

10 September 2025

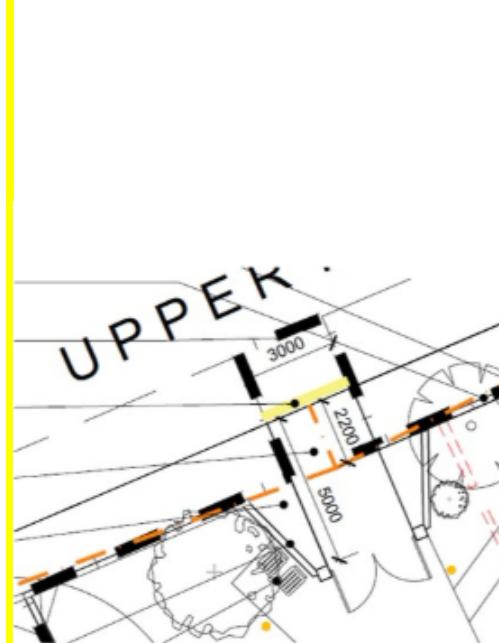
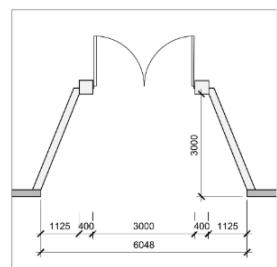
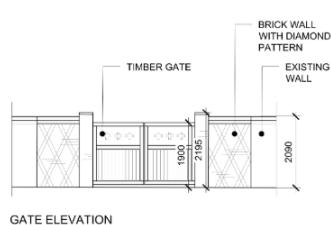


Title	PLANNING APPLICATION UPDATE REPORT
Ward	Redlands
Planning Application Reference:	PL/25/0620 (FUL)
Site Address:	Land adjacent 43 Upper Redlands Road, Reading
Proposed Development	Self-build erection of a single dwellinghouse, with associated access, parking and landscaping, including the relocation of a boundary wall and the removal of a bunker structure
Report author	Ethne Humphreys

1. Comments provided by Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

- 1.1. Officers have received a request from the Conservation Area Advisory Committee for their comments to be provided to Planning Applications Committee in full and these are now provided as an appendix to this update Report.
- 1.2. CAAC are also concerned that some of their comments have not been dealt with in the officer report, and these are:
 - Our comments (para 2.4) on the vehicle access gateway are not limited to the pattern on the bricks but to the nature of the access itself;

Officer comment: An opening in the boundary wall to provide a new access was accepted under application 21/0308. The set back of the gate was preferred as means that in oblique views the gap in the boundary wall is less noticeable. Transport are content as a 5m setback from the edge of the carriageway is provided.



- Our comment on rooflights (para 3.1) has not been responded to;

Officer comment: The two rooflights serve bedroom 4 and face Upper Redlands Road.



They are both small in size and set high on the roof so not easily visible from the street. Also officers can ensure through recommended condition 3 (Pre-commencement material details and samples (to be approved)) that conservation style rooflights are used.

- The purpose of the chimney (para 3.2) is not given;

Officer comment: This is a flue serving the en-suite bathroom oe

- We feel that even if the bunker is to be removed, the structure should be documented and if possible its original purpose ascertained;

Officer comment: While there is no objection to the removal of the bunker the request by CAAC for the appearance and location to be documented is reasonable. Requiring that its location is documented as a planning condition is not reasonable in this case but a planning informative inviting the applicant to allow access to enable photographs and research to be undertaken before demolition would be acceptable.

- In relation to the original plot dividing wall (para 2.2) that is to be moved, our reading of (page 7) of the Design & Access Statement of the granted application PL/21/0308 was that it was to be retained as the ground floor wall of the new property. This may have been changed in the final version of the approved plans.

Officer comment: as explained in paragraph 7.24 of the main report the boundary wall in question runs north/south down the middle of the site. Whilst there is no requirement to consider its retention, it is recognised to be an original feature of the site. As such, it is proposed to relocate to form the western site boundary. It is noted that approval 21/0308 did not propose or require the retention of this wall and its proposed relocation is considered to be positive. The Council's Conservation Officer raised no concern in this respect.

2. Conclusion

4.1 Officers are grateful to CAAC for their observations and comments and are satisfied that in overall terms the planning merits of the proposals outweigh concerns raised. The application is recommended for approval as in main report.

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys / Julie Williams

Appendix



Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee
23 June 2025

Dear Ethne Humphreys

COMMENTS ON APPLICATION PL/25/0620

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee make the following observations and objections to the proposal to build a house on land adjacent to 43 Upper Redlands Road.

1. SUMMARY

- A full heritage statement has not been provided. The heritage assessment section that forms part of the planning statement provides insufficient detail.
- Plans show that the wall running north/ south down the middle of the property is to be relocated. The wall is significant to an understanding of the development of the site and needs justification if it is to be moved/removed. We would prefer to see it incorporated into the landscaping plan.
- We object to the decorative brickwork on either side of the gateposts copying the brickwork on Wantage Hall. This detracts from the impact of Wantage Hall (a listed building) and therefore conflicts with policy EN1 and also detracts from the plain wall itself which is a feature of the conservation area and therefore conflicts with policy EN3.
- Further investigation into the purpose and age of the bunker structure is required.
- The design is preferable to the last pastiche proposal (refused) but we object to the roof lights facing Upper Redlands Road which do not enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. The location and design of the chimney spoils the roofline. Both of these features conflict with Policy EN6.

2. HERITAGE

2.1.1 The land lies within character area 1 of the Redlands Conservation Area on a currently vacant L-shaped plot comprising some of the rear garden of 45 Upper Redlands Road and a plot of land between 43 and 45 Upper Redlands Road that appears never to have been built on.



Figure 1 Extract from OS map 1872-1877 published 1883. Courtesy National Library of Scotland. Approx site of proposed development on land adjacent to 43 Upper Redlands Road within area circled

2.1.2 A heritage statement forms part of the planning statement but provides insufficient detail of previous development of the site and the impact that this proposal would have on the Redlands Conservation Area and Grade II listed Wantage Hall opposite. Paragraph 4.5 of the Design & Access Statement says that a full heritage statement is provided but if it has not, it should be requested from the applicant.

2.2 The garden wall

2.2.1 There is currently a wall down the north/south middle of the site which separates the vacant plot from the area that used to be part of the grounds of 45 Upper Redlands Road. We could not find any images of the wall included with the application. The plan (24-J4673-01-002) says that this is to be relocated and to the southern site boundary (Planning Statement para 5.5). Part of the wall is marked on the Tree Survey Plan as a 'retaining wall'. The previously approved application for this site retained this wall.

2.2.2 This wall is significant to an understanding of the development of the site and needs justification if it is to be moved/removed.

2.2.3 More serious consideration should be given to including the 'historic' wall in the planned landscaping rather than unimaginatively levelling the whole of the site.

2.3 The bunker

2.3.1 Within the heritage statement there should be an investigation as to the age and purpose of the bunker. It lies within the previous garden area of 45 Upper Redlands Road. Is it an air raid shelter or did it have another purpose? There are a couple of photos in the Tree Survey report.

2.3.2 Rather than removal, consideration should be given to finding a use for it within the grounds of the new house. We do not believe that it is located in part of the site that will negatively impact construction. We also note comments of the Natural Environment Officer in relation to the bunker.

2.4 Vehicle access

2.4.1 We are confused about the set-back of the gate from the road. The Design & Access Statement says in para 3.4, Pre-app Conclusions PL/24/1584, that a 5m set back is required, but this proposal only gives a 3m set back. The set-back means that a new section of wall has to be built in the recess linking the gate

pillars and the wall. A wider gate which does not require a set-back would be preferable to maintain a continuous boundary with the road, as in the previously approved application. If a set-back is required, the wall should be plain brick to match the existing wall. We object to the current materials palette.

2.4.2 Harm is caused to the setting of Grade II listed Wantage Hall by the use of decorative brickwork on either side of the gateposts. The decoration detracts from the impact of Wantage Hall's own decorative brickwork and therefore conflicts with Policy EN1. It also detracts from the plain wall along Upper Redlands Road into which the vehicular entrance will be inserted. Property walls are important and mentioned in the CA appraisal, Character Area 1 'Properties here and throughout the Conservation Area are "linked" by frontage brick walls and/or low brick walls with railings above, and good tree cover behind.' The patterned wall conflicts with policy EN3. It should be noted that an application '[Victorian Walls on Redlands Road, Upper Redlands Road and New Road](#)' was made to list the wall in 2019 which was refused with the conclusion 'However the walls do have clear local interest and add to the built texture of this part of Reading.'

2.5 Materials

2.5 Approval of all materials should be secured by condition.

3. DESIGN

3.1 We agree that this proposal is preferable to the last refused pastiche but we object to the roof lights facing Upper Redlands Road which do not enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and should be removed and the second floor design changed to accommodate this.

3.2 It is unclear if the chimney is purely decorative or if it serves a purpose. The design and positioning as shown in the elevations is a negative feature of the roof line. Both these design features conflict with Policy EN6.

4. LANDSCAPE AND TREES

4.1 We note and support the comments of the Natural Environment Officer in relation to landscaping and diversity of proposed planting.

4.2 We are particularly concerned about damage to the Tulip Tree marked as a 'Category A tree' within the grounds of 45 Upper Redlands Road in the creation of parking spaces.

4.3 The approved felling of the 26 trees (PL/25/0378) on site will have caused significant harm to the bosky character and appearance of the conservation area for which a considerable amount of mitigation planting will be required to overcome the negative visual and biodiversity impact.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Please consider our objections and observations in arriving at a decision on this application.

Yours sincerely

Evelyn Williams
Chair Reading CAAC

On behalf of Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee