where the signage is located is architecturally ordinary, and given TGWU's historic context in Reading, the meaningful union-related use or connection to an important local or labour event is not considered sufficient to merit local listing. Although the signage provides evidence of TGWU's presence in Reading, its relationship to the physical, social, and architectural aspects of Reading's historic environment is limited.

6. Contribution to strategic aims

6.1. The Council Plan 2025-28 identifies five priorities:

- Promote more equal communities in Reading
- Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
- Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce Reading's carbon footprint
- Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
- Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future

6.2. Local listing of buildings and structures helps to secure Reading's cultural success and deliver a healthy environment, by helping to retain those buildings that contribute towards making Reading a more attractive place to live and connect Reading's residents to the town's past.

7. Environmental and climate implications

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

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

8. Community engagement

8.1. Details of the consultation carried out are set out in section 4 of this report. The scope of consultation to be carried out on proposals for addition to the Local List was part of the local listing process agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 (Minute 56 refers).

9. Equality impact assessment

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

10. Health implications

- 10.1 No health implications have been identified of the recommended decision.

11. Other relevant considerations

- 11.1 None of this report.

12. Legal implications

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

13. Financial implications

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

14. Timetable for implementation

- 14.1 Not applicable.

15. Background papers

- 15.1 There are none.

Appendices

1. Location map
2. Relevant photos and illustrations submitted in the nomination

Appendix 1: Location plan



Appendix 2: Relevant photos and illustrations submitted in the nomination as Appendix

APPENDIX 1

Images for Local Listing Nomination for TGWU signage at 89 Southampton Street

<i>Description</i>	<i>Image</i>
89 Southampton Street – south side today (Evelyn Williams)	
89 Southampton Street - September 2012 (Google Earth)	

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Planning Applications Committee

07 October 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	PL/26/0958/FUL
Site Address:	Abattoirs Road, RG1 7BL
Proposed Development	Extension of the temporary planning permission, as approved under PL/21/1010, for the now constructed and fully operational 40 no. sleeping units and 3 no. support units for rough sleepers until 31st March 2028. (amended)
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Alison Amoah - Principal Planning Officer
Deadline:	Original target expiry of 9 th October 2026, with an agreed extension of time to 23 rd October 2026.
Recommendation	GRANT Full Planning Permission.
Conditions	To include: 1. Temporary Time Limit– All occupiers to vacate the site by 1st September 2027. All buildings removed and the site restored to its former condition by 31st March 2028. 2. Approved Plans 3. Landscaping – retained 4. Boundary Treatment – retained 5. External Lighting – retained 6. Vehicle Parking – retained 7. Cycle Parking – retained 8. Vehicle Access – retained 9. Refuse and Recycling – retained 10. Secure Access system and CCTV – retained 11. Litter Management Strategy – compliance 12. Management and Decommissioning Plan to be submitted for approval within one month of the date of

	permission. To include a timetable for implementation. Compliance at all times thereafter.
Informatives	To include: 1. Terms and Conditions 2. Community Infrastructure Levy 3. Network Rail Advice 4. Positive and Proactive

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposal is to retain the existing temporary rough sleeper pods and support services, which were granted permission in September 2021 (subject to a condition requiring their removal by 17 September 2026), and to grant permission until the end of March 2028. It is proposed that all occupiers would vacate the site by September 2027 with the buildings removed and the site restored by March 2028.
- 1.2 This new permission is sought to allow for a managed and coordinated cessation of the use, including the relocation of residents into more permanent accommodation and the preparation of the site for future redevelopment.
- 1.3 Following the publication of the original committee report objections were received from neighbouring residents setting out several significant anti-social, criminal and security issues with the operation of the site. The application was deferred from the September 9th 2026 Planning Applications Committee in order that the issues raised could be investigated and assessed.
- 1.4 It is acknowledged that there have been a number of anti-social behaviour and criminal incidents, which have created a significant level of harm to residential amenity over the period of the site's operation. There is evidence that this has reduced more recently, attributed in part to the measures put in place which sought to address incidents that had occurred, but also due to a reduced number of occupants on site. It is acknowledged that the site should have been closed by the date set in the current permission (17 September this year). This has not been done. Whilst regrettable, it is considered that the best practical outcome in the circumstances is to grant permission for a further period to ensure that the site is closed down in a structured, managed way in Planning terms.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The site description and context are as set out in the original committee report appended at Appendix 1.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal remains as a scheme to retain the temporary site, known as Caversham Road Pods, originally granted temporary permission for 5 years from September 2021 (ref: PL/21/1010). The proposed extended period would be up until the end of March 2028, with Pods vacated by September 2027, with the remaining period for the clearance of the site.
- 3.2 The extra temporary period sought is for the formal legal steps to end tenancies of those people currently living in the scheme, who will also be supported to move into alternative accommodation as the current scheme is decommissioned.
- 3.3 This is a full planning application, which is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee for determination, as the applicant is the Council's Housing Service (Regulation 3). The main report prepared for September 2026 Committee is appended at Appendix 1 and the update report at Appendix 2.
- 3.4 Submitted Plans and Documentation:
These are as listed in the main report at Appendix 1.
- 3.5 Community Infrastructure Levy: As set out in the main report at Appendix 1.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 This is as set out in the main report at Appendix 1.

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 In addition to the consultations recorded within section 5 of the main report at Appendix 1, further consultation was undertaken with Thames Valley Police (TVP) with respect to the matters raised within the two objections from residents, received within the relevant consultation period, but after the main September committee report had been prepared. The TVP comments and the objections are set out below.

Non-Statutory

- 5.2 Thames Valley Policy (TVP) – There is no objection to a phased closure and managed wind down of the Pods subject to improved transparency and communication from the relevant RBC teams regarding the future of the site, alongside delivery of the previously agreed environmental improvements and continued partnership working to address crime and Anti-Social Behaviour. The approval of a proposed Management and Decommissioning Plan is welcomed.
- 5.3 TVP recognise that an immediate closure and displacement of residents would risk simply displacing residents and the associated vulnerabilities elsewhere and

that it is, therefore, important that the closure is managed carefully, with appropriate accommodation, provision and support in place for residents as they transition away from the Pods, in the interests of the individuals concerned, partner agencies or the wider community.

- 5.4 TVP advise that they have undertaken considerable work to reduce offending within the Pods and offending by residents of the Pods impacting neighbouring communities. In addition, following a series of serious violent offences at the Pods last year, TVP undertook their own Environmental Visual Audit and identified necessary improvements to the site to improve natural surveillance and lines of sight, and requested the installation of additional CCTV. TVP was also asked to increase patrols and visits to the site and undertake more regular engagement with staff, which they supported and implemented.

Neighbour Consultation

- 5.5 As advised in para 5.7 of the September 2026 report, the consultation period expired on 8th September 2026 and this resulted in two objections, which were received following the preparation of the committee report and, therefore, the item was deferred to allow the objections to be reviewed and assessed. The following is a summary of the objections from residents within the adjacent Malcolm Place. The full objections are included at Appendix 3:

- Repeated trespass onto private property to access the pods and unauthorised access to residential areas with serious incidents around the shared boundary.
- Individuals entering or remaining within communal areas of our building without permission
- Threatening and intimidating behaviour towards residents
- Theft and security problems
- Drug use
- Regular noise and disturbance, including late at night, overnight and during the early hours
- Litter, waste (including drug paraphernalia) and general anti-social behaviour around the site.
- The cumulative impact on residential amenity, safety and security
- Pods were originally introduced as a temporary response during the Covid-19 pandemic. After approximately five years of operation, the proposal to extend the use until 2028 risks turning what was intended to be a temporary arrangement into a long-term or semi-permanent use, despite the ongoing impacts experienced by neighbouring residents
- Is the continued use of the site compatible with the reasonable expectations of neighbouring residents?
- Are there alternative accommodation solutions available that would have less impact on established residential communities?

- Is a further extension justified given the significant period for which the temporary permission has already been in place and appears inconsistent with the temporary nature and planned closure of the site?

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 6.1 In addition to the policy and guidance set out in Section 6 of the main report, and in light of the matters raised through the submitted objections, the assessment has also been undertaken against the following relevant policies related to amenity considerations and crime prevention.

National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026).

Policy P3: Living Conditions and Pollution

Policy P5: Maintaining Public Safety and Security

Policy H05: Meeting the Needs of Different Groups

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards)

Housing Needs of Different Groups

7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- i) Residential Amenity Impacts**
- ii) Approach to Site Decommissioning**

i) Residential Amenity Impacts

- 7.1 As set out under the consultation section above several significant amenity concerns have been raised leading to objection from local residents.
- 7.2 It is acknowledged, and evident from the objections and information gathered through subsequent liaison by the Planning Officer with colleagues within Rough Sleeping, Housing and Estates Management, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Launchpad and TVP, that there have been a number of site management, significant antisocial behaviour (ASB), security, litter and community issues, which have occurred within and adjacent to the site during its operational period to date including:
- ASB concerns involving individual residents.
 - Unauthorised access to the site and neighbouring areas.
 - Litter accumulation in and around the site.
 - Security concerns relating to boundary areas and vacant pods.
 - Concerns regarding visitors and movement in and around the Pods.
 - Concerns relating to possible drug dealing at the site.

- 7.3 It is clear that these incidents have had a significant detrimental impact on the adjacent residents and presumably the residents of the pods.
- 7.4 Although it cannot be confirmed that all incidents or crime of ASB recorded within the immediate area originated from residents of the site, the evidence demonstrates that a number of incidents have been directly or indirectly associated with the operation of the Pods, including incidents involving residents, visitors and associates. These incidents are relevant to the assessment of the amenity impacts of the use.
- 7.5 The following sets out the issues raised, how these have been addressed and proposed further measures.

Trespass and Site Security

- 7.6 In terms of issues with trespass onto private property it is acknowledged that users of the site exploited shortcomings in the original perimeter and security infrastructure. In response the applicant has confirmed that such issues have been actively managed through regular multi-agency partnership working between Thames Valley Police, RBC Community Safety, RBC Housing and Estates Management, RBC Housing Property Services and Launchpad Reading where there has been the review of:
- Perimeter security;
 - Visitor management;
 - Routes of unauthorised access into the Pods site; and
 - Measures required to prevent individuals bypassing the authorised site entrance;
- 7.7 The applicant advises that strategic multi-agency meetings held, at least every three months, have focused on these issues, alongside additional monthly operational meetings involving Reading Borough Council Housing and Estates and Housing Needs Teams, and Launchpad Reading to coordinate actions, monitor risks, and implement agreed security improvements. There are Council records and meeting minutes evidencing that these concerns have been discussed and reviewed.
- 7.8 The applicant advises that this has, as a result of the issues raised, resulted in a number of measures being implemented as follows:
- Installation of additional perimeter fencing designed to prevent access into the Pods site from adjoining land;
 - Raising of security fencing in areas identified as vulnerable to unauthorised entry;
 - Application of anti-climb paint to deter scaling of boundary structures;

- Installation of additional lighting and floodlighting to deter unauthorised movement around boundary areas and to improve surveillance;
- Review and enhancement of CCTV coverage to monitor perimeter areas and identify recurring access routes;
- Approval of mobile CCTV deployment to improve coverage of identified blind spots;
- Automatic CCTV footage retrieval processes where incidents require investigation, allow quick access to TVP.
- Removal of fob access from the main entrance. Individuals wishing to access the site must now use the intercom/buzzer system, improving control of visitors.
- Replacement locks fitted to individual pods to prevent access to vacant units.
- Investigation and monitoring of known access points and perimeter vulnerabilities;
- Completion of anti-climb measures to the flat roof area that had been identified as a potential means of gaining access to the site;
- Clearance of vegetation to improve natural surveillance and CCTV coverage.
- Clearance of void spaces between the Pods site and neighbouring premises to improve security.
- Ongoing review of service gate security, perimeter meshing and alleyway surveillance arrangements; and
- Ad hoc overnight security deployed to provide additional support to 24/7 site staff during periods of elevated risk, helping to maintain site safety, manage challenging behaviour, and respond to incidents effectively.
- Sharing of incident information by Launchpad with Housing Management.

7.9 Officers recommend that these measures are retained and that relevant maintenance is continued, and any additional measures as required, are implemented in accordance with the recommended Management and Decommissioning Plan to include an agreed implementation timetable.

7.10 The measures set out above are relatively recent. It is not yet clear that they have been effective in resolving the Police or neighbour concerns. However, since the intention is to close the site, the report recommendation focuses on this and it is considered that any additional measures, over and above those set out above, should be given relatively little weight in this Planning decision. The focus is closure of the site in the most appropriate and managed way given the circumstances.

Anti-Social Behaviour and Noise Disturbance

7.11 Regarding reports of threatening, intimidating and anti-social behaviour, this has involved both residents of the site and their visitors and associates of residents accessing or congregating around the site.

- 7.12 The Pods operate as 24-hour staffed accommodation, with support, risk management and behavioural oversight provided by Launchpad Reading. The applicant advises that residents are required to comply with tenancy conditions and house rules, including expectations relating to behaviour, anti-social conduct and visitor management and actions that may be taken where the standards are not met. There are also tenancy conditions setting out expectations regarding behaviour, visitor management, community safety, property use, and engagement with support services. Nevertheless, it is apparent that actual behaviour on site has not always met these conditions or expectations and that the Police have been required on occasion to step in to resolve incidents and focus additional resources to discourage anti-social or criminal behaviour.
- 7.13 Various records exist relating to site operation and management, including:
- Incident logs maintained by Launchpad
 - Housing Management records relating to incidents and complaints received
 - ASB monitoring and tracking records
 - Visitor logs
 - Maintenance of an incident and action tracker
 - Records of measures undertaken
 - Information shared with and received from Thames Valley Police
- 7.14 The applicant advises that a number of partners have been involved with managing issues arising from the site including Launchpad, RBC Housing, the RBC Rough Sleeping Initiatives Team, TVP, Probation Services, RBC Highways, RBC Community Safety and other Council services where appropriate. Measures put in place have included:
- Formal ASB investigations, support interventions and warnings through to the use of eviction action where necessary, and where appropriate, possession proceedings;
 - Enhanced liaison with TVP resulting in a Single Point of Contact Officer (SPOC) and better relations with Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) with regular intelligence provided to TVP;
 - Increased monitoring and partnership working with Probation in specific cases where additional support and oversight were required.
 - Regular intel reports from Launchpad to the Police re dealing and other suspected illegal activity.
 - Provision of additional security staff for a period following an incident outside of the site but in the vicinity; More targeted work with Probation Services to address behaviour concerns involving specific individuals.
 - Formal recording of incidents on Launchpad's ASM monitoring log a live ASB tracking system.
- 7.15 TVP has confirmed that following several incidents they have increased patrol visits and visits to the site. TVP confirm that there has been a reduction in

reported drug-dealing activity at the Pods as well as fewer complaints of ASB in recent weeks. This is a recent change, and it is not possible to confirm that this is a consistent trend currently.

- 7.16 The applicant confirms that there has been a reduction in the number of residents on the site in recent months from 40 to 27, with further planned move-ons continuing.
- 7.17 The applicant advises that vacant pods will be locked and secured as occupancy further reduces during the site decommissioning process. This would be a matter to be addressed in the Management and Decommissioning Plan to be secured by condition.

Litter

- 7.18 Although the applicant has advised that there is regular clearance of rubbish and weekly litter picking organised through RBC Housing and Estates Management within and surrounding the site, it is evident from both the neighbour objection and RBC Environmental Protection as internal consultee, that this remains a concern. A condition requiring submission and approval of, and adherence to a litter management strategy, is recommended to cover the remaining time applied for, although it would appear that this will not be fully resolved until the site has been closed.

Further Measures Proposed

- 7.19 The only way a positive recommendation can be achieved for the current proposal is for a suitable Management and Decommissioning Plan for the closure of the site to be submitted for approval and implemented. This would need to set some clear time-bound milestones and define clear roles, responsibilities and reporting frameworks. TVP welcome this approach and it is, therefore, recommended that such a framework includes the following key sections:
- Introduction
 - Aims and Objectives
 - Roles and Responsibilities
 - Support During Decommission – Staff ratios, security provisions, management oversight,
 - Governance and Reporting – including engagement with Thames Valley Police.
 - Timeframe for Decommissioning – to include formal service of Notice to Quit to residents – by end of 2026, for residents not already under notice; Notice served on the support provider (Launchpad) by December 2026; All occupiers to vacate the site by 31st August 2027; Physical removal of the Pods and site restoration by 31st March 2028.
 - Move-on Pathways
 - Support and Wraparound Services
 - Health and Safety

- Site management and Incident Management
- Data Sharing and Monitoring

7.20 The applicant advises that no new referrals are being accepted, move-on planning is underway, and the site is being actively decommissioned with a planned closure date of 31 August 2027. The applicant states that the proposed time extension represents the minimum period necessary to enable the approved decommissioning programme to be completed in a safe, lawful and managed manner. Work has commenced on the Management and Decommissioning Plan document. If an acceptable version is available by the time of the Committee meeting this will be reported in an Update. If not, the document will be secured by condition, requiring submission for approval within a month of permission being granted as set out in the recommendation above.

ii) **Approach to Site Decommissioning**

7.21 The relevant policy framework support for the principle of use was set out in Section 7 (i) of the main report from September Planning Applications Committee. However, the amenity concerns raised above came to light following the publication of the September committee report. It therefore needs to be demonstrated that the new temporary permission, to enable the planned wind down and closure of the site, would not lead to significant ongoing harm to the amenity of surrounding residents. This needs to be balanced against the ongoing provision of a site providing accommodation for vulnerable people, which is supported by NPPF Policy H05 and RBLP Policy H6.

7.22 The resident objections raise relevant concerns regarding whether the continued use to the end of March 2028 is justified, whether its use is compatible with the expectations of neighbouring residents, and whether there are alternative solutions with less impact on established residential communities.

7.23 Notwithstanding the improvements already implemented and any further measures as required, Officers recognise the very real and understandable concerns of neighbouring residents regarding any further extension of the temporary permission. Given the significant amenity impacts experienced during the operation of the pods, substantial justification is required for allowing the use to continue, even if for a further temporary period. In this case such justification must be presented in the context that the extension is sought to facilitate the managed closure of the site rather than its continued operation on a longer-term basis.

7.24 It is acknowledged that there have been a range of amenity, safety and security issues and that there have been operational challenges during the lifetime of the Pods. The Council's own review of the service identified limitations and significant operational challenges associated with the existing model with larger numbers of

occupiers in one location and identified the benefits of smaller more diverse approaches. These informed the recommendation approved by Policy Committee on 13 July 2026 that the Pods should be decommissioned, aligned with the Council's recently adopted Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and associated action plan. The purpose of the current application is to provide sufficient time to implement the transition set out within that Strategy rather than to continue to use the site indefinitely.

- 7.25 The Council (in its role as Local Housing Authority and Social Services Authority) has statutory responsibilities towards vulnerable residents experiencing homelessness and the proposed extension of the temporary permission is to enable existing residents to be supported into alternative accommodation and allow for a staged and planned closure process rather than an unmanaged and accelerated cessation of the accommodation. The Council also has a responsibility to comply with the terms of the planning permission and to act responsibly in that regard. The failure to comply with Condition 1 of permission 211010 is therefore regrettable.
- 7.26 Immediate closure would create significant risks for residents including: increased chances of rough sleeping; safeguarding concerns; loss of continuity of support; create legal and tenancy management difficulties; undermine planned move-on arrangements for residents with disabilities and complex needs; and produce risks to vulnerable women and couples. A managed decommissioning approach would reduce these risks and it also enables the Council to fulfil its housing management responsibilities, adhere to tenancy rights and provide residents with a reasonable opportunity to engage with move-on planning and alternative accommodation options. Active decommissioning includes that no further referrals are being accepted; a dedicated move-on programme is underway with fortnightly meetings since July with all key stakeholders present; and individual move-on plans being developed by Launchpad in conjunction with the Council's Commissioners and Homelessness Prevention Teams.
- 7.27 The applicant advises that an abrupt cessation is not possible due to the legal processes involved beyond the planning process. This is noted and whilst it is arguable that these processes should have begun sooner to ensure compliance with the planning permission, it is apparent that this is now not possible in terms of actual move-ons for other legal reasons. This does not constrain the Local Planning Authority who may still decide not to grant permission. However, it is considered desirable that the closure remains under planning control with suitable conditions imposed whilst the legal process is followed, therefore a practical solution to a managed closure is considered necessary.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2 The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that a managed reduction in the occupancy as described in this report would minimize the likelihood of harm to residents with protected characteristics. The time-limited continued supply of this specialist accommodation is in direct response to the need to accommodate marginalised groups in the Borough.

9. HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The proposal involves a time limited ongoing temporary use of modular housing units (pods) for temporary accommodation for those who have transitioned out of rough sleeping. This would continue to provide stable self-contained shelter with appropriate sanitation, heating and support services including healthcare, which aligns with National Policy, which focusses on reducing health inequalities and ensuring vulnerable groups have access to safe, inclusive housing and social infrastructure and supports the public health duty to prevent rough sleeping.
- 9.2 In respect of neighbouring residents, the continued operation of the site carries the potential for further impacts on their health through anxiety and fear of crime, related to anti-social behaviour, noise, security concerns, unauthorised access and other disturbance. However, a range of measures have been implemented during the course of the site's operation including improved lighting, enhanced CCTV coverage and surveillance, and safety controls, seeking to improve amenity/health impacts.
- 9.3 An abrupt or unmanaged closure could result in housing instability, disruption to existing support arrangements, increased safeguarding risks and, for some individuals, a risk of returning to rough sleeping. A managed decommissioning process would enable existing residents to continue receiving support while appropriate alternative accommodation and move-on arrangements are progressed.

- 9.4 These considerations support a time-limited and carefully managed decommissioning process, subject to appropriate measures to minimise the impacts on neighbouring residents through the remaining period of operation, which is recommended as part of an Management and Decommissioning Plan, currently in preparation.

10 CONCLUSION & PLANNING BALANCE

- 10.1 The concerns raised by neighbouring residents are substantial and are afforded significant weight in the planning balance. The evidence available, including the advice of Thames Valley Police, demonstrates that the operation of the site has resulted in significant anti-social behaviour, security and other amenity impacts which have adversely affected neighbouring residents and public security in the environs of the application site. While not all incidents within the surrounding area can be attributed to residents of the Pods, there is sufficient evidence of incidents associated with the operation of the site, including residents, visitors and associates, to demonstrate that the use has caused significant harm during periods of its operation.
- 10.2 The proposal is not for the permanent or indefinite retention of the use. The applicant has resolved to decommission the Pods, no new referrals are being accepted, occupancy has already reduced and individual move-on arrangements are underway. In parallel, enhanced security, site management, tenancy enforcement, Police liaison and monitoring measures have been introduced, with evidence of some improvement recently, although it is too early to identify a positive trend. These factors have the potential to reduce rather than eliminate, the potential for further amenity impacts during the remaining period of occupation. Although cessation of use was required by 17 September 2026, under the terms of the current permission, this has not occurred. Whilst regrettable, legal and practical requirements beyond the Planning process mean that move-ons will not occur immediately even if permission is not granted.
- 10.3 Throughout the period of operation of the Pods the applicant, with its various partner organisations, has sought to minimise impacts on neighbouring occupiers through a multi-agency partnership, although it is apparent that this has not been wholly successful. Significant interventions have already been undertaken in response to the problems experienced, although it is considered by officers that such measures have been reactive rather than proactive and has required Police intervention. Occupancy has now reduced from 40 to 27 residents, and no new referrals are being accepted. There is some indication that recent physical and management improvements, have resulted in an improvement in the operation of the site more recently albeit not over a long enough period to confirm their long-term effectiveness.

- 10.4 There remains potential for further incidents and disturbance during the period of occupation applied for, particularly while residents are moved on and the site is progressively decommissioned. A further temporary permission could, therefore, only be regarded as acceptable if accompanied by robust controls which secure and build upon the measures already implemented, noting that these cannot realistically mitigate all harm identified, and this is something which only the ultimate closure of the site will achieve. These controls should be set out in a Management and Decommissioning Plan (secured by condition) to include, continued monitoring and liaison with stakeholders, effective site and visitor management, appropriate security measures, arrangements for securing vacant pods and a satisfactory litter management regime. The management framework should establish clear responsibilities, reporting arrangements and key milestones leading to the cessation of the use.
- 10.5 Officers therefore conclude that there are exceptional circumstances, including practical and legal constraints which justify a strictly time-limited continuation of the use solely to facilitate its managed decommissioning, subject to appropriate planning controls and mitigation and management measures identified above being secured and implemented.
- 10.6 The proposal is, therefore, recommended for approval subject to the conditions as set out in the recommendation above.

APPENDIX 1: PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT SEPTEMBER 2026

Planning Applications Committee

09 September 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	PL/26/0958/FUL
Site Address:	Abattoirs Road, RG1 7BL
Proposed Development	Extension of the temporary planning permission, as approved under PL/21/1010, for the now constructed and fully operational 40 no. sleeping units and 3 no. support units for rough sleepers until 31st March 2028. (amended)
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Alison Amoah - Principal Planning Officer
Deadline:	9 th October 2026
Recommendation	GRANT full planning permission.
Conditions	To include: 1. Temporary Time Limit until 31^s March 2028 2. Approved Plans 3. Landscaping – retained 4. Boundary Treatment – retained 5. External Lighting – retained 6. Vehicle Parking – retained 7. Cycle Parking – retained 8. Vehicle Access – retained 9. Refuse and Recycling – retained 10. Secure Access system and CCTV – retained
Informatives	To include: 1. Terms and Conditions

	2. Community Infrastructure Levy 3. Network Rail Advice 4. Positive and Proactive
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2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The proposal is for the continued use of the existing temporary rough sleeper pods and support services, which were granted permission in September 2021 for a period of 5 years
- 2.2 An extension of time for the siting of the pods until the end of March 2028 is sought to allow for a managed and coordinated cessation of the use, including the relocation of residents into more permanent accommodation and the preparation of the site for future redevelopment.
- 2.3 It is not considered that extending this use for a period of 18 months would have any detrimental material effects and it is, therefore, recommended for approval subject to conditions.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.2 The application site is located to the west of Caversham Road and to the south of Abattoirs Road and is existing accommodation for rough sleepers operated by Launch Pad on behalf of Reading Borough Council. It is made up of stacked residential pods (with the appearance of shipping containers), which house 40 accommodation pods (2 pods in height) comprising single person studio accommodation and a bathroom. In addition, there are welfare office pods, a laundry and switch room, staff car parking, landscaping, seating, bin and cycle storage. There are two secure access points – one to the eastern boundary on Caversham Road and one to the north on Abattoirs Road.
- 2.3 The development of the site for temporary pods arose from the Government's response to Covid-19 'Everyone in' requiring local authorities to house all rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping. This site was one of the options developed to meet a client group with more complex needs for whom intensive support on site was necessary.
- 2.4 To the south is a mixture of industrial and residential buildings and to the west a large area of hardstanding associated with the Cattle Market buildings. The application site is owned by Reading Borough Council.
- 2.5 The site is potentially contaminated land, within an Air Quality Management Area and is part of the Cattle Market area allocated under Policy CR12a within the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) 'West Side Major Opportunity Area' (Area A – see extract below).

CR12a, CATTLE MARKET: This site will be developed for a mix of edge-of-centre retail uses, and residential development, along with public car parking. The retail may include bulky goods, but should not include a significant element of non-bulky comparison goods retail. It must be designed to reflect the urban grid layout and built form of the centre and a single storey retail warehouse will not be permitted. Development should take account of mitigation required as a result of a Flood Risk Assessment. Site size: 2.46 ha Indicative potential: 330-490 dwellings, 10,000-15,000 sq m net gain of retail.

West Side Major Opportunity Area Strategy



- 2.6 It should be noted that under the emerging policy within the Local Plan Partial Update Submission version (May 2025) the policy is proposed for amendment to the following:

“This site will be developed for primarily residential development. It must be designed to reflect the urban grid layout and built form of the centre Development should take account of mitigation required as a result of a Flood Risk Assessment. Development should deliver a fitted out primary healthcare facility where this is viable and where there is a realistic prospect that an occupier to operate the facility can be found. Site size: 2.46 ha Indicative potential: 560-840 dwellings, primary healthcare.”

- 2.6 The first reason for the change is to remove the significant retail element, which is no longer required as the level of need for retail development has substantially reduced in large part due to the increase in online retailing. Retention of the retail requirement would have likely made the allocation undeliverable. The second reason is that the basis for assessing appropriate densities has changed across the board, based on more up-to-date information on achievable densities, and this has resulted in an increase in the assessed capacity of most allocations in the plan.
- 2.7 It is within Flood Risk Zone 2.



Site Location

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is to retain the temporary site, known as Caversham Road Pods, as originally granted temporary permission for 5 years from September 2021 (ref: PL/21/1010), for a further 18 months until the end of March 2028. There would be no change to the existing scheme, which would continue to provide supported accommodation for vulnerable individuals to support their progression towards independent living.
- 3.2 The timing of individual move-ons varies significantly depending on the personal circumstances and the availability of suitable next-step housing. The submitted Planning Statement sets out that some of the most recently housed residents are still progressing through these interventions and are not yet ready to transition. Additional time, in terms of extending the temporary permission period, is, therefore, required both for them to reach that stage and for appropriate accommodation options to be identified and secured.
- 3.3 The formal legal steps to end tenancies could not take place until the Council's decision to close the scheme had been made public. People currently living in the scheme will be supported to move into alternative accommodation as the current scheme is decommissioned by September 2027. This approach was agreed at a meeting of the Council's Policy Committee on 13th July 2026 and reflects priorities in the Council's Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031, adopted earlier this year. The Strategy places a greater emphasis on preventing homelessness and rough sleeping, alongside providing longer-term housing and support solutions for those who need them. Current national best practice favours a shift away from large-scale, intensely populated supported housing models, towards dispersed approaches where possible.
- 3.4 It is expected that the service would be fully decommissioned by September 2027, with reinstatement of the site to a cleared state taking place thereafter.
- 3.5 This is a full planning application, which is being reported to the Planning Applications Committee for determination as the application is the Council's own

application (Regulation 3). The original application was reported to your meeting on 8th September 2021, and the relevant report and update report are attached as Appendix 2 and 3 to this report.

- 3.6 It was not possible for this to be submitted as a S73 application (variation) due to the original description of development including reference to a five-year temporary period. However, although a full application, it has been examined much as a S73 would have been in terms of considering any material changes since the original temporary permission was granted, rather than a wholesale reassessment of all issues.

3.7 Submitted Plans and Documentation:

The submitted plans and documentation are as follows:

- Drawing no: 201123-101.01 - Site Location Plan, received 28th July 2026
- Drawing no: 2606-001 – As Built Site Block Plan, received 27th August 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-114.04 - Site Layout, received 14th August 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-015.02 - Site Elevations A, B & C, received 14th August 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-016.01 - Site Elevations D, E, F, G & H, received 28th July 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-017.02 - Site Elevations J, K, L & M, received 14th August 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-110.01 - Layouts and Elevations: Unit Types A&B, received 28th July 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-111.01 - Layouts and Elevations: Unit Types C&D, received 28th July 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-113.02 - Layouts and Elevations: Laundry, received 14th August 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-112.01 - Layouts and Elevations: Offices, received 28th July 2026
- Drawing no: ASD-DN-MR-0920-003 Sheet 1 of 1 Rev R01 - Exterior Lighting, received 14th August 2026
- Bin Storage Metrostor, PBM-3_LHH_SWG_GW_EU Issue 1, dated 29/4/21, received 12th August 2026
- Bin Storage Metrostor Data Sheet, PBM36601-12801, received 12th August 2026
- Drawing no: 201123-103.02 - Site Vehicle Tracking, received 14th August 2026

Other Documents:

- Design and Access Statement, dated 18th March 2021, prepared by Williams Architects [as submitted under the original application], received 17th July 2026
- Design and Access Statement and Planning Statement, received 17th July 2026
- Photos, received 12th August 2026
- Photos of Cycle Storage received 14th August 2026



- 3.8 Community Infrastructure Levy: In relation to the Community Infrastructure Levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. As the proposal is for temporary buildings there is an exemption from CIL liability.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The relevant planning history is as follows:

PL/14/1475/FUL – Use of land for storage of cars – Refused 18th May 2015

PL/17/1315/FUL - Demolition of existing out buildings on site and the provision of a new public car park with access acquired from Abattoirs Road, with egress onto Great Knollys Street Land off Abattoirs Road, Reading –Finally Disposed Of 2nd August 2018

PL/19/1384/REG3 - Demolition of existing outbuildings and the provision of a new public car park with access required from Abattoirs Road with egress on to Great Knollys Street, Reading –Withdrawn 18th November 2021

PL/21/1010/REG3 - Retrospective application for the erection of 40no. sleeping units and 3no. support units for rough sleepers, to be used temporarily for a period of 5 years – Approved 17th September 2021

5. CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 Consultations have been undertaken with the following:

Statutory

- 5.2 Network Rail - No comments/ objections.

Non-Statutory

- 5.3 RBC Transport Strategy - The existing access arrangements remain unchanged from those previously approved and implemented. Vehicular movements associated with the site are limited and relate primarily to staff access, servicing, and support functions. Given the nature of the development, traffic generation is minimal, and the proposal would not result in any changes that would increase

vehicular activity or affect the current access arrangements. There are no transport objections to this application.

- 5.4 Thames Valley Policy – Designing out Crime Officer - A response was provided to the original application (Ref 211010/REG3) in relation to:
- Management procedures to address crime and anti-social behaviour
 - Formal surveillance
 - Visually permeable vehicle and pedestrian gates at entrances with access controls
 - Boundary fencing.
- 5.5 The requirement to provide a secure access system and CCTV was conditioned on the original permission. It is presumed that these have been implemented, are retained on site, and are operating effectively. A condition may be required to ensure that the approved CCTV and access control system are retained and maintained should planning permission be granted for this application.
- 5.6 RBC Environmental Protection, and RBC Planning (Natural Environment) were also consulted. Any further consultation responses will be reported in an update report.
- 5.7 Two site notices were displayed on 18th August 2026. No comments have been received. The consultation period expires on 8th September, and any comments received prior to committee will be reported in an update report.

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 Section 72 1 (b) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 enables local planning authorities to grant planning permission for a specified temporary period.
- 6.3 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 (August 2026).

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

4. Achieving Sustainable Development

6. Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes (H09 Specialist Forms of Accommodation)

12. Making Effective Use of Land

15. Promoting Sustainable Transport

18. Managing Flood Risk and Coastal Change

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards)

- Use of Planning Conditions

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

EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

EN15: Air Quality

EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

EN18: Flooding and Drainage

H6: Accommodation for Vulnerable People

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

CR2: Design in Central Reading

CR12: West Side Major Opportunity Area

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)

Other relevant documents:

- Reading Borough Local Plan Partial Update – Sequential and Exception Test [in relation to flood risk] (May 2025, RBC)
- Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping: A Strategy for Reading 2026-2031
- Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping: An Action Plan for Reading 2026-2031
- Housing Strategy for Reading 2020- 2025, RBC
- Reading Borough Council Policy Committee Report 3rd August 2020

- Reading Borough Council Policy Committee Report 13th July 2026

6.4 Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024. A submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on 9th May 2025, and it is currently at 'Examination' stage.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become "out of date" when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy. Of those listed above Policies CC2, CC3, CC4, CC7, EN14, EN18, H6, TR4, TR5, CR2, CR12 and CR12a are proposed for amendment, but the objectives of those policies remain very similar in the draft updated Local Plan, and at present, due to the status of the emerging Local Plan have limited weight in decision making. The current policies can continue to be afforded weight in the appraisal below and are not considered to be 'out of date'. As noted above, Policy CR12a in relation to the Cattle Market is proposed to be altered and this is discussed further below.

7. **APPRAISAL**

The main matters to be considered are:

- i) Principle of Continued Use**
- ii) Other**

i) Principle of Continued Use

- 7.1 As described above the application site forms part of an allocated site within the current local plan. This allocation is being carried forward to the emerging Local Plan Partial Update under Policy CR12a, albeit it would focus primarily on residential use.

- 7.2 Under Section 72 1(b) of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) there is the provision to enable permissions to be granted for temporary periods and the principle of the temporary use was established as acceptable under the original temporary permission ref: PL21/1010 and there are no material matters which would lead to an alternative position.
- 7.3 However, under the National Planning Policy Guidance (Use of Planning Conditions - Para: 014 Reference ID: 21a-014-20140306) it states that although a temporary planning permission may be appropriate *“to enable the temporary use of vacant land or buildings prior to any longer-term proposals coming forward (a ‘meanwhile use’). It will rarely be justifiable to grant a second temporary permission (except in cases where changing circumstances provide a clear rationale, such as temporary classrooms and other school facilities). Further permissions can normally be granted permanently or refused if there is clear justification for doing so. There is no presumption that a temporary grant of planning permission will then be granted permanently.”*
- 7.4 The ongoing use for rough sleeper pods as move-on accommodation and on-site support, until suitable next-step housing becomes available, continues to be supported by National Policy in terms of contributing towards supporting the social objective of sustainable development (Para 17.) by supporting *“strong, vibrant and healthy communitiesand communities’ health, social and cultural well-being”*
- 7.5 The proposal accords with the aims and priorities set out within the Council’s Housing Strategy and, Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy by providing suitable accommodation to meet ongoing need until long term accommodation can be sourced.
- 7.6 It also meets Policy H6 of the RBLP through the ongoing provision of accommodation for vulnerable people.
- 7.7 The site remains part of the allocation under Policy CR12a. The application seeks to extend the temporary use, which continues to offer a unique opportunity for a valuable scheme as a meanwhile/ temporary use on an underused piece of land in central Reading, after which it will be cleared and available for development. The extension of the temporary permission until the end of March 2028 is consistent with the expiry date of the current leases on the wider allocation site. Its ongoing temporary use would, therefore, not impact on the delivery of a scheme/s in accordance with the allocation and would ensure that the site continues to provide a valuable resource for specialist accommodation in the meantime.
- 7.8 It is considered, therefore, that in this case there is a clear rationale for further extending the temporary permission.

ii) **Other**

- 7.9 In terms of other matters previously considered with respect to design, amenity, transport, landscaping, sustainability, and environmental, there is no proposed change to the site, and these matters have already been assessed and found to be acceptable subject to conditions previously imposed. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to be suitable in terms of the policies of the Local Plan set out above and officers advise that in the majority of instances, the conditions can be adjusted from those which originally required submissions, to those which are now simply restrictive in nature.
- 7.10 The proposal includes an amended site plan, as the implemented scheme varies very slightly from the original approved layout with respect to the amount of green space, number of bins and parking and the amended plan also reflects the actual lights and cctv cameras in situ.
- 7.11 Community safety and effective site management are integral to the operation of the Pods. A robust management regime has been in place since its occupation, including 24-hour on-site supervision, controlled access arrangements, and provision of support services tailored to residents' needs. Such measures will continue unchanged throughout the extended period of operation and have proved effective. Where any issues have arisen, these have been resolved and dealt with in a timely manner.
- 7.12 The recommended conditions include compliance with the existing site plan and the facilities already in situ.

8. Equalities Implications

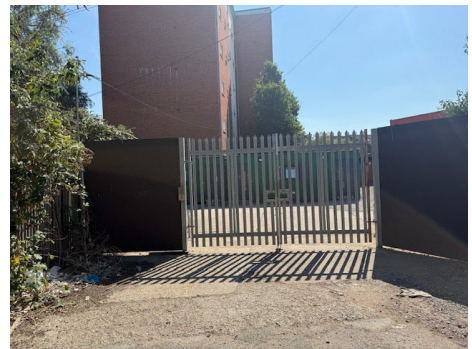
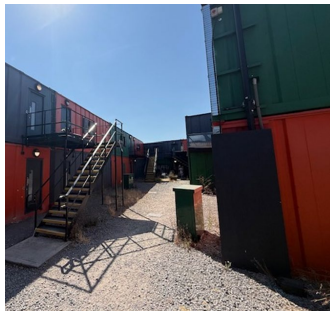
- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons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

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposal would provide for a short-term, continued temporary use for much needed move-on accommodation for vulnerable people with on-site welfare support. There are essentially no changes proposed to the existing scheme, which has operated for 5 years without any significant residential amenity effects. It would continue to be a sustainable development in line with national and local policies and would also continue to meet Council priorities with respect to homelessness and rough sleeping and a suitable 'meanwhile' use on an underused piece of land.
- 9.2 The extended period would allow for a managed conclusion to the use at the end of which the site would be available to be able to bring forward proposals according the with long-term site allocation for housing.
- 9.3 The proposal is, therefore recommended for approval subject to restrictive-type conditions being attached.

APPENDIX 1: PLANS & PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos

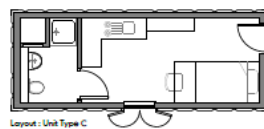


Existing/ Proposed Site Plan

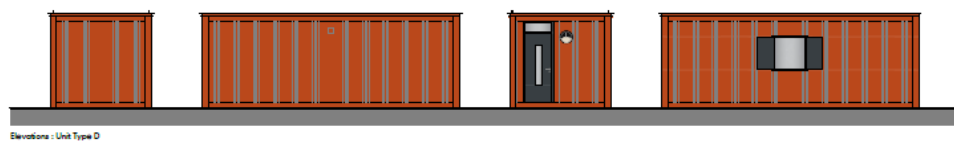
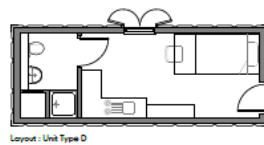
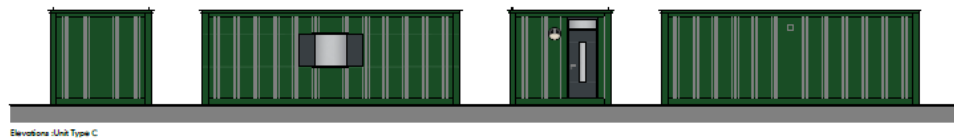


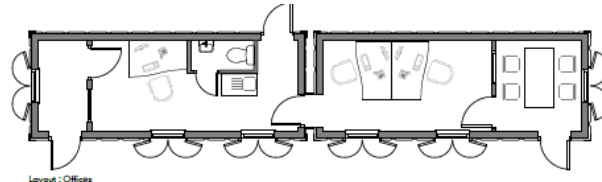
Existing/ Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations



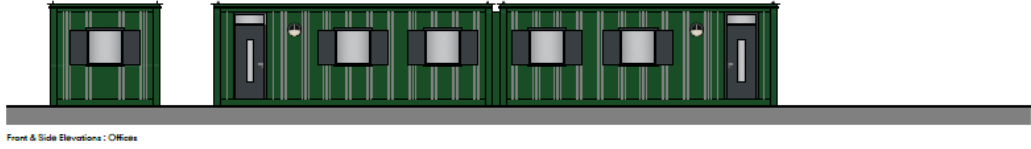


- Colour 1 : RAL 2001 red-orange
- Colour 2 : RAL 7024 graphite grey
- Colour 3 : RAL 6035 pearl-green





Layout : Office



Front & Side Elevations : Office



Rear & Side Elevations : Office

APPENDIX 2: PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT PL/21/1010

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO.8

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 8th September 2021

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 211010

Address: Land to the west of Abattoirs Road

Proposal: Part Retrospective application for the erection of 40 no. sleeping units and 3no. support units for rough sleepers, to be used temporarily for a period of 5 years.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Deadline: 14/9/2021

Planning Guarantee 26 week target: 18/1/2022

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

- 1) TL1 - 3 yrs
- 2) Temporary permission - five years
- 3) Use approved is as temporary homeless shelter accommodation only
- 4) AP1 - Approved Plans
- 5) M1 - Materials as submitted
- 6) Landscaping scheme to include large plants in planters to be submitted, approved and implemented prior to occupation
- 7) L3 - Boundary Treatment - as shown and retained
- 8) Details of lights to be submitted and approved prior to occupation
- 9) DC1 - Vehicle Parking as specified prior to occupation
- 10) DC3 - Vehicle Access as specified prior to occupation
- 11) DC7 - Cycle Parking as specified prior to occupation
- 12) Refuse and Recycling as specified prior to occupation
- 13) Secure access system and CCTV to be provided prior to occupation and retained with 24-hour on-site monitoring

INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE:

- 1) IF5 - Terms and Conditions
- 2) IF6 - Building Regulations
- 3) I11 - CIL
- 4) IF3 - Highways
- 5) IF8 - Encroachment
- 6) IF1 - Positive & Proactive.
- 7) Network Rail advice

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The site is a brownfield site partially bounded to the north by the railway line and partially by 59a Caversham Road (believed to be short term residential use), to the east by the A329 Caversham Road, to the south by a mixture of industrial and residential buildings and to the west by a large area of hardstanding associated with the Cattle Market buildings and appears to be being used informally for vehicle storage and parking. The application site is owned by the Council.
- 1.2 It has an abandoned character with scrubby vegetation recolonising the area through cracks in the hardstanding. Boundaries to neighbouring sites comprise a mix of palisade fencing, brick walls and corrugated metal structures.
- 1.3 There are a mix of scale of buildings with the buildings to the west associated with the Cattle Market being predominantly low rise in nature of one and two storeys and those to the east comprising several multi-storey buildings. The railway tracks are at an elevated position above the ground level of the application site.
- 1.4 The site is identified as potentially contaminated land, within an Air Quality Management Area and is part of the Cattle Market area allocated under Policy CR12a within the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) 'West Side Major Opportunity Area'. It is within Flood Risk Zone 2.
- 1.5 In March 2020, as part of the Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was announced that local authorities should house all rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping so that they could socially distance effectively and self-isolate if they needed to do so. As a result of the national 'Everyone in' response, over 260 people in Reading Borough, who were rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping, were accommodated in B&B/hotel accommodation in Reading during the course of the pandemic. This created a significant pressure on the Council's resources and solutions were required to move people on to alternative accommodation.
- 1.6 A range of 'move on' options were utilised and in order to meet the needs of a large number of the client group, with more complex needs, The Council's Housing Department proposed a temporary development of 40 units of modular accommodation with intensive support on site at this site. The authority, to spend Housing Revenue account monies to progress the development, was provided by Policy Committee on 3rd August 2020.
- 1.7 The original timeline for delivery was August to October 2020. Crown Commercial Service, the public procurement arm of Government, offered assistance in procuring the modular housing solution both in terms of drawing up a specification and drawing from their established frameworks for supply and construction to help reduce costs. Tenders were sent out in August 2020, but a contractor was not appointed until November 2020 and the contract was not agreed until January 2021.

- 1.8 Legal issues and the arrival of travellers on site significantly hindered the availability of the site. The manufacturer suffered delays in the production of the units, which are all manufactured offsite, so although a significant number of the units are already on site the development is not likely to be completed until early September 2021.
- 1.9 The application is referred to committee as it is a Council own development (Regulation 3), as well as being a 'major' development.

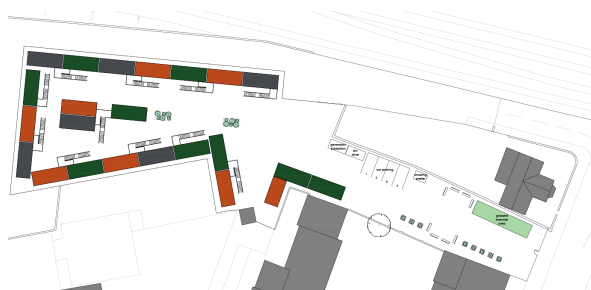
Location Plan



2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposal is for:

- A total of 40 accommodation pods (2 in height), each comprising single person studio accommodation and a bathroom
- 2 site welfare office pods - 45.8sqm GIA
- Laundry & Switch Room (electric distribution point) - 22sqm GIA
- New pedestrian gate onto Caversham Road
- 4 no. staff car parking spaces
- Bin storage, cycle storage and landscaping
- 6 staff



2.2 Submitted plans and documentation received 18th June 2021 unless otherwise stated (including amended details) are as follows:

- Site Location Plan - Drawing no: 201123-101.01
- Site Block Plan - Drawing no: 201123-102.03

- Site Layout - Drawing no: 201123-114.03
- Site Elevations A, B & C - Drawing no: 201123-015.01
- Site Elevations D, E, F, G & H - Drawing no: 201123-016.01
- Site Elevations J, K, L & M- Drawing no: 201123-017.02
- Layouts and Elevations: Unit Types A&B - Drawing no: 201123-110.01
- Layouts and Elevations: Unit Types C&D - Drawing no: 201123-111.01
- Layouts and Elevations: Laundry - Drawing no: 201123-113.02
- Layouts and Elevations: Offices - Drawing no: 201123-112.01
- Exterior Lighting - Drawing no: ASD-DN-MR-0920-003 Sheet 1 of 1 Rev R01, received 20th July 2021
- Exploratory Hole Plan - Drawing no: 20260-PW-AG-00-XX-DR-G-1001 Rev P01, received 20th July 2021
- Foundation Plan and Details Two Storey Sleeper Pods - Drawing no: 20260 - PWA-00-XX-DR-S-1001 Rev P01, received 20th July 2021

Other Documents:

- Design and Access Statement, dated 18th March 2021, prepared by Williams Architects, Document ref: 211123-130.01

- 2.3 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. As the proposal is for temporary buildings there is an exemption from CIL liability.

3 PLANNING HISTORY

171315/FUL: Demolition of existing out buildings on site and the provision of a new public car park with access acquired from Abattoirs Road, with egress onto Great Knollys Street Land off Abattoirs Road, Reading - 'Disposed Of' 2/8/2018

191384/REG3 - Demolition of existing outbuildings and the provision of a new public car park with access required from Abattoirs Road with egress on to Great Knollys Street, Reading - Pending

4 CONSULTATIONS

Statutory

Network Rail

- 4.1 No objection. Lighting - Any lighting associated with the development (including vehicle lights) must not interfere with the sighting of signalling apparatus and/or train drivers' vision on approaching trains. The location and colour of lights must not give rise to the potential for confusion with the signalling arrangements on the railway. Following occupation of the development, if within three months Network Rail or a Train Operating Company has identified that lighting from the development is interfering with driver's vision, signal sighting, alteration/mitigation will be required to remove the conflict at the applicant's expense.

- 4.2 Drainage - Soakaways / attenuation ponds / septic tanks etc, as a means of storm/surface water disposal must not be constructed near/within 5 metres of Network Rail's boundary or at any point which could adversely affect the stability of Network Rail's property/infrastructure. Storm/surface water must not be discharged onto Network Rail's property or into Network Rail's culverts or drains. Network Rail's drainage system(s) are not to be compromised by any work(s). Suitable drainage or other works must be provided and maintained by the Developer to prevent surface water flows or run-off onto Network Rail's property / infrastructure. Ground levels - if altered, to be such that water flows away from the railway. Drainage is not to show up on Buried service checks.

Non-statutory

Environmental Health

- 4.3 Officers are awaiting comments at the time of writing. This will be reported in an update report.

Natural Environment (tree officer)

- 4.4 The site is within a low canopy cover ward (Abbey with reference to the adopted Tree Strategy) and within the AQMA - as such, sufficient greening of any development is more important. Whilst I appreciate the temporary nature of the use, greening can still be incorporated to both meet policy requirements, aims of our Tree Strategy and to make the site more pleasant for users. The use of planters would enable any trees or shrubs within these to be re-used by the Council after use of the land ceases too.
- 4.5 Landscape principles should be established prior to a decision. The site would benefit from planting / green screening on the Caversham Rd /IDR frontage to help filter pollution. The type of tree planting in planters could include dwarf fruit tree varieties which would provide, wildlife value, softening of the site and fruit for the users. Planters will have to be of a sufficient size - details of which could be secured via condition.
- 4.6 Given that the site is already being set up, it would seem reasonable to see if the full details could be resolved prior to a decision to avoid a pre-occupation condition.

Thames Valley Police - Crime Prevention Design Adviser (Berks)

- 4.7 Awaiting comments at time of writing. Any response received will be reported in an update report.

RBC Transport Strategy

- 4.8 The site in question has no existing planning use and therefore there are no vehicle trips associated with the application site, the principle of this was agreed as part of previous applications on the site. The proposal will increase vehicle movements to and from the site and therefore it must be established that the access illustrated is sufficient. This application is for the same site where the extended RBC car park is proposed to be located and I note this application is still undetermined. Therefore, details of how the two sites could co-exist need to be provided and the new vehicle access to the site assessed

and visibility splays provided. I am happy that speeds would be low and as such visibility should be provided at 2m x 25m in either direction.

It is also noted that no cycle parking has been provided, irrespective of the demographic cycle parking should still be provided at a ratio of 0.5 spaces per unit. The agent has confirmed that A small shed will be provided adjacent to the management suite for secure bicycle storage. Details of this need to be provided.

It will also need to be clarified how refuse will be collected, it is noted that the refuse store is located half way into the site which would assume that a refuse vehicle would travel along Abattoirs Road. If this is the case then a dedicated on site turning facility will be required. It should also be noted that a refuse vehicle will need to get to within 10m of where refuse is to be collected from.

In addition, and to be consistent with other applications for this site the applicant should implement a no right turn ban at the junction of Abattoirs Road and Caversham Road as the proposal increases vehicle movements to and from the site. Other applications have been required to undertake this prior to commencement of the use on the site however as this proposal is already partially in operation I would suggest that they implement this within 2 months of permission being granted given the statutory processes have already commenced in relation to the car park. I recommend a condition is used.

Public consultation

- 4.9 The following addresses were consulted by letter: Arches Club, Abattoirs Road; Flats 1 & 2 59A Caversham Road; Flats 1-32 Malcolm Place, Caversham Rd; Flats 1-30 Jeffrey Place, Caversham Road; 1-29 Regent Court, Caversham Road; Reading Cattle Market, Great Knollys Street; Reading Auction Market, Great Knollys Street; Cattle Market Café, Great Knollys Street; and 18 Great Knollys Street.
- 4.10 3 objections were received. Full neighbour consultation comments are available to view on the Council's website. The following is a summary of the key issues raised:
- Built without prior planning permission; not informed of the intent to use the land for this purpose prior to the units being erected.
 - Major concerns about the security of property and the increased likelihood of anti-social behaviour
 - Already a significant issue with bicycle theft and attempted theft as well as unwanted intruders into the neighbouring residential block (previous rough sleepers in the hallways). This wall gives direct access to the internal areas of the block of flats and totally undermines the locked front door!
 - What safety and security measures are being put in place to protect neighbours and property?

- There are already existing container sleeping units built on the same sites building additional 40 units will create an over concentration of homeless unit in the area. This is done without further supporting amenities in the area, and the council is making a decision without a detailed plan for hosting a high density homeless pods site.

Planning Officer comment: It appears that the objector has misunderstood the proposal which is not for a further 40 units but is seeking permission for just 40 pods - including those already on site.

- Since the temporary container sleeping units were built I have observed increasing amounts of trespassing to our property area and people going through our rubbish in the middle of nights and left rubbish on the ground in our residential area. this has created health & safety issue for the local residents of Regent Court.
- As Regent Court is a listed building, accumulation of rubbish in the area and building of sleeper pods nearby may impact the appearance and character of a listed building.
- The area is next to the railway line and surrounded by a commercial area. The dirty and noisy living conditions would not be suitable and respectable.
- Concentrating all homeless in one area will hamper the effort for integrating them into the wider community.

5 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”. The relevant sections of the NPPF are:
- 5.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

National Policy

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

Section 14 - Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

- 5.3 The Development Plan is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) (RBLP). The relevant policies are:

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
Policy CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm
Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
Policy CC9: Securing Infrastructure
Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
Policy EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
Policy EN15: Air Quality
Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
Policy EN18: Flooding and Drainage
Policy H6: Accommodation for Vulnerable People
Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
Policy TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
Policy CR2: Design in Central Reading
Policy CR12: West Side Major Opportunity Area

5.4 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are:

- Employment, Skills and Training (April 2013)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (December 2019)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design (October 2011)
- Planning Obligations Under Section 106 (April 2015)

5.5 Other Documents:

- Sequential and Exception Test of Sites in the Submission Draft Local Plan (March 2018, RBC)
- Reading's Preventing Homelessness Strategy 2020 - 2025
- Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 - 2024, RBC
- Housing Strategy for Reading 2020- 2025, RBC
- Reading Borough Council Policy Committee Report 3rd August 2020

6 APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- **Principle of Development**
- **Design**
- **Residential Amenity**
- **Transport**
- **Landscaping**
- **Sustainability**
- **Environmental Matters**
- **Equalities impact**
- **Other Matters**

- 6.1 Residents have raised issues that work has commenced on site prior to planning permission being sought and granted. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2020 introduced part 12A which states that emergency development by a local authority or health service body is permitted development if that is:

A. Development by or on behalf of a local authority(3) or health service body on land owned, leased, occupied or maintained by it for the purposes of–

(a)preventing an emergency;

(b)reducing, controlling or mitigating the effects of an emergency; or

(c)taking other action in connection with an emergency.

- 6.2 This, therefore, allowed for works to commence to provide emergency move on accommodation for those rough sleepers housed in B&Bs during the pandemic, without first applying for planning permission. This was as long as permission was sought and secured by 31st December 2021. As at 11th August 21 pods had been installed. The remaining pods are due to be delivered by the end of the first week in September.

Principle of Development

- 6.3 The NPPF states (para. 10) that *“at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development”* and at para. 11 that for decision-taking this means: *“approving development proposals that accord with an up -to-date development plan without delay;”*. The overarching objectives are economic, social and environmental. *The proposal would contribute towards supporting “strong, vibrant and healthy communities...”* and through the provision of move-on accommodation and on-site support, would support health and social well-being.
- 6.4 The proposal meets the Council’s Corporate Plan priority of safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable. In addition, it contributes to the Council’s strategic aims of promoting equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment. The proposal also accords with the aims and priorities set out within the Council’s Housing Strategy, Preventing Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 6.5 Policy H6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) relates to accommodation for vulnerable people and states that *“(i).....Other specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will address the identified needs, which are primarily for accommodation that enables occupants to live as independently as possible....ii) Development for specialist accommodation for vulnerable people will fulfil the following criteria: • Developments will, where possible, locate accommodation close to.... relevant community facilities.....; • Development will incorporate areas of green space, which are particularly important for many groups of vulnerable people....iv) Affordable specialist housing for vulnerable people that meets the needs of the most up to date Housing Strategy may count towards affordable housing provision in line with policy H3.”*
- 6.6 The temporary proposal would provide accommodation for vulnerable people with a specialist service, commissioned to provide relevant on-site support, akin

to a C2 use class, which includes residential institutions where a level of care is provided. The site is part of the allocation under Policy CR12a as follows:

CR12a, CATTLE MARKET: This site will be developed for a mix of edge-of-centre retail uses, and residential development, along with public car parking. The retail may include bulky goods, but should not include a significant element of non-bulky comparison goods retail. It must be designed to reflect the urban grid layout and built form of the centre and a single storey retail warehouse will not be permitted. Development should take account of mitigation required as a result of a Flood Risk Assessment. Site size: 2.46 ha Indicative potential: 330-490 dwellings, 10,000-15,000 sq m net gain of retail.

- 6.7 Whilst the proposal would not provide the permanent housing sought by the allocation, it would contribute to addressing more complex and immediate needs by providing safe accommodation for rough sleepers and on-site welfare support on a temporary basis, which would accord with Policy H6. This is a relatively unique opportunity to deliver a valuable scheme as a meanwhile/ temporary use on an underused piece of land in central Reading. It is also relevant that there has been no alternative proposal, which meets the allocation requirements, which has come forward for this site in over 20 years.
- 6.8 In conclusion, the principle of the use of the site as proposed on a temporary basis is considered acceptable. It would provide a form of affordable accommodation for vulnerable people in accordance with Policies H6 and H3, which weighs in favour over fulfilling the aims of the site allocation in this case. It would also provide employment benefits in the short term for the support staff for the site. The report goes on to consider the proposal against other relevant policies.

Design

- 6.9 The NPPF (Para 126) sets out that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 6.10 Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm, requires all development to be of a “high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.”
- 6.11 The proposal includes pods at two storeys, mostly arranged around the perimeter of the site. They will have a utilitarian and basic appearance, although they will be colourful. They will sit comfortably within the surrounding context and their scale at 5.7m in height is acceptable. The layout maximises the use of this irregular shaped site, and the appearance will be softened by some planting in above ground pots and amenity space. The site will also include bin storage and parking.
- 6.12 Officers accept that the scheme will not meet the requirements of Policy CC7 in terms of high-quality design, but this has been weighed against the nature of this temporary development, which will meet a specific and specialist accommodation need, which is considered to make this scheme acceptable in this instance.

- 6.13 The site benefits from being in a highly accessible location with the necessary local infrastructure already in place. The existing vehicular access point on the northern side, from Abattoirs Road, will be retained and a new pedestrian access point will be installed on the Caversham Road frontage.



- 6.14 In terms of achieving a design which is safe and accessible the proposal includes secure palisade fencing of 2m high around the site and access-controlled entrances and 24hr on site supervision.
- 6.15 The development of the site for the temporary pods, with some landscaping and on-site amenity, will provide improvements to the appearance of the site, and although not wholly in accordance with policy CC7, this is considered on balance to be suitable given the positive social benefits of the proposal.

Residential Amenity

- 6.16 Policy CC8 requires development to 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. The nearest residential properties to the proposal are adjacent to the boundary with the site at Jeffery Place and Malcolm Place.
- 6.17 Policy EN16 states that *“proposals for development that are sensitive to the effects of noise or light pollution will only be permitted in areas where they will not be subject to high levels of such pollution, unless adequate mitigation measures are provided to minimise the impact of such pollution”*.
- 6.18 The pods themselves will be orientated such that there will be no overlooking, no overbearing effects, or loss of daylight/ sunlight of adjacent properties.
- 6.19 Issues have been raised through consultation with respect to crime and safety. The site will be bounded by 2m high palisade fencing and the entrances will be controlled through a door entry system, with CCTV, to prevent access to anyone other than those who will live or work there or who are required for providing services, e.g doctors. The site will be subject to 24/7 on-site support from the homeless charity, St. Mungo’s, who will provide staff for individual support for the residents of the site, which will take place within the offices, and staff for building services and incident response.

- 6.20 Each of the units will be externally lit for safe access to the units and there will be additional lighting to the site entrances and around communal areas. A condition is attached requiring the submission of the final lighting details and implementation prior to occupation.
- 6.21 For the occupants of the site, each of the pods will have a window to provide sufficient levels of daylight/ sunlight.
- 6.22 The windows and doors of the pods will be double glazed and will be located facing inwards and away from the railway to mitigate the impact of noise from that source.
- 6.23 In terms of amenity space there will be communal courtyard areas in front and around the pods as well as seating and a grassed area.
- 6.24 With the conditions proposed, the scheme is considered not to cause undue harm through noise disturbance or security concerns to the future occupants and nearby residents and is considered to provide an acceptable standard of temporary accommodation to the users. The proposal will not fully accord with relevant amenity policies, but it is considered it will provide sufficient measures when balanced against the benefits of the provision of a temporary scheme of this nature.

Transport

- 6.25 The Application Site is in a very sustainable location within walking distance of the centre of Reading. There is a pedestrian point across Caversham Road very close to the site and access to public transport.
- 6.26 The proposal will retain access points for vehicles and pedestrians from Abattoirs Road and Caversham Road respectively and will include 4 no. car parking spaces for staff and covered cycle storage. The only vehicles visiting the site will be staff and support services and subject to clarification on traffic circulation, trip generation and suitable safety measures, it is likely that these could only turn left from the site onto Caversham Road. Bin storage is proposed as an open fronted, covered canopy structure and will be sited to enable easy proximity/ access for refuse vehicles. Transport comments have been provided (see consultation section of this report) and some questions remain. These will be addressed in an update report.
- 6.27 However, there was no in principle objection on transport grounds and therefore subject to the details sought being provided the requirements of the relevant policy TR5 will be met.

Landscaping

- 6.28 Policy H6 states that development will incorporate areas of green space, which are particularly important for many groups of vulnerable people. Policy CC7 requires developments to include appropriate landscaping and EN14 requires new development to make provision for tree planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage and in areas such as this which have low tree coverage and are within Air Quality Management Areas EN15.

- 6.29 This proposal is for an emergency welfare accommodation project and bearing in mind the temporary (five year) nature of the accommodation, a landscaping solution which is appropriate needs to be considered.
- 6.30 The site is a relatively constrained urban site with no existing meaningful landscaping. The proposal will focus the siting of the pods adjacent to the site boundaries. The proposal will include some planting within above ground planters within the site, between the pods, and to boundaries. A condition is included for the submission and approval of a satisfactory detailed landscaping plan for implementation prior to occupation.
- 6.31 It will also involve the removal of scrub, particularly at the Caversham Road frontage. This will contribute to improving the appearance of the site.

Sustainability

- 6.32 Adopted Local Plan Policy CC2 requires new development to reduce the consumption of resources and materials and states that *“All minor non-residential developments is required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM ‘Very Good’ standard as a minimum;..... Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.”*
- 6.33 Policy CC3 requires that all developments demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. Policy CC5 requires minimisation of waste during construction and the life of the development.
- 6.34 As a temporary scheme of this unique type of development it will not be possible to meet BREEAM standards. However, the proposals do offer a range of measures as follows contributing towards policy requirements:
- The pods have been manufactured off-site using modern methods of construction to minimise waste and maximise efficiencies of the build process.
 - The units are well insulated using high performance rigid insulation boards lining the walls, roof and floor and windows are double glazed both for thermal and acoustic reasons.
 - They will be heated via electric panel heaters and hot water will be provided through an instantaneous electric water heater ensuring no heat loss on the hot water system through stored water.
 - LED lighting will be used both internally and externally. Other appliances installed in the pods will be low energy.
- 6.35 Although temporary in nature they are robustly manufactured, and they could be re-used.

Environmental matters

- 6.36 ***Air Quality:*** Policy EN15 requires developments to *“have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality”*. The pods are sited well back from Caversham Road and set away from the railway line and the direct impacts of poor air quality will therefore be minimised. The units

are temporary and as an allocated site for housing it has been assessed as suitable for accommodation.

- 6.37 **Contaminated land:** Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources 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.”* Some sampling of the ground conditions was undertaken in February 2021 and this showed no contaminated material. Excavations have been kept to a minimum and generally to nominal depths of 300mm to 450mm and limited to installing foundation pads to each corner of the pods and for connections to required existing services. These excavations have not revealed any contaminated material or evidence of contaminated ground. No excavated material has been removed from the site during the works. Any comments received from Environmental Protection will be reported in an update.
- 6.38 **Flood Risk:** The site is in Flood Risk 2. It is part of an allocated site for residential and commercial uses and has therefore passed the sequential test. The proposed use is defined under the ‘more vulnerable’ classification of use for which flood risk standing advice is to be followed. Under the NPPG¹ it states that all vulnerable developments should follow the advice for: surface water management, access and evacuation and floor levels. There will be a permeable top surface across the whole site and the pods utilise eaves drop for rainwater fall to the blank elevation sides to manage surface water on site. There will be an emergency evacuation plan in place for staff and residents. It is considered that there will be no worsening of surface water run off as the pods will be located on areas which are existing hard surfacing, and existing drainage will be utilised. The ground floor pods will have an internal floor level above estimated flood levels.

Equalities Impact

- 6.39 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.
- 6.40 In developing of the scheme it was agreed that ambulant disabled and disabled persons requiring such accommodation will continue to be housed within more accessible hotel accommodation as is currently the case.

Other Matters

- 6.41 **S106:** There are no obligations which are required for the site to accord with Policy CC9.

¹ Preparing A Flood Risk Assessment: Standing Advice, February 2021 (NPPG)

- 6.42 ***Impact on Listed Building:*** An objector has raised concern over the impact of litter and the pods themselves on the appearance and character of the listed Regent Court.
- 6.43 Regent Court is sited ca 30m from the closest point to the site and its current setting is overwhelmingly dominated by the existing flats of Jeffery Court and Malcolm Court. As the pods are sited alongside and behind Jeffrey Court are only 2 storeys in height it is not considered that would be any detrimental effect with respect to the setting and the character and appearance of the listed buildings.
- 6.44 With respect to litter, there are currently no occupants of the site, and as a construction site should be left secure at the end of each day. During the operation of the site there will be sufficient bin storage and refuse will be collected regularly on-site by a refuse vehicle. The process of developing the site for a temporary use, which will have 24/7 on-site supervision, should minimise any likelihood of litter from the site being dumped in other locations.

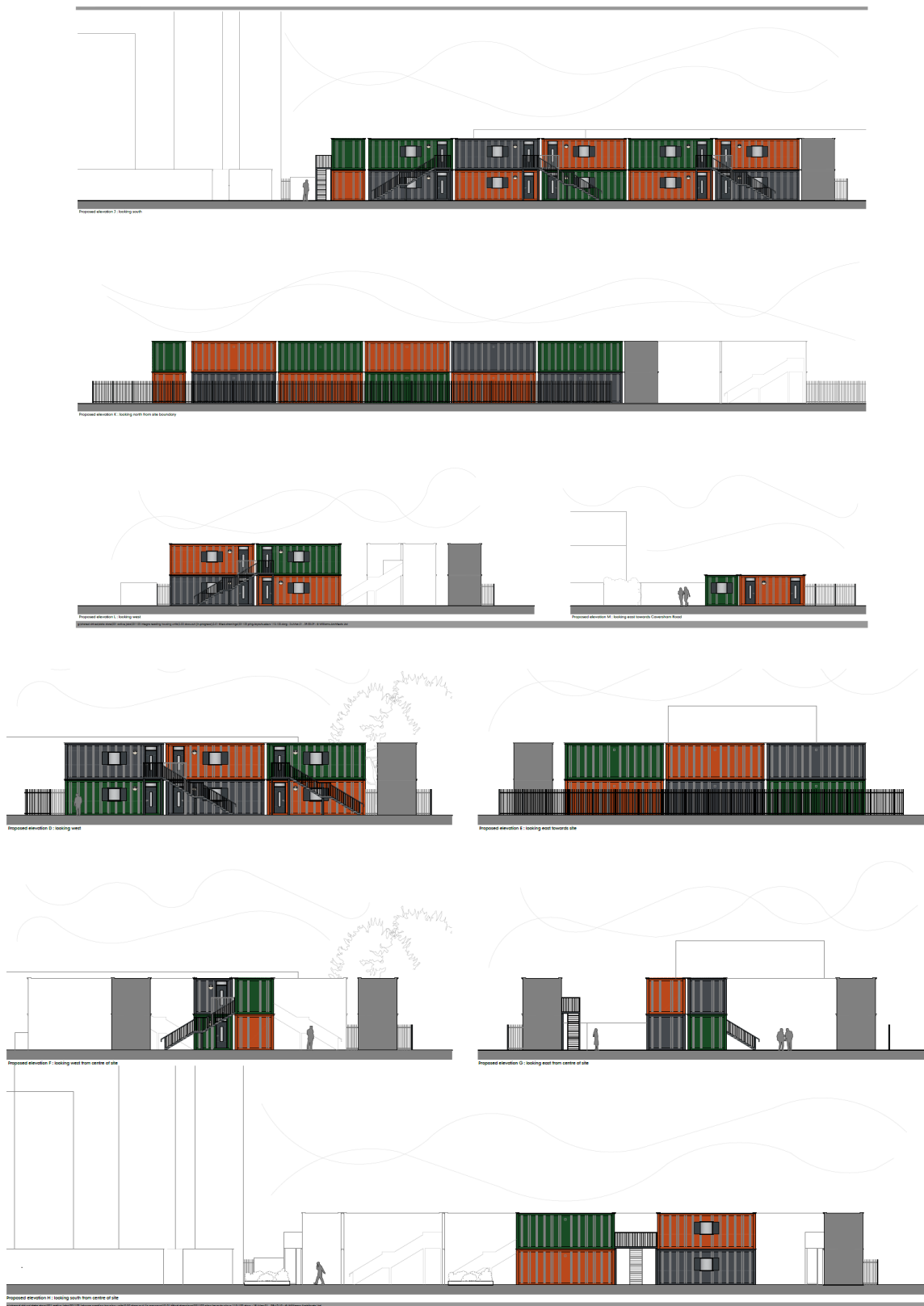
CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal is for much needed temporary move-on accommodation for vulnerable homeless people with on-site welfare support. Although the scheme does not wholly meet some of the adopted planning policy requirements it is considered that delivering a proposal which meets an exceptional issue and for which there is an overriding public need, outweighs meeting normal policy requirements in this instance. Indeed, it responds very positively to a number of Council priorities with respect to addressing homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 7.2 Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant on this scheme and overall officers consider this to be a supportable scheme, which accords with relevant national and local policy. The planning application is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

APPENDIX 1: Plans

Floor Plans & Elevations

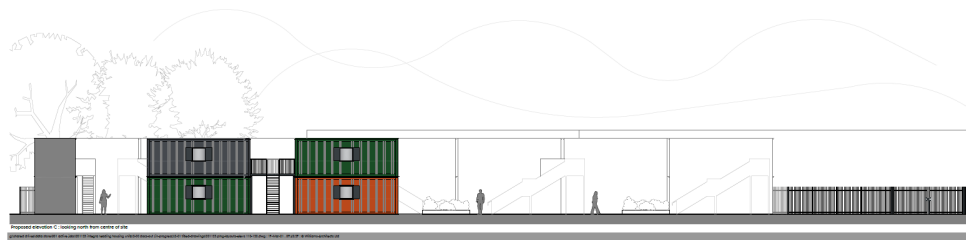




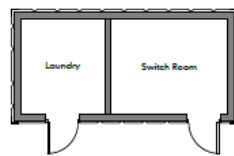
Proposed elevation A: looking north towards existing fence



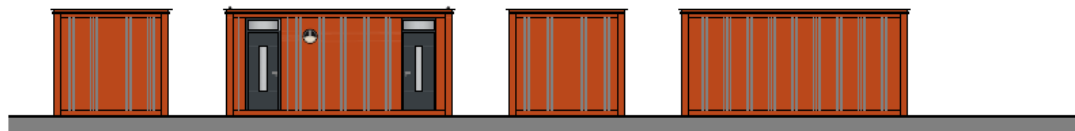
Proposed elevation E: looking south from north site boundary



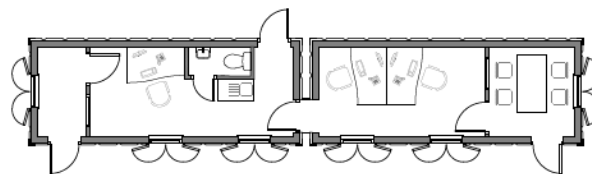
Proposed elevation C: looking north from centre of site
Proposed building details shown are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to represent any specific product or manufacturer. All dimensions and specifications are subject to change without notice.



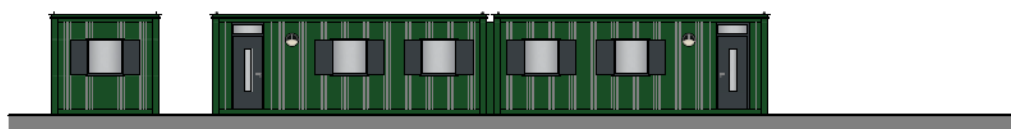
Layout : Laundry



Elevations : Laundry



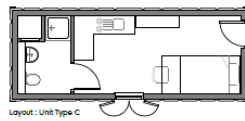
Layout : Offices



Front & Side Elevations : Offices

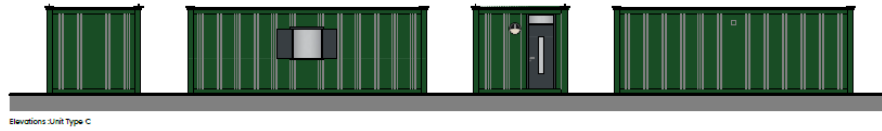


Rear & Side Elevations : Offices

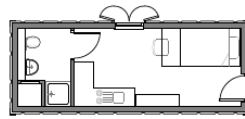


Layout : Unit Type C

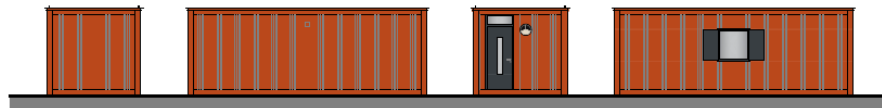
- Unit colours
- Colour 1 : RAL 2001 red-orange
 - Colour 2 : RAL 7024 graphite grey
 - Colour 3 : RAL 6035 pearl-green



Elevations : Unit Type C



Layout : Unit Type D

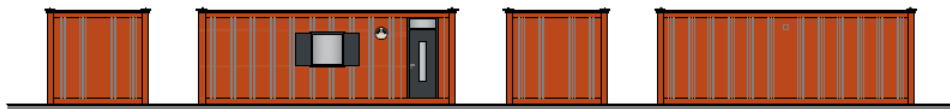


Elevations : Unit Type D

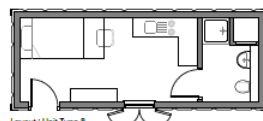


Layout : Unit Type A

- Unit colours
- Colour 1 : RAL 2001 red-orange
 - Colour 2 : RAL 7024 graphite grey
 - Colour 3 : RAL 6035 pearl-green



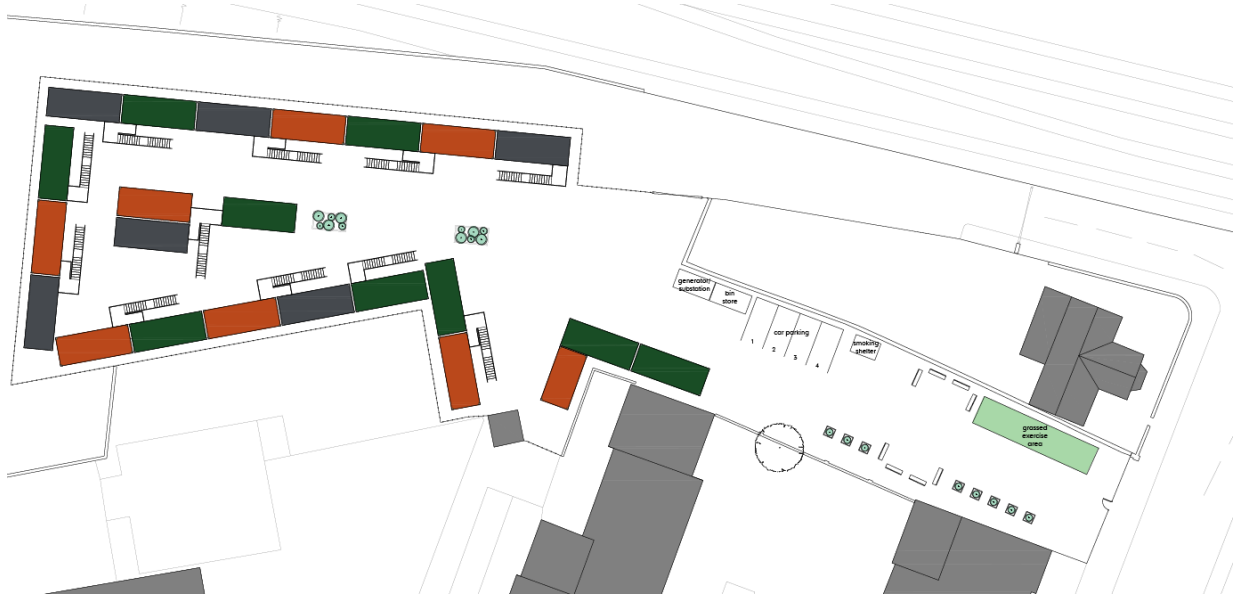
Elevations : Unit Type A



Layout : Unit Type B



Elevations : Unit Type B



Site Plan



APPENDIX 3: PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT PL/21/1010

UPDATE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES READING BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 8th September 2021	ITEM NO. 8
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Ward: Abbey

App No.: 211010

Address: Land to the west of Abattoirs Road

Proposal: Part Retrospective application for the erection of 40 no. sleeping units and 3no. support units for rough sleepers, to be used temporarily for a period of 5 years.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Deadline: 14/9/2021

Planning Guarantee 26 week target: 18/1/2022

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives

As on main report with amended and additional conditions as follows:

CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE:

Amended

- 7) DC76 - Cycle Parking to be submitted and approved as specified prior within 3 months of occupation
- 13) Secure access system and CCTV to be provided prior to occupation and retained with 24-hour on-site monitoring and the cameras to be of a standard which enable good image capture and are sited appropriately for unobstructed views.

Additional

- 14) DD6 - Visibility Splays as submitted.
- 15) Within 2 months of occupation the Traffic Regulation Order for a no right turn at the junction of Caversham Road and Abattoirs Road shall be installed.

1. AMENDED/ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Transport

- 1.1 Amended plans have been received, which the Transport Development Control Manager has confirmed resolve the matters raised regarding:

- Refuse vehicle tracking for accessing the site;

- Visibility splays for the junction of Caversham Road and Abattoirs Road and at the entrance to the site; and
 - Location of the refuse storage.
- 1.2 No cycle storage has been provided and, therefore, a revised drawing is still required illustrating a dedicated cycle store for both staff and residents. The Transport Development Control Manager would accept this in the form of lockable sheds and has recommended a condition as included above.
- 1.3 With reference to Transport's comments in the main report (para. 4.8) in terms of the requirement for a no right turn at the junction of Abattoirs Road and Caversham Road, an additional condition is included above.

Crime Prevention Design Advisor, Thames Valley Police

- 1.4 Comments have been received from Thames Valley Police as follows and they have no objection to the scheme:

"Having discussed the application with my colleague Sgt Cutler we have no significant concerns in relation to the site and therefore, do not wish to object to the application. However, we do make the following comments and recommendations.

Whilst this is a residential development our understanding is an office will be present on site and staffed at all times to support the residents. Management procedures, therefore, should be robust and address the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour ensuring the security of both occupants, staff and the community as a whole.

We understand formal surveillance will be present. Consideration should be given to conducting an operational needs assessment to ensure cameras meet the required standard for a good image capture and are sited appropriately.

The application refers to secure vehicle and pedestrian entrances. Again, our understanding is that these are via dedicated entrances without the need to utilise the access for any of the neighbouring residential blocks. Vehicle and pedestrian gates should be able to prevent unauthorised access, however, these should be visibly permeable to allow surveillance into and from the site and vehicle gates should be constructed to prevent pedestrian access. Access controls must be present and managed via electronic fob or card to allow staff to quickly and easily manage the development allowing access to be provided or revoked with limited delay. Pin pad codes should not be used as it is not possible to know who the access code has been passed to whilst over time the keys can show wear and tear making it possible to identify codes. A visitor entry system should be present connecting to staff and allowing them both an audio and visual communication prior to allowing access.

That is the case

The application refers to the use of 2m palisade fencing which is usually more appropriate for industrial settings. Visibly permeable vertical railings (1.8m minimum) would provide a level of security better suited for a residential setting.

Planning Officer comments:

With respect to the proposed CCTV system and quality of image an amended condition is recommended as included above (no.13).

In terms of vehicle and pedestrian gates these will prevent unauthorised access and will be visibly permeable. It is the case that the access controls would be either a fob or card system.

TVP has made comments on the industrial nature of the fencing, however, this is largely as existing and its replacement would be unviable for such a scheme. The fencing would be visibly permeable.

Plans and other information

1.5 Further amended plans were submitted as follows:

- Site Vehicle Tracking - Drawing no: 201123-103.02, received 7th September 2021
- Site Elevations: A, B & C - Drawing no: 201123-015.02, received 6th September 2021
- Site Layout - Drawing no: 201123-114.04, received 6th September 2021
- Site Block Plan - Drawing no: 201123-102.04, received 6th September 2021

Conclusion

1.6 The recommendation remains as in the main report save for further suggested and amended conditions as included above.

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

APPENDIX 2: PLANNING APPLICATIONS UPDATE COMMITTEE REPORT
SEPTEMBER 2026

**Planning Applications
Committee**

09 September 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION UPDATE REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	PL/26/0958/FUL
Site Address:	Abattoirs Road, RG1 7BL
Proposed Development	Extension of the temporary planning permission, as approved under PL/21/1010, for the now constructed and fully operational 40 no. sleeping units and 3 no. support units for rough sleepers until 31st March 2028. (amended)
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Alison Amoah - Principal Planning Officer
Deadline:	9 th October 2026
Recommendation	As per the main agenda report
Conditions	As per the main agenda report plus the addition of a further condition as follows: 11. Litter Management Strategy -compliance
Informatives	As per the main agenda report

1. Consultations

- 1.1 Since the main report was prepared consultation responses have been received from RBC Planning (Natural Environment) and Environmental Protection officers.
- 1.2 ***RBC Planning (Natural Environment)*** – raised an issue that the original permission (PL/21/1010) had included a condition 5 requiring approval of a landscaping scheme, but this was not formally discharged. However, officers advise that there is some existing planting in above ground planters, and this is considered to be appropriate and proportionate for the development. A condition is recommended to ensure this planting is retained for the remainder of the permission period sought and this is as set out in the recommendation of the main report.
- 1.3 ***RBC Environmental Protection*** - Concerns were raised over observed issues of litter to the front of the site to the Caversham Road frontage.
- 1.4 The applicant will prepare a Litter Management Strategy. The Environmental Protection Officer confirmed that they were satisfied, subject to a recommended condition requiring the Strategy.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 The issues raised do not alter the overall recommendation other than for the inclusion of an additional condition.

APPENDIX 3 (To October 2026 Planning Applications Committee Report): NEIGHBOUR OBJECTIONS

OBJECTION 1

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object to planning application **PL/260958** and the proposed extension of the Caversham Road temporary accommodation pods until March 2028.

I live in the residential property immediately adjoining the site and have experienced first-hand the impact the facility has had on neighbouring residents since it was established. While I fully support the provision of accommodation and support for vulnerable people, I do not believe this use is appropriate in its current location given the cumulative effects on adjacent homes.

Over the approximately five years that the pods have operated, residents have experienced a range of persistent issues affecting safety, security and residential amenity, including:

- Repeated trespass onto private property and unauthorised access to residential areas.
- Individuals entering or remaining within communal areas of our building without permission.
- Threatening and intimidating behaviour towards residents.
- Regular noise disturbance, including late at night and during the early hours.
- Litter, waste and general anti-social behaviour around the site.
- Frequent use of neighbouring private property as a route of access to and from the pods.

These are not isolated incidents but recurring problems which have significantly affected residents' ability to enjoy their homes peacefully and to feel safe in the area immediately surrounding their properties.

The cumulative impact has been substantial. Residents have had to contend with ongoing concerns about security, intimidation, noise and anti-social behaviour for several years. In my view, this demonstrates that the use has not operated without causing unacceptable effects on neighbouring residential properties.

I would also ask the Council to consider relevant information held by Thames Valley Police, Community Safety teams and Housing Services regarding incidents, complaints and anti-social behaviour associated with the site during its period of operation. Such evidence is highly relevant when assessing whether the use remains appropriate in this location.

A further concern is that the pods were originally introduced as a temporary response during the Covid-19 pandemic. After approximately five years of operation, the proposal to extend the use until 2028 risks turning what was intended to be a

temporary arrangement into a long-term or semi-permanent use, despite the ongoing impacts experienced by neighbouring residents.

When determining this application, I ask the Council to consider:

- Whether the continued use of the site is compatible with the reasonable expectations of neighbouring residents.
- The cumulative impact on residential amenity, safety and security.
- Whether alternative accommodation solutions are available that would have less impact on established residential communities.
- Whether a further extension is justified given the significant period for which the temporary permission has already been in place.

For these reasons, I respectfully object to planning application PL/260958 and request that planning permission for the proposed extension is refused.

OBJECTION 2

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a resident of the property immediately adjoining the Caversham Road temporary accommodation pods to register my **strong objection to planning application PL/260958 and to any proposal to extend the use of the site until March 2028.**

I am also a member of the Right to Manage company responsible for the management of our building. As part of that role, I am in regular contact with residents and leaseholders regarding matters affecting the property, including security, maintenance, access and residents' general concerns.

I want to make clear that **this objection is submitted by me personally and not formally on behalf of the RTM company.**

However, my involvement with the RTM is relevant because it means I regularly hear directly from other residents about their experiences. Over the period in which the pods have operated, residents have repeatedly raised concerns with me which are consistent with my own experiences, including trespass, unauthorised access, threatening behaviour, noise disturbance, drug use, security problems and other serious impacts on residential amenity.

The specific incidents that I describe below as having personally experienced or witnessed are my own evidence. Other residents have their own experiences and, where appropriate, can provide statements, photographs or other supporting evidence as part of an evidence pack. Some residents may also choose, or may already have chosen, to submit separate objections to the application in their own names.

My objection is not to the principle of providing appropriate accommodation and support to people experiencing homelessness. I recognise both the importance and difficulty of that work.

My objection is to the continued operation of **this particular facility in this particular location**, immediately adjacent to established residential accommodation, following approximately five years during which I and other residents have experienced repeated and serious impacts on our safety, security, residential amenity and ability to enjoy our homes peacefully.

The matters described below should **not be regarded as an exhaustive account**. Many incidents occurring over the approximately five years of operation have not been formally recorded. Residents have not necessarily reported every instance of noise, trespass, intimidation or anti-social behaviour, particularly where incidents became frequent or where residents did not believe that reporting each individual occurrence would lead to meaningful action.

I therefore respectfully request that the Council considers not only the incidents I am presently able to describe, but also its own housing, community safety, anti-social behaviour and other relevant records, together with information held by Thames Valley Police and any evidence provided by other residents.

1. Repeated trespass and unauthorised entry into our residential premises

Since the pods became operational, residents of our building have experienced repeated trespass onto our private property and attempts by individuals associated with or visiting the site to gain access to the building.

I have personally witnessed and experienced incidents involving unauthorised access to the property.

There have been occasions where individuals have forced their way into the building and subsequently refused to leave. Individuals have slept within the internal communal hallways. I hold photographic evidence of such incidents and can provide this to the Council if required.

On another occasion, an individual gained unauthorised access to the residents' bin store and slept inside it, causing significant alarm to a resident who unexpectedly encountered the individual while taking rubbish out.

Other residents have reported similar problems to me through my involvement with the RTM.

These are not abstract concerns about what might happen as a consequence of the use. They are impacts that people living immediately adjoining the site have actually experienced during its operation.

2. Theft and security problems

Residents have experienced persistent security problems during the period in which the pods have operated, including the theft of numerous parcels from the residential building.

While I appreciate that responsibility for every individual theft cannot necessarily be attributed conclusively without police evidence, these thefts have occurred alongside repeated unauthorised access and trespass affecting the building.

Through my involvement with the RTM, parcel theft and building security have been recurring concerns raised by residents.

The result has been a substantial and continuing security problem and a level of vigilance that residents should not reasonably be expected to endure indefinitely within their own homes.

3. Open drug use and drug-related paraphernalia

I have personally witnessed open drug use in and around the immediate vicinity of our property.

Other residents have also raised similar incidents with me, together with concerns regarding discarded drug-related paraphernalia.

This is particularly concerning because **children live within the building**, and residents and their families necessarily use the adjoining external and communal areas on a daily basis.

The presence of drug use and associated waste immediately adjoining residential accommodation represents a serious deterioration in residential amenity and raises legitimate community-safety concerns.

4. Threatening and intimidating behaviour and the impact on personal safety

Residents attempting to prevent trespass or asking unauthorised individuals to leave the property have on a number of occasions been met with threatening and intimidating behaviour.

This has included serious verbal threats, including threats involving stabbing. I have personally experienced threatening or intimidating conduct associated with individuals trespassing on or around the property. Other residents have separately described similar experiences to me.

My partner has also personally experienced repeated incidents which have caused her to fear for her safety. She has been followed and screamed at in the vicinity of our home, and these experiences, taken together with the wider pattern of threatening and unpredictable behaviour around the property, have had a profound and lasting effect on her.

The impact has reached the point where she no longer feels comfortable making the short journey home alone from Reading station. Our home is only approximately a five-minute walk from the station, yet I now regularly feel it necessary to meet her and accompany her home because of her fear of encountering further threatening behaviour.

This is an important illustration of the effect the current use has had on our ordinary daily lives. Residents should be able to enter and leave their homes without fear, and a short walk from a major transport hub to one's own front door should not require another household member to act as an escort because of repeated experiences of intimidation.

The cumulative effect should not be underestimated. This is not simply a question of inconvenience or occasional disturbance. For my partner, these incidents have been genuinely traumatic and have materially affected her sense of personal safety in and around her own home.

Other residents have also reported feeling intimidated within and immediately outside the building, including when entering and leaving the property.

Through my involvement with the RTM, I am aware that in some instances the wider problems associated with the site have contributed to long-standing tenants choosing to terminate their tenancies and leave the building.

For the avoidance of doubt, my concern is not based on assumptions about people experiencing homelessness. It arises from specific conduct that I, my partner and other residents have personally witnessed and experienced over an extended period, and from the very real effect that conduct has had on people living immediately next to the site.

5. Trespass associated with access to the pods and serious incidents around the shared boundary

Our property directly adjoins the pods and shares a boundary wall with the site. There have repeatedly been incidents of individuals trespassing across our property in an attempt to gain access to the pods.

This has been a recurring issue discussed within the building and through the RTM. I also understand that at least one particularly serious incident in the vicinity involved a stabbing.

I do not ask the planning authority simply to accept residents' recollections of that incident. Instead, **I specifically request that Reading Borough Council obtain and review relevant Thames Valley Police incident and crime information associated with the site and its immediate surroundings during the period in which the pods have operated.**

Police attendance in the vicinity has, in my own experience and from accounts given by other residents, been frequent. That history is relevant when assessing the actual consequences of continuing the use.

The Council is also already aware of difficulties associated with the boundary. At one stage, those responsible for our building were asked to consider increasing the height of the boundary wall as a response to individuals gaining access.

I consider that request particularly significant.

The burden of mitigating problems arising from the operation and management of the adjoining site should not simply be transferred to neighbouring residents and leaseholders by requiring them to spend their own money continually increasing the security of an established residential development.

If a particular land use can only operate without unacceptable effects on its neighbours by requiring those neighbours to further fortify their property, that should itself cause the planning authority serious concern about the suitability of the continued use in this location.

6. Persistent noise and disturbance, including overnight

I have personally experienced substantial and repeated noise disturbance associated with the site and individuals in its vicinity.

This is not confined to reasonable daytime activity.

There have been instances of shouting and screaming late at night and during the early hours of the morning, at times continuing for prolonged periods.

I have personally experienced sleepless nights as a result.

Other residents have repeatedly raised similar complaints with me as part of my involvement with the RTM.

Persistent night-time disturbance affecting the occupants of immediately adjoining residential accommodation is a direct residential-amenity issue and should be afforded

significant weight when considering whether this use should continue for a further period.

7. Waste, litter and discarded drug paraphernalia

There has also been repeated dumping and accumulation of rubbish in the vicinity of the property, together with drug-related paraphernalia.

These concerns have been raised by multiple residents.

Aside from the visual impact, this affects residents' ability to use the area safely and comfortably and further contributes to the cumulative deterioration in amenity arising from the operation of the site.

8. The cumulative impact is critical

I ask the Council not to assess each of these matters in isolation.

A single episode of noise, trespass or anti-social behaviour might reasonably be regarded as an isolated management issue.

What I have personally experienced, and what other residents have independently reported to me over a period of years, is a **recurrent pattern** encompassing:

- unauthorised entry and trespass;
- individuals sleeping within our building and private facilities; repeated security incidents and theft;
- open drug use;
- discarded drug paraphernalia;
- threatening and intimidating behaviour;
- serious threats of violence;
- repeated use of our private property to access the pods;
- police attendance and serious incidents in the vicinity;
- persistent late-night and overnight noise; and
- substantial waste and litter.

The fact that residents have independently raised the same types of concerns is important.

I do not seek to present myself as speaking formally on behalf of every resident. Rather, through my role within the RTM, I am aware that **my own experiences are not isolated**.

Other residents have their own experiences which they can provide directly to the Council, whether through separate planning objections, resident statements or an evidence pack.

The relevant planning question is therefore not whether any one individual incident could theoretically occur beside any residential property.

It is whether the **continued operation and management of this particular use has, in practice, demonstrated that it can coexist satisfactorily with the residential properties immediately adjoining it.**

My own experience, reinforced by the concerns repeatedly raised with me by other residents, is that it has not.

9. A supposedly temporary use has already continued for approximately five years

The pods were introduced in extraordinary circumstances during the Covid-19 pandemic as temporary accommodation to assist people sleeping rough.

Residents accepted that a temporary response was being implemented during an unprecedented emergency.

Approximately five years later, however, the temporary use remains immediately beside our homes.

There must be a meaningful distinction between genuinely temporary planning permission and the repeated continuation of a use which causes substantial adverse effects on its immediate neighbours.

Residents have already borne those effects for a considerable period. We should not now simply be expected to accept further extensions as though the experience of those preceding years were irrelevant.

10. The proposed extension appears inconsistent with the temporary nature and planned closure of the site

The pods were established as a temporary response and there has already been a public expectation that the site would be closed.

I am therefore extremely concerned by an application which appears to seek permission for the pods to continue until **March 2028**.

I request that the planning officer expressly addresses:

1. why a further extension is necessary;
2. why this temporary use remains appropriate after approximately five years of operation;
3. what planning justification exists for extending a demonstrably problematic temporary use immediately adjacent to established homes; and
4. why adjoining residents should be expected to bear the documented adverse effects of the site for a further period.

A temporary facility should not become effectively semi-permanent through successive extensions without proper consideration of the real-world consequences experienced by those living immediately beside it.

11. Information I request the Council obtains before determination

Given the seriousness of the issues raised, I request that the Council does not determine this application without obtaining and considering, insofar as legally available:

- Thames Valley Police incident and crime information relating to the pods and their immediate vicinity during the period of operation;
- Council anti-social behaviour and community-safety records associated with the site;
- complaints and incident reports held by the Council's Housing/Homelessness services and the operator;
- records concerning boundary-security problems between the pods and our residential property, including the previous suggestion that the boundary wall should be increased in height;

- noise complaints associated with the site;
- records relating to waste, needles or other drug paraphernalia in the vicinity; and
- information demonstrating how the site has been managed and what measures have previously been introduced in response to reported incidents.

I would also ask the Council to take into account evidence submitted separately by other residents of the building. As noted above, some may submit their own planning objections, while others are able to provide supporting statements or evidence if requested.

I would welcome a **site visit by the planning case officer**, including viewing the relationship between the pods, our boundary and the adjoining residential accommodation, as the proximity of the two uses is central to understanding the effects described above.

Conclusion

I have lived beside what was presented as temporary accommodation for a substantial period.

During that time, I have personally experienced a number of the problems described in this objection. Through my role within the building's RTM company, I have also regularly spoken with other residents who have independently reported similar experiences and concerns.

These include repeated trespass, unauthorised entry, security problems, theft, drug use, threatening behaviour, serious threats of violence, substantial noise disturbance, discarded drug paraphernalia, rubbish and repeated problems associated with the shared boundary.

The fact that similar concerns have been raised by multiple residents over an extended period is important. It demonstrates that these are not simply isolated complaints from one neighbour.

The impact is not limited to individual incidents recorded in an incident log. It has changed how we live our daily lives. My partner has experienced these problems personally and has, as a result, become fearful of returning home alone. Despite our home being only around a five-minute walk from Reading station, I now regularly meet her and accompany her back because previous incidents of being followed, shouted and screamed at have left her deeply distressed and fearful of further encounters.

No resident should reasonably be expected to accept that level of disruption and fear as a normal consequence of living in their own home. The fact that a supposedly temporary use has continued for years while neighbouring residents have had to alter ordinary aspects of their lives in order to feel safe should, in my view, weigh heavily against any further extension.

I recognise the Council's responsibility to support vulnerable people and people experiencing homelessness, and I fully support the provision of suitable, properly managed accommodation for those who need it.

However, fulfilment of that responsibility does not require the indefinite continuation of a particular temporary facility where years of experience demonstrate significant adverse effects on its immediate residential neighbours.

For these reasons, **I strongly object to planning application PL/260958 and request that planning permission for the proposed extension be refused.**

Planning Applications Committee 07 October 2026		 Reading Borough Council Working better with you
Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT	
Ward	Thames	
Planning Application Reference:	PL/26/1116	
Site Address:	Hills Meadow Car Park, George Street, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8DH	
Proposed Development	Temporary erection of ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Winter Wonderland festival, for a period of time not to be before 11 October 2026 and not to extend beyond 20 January 2027. [Amended description]	
Applicant	Premier Winter Wonderland Events	
Report author	Nathalie Weekes	
Deadline:	14/12/2026	
Recommendations	Grant planning permission, subject to conditions as follows	
Conditions	1. Temporary Planning Permission 2. Approved Plans 3. Opening Hours 4. In accordance with the Event Management Plan 5. External Lighting 6. Flood Risk Measures 7. Fencing 8. Sound Levels (15dB below background levels) 9. Generator as specified in Noise Assessment	
Informatives	1. Positive and Proactive 2. Terms 3. Environmental Protection License 4. No Tree Works 5. Additional planning consent would be required for any events other than 'Winter Wonderland' that are proposed to take place between the 11 October 2026 and 20 January 2027.	

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to conditions as outlined above.
- 1.2. It is recognised that the development does not contribute positively to The Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature, however, the development is temporary with the site to be restored to its original state after 20th January 2027.
- 1.3. Policy CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 states that innovative solutions to leisure provision will be encouraged, particularly those that make best use of available

land. The Policy goes on to describe the River Thames as a prime location for new or improved tourist attractions, and as such, this area is suitable for informal recreation and sporting uses and associated temporary small-scale development. The event is considered to be a suitable use and temporary permission is recommended.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application is referred to Planning Applications Committee by virtue of the site area falling within the 'Major' applications category.
- 2.2. The proposal site is Hills Meadow Car Park in lower Caversham. The proposal site is located within Flood Zone 2, and partially within Flood Zone 3. The car park is owned by Reading Borough Council and is partially used as an events space on several occasions per year for traditional fairs and circuses. Space at Hills Meadow Car Park is regularly let out by Reading Borough Council Leisure & Recreation Service for short term seasonal events during school holidays.

2.3. Location Plan:



3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The proposed development is seeking planning permission for the temporary erection of an ice rink, marquee structures, fairground rides and ancillary side stalls in connection with the Winter Wonderland festival, for a period of time not to be before 11 October 2026 and not to extend beyond 20 January 2027. The site is to be cleared of festival apparatus by 20 January 2027. The event is to be open to the public from 11:00am to 10:00pm in accordance with an extant Premises Licence obtained for the Event under the Licensing Act 2003.
- 3.2. Schedule 2, Part 4, Class B of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 allows for the temporary use of land for any purpose for not more than 28 days in any Calendar year and for the provision on that land of any moveable structures for the purposes of the permitted use. Any days over and above those 28 days permitted in that calendar year require planning permission. This application is for a temporary use that exceeds 28 days.

3.3. The following plans have been received:

- Location Plan
- Block Plan - proposed
- Event Safety Management Plan 2026 2027
- Planning Statement prepared by ET Planning 20260818
- CIL
- 14968 - Reading winter wonderland - plant noise assessment report

As received 19 August 2026

- 214136 Hills Meadow Car Park Event Tree Method Statement
- Hoarding around the boundary

As received 14 September 2026

4. Planning history

4.1. *Application History of Proposal Site*

PL25/1225/FUL - Temporary erection of ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Christmas festival, for a period of time not to be before 13 October 2025 and not to extend beyond 16 January 2026 for a period of 1 year

PL/24/0898/FUL - Temporary erection of ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Christmas festival, for a period of time not to be before 12 October 2024 and not to extend beyond 19 January 2025 for a period of 1 year- Application permitted on 6/10/2024

PL/23/1094/FUL - Temporary erection of ice rink, marquee structure and ancillary side stalls in connection with Christmas festival, for a period of time not to be before 15 October 2023 and not to extend beyond 21 January 2024 – Application permitted on 6/10/2023

PL/22/1171/FUL - Part retrospective temporary planning permission for erection of an ice rink, with marquee structure housing skate hire (and first aid) and ancillary side stalls in connection with holding a themed Christmas festival for a period of time not to be before 16th October 2022 and not extend beyond 16th January 2023 – Application Permitted on 27/10/2022

PL/21/1918/FUL - Part retrospective temporary planning permission for erection of an ice rink, with marquee structure housing skate hire (and first aid) and ancillary side stalls in connection with holding a themed Christmas festival for a period of time not to be before 24 October 2021 and not extend beyond 16 January 2022 for a period of one year. – Application Permitted on 12/01/2022

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

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

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

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

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

5. Consultations

- 5.1. The following consultation responses were received:

RBC Transport Development Control

- 5.2 No objection. The application is for a temporary erection of an ice rink, marquee structure, ancillary stalls, fairground rides for a Christmas themed festival. Similar Christmas festival events have been run by the applicant on the site for a number of years. The main structure on the site will be the ice rink in addition to a number of other smaller structures on site and attractions. The proposed event layout is largely unchanged from previous years.
- 5.3 An event safety management plan has been submitted and details how the event organiser has arranged the use of Hills Meadow for all parking needs and the storage of vehicles needed for the set up and take down of the event, and for maintenance and restocking during the event. Gate/Security staff will monitor visitor numbers, and limit people in and out when approaching capacity.
- 5.4 In NPPF terms it is in a very sustainable location. The site is within a 5 minute walk from Reading Station and Bus Interchange, and within 10 minutes' walk of Central Reading. Hills Meadow public car park is located immediately adjacent to the site providing Pay & Display public parking spaces. Extensive parking restrictions preventing unauthorised on street parking is in place in the surrounding streets, therefore it is not anticipated that the event would cause a detrimental impact on the local highway network.
- 5.5 In view of the above, there are no transport objections to the granting of the temporary planning permission.

RBC Environmental Protection

- 5.6 The noise assessment is satisfactory, but can the applicant confirm whether there are any changes to the generator set up or running from last year. The noise issue appeared to be okay last year and no complaints were received. A list of the proposed fairground rides has been submitted for review. No objections subject to conditions and agreement to the proposed fairground rides. *Officer Comment: any further update on this matter will be reported in an update or to the PAC meeting.*

RBC Natural Environment

- 5.7 It's questionable whether the tree method statement is still relevant insofar as being up-to-date with the condition of trees and any pruning that might be required as it's nearly 2 years old – trees can change in that period of time. There are two concerns in the Tree protection plan 1) justification for the lesser fencing of orange mesh builders fence rather than Heras fencing along the edge and 2) a dedicated area within the tree /RPA zones for '*partial dodgem base and temporary caravan accommodation*': Activity should stay out of the tree / soft landscape zone as it risks damage to the trees and rooting environment, including an A category Plane tree (above). It is acknowledged that they have provided mitigation on the form of stem protection (not sufficient for Tree T009 given its low crown clearance – protection of whole canopy being necessary) and ground protection but why do they need this area? It should be off limits. *Officer comment: any further update on this matter will be reported in an update or to the PAC meeting.*

RBC Parks and Leisure Service

5.8 Flood Risk

The site is partly located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. While mitigation is proposed, the reliance on a Flood Response Plan requires ongoing monitoring. Maybe worth consulting the Environment Agency to confirm adequacy.

Noise and Amenity

Although operating hours are restricted, noise from fairground rides and background music has the potential to impact residential receptors as well as have an impact on wildlife during the event. The effectiveness of controls will depend on strict adherence to licensing conditions and rapid response protocols.

Traffic and Parking

The event will reduce the availability of existing car parking at Hills Meadow, while simultaneously generating visitor demand. The Transport Assessment could provide further detail on how parking displacement and peak-time traffic will be managed.

Cumulative Impact

Reading hosts a number of seasonal events. Consideration should be given to whether cumulative traffic, noise, and amenity impacts have been fully assessed.

Litter and Waste Management

The event is likely to generate increased levels of litter and waste from food outlets, traders, and visitors. The application would benefit from further detail on collection arrangements, frequency of on-site cleaning, and coordination with Council waste services to ensure surrounding public areas are not adversely affected.

RBC Parks has previously requested that the boundary fencing be at least 2 metres away from the perimeter skate fence for Health and Safety reasons. *Case Officer: The agent has confirmed that fencing will be at least 2 metres away from the skate park.*

RBC Licensing

- 5.9 No objection. A premises licence has been granted for the proposed temporary event.

Public/local consultation and comments received:

- 5.10 Two site notices were displayed at the application site on 15/9/2026.

At the time of writing, officers have received one objection and a comment from CADRA:

Objection: The length of set up and deconstruction has not been included in the dates proposed. Will Octoberfest also be held during the proposed time period. Additional information is required regarding the amount and type of proposed fairground rides. Three months is too long for the loss of a public facility.

CADRA (Caversham and District Residents' Association): CADRA appreciates the popularity of the annual Winter Wonderland event in Hills Meadow but is concerned about the potential damage to the grass strip, shrubs and trees along the footpath near View Island, and how flooding may affect the area during the event. The footpath is a key popular route for Lower Caversham and to View Island. The strip provides a natural environment in an urban area, supporting wildlife and helping to hide views of the rough ground and car park. Whilst the event area does not appear to encroach on the strip, in the past there has been evidence of damage from heavy construction vehicles on it, presumably caused during setup and clean up. For some years, log barriers were laid which successfully protected the strip from damage during events. CADRA believes reintroducing a simple barrier would effectively safeguard the area and ask that the area be closely monitored, to keep heavy equipment away, ensuring the strip remains unharmed. Our concern about flooding is that this can happen quickly, providing little time to move equipment, whose presence may increase the overall flood damage in the area. We also want to ensure that the arrangements for monitoring noise levels and managing traffic are adequate, so that the public's enjoyment of the popular footpath is not

negatively impacted during the period of the event. We ask the Planning Application Committee to consider all CADRA's concerns.

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) – '*proposals should apply a 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 policies S3 to S4).
- 6.2. Section 72 1 (b) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 enables local planning authorities to grant planning permission for a specified temporary period.

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 (August 2026).

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

- 7. Policies E1-4 Building a strong, effective economy
- 12. Policies L1-3 Making Effective Use of Land
- 15. Policies TR1-TR8 Promoting Sustainable Transport
- 16. Policies (HC1-8) Promoting healthy communities
- 18. Policies F1-9 Managing Flood Risk and Coastal Change
- 19. Policies N1-6 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards)

- Use of Planning Conditions

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

The relevant policies are:

- CC7 Design and the Public Realm
- CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
- EN7 Local Green Space and Public Open Space
- EN12 Biodiversity and The Green Network
- EN13 Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN18 Flooding and Drainage
- TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Parking
- CR1 Definition of Central Reading
- CR2 Design in Central Reading
- CR3 Public Realm in Central Reading
- CR4 Leisure, Culture and Tourism in Central Reading

6.3. Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Other documents

Reading Tree Strategy (2021)

Health Impact Assessment in spatial planning: a guide for local authority public health and planning teams October 2020

Local Plan Update

- 6.5 The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024.
- 6.6 Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.
- 6.7 Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this proposal listed above, is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remain very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the advice given below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

7. Appraisal

- 7.1. The main considerations are:
- Principle of Development
 - Design
 - Safeguarding Amenity
 - Flooding
 - Natural Environment
 - Transport
 - Other Matters

Principle of Development

- 7.7 Hills Meadow is a designated Local Green Space (LGS) and Public Open Space (POS) and is therefore subject to Policy EN7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Policy EN7 states that any proposals that would result in the loss of these open areas, their quality, and jeopardise their enjoyment by the public will not be permitted.
- 7.8 The proposal site is also located within The Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature (MLF) and is therefore subject to Policy EN13 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Policy EN13 states that planning permission will not be granted for any development that would detract from the character or appearance of a Major Landscape Feature.
- 7.9 Whilst the above is noted, the event itself takes place within the car park associated within Hills Meadow, upon hardstanding surfacing and not within the areas of Hills Meadow which contribute to the features of landscape importance. Moreover, the event would be set against the backdrop of mature trees lining the edge of the car park.
- 7.10 Hills Meadow Car Park is located within Central Reading, the prime focus of which is for major leisure, cultural and tourism development. One of the assessment criteria for

proposals within Central Reading under Policy CR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan is for development to make imaginative uses of open space and the public realm, which contribute to the offer of the centre. The temporary development at Hills Meadow Car Park is considered to make effective use of the car park in providing a seasonal leisure event, whilst expanding the offer of Central Reading. The temporary nature of the event also means any harmful impact on the landscape would not be permanent.

- 7.11 The development is also subject to Policy CR4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, which states that innovative solutions to leisure provision will be encouraged, particularly those that make best use of available (often limited site area). The Policy goes on to describe the River Thames as a prime location for new or improved tourist attractions, and as such, this area is suitable for informal recreation and sporting uses and associated small-scale development. The event will bring interest and additional economic activity to the town over the seasonal event period. Increased visitors may include greater trips into town, and potential secondary activities and spending associated with the main trip attending the event.
- 7.12 The proposed development is therefore considered in accordance with Policy CR4, bringing a temporary, seasonal leisure attraction to the town centre. Given the temporary context of the proposed development and the location of the development within the proposal site, it is considered that proposed temporary use of the site as an events space is appropriate.
- 7.13 It is considered appropriate to condition that the use of the site will cease, and all structures be removed by 23:59 on 20 January 2027. This is to ensure that the space is restored for full public access and use.

Design

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

Safeguarding Amenity

- 7.16 The event has been well-managed over the years and any issues are fed back each year to improve the next year's event. No complaints were received last year and the noise appeared to be acceptable. Generators will be set up in the same way and fairground rides will be the same as the previous year, a list has been provided. The RBC Environmental Protection Team have reviewed the noise assessment submitted for the generators and raised no objection. The event has been well-managed over the years and any issues are fed back each year to improve the next year's event. No complaints were received last year and the noise appeared to be acceptable.
- 7.17 The Event Safety Management Plan submitted for this application states that any music that is played will be for background purposes and will be kept low to avoid disturbance to the local residents. The Planning Statement states that, "*As any music that is played will be for background purpose we do not consider this will be a problem, but will be monitored to make sure it stays below 60-70Db.*".
- 7.18 The sound levels are to be set each day to ensure they are background level only, by means of the operator of the site, starting the sound systems prior to opening of the attractions to the public. The levels at which the music is set is below background noise levels and the organisers ensure it does not exceed the levels caused by operation of the

Winter Wonderland event itself. The setting of sound levels at this level ensures that the music level is low and not noticeable at the surrounding residents' properties. The levels are set in the morning prior to opening and those levels are policed by the organisers and no individual ride is authorised to adjust the music level.

- 7.19 One of the conditions for the Premises Licence for this event states that; "The premises licence holder shall ensure that the noise level measured at least 1m from the façade of the nearest and all other noise sensitive premises (being premises where occupants are likely to suffer from excessive noise) shall not exceed 63dBa over a 15-minute period (L_{Aeq} 15 min)". It is therefore not considered reasonable to resist planning permission on the basis that breach of noise limits can be enforced against by the Environmental Protection Team.
- 7.20 A further condition for the Premises Licence requires residents of Kingfisher Place and Cardinal Close (premises that are sensitive to noise from the event) to be provided with the contact details of the Designated Premises Supervisor. This is to ensure that any issues relating to noise are reported directly to the event organisers.
- 7.21 Similar to previous years, an additional condition is recommended in relation to sound levels from any music and other activities associated with the use.
- 7.22 This condition would state that the sound level of any music and any other activity associated within the use hereby approved shall not exceed background noise level at the façade of any residential property, when measured as L_{Aeq} (5 min) levels. This is to safeguard the living conditions of residents within the area surrounding the event, in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. This condition is stricter than the conditions set out regarding noise levels within the Premises Licence for the event.
- 7.23 Therefore, subject additional information to be provided by the agent and to conditions regarding opening hours, event management and external lighting, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Local Plan.

Flooding

- 7.24 Hills Meadow Car Park is located within Flood Zone 2, and partially within Flood Zone 3. The applicant has been asked to provide additional information to address flood risk within the Planning Statement submitted for this application. The agent has confirmed that *'in heavy rain, the marshals look at river levels. If there is any cause for concerns and the site would need to be evacuated, the marshals will announce this over tannoy's. Customers will be directed to the entrance, which has level access but is at a higher level so safe from flooding.'*
- 7.25 Additional details have been requested prior to first use of the site in relation to the construction of the event and evacuation within the flood risk statement to be considered sufficient, and detailed enough given the temporary nature of the event to be considered in accordance with Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. An updated Planning Statement will be provided prior to the PAC meeting. A condition will be attached requiring the event to be carried out in accordance with the details provided regarding flood risk management within the Planning Statement.

Natural Environment

- 7.26 As per paragraphs 5.7, clarification was requested by the Planning (Natural Environment) Team regarding the potential impact that the event would have on trees surrounding the site. It was requested that details of any pruning required be provided, along with confirmation of the details for the fencing to the perimeter of the event.
- 7.27 In response to this, the applicant has confirmed that no pruning or interference with the trees at Hills Meadow is anticipated. The fencing will be erected using weighted feet and not dug posts.

- 7.28 A condition is recommended for fencing to be erected around the perimeter of the site as defined by the red line on the location plan prior to any works commencing on site and then retained until the event's use has ceased; thereafter the site shall be returned to its original condition.
- 7.29 Therefore, subject to condition, the development is in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Local Plan.

Transport

- 7.30 The site is located adjacent to a car park providing 298 pay & display vehicle parking spaces. It is not anticipated that the event would have a detrimental impact on the local highway network due to its temporary nature and based on experience of past events. The temporary development is therefore considered in accordance with Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.
- 7.31 In response to the concerns from the objector, the disruption to the local highway network is considered to be comparatively minor and set up and set down is not anticipated to be an issue either, providing this is undertaken in accordance with the approved Events Management Plan. This is similar to the way the event has run successfully at this site for the past five winter seasons.

Response to other issues raised

- 7.32 On the subject of damage to the grass strip and trees along the footpath, the applicant has confirmed that fencing will be provided to protect the trees and the soft landscape area. An updated management plan will be provided prior to the PAC meeting. Conditions are recommended to provide tree protection during the event. The agent has confirmed that it is not proposed for the footpath to be obstructed.
- 7.33 The applicant has confirmed that the planning application is proposed for the Winter Wonderland event only from 7 November 2026 to 3 January 2027. An informative is recommended to confirm that any additional events to be held at the site would require additional planning consent.

8 Equality implications

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

9 Health implications

- 9.1 The proposed development will provide accessible facilities and is not considered to give rise to any significant adverse physical, mental or social well-being health implications. The proposal relates to a temporary event of limited duration and is not expected to result in any long-term effects on the health or wellbeing of local residents, visitors, or the wider community. Any potential impacts associated with noise, traffic movements, or increased activity would be short-term and temporary in nature. While food and drink concessions may form part of the event, the specific food offering has not been confirmed at this stage.

Any food provision would be temporary in nature and limited to the duration of the event. As such, the proposal is not considered to have a material impact on local dietary habits or public health outcomes. No specific health concerns in relation to healthy environment or open-space and recreation are identified in relation to this application. The existing open space will be retained and available for its long-term intended use following the event.

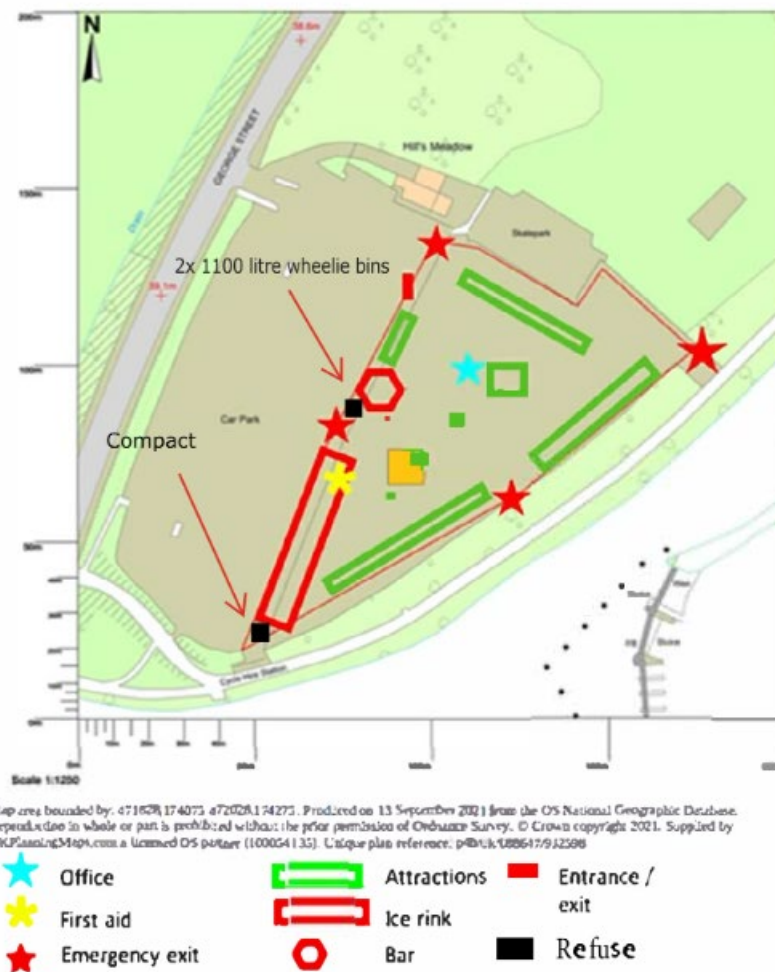
10 Conclusion & planning balance

- 10.1 This application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 10.2 Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Having gone through this process officers consider that the short-term harm to the appearance of The Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature is considered outweighed by the economic benefits of the event and the fact that the site will be returned to its original state after 20th January 2027.
- 10.3 It is considered that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. As such, this application is recommended for approval subject to conditions as set out above.

Plans & Appendices

Block Plan

Reading Winter Wonderland, Hills Meadow.



Proposed hoarding to the front



Proposed fencing to the rear



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Planning Applications Committee

07 October 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Tilehurst Ward
Planning Application Reference:	PL/26/0783 Full planning permission
Site Address:	5 CONWY CLOSE, TILEHURST, READING, RG30 4JB
Proposed Development	Change of use from a domestic integral single garage into living accommodation.
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Report author	Huimin Chen
Deadline:	16 October 2026 (EoT)
Recommendations	Approval with conditions
Conditions	1. <i>TL1 – Time Limit – Three Years</i> 2. <i>AP1 – Approved Plans</i> 3. <i>Materials (to match)</i>
Informatives	1. <i>IF1 – Positive and Proactive Working – approval</i> 2. <i>IF5 – Terms</i> 3. <i>IF7 – Complaints about Construction</i>

1. Executive summary

1.1. The proposal is to support the provision of an accessible family accommodation as part of the Council's housing stock. The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its effect on the character and appearance of the area and the effect on neighbouring amenity.

1.2. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to the conditions as outlined above.

2. Introduction and site description

2.1. The application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of the internal garage to provide an accessible living room or lounge to create ground floor family space to support accessible family accommodation.

2.2. The application is referred to Committee because it has been submitted by the Council's Housing Property Services team.

2.3. The application site consists of a 3-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse. The property is part of a small development of council stock properties constructed in 2018, located adjacent to the Thames Valley School, the Meadway Sports Centre and the Avenue Special School. The property has 4 bedrooms along with living accommodation and an internal garage, over 3 floors. The adjoining and neighbouring properties are also council-owned housing stock. The property has existing parking spaces in front of the property.

2.4. Location Plan



2.5. Site Photograph



3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The proposal does not include any extended aspect of the original build. The property has an integral garage with an internal door connection. The proposed conversion of the integral garage is to provide an accessible living room to create a ground floor family space. The existing up and over garage door will remain in situ albeit permanently fixed in place with insulated wall panel behind, this will keep the façade unchanged. In addition, an insulated wall panel would also be installed to the north-westerly wall of the existing garage. A 4-pane side window would be installed to the south elevation of the existing

garage to provide natural light to the proposed living room, with a width of approximately 1.8m and overall height of approximately 95cm. The bottom sill of this window would be approximately 1.1m away from the ground floor, while the header height is 2.1m.

3.2. The following plans would be considered:

- Location plan dated and received 12/6/2026.
- Drawing no. 1102 HTA elevations and sections rev P1, as existing, received 12/6/2026.
- Existing floor plan, received 10/7/2026.
- Site location plan, dated 3/1/2023, received 21/7/2026.
- Side elevation drawing, as proposed, received 24/7/2026.
- Plan view of ground floor layout proposal, as proposed, received 24/7/2026.
- Document for parking provision, dated and received 02/09/2026.
- Covering letter, dated 3/1/2023, received 12/6/2026.

4. Planning history

- 4.1. PL/16/1390 - Residential development comprising 57 dwellings, vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access, parking, and hard and soft landscaping and open space at land off Conwy Close. Permitted subject to Legal Agreement, 15/12/2016.
- 4.2. PL/17/1537 – Minor alterations to appearance and layout of planning permission 161390. Agreed 06/12/2017.
- 4.3. PL/18/0179 – Non-material Amendment to 161390 Block 3 to change parking layout and change windows to doors. Agreed 13/04/2018.
- 4.4. PL/24/1212 – Proposed conversion of the integral garage is to provide a wheelchair accessible wetroom and structural works to create an open plan ground floor family space. Approved 07/11/2024.

5. Consultations

- 5.1. The following consultation responses were received:

RBC Transport Development Control

- 5.2. Proposal will result in the loss of the garage to provide ancillary accommodation; this will result in the loss of a parking space.

Plans have not been provided illustrating a revised parking layout for 2 vehicles which would be required. Aerial images would appear to suggest that there is adequate width on the front drive to facilitate 2 vehicles; a shared vehicle crossing already is in place.

There are no Transport objections to this application; however, revised plans illustrating 2 parking spaces will be required.

Planning officer's note: Following the submission, on 2 September 2026, of a document for parking provision illustrating two parking spaces to the front of the property, the Transport team confirmed that the proposal is considered acceptable without the need to impose a condition for vehicle parking. It is also evident from the site visit that there is sufficient space for two vehicles to park within the site.

Public/local consultation

- 5.3. A site notice was displayed near the application site. The 21-day consultation period was from 17 August 2026 to 7 September 2026. No letters of representation have been received.

6. Legal context

- 6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals 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) – ‘*proposals should apply a 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 policies S3 to S4).

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

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026

- Chapter 14: Achieving Well-Designed Places
 - Policy DP3 – Key Principles for Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 15: Promoting sustainable transport
 - Policy TR4 – Street design, access and parking
- Chapter 17: Pollution, Public Protection and Security
 - Policy P3 – Living Conditions and Pollution

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)

H9 (House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation)

TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)

CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction)

Local Plan Update

- 6.3. The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024.
- 6.4. Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.
- 6.5. Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this proposal listed above, is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remain very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the advice given below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

7. Appraisal

- 7.1. The main considerations are:

- Character and Appearance
- Residential Amenity
- Transport
- Sustainable Design and Construction

Character and Appearance

- 7.2. Policy H9 states that an extension to a house will be acceptable where it respects the character of the house in terms of scale, location, materials, and design and respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, and any important existing building line. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant considerations for design.
- 7.3. Policy DP3 of National Planning Policy Framework 2026 requires that development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets.
- 7.4. Officers consider the conversion of the integral garage to provide a ground floor living room to support accessible family accommodation is acceptable. The existing garage door will be retained, meaning the property will have the same look and feel as the adjoining neighbour at 3 Conwy Close and the neighbouring semi-detached properties of the same age and character. Officers consider the proposed window to the south elevation would fit with the existing character and would not disrupt the existing architecture and is therefore acceptable in terms of character and appearance.
- 7.5. The proposal is considered compliant with policies H9 & CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policy DP3 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026.

Residential Amenity

- 7.6. Policy H9 states that an extension will be acceptable where it does not result in an overbearing impact on neighbours. Policy CC8 states an extension to a house will be acceptable where it will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.
- 7.7. Policy P3 of National Planning Policy Framework 2026 also states that development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of living conditions and the natural environment, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity.
- 7.8. The proposed window to the west elevation is not considered harmful to residential amenity as it would be directly facing the 1.8m height boundary fencing with No.7 Conwy Close and would not result in loss of privacy to neighbours.
- 7.9. The outlook from the window and the daylight received would be constrained by the boundary fence and adjacent house. However this arrangement cannot be altered and the benefits of providing the additional living accommodation are considered to outweigh any harm to the amenity of occupiers of the existing dwelling.
- 7.10. The proposal is considered compliant with policies H9 & CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policy P3 of National Planning Policy Framework 2026.

Transport

- 7.11. The Highway Authority was consulted as the proposal includes converting the integral garage. The submitted drawings and site visit confirm that the property benefits from a large block paved driveway offering parking for 2 vehicles. The Highway Authority has no objections.
- 7.12. Officers consider the proposal will be compliant with Policy TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policy TR4 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026.

Sustainable Design and Construction

- 7.13. Policy CC2 states that proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals,

materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

- 7.14. Whilst the above policy is not directly applicable to this type of application, officers note that the proposal includes constructing a section of insulated wall behind the garage door façade to help reduce the home's energy consumption.
- 7.15. Officers consider the proposal will be compliant with policy CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

8. Equality implications

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

9. Health Implications

- 9.1. The proposed development principally involves the conversion of the existing integral garage to provide accessible ground-floor living accommodation. The external appearance of the dwelling would remain largely unchanged. The proposal is not considered to give rise to any adverse implications for physical, mental or social well-being. Rather, the provision of accessible ground-floor living accommodation would improve the accessibility and functionality of the dwelling and is considered to have positive health and well-being implications for its occupants.

10. Conclusion and Planning Balance

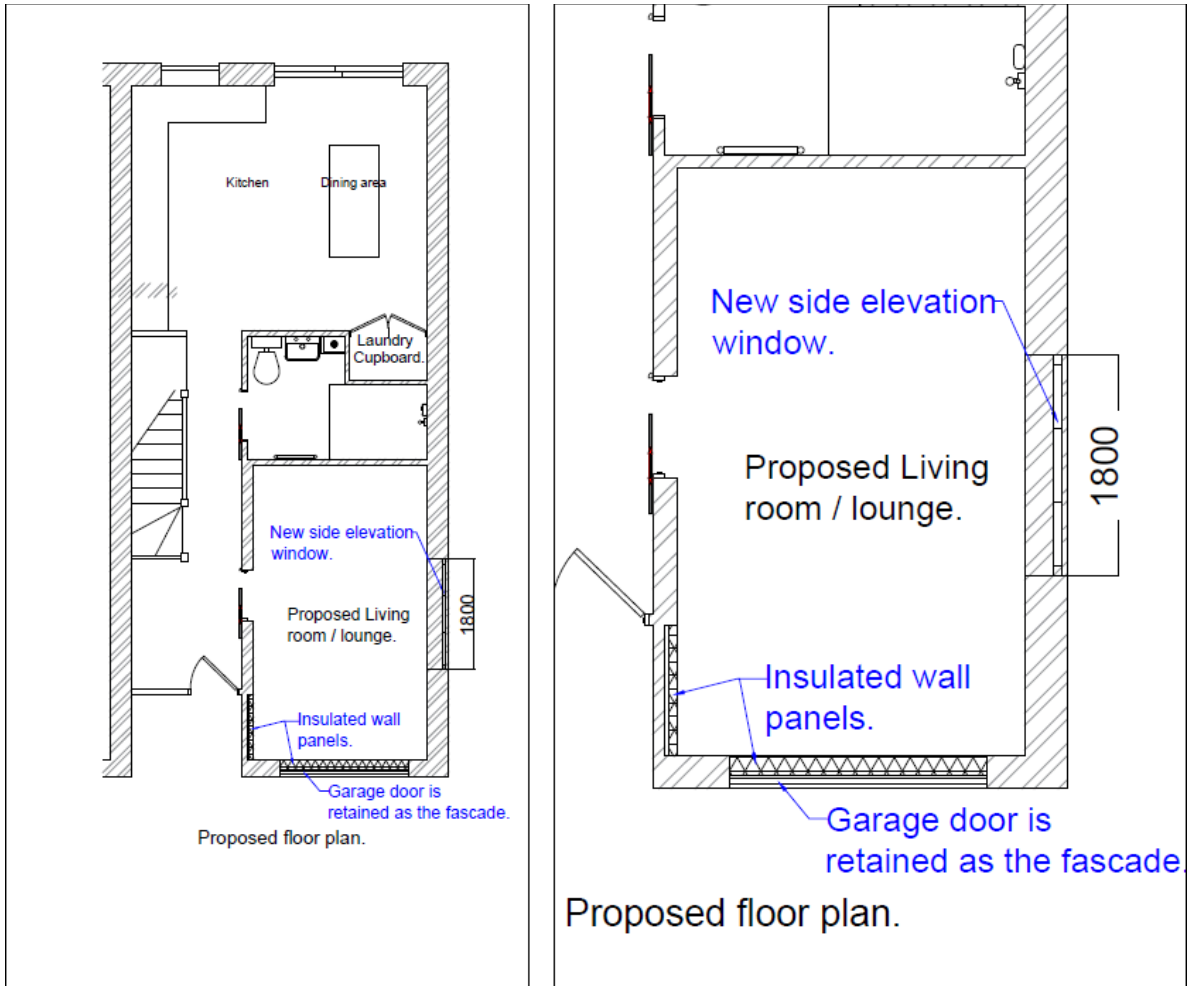
- 10.1. This application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 10.2. Any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. Having gone through this process, officers consider that the proposed garage conversion to provide an accessible ground-floor living room would not result in harm to the living conditions of occupiers of neighbouring houses. The somewhat restricted outlook and daylight serving the new living room is considered to be outweighed by the benefits of improved accessibility and liveability for occupiers of the existing dwelling. The proposals would not adversely affect the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the wider area. As such, this application is recommended for Approval subject to conditions.

Plans & Appendices

Plans



Site Layout Plan



Proposed Side (South) Elevation – No Changes to Other Elevations

