

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 9

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 5th December 2018

Ward: Minster

App No.: 181448/REG3

Site Address: Riversley Court, 205 Wensley Road, Reading

Proposal: Single storey detached prefabricated water storage and treatment plant room

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Date valid: 30<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Target Determination Date: 25<sup>th</sup> October 2018 (agreed extension to 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018)

### RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT Full Planning Permission subject to conditions:

#### Conditions:

1. Time limit for implementation
2. Materials
3. Approved plans
4. Fence Details
5. Landscaping - Details to be submitted including 2 replacement trees
6. Landscaping Implementation
7. Landscaping Maintenance
8. Arboricultural Method Statement
9. Construction Management Statement

#### Informatives:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Building control
3. Encroachment
4. Thames Water Build Over Agreement
5. Positive and proactive

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application relates to land to the north west of the Riversley Court block of flats, adjacent the car park serving these flats.
- 1.2 This minor application is reported to Planning Applications Committee as Reading Borough Council is the applicant.

## Location Plan (Not to scale)



## 2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal seeks planning permission for a single storey detached pre-fabricated outbuilding to serve a water storage and treatment plant room. It would be located next to the existing cold water booster plant room. It would measure 4.2m in width and 9.5m in depth. The roof would be flat, at a height of 3.2m.
- 2.2 The proposals also incorporate fencing (timber and metal) along the west side of the structure, with proposed planting in front of the fencing.
- 2.3 To facilitate the structure, it is proposed to remove an Oak tree.

## 3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 None relevant.

## 4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Public consultation  
The occupiers of the flats at Wensley Court, Riverseley Court and Irving Court have been notified of the application and a site notice has also been displayed at the site.
- 4.2 No neighbour letters of representation received.

- 4.3 RBC Transport: No objection subject to condition (CMS).
- 4.4 Natural Environment/Parks: Concerns originally raised about the loss of the Oak Tree. However, upon further inspection, its retention was not considered critical. No objection subject to replacement tree planting and landscaping conditions.

## 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. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Local Development Framework 'Core Strategy' 2008 (Altered 2015) and 'Sites and Detailed Policies Document' 2012 (Altered 2015).

5.2 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (2018)  
National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008) Policies

CS7: Design and the Public Realm  
CS28: Loss of Open Space  
CS38: Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) Policies:

DM4: Safeguarding Amenity  
DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters  
DM18: Tree Planting

## 6. APPRAISAL

Design, impact on the host dwelling, character of the area and street scene

- 6.1 The proposal is considered in the context of any impact on the character of the existing residential blocks and the estate as a whole, the adjacent park and the public footpath which runs through the area.
- 6.2 The proposed structure would have a similar footprint to the existing plant room. Whilst it would be slightly higher, it would remain single storey and with a flat roof to minimise the bulk and to reflect the existing plant room. It is recognised that the structure would be located close to the public footpath which goes through the site and, as such, would be highly visible. In this respect, fencing is proposed to partially screen the development and it is considered that soft landscaping, as indicated, would be appropriate to soften the appearance of the development which could be secured by way of a suitably worded condition. Taking into account the existing outbuilding and its relationship with the character of the surrounding area, the proposal is not considered inappropriate.
- 6.3 Whilst the site is not allocated as designated open space, Policy CS28 states that this (non designation) does not imply that other areas of open space or recreational land serve no purpose and need less protection from development. As above, the proposal would be close to the footpath and adjacent play area. It is considered that the proposed replacement tree planting and soft landscaping would help to minimise the impact of the development but also soften the

appearance of the existing structure, also close to the footpath. In the context of its location on the periphery of the recreational area it is not considered to result in any unacceptable harm.

- 6.4 Given the above, and with regards to the current context, it is not considered that the proposal would have any adverse effect on the character and appearance of the existing residential blocks and the wider estate as a whole, or the character of the adjacent pathway and play area such to warrant a refusal.
- 6.5 The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS28 of the Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015) and Policy DM9 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015).

#### Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

- 6.6 Given the position, scale and nature of the proposed structure there would be no material loss of amenity to any neighbouring property.
- 6.7 It is unlikely that any additional noise would result than from the use of the structure than at present and no significant harm to neighbouring occupiers in terms of noise or disturbance is considered to be caused.
- 6.8 The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015).

#### Impact on the Natural Environment

- 6.9 Concerns were originally raised about the removal of an Oak tree to facilitate the proposals. However, upon further inspection, the condition of the tree was recognised to be poor and not worthy of retention in this instance. The applicant submitted its reason for the proposed location (ease of installation and for the visual impact that the new structure would have) and also submitted an Arboricultural Report. The Council's Tree Officer confirmed that there was no objection to the loss of the tree, subject to replacement tree planting which could be secured by way of a suitably worded condition. On this basis, it is considered that these measures outweigh any harm resulting from the loss of the tree and there are no landscape objections to the proposal.
- 6.10 The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS36 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015).

#### Impact on Parking/Highways

- 6.11 Given the nature of the proposal, there would be no impact on parking arrangements or impact on other road users. No transport objection subject to submission of a Construction Method Statement prior to commencement of works.
- 6.12 The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policy DM12 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (altered 2015).

#### Other Issues

- 6.13 In relation to planning conditions, in line with section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended), which came into force on 01/10/18, discussions have been undertaken with the applicant regarding pre-commencement

conditions. The applicant has formally agreed to the recommended pre-commencement conditions via return email on 22/11/18.  
Equalities Act

- 6.14 Finally, in terms of equality, in determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, 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.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions.

### **Plans:**

Drawing No: Location Plan RDG PL A 0101

Drawing No: Site Plan RDG PL A 0102

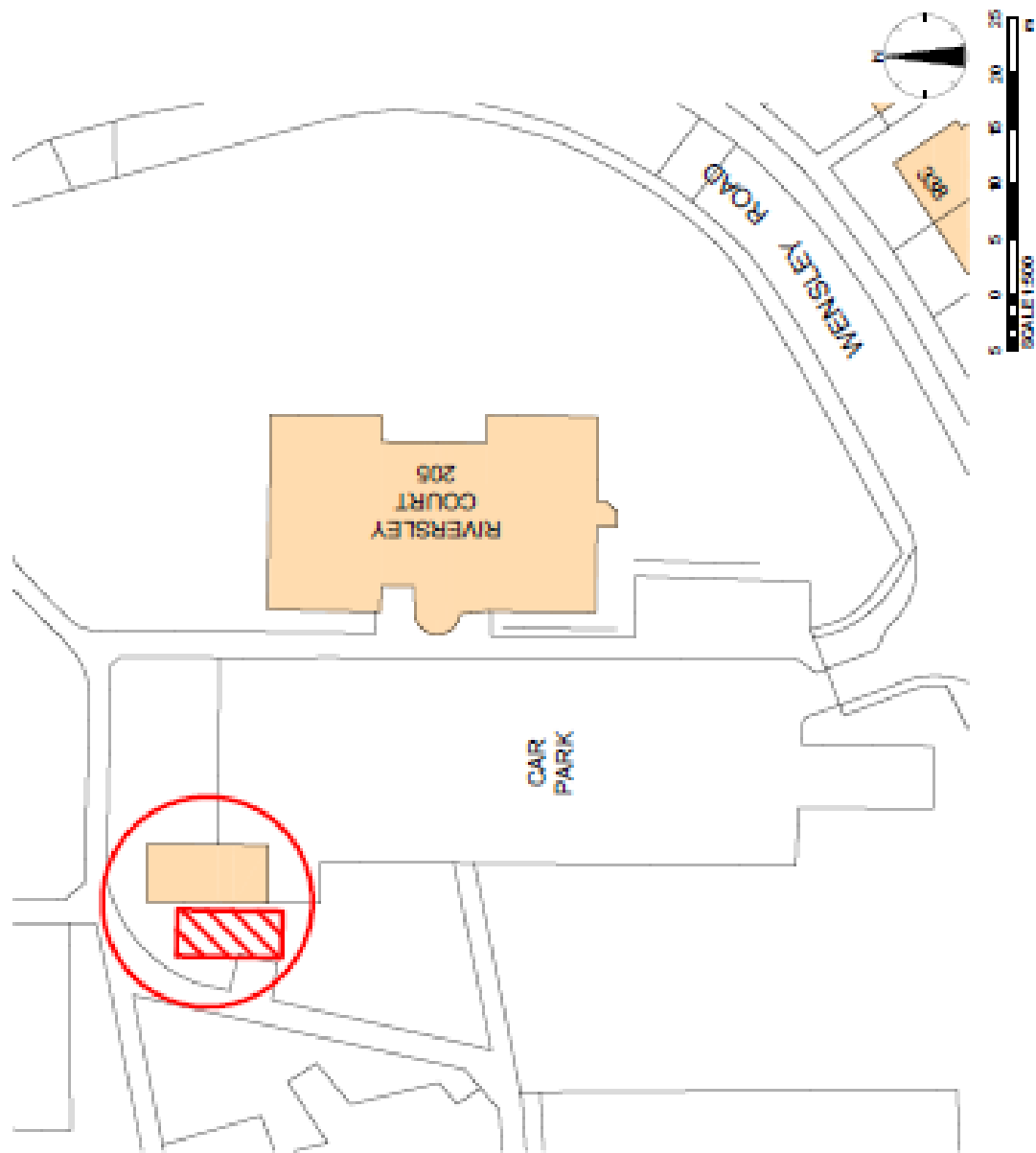
Received 16<sup>th</sup> August 2018

Drawing No: Existing and Proposed Layout Plans RDG PL A 104 Rev A

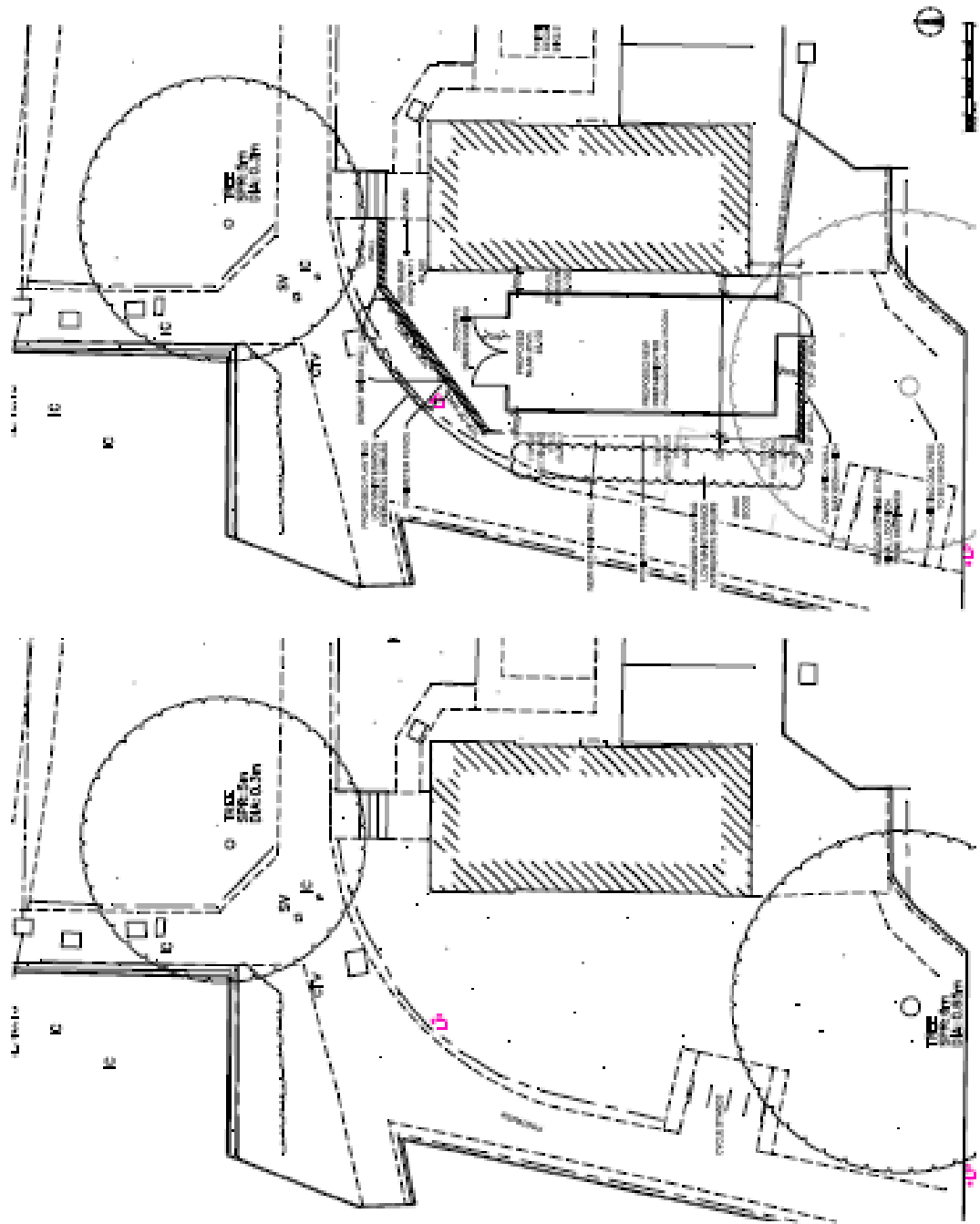
Drawing No: Existing and Proposed Elevations RDG PL A 103 Rev A

Received 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018

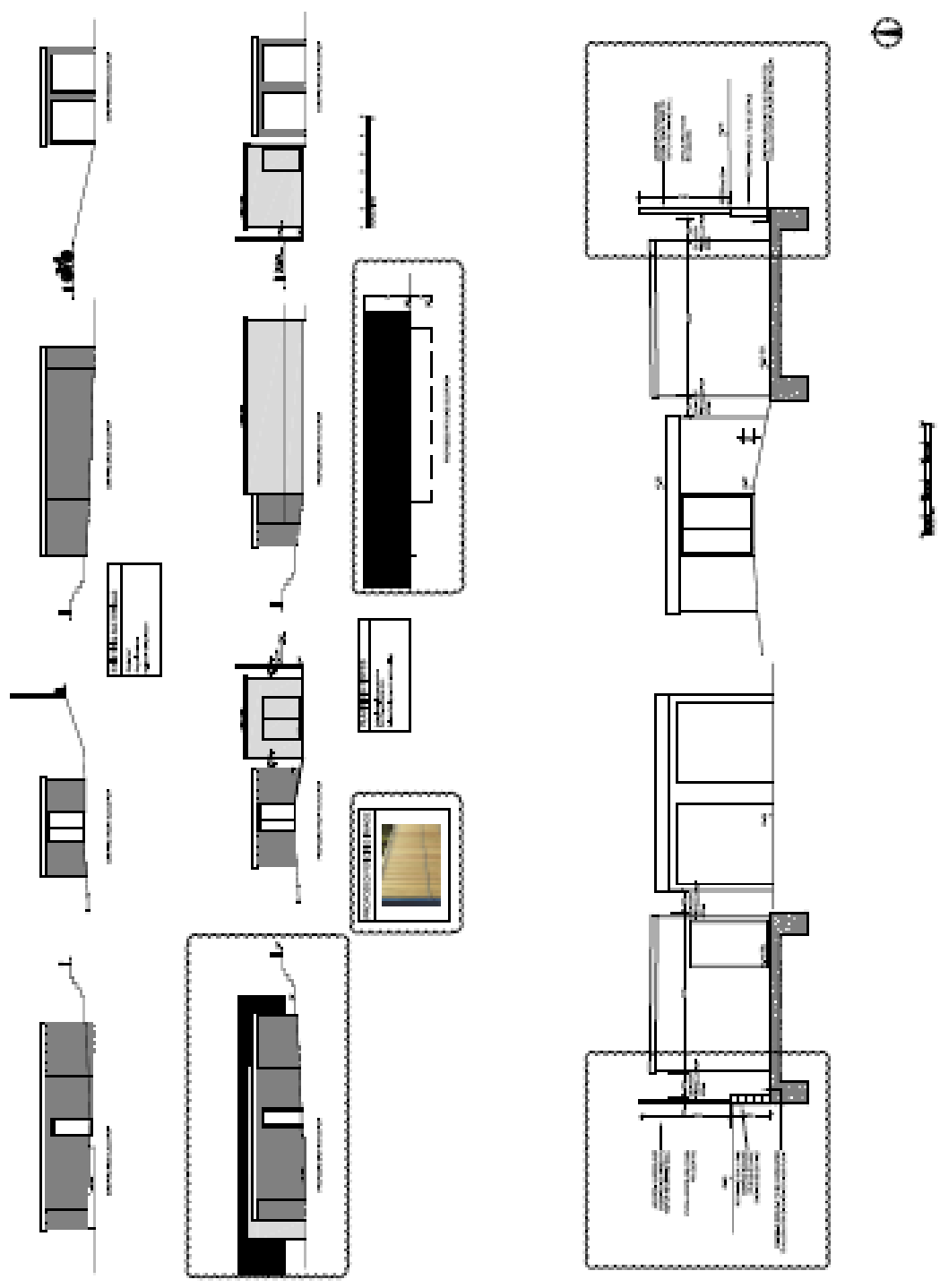
**Case Officer:** Ethne Humphreys



Proposed Site Plan



Existing and Proposed Layout



Existing and Proposed Elevations