

Planning Applications Committee

22 July 2026



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Thames Ward
Planning Application Reference:	PL/25/0697 Removal/variation of conditions
Site Address:	Former Gas Holder site, Alexander Turner Close, Reading, RG1 3EA
Proposed Development	Demolition of existing buildings and Gas Holder and the erection of new buildings ranging between 2 and 9 storeys in height, providing 130 residential units (Class C3) with associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space without complying with conditions 2 (approved plans), 11 (noise mitigation), 12 (ventilation strategy), 26 (SuDS) and 35 (vehicle parking) of planning permission ref. PL/19/0627 for changes to design, layout, unit mix, vehicle parking, refuse storage, landscaping, noise mitigation, ventilation strategy and energy strategy
Applicant	Mr Joshua Austin
Report author	Matthew Burns
Deadline:	13 week decision date: 22/08/2025 Extension of time date: 31/07/2026
Recommendations	GRANT Variation of conditions of planning permission PL/19/0627 as specified below
Conditions	<i>All condition number references as per original planning permission decision notice attached as appendix 3 to this report</i> <u>Varied Conditions as proposed:</u> 2. List of approved plans – varied accordingly to reflect the proposed plans submitted 11. Prior to occupation of each phase of the development implementation of noise mitigation measures – varied to reflect the proposed revised noise assessment and mitigation scheme submitted 12. Prior to occupation of each phase of the development implementation of the ventilation system – varied to reflect the proposed revised strategy submitted 26. Development to be carried out in accordance with the approved SuDS strategy, maintenance and management plan – varied to reflect the proposed revised SuDS scheme submitted 35. Prior to occupation of each phase of the development submission and approval of details of visitor parking spaces and provision of all vehicle parking for each phase prior to occupation of that phase – varied to reflect the revised vehicle parking proposals and phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655

Other Conditions varied to reflect various approval of details reserved by condition (APC) applications and non-material amendment (NMA) applications that have been approved since the original planning permission was granted:

3. Prior to occupation of each phase of the development submission and approval of cycle parking details for that phase – phased approach introduced following approved of NMA ref. PL/23/1655
4. Prior to occupation of each phase of the development implementation of the vehicle access serving that phase – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655
5. Prior to occupation of each phase of the development implementation of the approach refuse and recycling stores – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655
7. Condition requiring submission and approval of details of surface water infiltration changed to a compliance condition following approval of APC ref. PL/23/1852
15. Prior to occupation of Buildings A and B provision of the lifts serving each building – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655
17. Condition requiring submission and approval of contamination assessment changed to a compliance condition following approval of APC ref. PL/23/1060
18. Condition requiring submission and approval of contamination remediation assessment changed to a compliance condition following approval of APC ref. PL/24/0361
21. Condition requiring submission and approval of an arboricultural method statement changed to a compliance condition following approval of APC re. PL/23/1546
22. Prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level submission and approval of a habitat enhancement scheme (including Peregrine Falcon platform) – trigger for submission of details changed to prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1544
23. Prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level submission and approval of scheme for re-use of 1887 cast iron item - trigger for submission of details changed to prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level following approval of NMA ref PL/23/1545
24. Condition requiring submission and approval of a construction method statement changed to a compliance condition following approval of APC ref. PL/23/1585
- 25 i). Condition requiring submission and approval of a scheme to provide an ecological buffer zone along the bank of the River Kennet during construction changed to a compliance condition following approval of APC ref. PL/24/0550. Condition 25 split into parts i) and ii) following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1544
- 25 ii). Prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level submission and approval of a scheme to provide, maintain and manage an ecological buffer zone along the bank of the River Kennet during occupation of the development – trigger for submission of details changed to prior to commencement beyond foundation level following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1544
27. Prior to occupation of each phase of the development implementation of the approved SuDS scheme for that phase (as approved under condition 26) – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655

	28. Condition requiring submission and approval of a land gas assessment changed to a compliance condition following approval of APC ref. PL/23/1565 29. Condition requiring submission and approval of a land gas remediation strategy changed to a compliance condition following approval of APC ref. PL/23/1589 31. Prior to commencement of development of any phase beyond foundation level submission and approval of an external lighting scheme for that phase - phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 32. Prior to commencement of development of any phase beyond foundation level submission and approval of a glint and glare study for that phase – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 33. Prior to commencement of development of any phase beyond foundation level submission and approval of a hard and soft landscaping scheme for that phase – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 34. Prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level submission and approval of a scheme of materials for all external surfaces for that phase – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 36. Prior to occupation of each phase submission and approval of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan for that phase – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 38. Prior to occupation of each phase submission and approval of details of boundary treatments for that phase – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 39. Prior to occupation of any part of the development submission and approval of details of all on-site play facilities and provision of all play facilities prior to occupation of 50% of the dwellings – trigger for provision of play facilities changed to prior to occupation of 50% of the dwellings following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 40. Prior to occupation of each phase submission and approval of details of measure to prevent pests and vermin accessing the bin stores for that phase - phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 41. Prior to occupation of any part of the development submission and approval of details of entrance signage and sculptural elements and implementation prior to occupation of 50% of the dwellings – trigger for implementation changed to prior to occupation of 50% of the dwellings following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 42. Prior to occupation of each phase submission and approval of as-built SAP assessment for each dwelling - phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 43. Prior to occupation of any part of the development submission and approval of details of an electric vehicle charging scheme and no phase of the development to be occupied until the scheme for that phase has been implemented - phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 44. Prior to commencement of development of any phase submission and approval of details of finished floor levels for that phase - phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 45. Prior to occupation of each phase submission and approval of security strategy and no phase to be occupied until the strategy for that phase has been implemented – phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655
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	48. Implementation of the development in accordance with phasing plans - phased approach introduced following approval of NMA ref. PL/23/1655 <u>Review of other conditions as per the original permission, for inclusion on the future decision notice (as per Planning Practice Guidance on flexible options for planning permissions) summarised as follows:</u> 6. No construction piling to be carried out unless details first submitted and approved by the LPA – no change 8. Flat roof of the car park not to be used for roof garden or similar amenity area – no change 9. No fixing or installing of miscellaneous item to the external faces or roof of any building without the prior approval from the LPA – no change 10. Provision and maintenance of 7 wheelchair user adaptable units within Buildings A and B – no change 13. Construction, demolition and delivery hours (compliance condition) – no change 14. No burning of construction of green waste on site – no change 16. All demolition to be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season – no change 19. Prior to commencement of construction above foundation level submission and approval of a validation report demonstrating implementation of the approved contamination remediation measures – no change 20. Reporting of any unidentified contamination – no change 30. Prior to occupation of any part of the development submission and approval of validation report demonstrating implementation of the approval land gas remediation measures – no change 37. Prior to occupation of any part of the development implementation of all approved flood mitigation and protection measures – no change 46. Within 5 months of occupation of the 65 dwellings submission and approval of a travel plan – no change 47. Annual review of the travel plan for 5 years from first approval – no change
Informatives	As per the extant planning permission

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This application seeks to vary conditions attached to the extant planning permission for the redevelopment of the former Gas Holder site at Alexander Turner Close, which already benefits from an implemented permission for 130 residential dwellings.
- 1.2. The proposed amendments are primarily required to address updated Building Regulations, fire safety and energy efficiency requirements. The changes include a second stair core and evacuation lift in Building B, revisions to internal layouts, updated parking, cycle parking and refuse arrangements, amendments to landscaping and drainage, and a revised energy strategy removing reliance upon gas combi boilers and instead proposed photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps.
- 1.3. The development would continue to provide 130 dwellings, retain the approved affordable housing provision secured through the existing Section 106 Agreement, and deliver the same public open space, riverside landscaping and pedestrian connections benefits as the approved scheme.

- 1.4. Officers consider that the proposed changes would have no unacceptable impacts on design quality, residential amenity, transport, biodiversity, flood risk or the wider character of the area. In particular, the revised energy strategy would significantly improve the environmental performance of the development and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
- 1.5. Taking account of the Development Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and all material considerations, the proposed amendments are considered acceptable, and planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to revised conditions and the continued application of the existing Section 106 obligations.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application site measures 0.71 hectares and is broadly triangular in shape. It is bounded by the River Kennet to the south and the east, railway lines to the north, which sit on a 3.5-meter-high embankment, and residential development to the west. This includes the Kennet Walk development and the more recent development along Robert Parker Road and Alexander Turner Close.
- 2.2. The site was formerly occupied by a 33-metre-high Gas Holder, ancillary buildings and a water tower. However, these buildings were demolished under prior approval demolition consent ref. PL/20/1269/DEM in 2022 with the site cleared down to hardstanding.
- 2.3. The north and south boundaries of the site benefit from existing vegetation, predominately in the form of trees, although the majority of these are situated beyond the application boundary for the site. There is a pedestrian footbridge crossing the River Kennet adjacent to the site, which provides access to New Town. In terms of vehicular access to the site, the only access is from Alexander Turner Close which connects to Robert Parker Road.
- 2.4. As well as the Grade II Listed New Town Primary School building, which is situated to the south of the site on the opposite side of the river, the railway bridge to the north-east of the Site is also Grade II listed. These and other local heritage assets are given full consideration in the Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (HTVIA) which accompanies this application. The site does not lie within a Conservation Area.
- 2.5. Part of the site falls within the Reading Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) due to its proximity to the railway line where it passes through the built-up area. The site also falls within Flood Zone 2.

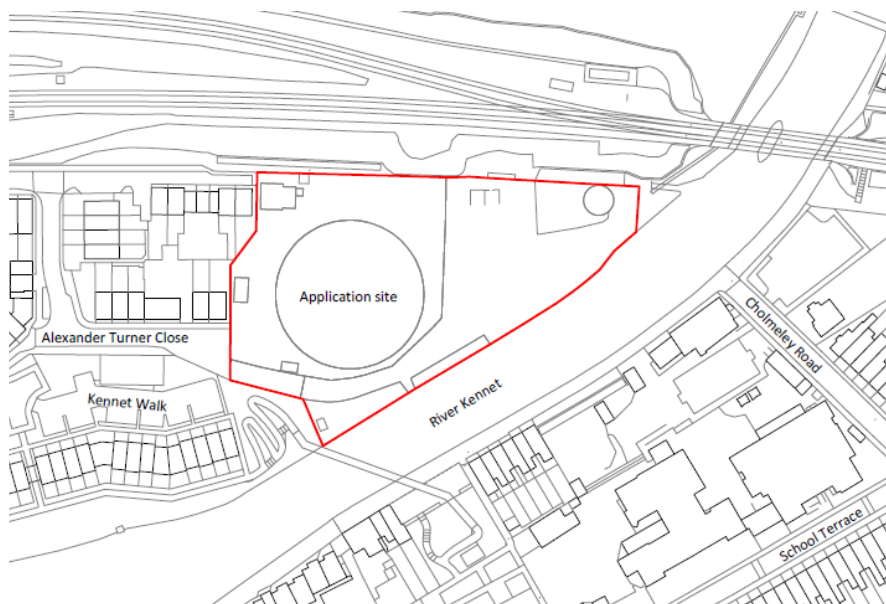


Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

- 2.6. The site also forms the far eastern corner of the East Side Major Opportunity Area (EMOA) which has been allocated for development as a new community at the eastern fringes of the centre in the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. Within the EMOA the Gas Holder Site is allocated under Policy CR13d (Gas Holder) for residential development of up to

46-70 dwellings which should enhance the character of the mouth of the Kennet and should maximise the potential of the site to be a river gateway to Reading.

- 2.7 Planning permission ref. PL/19/0627/FUL was granted at the site on 16th July 2021 for *demolition of existing buildings and Gas Holder and the erection of new buildings ranging between 2 and 9 storeys in height, providing 130 residential units (Class C3) with associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space*. The planning permission was implemented on 8th July 2024 when works to set out the foundations of the access road into the site from Alexander Turner Close were carried out on site. No further works beyond this have progressed at the site since 2024.
- 2.8 The approved development is for the erection of 3 new buildings at the site ranging between 2 and 9 storeys in height, providing 130 residential units (Class C3) with associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space. The approved buildings consist of a 5 storey apartment building (Building A) parallel with but set back from the river edge, a taller 9 storey building on the northern boundary incorporating a covered 2 storey car park (Building B) and a 2 storey building (Building C) forming an extension to the existing homes along Alexander Turner Close. 127 car parking spaces would be provided as part of the development.
- 2.9 A copy of the officer committee report (and update report) to November 2019 Planning Applications Committee with full details of the approved development, including secured s106 obligations as well as the original planning permission decision notice showing the full approved conditions, are attached to this report as appendix 1, 2 and 3.
- 2.10 Approved Building A comprises 38 market apartments (including 3 wheelchair accessible homes) consisting of 13 x 1-bedroom apartments, 20 x 2-bedroom apartments and 5 x 3-bedroom apartments. Approved Building B comprises 82 units including 4 wheelchair accessible homes) consisting of 35 x 1-bedroom apartments, 45 x 2-bedroom apartments and 2 x 2-bedroom apartments. This includes 3 x 2-bedroom duplexes and 2 x 3-bedroom duplexes at ground floor level which form part of the affordable housing provision. The building is split into two staggered but connected parts with 114 car parking spaces to be provided within the two-level covered car park including accessible and electric charging spaces. Building C comprises solely affordable housing units with 10 to be provided. This consists of 2 apartments (1 x 2 bedroom and 1 x 3 bedroom) at ground floor level with 8 x 2-bedroom apartments located at first and second floor level. 13 car parking spaces (including disabled parking) would be located to the front of the building.
- 2.11 The approved development as a whole provides for a unit mix of 48 x 1-bedroom apartments (36.9%), 74 x 2-bedroom apartments (56.9%) and 8 x 3-bedroom apartments (6.2%). All dwellings would have access to private amenity space. In Buildings A and B this would be in the form of the balconies or terraces at ground floor whilst the ground floor units in Building C would have private rear gardens. The section 106 legal agreement linked to the extant planning permission secures provision of a total of 15 of the dwellings (12 x 2 bed units and 3 x3 bed units) as affordable housing units equating to 12% of the total number of dwellings proposed. This level of affordable housing provision was agreed when the extant planning permission was granted following independent review of a viability appraisal submitted with the application which verified that it was not viable for the development to provide a policy compliant (30%) level of affordable housing and following agreement for a deferred payment mechanism with the applicant that would ensure the Council shared in any improvements in the viability position of the development (also secured as part of the existing s106 legal agreement).
- 2.12 The approved design for all three buildings proposes to use red brick, with detailing and accents in grey and white brick. Dark grey materials are used for window frames and other features such as metal balustrades and metal gable pitched roofs to each building. The design approach is influenced by the industrial character of the site and surrounding area. In terms of context within the site, Building A relates to the river frontage and the access road, Building B relates to the open space and the railway line and Building C relates to

the access road and the existing development to the west of the site. The development has been designed to reduce in height to the west where the site abuts the existing terraced houses and to rise in height to the east to mark a 'gateway' into Reading.

- 2.13 Vehicular access into the site is from Alexander Turner Close and a network of pedestrian routes would run through the development site and notably the approved development includes provision of a physical connection to the existing footbridge over the Kennet in the south west corner of the site.
- 2.14 The approved development also includes a 520m² public community garden, located between Buildings A and B and the river frontage. This area includes 2 x 50m² play areas (to Local Area for Play specifications) and space for informal play, native planting and sheltered seating by the river. A viewing platform is also to be provided that projects out into the river and provides informal seating areas. A nature corner is proposed as a sunken area to the east of Building B, which provides an ecologically diverse area of approximately 160m².
- 2.15 A selection of the approved plans and visuals for this extant planning permission is shown below:



Figure 2 – Approved Site Plan



Figure 3 – Approved South Elevations (viewed from River) (Buildings A and B shown top and Building A below)

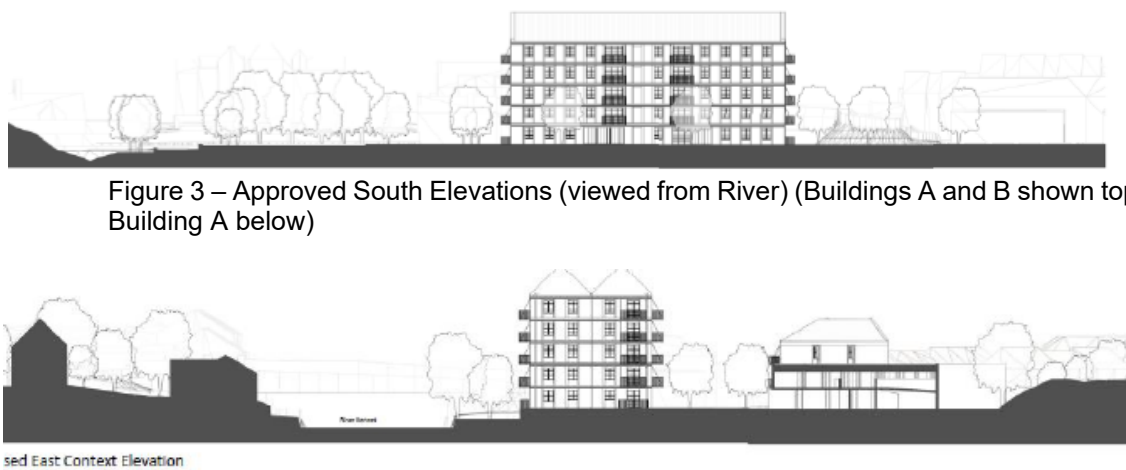


Figure 4 - Approved East and west Elevations (Buildings A and C shown top, Buildings A, B and C shown below)



Figure 5 – Approved North and South Elevations (Buildings B and C)



Figure 6 – Approved East and West Elevations (Buildings A and B)



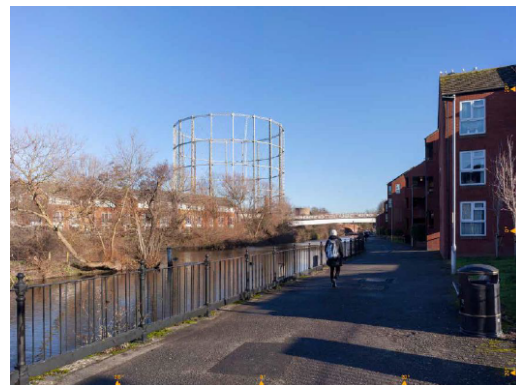
Approved South Context Elevation



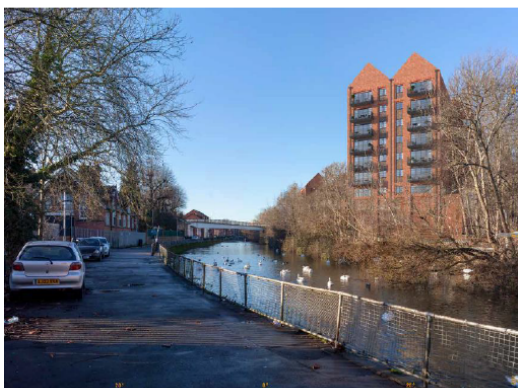
Figure 7 – Approved North and South Elevations (Buildings B and C top, Buildings A, B and C below)



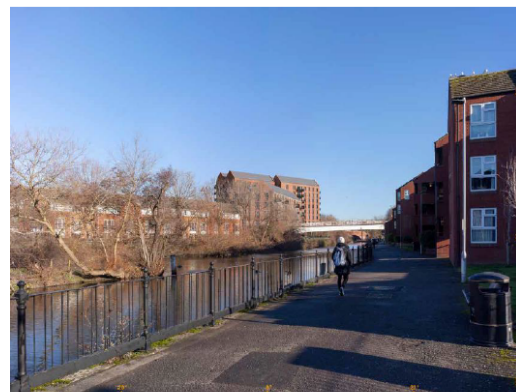
Existing View West from South Bank of River Kennet



Existing View East from South Bank of the River Kennet



Proposed View West From South Bank of River Kennet



Proposed View East from South Bank of the River Kennet



Existing View North from Cholmeley Road and Grade II Listed Newtown Primary School



Existing View North from Cumberland Road



Proposed View North from Cholmeley Road and Grade II Listed Newtown Primary School



Proposed View North from Cumberland Road



Existing View South West past Grade II Listed Railway Bridge



Existing View North West from Liverpool Road



Proposed View South West past Grade II Listed Railway Bridge



Proposed View North West from Liverpool Road



Proposed Visual Looking Directly North towards the Application site from Kennet Side across the River



Proposed Visual Looking East From Alexander Turner Close at the Entrance to the Site



Proposed Visual Looking North West from the River Bank within the site

Figure 8 – Existing and Proposed Visuals of the Approved Development

- 2.16 As per the Council's Scheme of Delegation the application is required to be determined by Planning Applications Committee given it relates to a s73 variation of conditions application of a planning permission for a major category development.

3. The Proposal

- 2.1 The application seeks to vary the approved plans condition (condition no.2) attached to planning permission ref. PL/19/0627 under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act), as well as conditions 11 (noise mitigation), 12 (air quality mitigation), 26 (SuDS) and 35 (vehicle parking) for changes to the design, layout, unit mix, vehicle parking, refuse storage, landscaping, noise mitigation and ventilation strategy and energy strategy of the approved development.

2.17 The application explains that the proposed changes are sought in order to comply with latest Building Regulations and the Building Safety Act as well as latest energy efficiency and fire safety legislation and requirements which have emerged since planning permission for the development was granted.

2.18 More specifically the proposed changes to the approved development include:

- Introduction of second stair core and fire evacuation lift in Building B and minor associated internal changes to the configuration of this building. This results in an increase in the width of the building at first floor and above by 3.5m to accommodate the additional stair core and lift and the west elevation of Building B projecting further over the single storey part of the covered car park to the east and provision of an additional column of windows to serve the stair core. The height and ground floor footprint of Building B and its (and of all buildings within the development) would not be increased and would remain as approved.
- Addition of lift overruns to the roof of Building B to accommodate the new lift cores.
- The internal access road length has been extended by 10m into the site to reduce the distance for Fire Tenders to Building B
- Reduction and increase in floor space of 49 dwellings within Building B as a result of internal reconfiguration of the building to accommodate the additional stair and lift cores
- Reduction in the floor space of 3 dwellings within Building C to adhere to Nationally Described Space Standards storage requirements.
- Change to the approved dwelling mix of the development as a result of the above changes to the size of units within Buildings B and C from 48 x 1 bedroom apartments (36.9%), 74 x 2 bedroom apartments (56.9%) and 8 x 3 bedroom apartments (6.2%) as approved to 48 x 1 bedroom apartments (36.9%), 73 x 2 bedroom apartments (56.15%) and 9 x 3 bedroom apartments (6.92%).
- Re-configuration of cycle stores for each building.
- The approved electric vehicle charging spaces relocated from within the covered car park, with the 12 approved external spaces to the front of Building C now proposed to be the electric vehicle charging spaces.
- Changes to the approved mechanical ventilation system to instead provide natural smoke ventilation with louvres and roof vents and ventilation shafts added to stair and lift cores and to the covered car park and part of the car park roof removed to improve natural smoke ventilation;
- Loss of 2sqm of green roof as a result of partial removal of the flat roof from the car park but with mitigation for this proposed in the form of planting of 8 additional trees within the site
- Introduction of decentralised energy sources to the development to replace the approved gas combi boilers. Photovoltaic Panels proposed to be added to the roofs of the buildings and exhaust Air Source Heat Pumps proposed for each dwelling to provide hot water with heating provided by electric panel heaters.
- Reduction by 5 spaces of the total number of car parking spaces to be provided within the development from 127 to 121 and number of electric vehicle charging spaces reduced from 13 to 12 (10% of total number of spaces to be provided) as a result of the relocation of electric vehicle charging spaces from the covered car park to external parts of the site and need to accommodate sprinkler tank within the car park.
- Minor change to access to car park
- Minor changes to external landscape layout to facilitate direct access to bin stores and the extension to the access road within the site necessitating relocation of 5 trees to be provided as part of the approved development to alternative locations within the site
- The bin stores have been amended to all buildings to accommodate food waste bins. The bin store to Building A has been amended to provide a second access door and dropped kerb and the location of the refuse stores in Buildings B and C amended to ensure the distances from the stores to the collection point does not exceed 10m.

2.19 The table below (figure 9) details the full range of proposed changes to the approved development:

	Category of Change	Change Proposed	Reason for Change
Block A	Fire	Evacuation Lift added, Lift Lobby requiring natural smoke ventilation riser sizes enhanced, and chimney added above habitable floor level.	To comply with BS9991
	Energy	Substation at ground floor level has been replaced with a bike store	To ensure substation and LV switch room can be adjacently located
		Service intake riser has been added	In line with the revised energy strategy
		Photovoltaic Panels added to the roof	To comply with Building Regulations Part L
	Maintenance	Eves / valley gulleys and access hatch added to the roof	To enable maintenance access for the roof and photovoltaic panels
Block B	Fire	Electric vehicle (EV) parking relocated externally	To comply with Building Regulations Part B which restricts EV parking spaces in undercroft areas
		Road length has been extended	To comply with distance requirements from the Block B fire hydrant in line with Building Regulations Part B
		Sprinkler tank has been added below the car park surface level	To comply with Building Regulations Part B
		Additional louvres added to the car park and car park roof reduced	To enable natural ventilation of the car park
		Staircore reconfigured to provide protected escape staircase and natural smoke ventilation to stair wells added	To comply with BS9991
		An additional staircore and evacuation lift and protected lobby has been added	To comply with BS9991 for apartment buildings over 18 metres

	Category of Change	Change Proposed	Reason for Change
		Unit B001 enhanced from 88 sq m to 113 sq m	To accommodate the additional staircore which is required by BS9991 for buildings over 18 metres
		Units B208, B308, B408, B508, B608, B708 and B808 (all 2 bed apartments) enhanced from 71 sq m to 72 sq m	To accommodate the additional staircore / evacuation lift which is required by BS9991 for buildings over 18 metres
		Units B202, B203, B302, B303, B402, B403, B502, B503, B602, B603, B702, B703, B802, B803 (all 2 bed apartments) enhanced from 71 sq m to 73 sq m	To accommodate travel distances required by BS9991 for buildings over 18 metres
		Units B209, B309, B409, B509, B609, B709, B809 (2 bed apartments) reduced from 71 sq m to 50 sq m (1 bed apartments)	To accommodate the additional staircore/ evacuation lift which is required by BS9991 for buildings over 18 metres
		Units B207, B307, B407, B507, B607, B707 and B807 changed from 1 bed apartments (50 sq m) to 2 bed apartments (71 sq m)	To accommodate the additional staircore / evacuation lift which is required by BS9991 for buildings over 18 metres
		Units B201, B204, B301, B304, B401, B404, B501, B504, B601, B604, B701, B704, B801 and B804 reduced from 72 sq m to 71 sq m	To accommodate the additional staircore / evacuation lift which is required by BS9991
		Evacuation Lift incorporated, lift lobby requiring natural smoke ventilation, riser sizes enhanced, chimney added above habitable floor level, and lobbied residential corridors have been added	To comply with BS9991
	Energy	Cold water room has been repositioned under the car park ramp	To ensure the weight of the tank is at ground level and to enable the refuse strategy to be compliant with British Standards
		The Coms room has been relocated adjacent to the second staircore and plant has been added to the roof	To ensure the M&E strategy works
		Photovoltaic panels added to the roof of the car park and roof of Block B	To comply with Building Regulations Part L
	Storage	The bike store which is surplus from Block C has been reallocated to the Block B car park	To ensure substation and LV switch room can be adjacently located
		The refuse areas have been reconfigured	To accommodate the second staircore required by Building Regulations Part B for buildings over 18 metres and tenant access added to ensure compliance to British Standards

	Category of Change	Change Proposed	Reason for Change
	Maintenance	An access hatch has been added from the car park to the roof, a second refuse access point has been added adjacent to Block B, eaves / valley gulleys and access hatches have been added to the roof	To improve maintenance for the roof and for the photovoltaic panels
Block C	Fire	Natural smoke ventilation added to the staircore	To comply with Building Regulations Part B
		Angled corner of the building recessed	To enable escape route from Block B Car Park in line with Building Regulations Part B
		External car parking bays converted to EV parking bays	To comply with fire requirement in Building Regulations Part B to exclude EV parking spaces from undercroft areas
	Energy	Bike storage area reduced and Low Voltage (LV) room added	To ensure substation and LV switch room can be adjacently located
		Service risers have been added within the staircores	To ensure the M&E strategy works
	Storage	Unit C002 (3 bed apartment) reduced from 106 sq m to 102 sq m	To comply with NSS storage requirements
		Unit C102 (2 bed apartment) reduced from 70 sq m to 65 sq m	To comply with NSS storage requirements
		Unit C101 (2 bed apartment) reduced from 70 sq m to 69 sq m	To comply with NSS storage requirements
	Layout	EV parking	EV parking spaces moved externally
	Footways	Footways and road widths adjusted to meet minimum requirements	To comply with fire requirement to exclude EV parking spaces from undercroft areas
	Landscaping	Minor adjustments to the landscaping	To accommodate external EV parking spaces

Figure 9 – Table of Proposed Changes

2.20 It is pertinent to note that the application does not propose any changes to the approved total number of dwellings which would remain as 130 nor to the quantum, tenure or mix of affordable housing secured as part of the s106 agreement linked to the extant planning permission which remains as 12 x 2 bed and 3 x 3 bed dwellings (5 x affordable rent tenure dwellings and 10 x shared ownership tenure dwellings). The existing s106 agreement stipulates within in it that it would also be linked to any s73 variation of condition planning permission that is granted.

2.22 Plans and Documents Submitted:

Drawing Title	Approved Drawing (PP ref. 190627)	Proposed Drawing Number
Existing Site Plan	E0-010	-
Site Location Plan	P0-001 P	-
Proposed Site Plan	16035 P0-010 P1	16035 P0-010 P3
Proposed Plan – Ground Floor	16035 P0-100 P1	16035 P0-100 P6
Proposed Plan – First Floor	16035 P0-101 P1	16035 P0-101 P5
Proposed Plan – Second Floor	16035 P0-102 P	16035 P0-102 P4
Proposed Plan – Third Floor	16035 P0-103 P	16035 P0-103 P3
Proposed Plan – Fourth Floor	16035 P0-104 P	16035 P0-104 P3
Proposed Plan – Fifth to Eighth Floor	16035 P0-105 P	16035 P0-105 P3
Proposed Plan – Roof	16035 P0-109 P	16035 P0-109 P3
Proposed Plans – Block A	16035 P1-100 P1	16035 P1-100 P3
Proposed Plan – Block B Ground Floor	16035 P1-200 P1	16035 P1-200 P3
Proposed Plan – Block B First Floor	16035 P1-201 P	16035 P1-201 P3
Proposed Plan – Block B Second Floor	16035 P1-202 P	16035 P1-202 P2

Drawing Title	Approved Drawing (PP ref. 190627)	Proposed Drawing Number
Proposed Plan – Block B Third Floor	16035 P1-203 P	16035 P1-203 P2
Proposed Plan – Block B Fourth to Eighth Floor	16035 P1-204 P	16035 P1-204 P2
Proposed Plans – Block C	16035 P1-300 P	16035 P1-300 P3
Proposed Sections	16035 P2-201 P	16035 P2-201 P3
Proposed Context Elevations – Block A	16035 P3-011 P1	16035 P3-011 P3
Proposed Context Elevations – Block A (2)	16035 P3-012 P1	16035 P3-012 P3
Proposed Context Elevations – Block B	16035 P3-013 P2	16035 P3-013 P4
Proposed Context Elevations – Block B (2)	16035 P3-014 P2	16035 P3-014 P4
Proposed Context Elevations – Block C	16035 P3-015 P1	16035 P3-015 P3
Proposed Context Elevations – Block C (2)	16035 P3-016 P1	16035 P3-016 P3
Proposed Elevations – Block A South and East	16035 P3-101 P	16035 P3-101 P2
Proposed Elevations – Block A North and West	16035 P3-102 P	16035 P3-102 P2
Proposed Elevations – Block B - South	16035 P3-201 P1	16035 P3-201 P3
Proposed Elevations – Block B - North	16035 P3-202 P	16035 P3-202 P2
Proposed Elevations – Block B – East and West	16035 P3-203 P1	16035 P3-203 P2
Proposed Elevations – Block C – South and North	16035 P3-301 P	16035 P3-301 P2
Proposed Elevations – Block C – West	16035 P3-302 P	16035 P3-302 P3
Proposed Area Plan – Ground Floor	-	16035 P0-400 P2
Proposed Area Plan – First Floor	-	16035 P0-401 P3
Proposed Area Plan – Second Floor	-	16035 P0-402 P3
Proposed Area Plan – Third to Fourth Floor	-	16035 P0-403 P3
Proposed Area Plan – Fifth to Eighth Floor	-	16035 P0-405 P3

Drawing Title	Approved Drawing (PP ref. 190627)	Proposed Drawing Number
Hardworks Strategy Plan	716-FH-XX-00-DP-L-201 P2	716-FH-01-XX-00-DP-L-201 P4
Levels Strategy Plan	716-FH-XX-00-DP-L-301 P1	716-FH-01-XX-00-DP-L-301 P2
Softworks Strategy Plan	716-FH-XX-00-DP-L-401 P2	716-FH-01-XX-00-DP-L-401 P3
Illustrative Masterplan	716-FH-XX-00-DP-L-101 P1	716-FH-XX-00-DP-L-101 P2
Landscape Base – Additional Trees	n/a	716-FHA

4. Planning history

- 4.1. PI/19/0627/FUL - Demolition of existing buildings and Gas Holder and the erection of new buildings ranging between 2 and 9 storeys in height, providing 130 residential units (Class C3) with associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space. Granted on 16th July 2021 (with linked s106 agreement).
- 4.2. PL/20/1269/DEM - Application for prior notification of proposed demolition of gas holder and ancillary structures - Granted on 20th January 2021.
- 4.3. PL/23/1060/APC – Application for approval of details reserved by condition 17 (Ground Investigation) of planning permission ref. 190627 - Approved on 24th October 2023.
- 4.4. PL/24/0361/APC – Application for approval of details reserved by condition 18 (Land Remediation Strategy) of planning permission ref. 190627 – Approved on 5th July 2023.
- 4.5. PL/23/1544/NMA - Non-material amendment to the wording of Condition 22 (Habitat Enhancement Scheme) and Condition 25 (Ecological Buffer Zone) of planning permission 190627 to amend the triggers for submission of the details required by both conditions – Agreed on 8th April 2024.
- 4.6. PL/23/1545/NMA - Non-material amendment to the wording of Condition 23 (re-use of 1887 cast iron item) of planning permission ref. 190627 – Agreed on 13th March 2024.
- 4.7. PL/23/1546/APC - Approval of details under condition 21 (Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 190627 – Approved on 16th May 2024.

- 4.8 PL/23/1565/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 28 (Gas site investigation) of planning permission ref. 190627 – Approved on 3rd April 2024.
- 4.9 PL/23/1585/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 24 (Construction and Demolition Method Statement) of application 190627 – Approved on 4th July 2024
- 4.10 PL/23/1589/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 29 (Land Gas Protection Scheme) of planning permission ref. 190627 – Approved on 3rd April 2024
- 4.11 PL/23/1655/NMA - Non material amendment to planning permission ref. 190627 (Demolition of existing buildings and Gas Holder and the erection of new buildings ranging between 2 and 9 storeys in height, providing 130 residential units (Class C3) with associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space) to amend the description of development and wording of conditions 2 (approved plans), 3 (cycle parking), 4 (vehicle access), 5 (refuse storage), 11 (noise mitigation), 12 (ventilation), 15 (lifts), 27 (SuDS implementation), 31 (external lighting), 32 (glint and glare study), 33 (hard and soft landscaping), 34 (materials), 35 (vehicle parking), 36 (landscape and ecological management plan), 38 (boundary treatment), 39 (on site play facilities), 40 (refuse storage – pest mitigation), 41 (entrance artwork), 42 (SAP – as built), 43 (electric vehicle charging), 44 (floor levels), 45 (CCTV) and addition of new condition 48 (phasing), to allow for phased implementation of the development – Agreed on 23rd April 2024
- 4.12 PL/23/1852/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by Conditions 7 (Surface Water Infiltration) and 26 (Sustainable Drainage Strategy) of planning permission ref. 190627 – Approved on 8th April 2024.
- 4.13 PL/24/0303/NMA - Proposed non material amendment to planning permission ref. 190627 (Demolition of existing buildings and Gas Holder and the erection of new buildings ranging between 2 and 9 storeys in height, providing 130 residential units (Class C3) with associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space) for proposed changes to design to address updated Building Regulations on fire safety, changes to the energy strategy for the development and changes to unit mix – Withdrawn on 22nd July 2024
- 4.14 PL/24/0550/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 25(i) (Ecological Protection Plan) of planning permission ref. 190627 (as amended by non-material amendment ref. 231544) – Approved on 31st May 2024
- 4.15 PL/25/1045/APC - Application for Approval of Details Reserved by Condition 19 (Contamination Remediation Validation Report) of planning permission ref. PL/19/0627 – Under Consideration.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 Environment Agency – No objection, subject to the conditions attached to the original planning permission being re-applied to any varied permission.
- 5.2 HSE Fire Safety – Are content with the fire safety design of the proposals. Identify some detailed matters that the applicant will need to consider during the later regulatory stages of the development design.
- 5.2 RBC Transport – No objection, subject to the conditions attached to the original planning permission being updated to reflect the revised proposals and reapplied to any varied planning permission.
- 5.3 RBC Natural Environment – No objection, subject to the conditions attached to the original planning permission being updated to include the additional tree planting and reapplied to any varied planning permission.

- 5.4 RBC Ecology Adviser – No objection, subject to the conditions attached to the original planning permission being reapplied to any varied planning permission.
- 5.5 RBC Environmental Protection – No objection, subject to the conditions attached to the original planning permission being updated to incorporate the additional noise mitigation measure proposed and reapplied to any varied planning permission.
- 5.6 RBC Waste Services – No objection to the proposed revised refuse stores and collection arrangements for development.

Public Notification

- 5.7 A site notice was displayed at the application site on 28th May 2025.
- 5.8 2 x representations have been received with is summarised as follows:
- Robert Parker Road has a problem with loud car noise at antisocial hours due to speeding, this will become worse if the road is to service an additional 130 residential units and additional speed humps to Rover Parker Road should be provided.
Officer comment: The development is already subject to an extant and implemented planning permission; this application considers only the proposed changes to that approved planning permission. The implemented consent is for 130 new residential units, and this application does not re-open consideration of matters that have already obtained planning permission and to which changes are not sought as part of this application.
 - Is the peregrine box that is proposed to be provided with the development still proposed.
Officer comment: Yes, this requirement is secured under condition 22 of the extant planning permission and is not proposed to be changed as part of this variation application. This condition would be carried across and replicated as part of any s73 variation of condition planning permission that is issued.

6. Legal context

- 6.1 Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 6.2. Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 6.3. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 6.4. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 6.5. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

NPPF December 2024 (as amended February 2025)

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN8: Waterspaces
- EN9: Provision of Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodlands
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
- EN18: Flooding and Drainage
- H1: Provision of Housing
- H2: Density and Mix
- H3: Affordable Housing
- H5: Standards for New Housing
- H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- TR1 Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
- CR1: Definition of Central Reading
- CR2: Design in Central Reading
- CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading
- CR6: Living in Central Reading
- CR13 – East Side Major Opportunity Area
- CR13d - Gas Holder Site

Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
- Affordable Housing (2021)
- Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
- Employment, Skills and Training (2013)

Local Plan Update

- 6.6 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. The submission draft of the Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) was submitted on 9th May 2025

and examined earlier this year. At the time of writing, the examination-in-public of the partial update to the local plan is in the process of taking place. Stage 1 hearings were held virtually on 11th and 12th November 2025. Stage 2 hearings took place in February 2026.

- 6.7 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.
- 6.8 Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to these applications listed above is that, other than Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) 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 determination of this planning application and are not considered to be ‘out of date’. Policy H1 is out of date because the Council is not currently meeting its annual housing targets for general housing as calculated using the standard method in National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (as required now Policy H1 is out of date) or for the provision of Affordable Housing.
- 6.9 Whilst at this time, the examination of the LPPU has reached a fairly advanced stage the weight that can be attributed to policies within the LPPU depends on the degree to which modifications are proposed to relevant policies. Where it is considered any updated policies within the LPPU that are relevant to the changes to the approved development proposed by this s73 variation of conditions application can be attributed significant weight this will be outlined in this report if relevant.
- 6.10 It is noted that paragraph 11 of the NPPF states: “d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.
- 6.11 Paragraph 11 is often called ‘the tilted balance’. With regard to policies which must be given weight in determining adverse impacts it refers to paragraphs 66 and 84 of chapter 5; 91 of chapter 7; 110 and 115 of chapter 9; 129 of chapter 11; and 135 and 139 of chapter 12. Policy H1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 is over 5 years old, and the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply, currently demonstrating 3.55 years. As such, Policy H1 is out of date, and the tilted balance would be engaged, an assessment of the overall planning balance will form part of the conclusion of this report.

7. Appraisal

- 7.1 The Planning Practice Guidance on flexible options for planning permissions confirms that section 73 applications are considered against the...

“...Development plan and material considerations, under section 38(6) of the 2004 Act, and conditions attached to the existing permission. Local planning authorities should, in making their decisions, focus their attention on national and development plan policies, and other material considerations which may have changed significantly since the original grant of permission”.

7.2 With this context in mind, many of the matters that have already been considered appropriate, are not repeated in this assessment, in view of the overriding policy context not changing so significantly in the intervening time to alter those findings. Furthermore, technical matters not impacted by the proposed changes are not explicitly referenced within this appraisal, with the s106 obligations and conditions included on the original permission satisfying these elements satisfactorily (barring in a number of instances an update to the plans referenced). Instead, as per the guidance above, the focus of attention is on the proposed changes to the development and national and local policy and other material considerations which have changed significantly. Firstly, since the original decision was issued in May 2024, the NPPF has been updated (most recently in February 2025). Other than Policy H1, the local policy context has not significantly altered, with the same Local Plan (2019) still in place, although the Local Plan is in the process of being updated this is not yet at a stage where significant weight can be given to updated policies, as discussed in paragraphs 6.6 to 6.11 above.

7.3 It is also relevant to acknowledge from the outset of this appraisal that, from a procedural perspective, it is considered appropriate for these proposals to be presented as a section 73 application. The three recent Case Law cases of *Finney*, *Armstrong* and *Fiske* have all been considered, with the proposals not changing operative wording of the original description of development (as per *Finney*), that the scope of the changes align with the approach taken in *Armstrong* and do not create a fundamental conflict between the conditions and the permission (*Fiske*).

7.4 *The NPPG (para 015) also sets out that:*

Permission granted under section 73 takes effect as a new, independent permission to carry out the same development as previously permitted subject to new or amended conditions. The new permission sits alongside the extant permission, which remains intact and unamended. It is open to the applicant to decide whether to implement the new permission or the one originally granted.

A decision notice describing the new permission should be issued, setting out all the conditions related to it. To assist with clarity decision notices for the grant of planning permission under section 73 should also repeat the relevant conditions from the extant planning permission unless they have already been discharged.

As a section 73 application cannot be used to vary the time limit for implementation, this condition must remain unchanged from the extant permission. If the original permission was subject to a planning obligation, then this may need to be the subject of a deed of variation.

7.5 With all of the above in mind, the main considerations for the amendments proposed are considered to involve:

- i) Design Matters
- ii) Amenity Matters
- iii) Sustainability
- iv) Transport Matters
- v) Natural Environment
- vi) Other Matters

i) Design Matters

7.6 The proposed external changes to the appearance of the development are considered to be minor when compared to the approved scheme. Notably the overall footprint of the proposed buildings and their height are not proposed to change and remain as approved.

- 7.7 The most notable proposed change relates to Building B, the tallest building within the development at 9 storeys, which is proposed to be increased in width between the 1st and 8th floors by 3.5m to accommodate the additional stair and lift core in order to comply with latest Building Regulations and Fire Safety legislation. The increase in width would extend the upper floors of the building further west above the approved single storey part of the covered car park area meaning the overall footprint of Building B would not increase just the width of the upper floors. The appearance of the external elevations of the building would remain as approved, just wider with an additional column of windows to serve the new stair core which would reflect the appearance and proportions of the approved windows to Building B. Approved and proposed south elevation of Building B is shown in figures 10 and 11 below which shows these changes.



Figure 10 – Approved Building B South Elevation

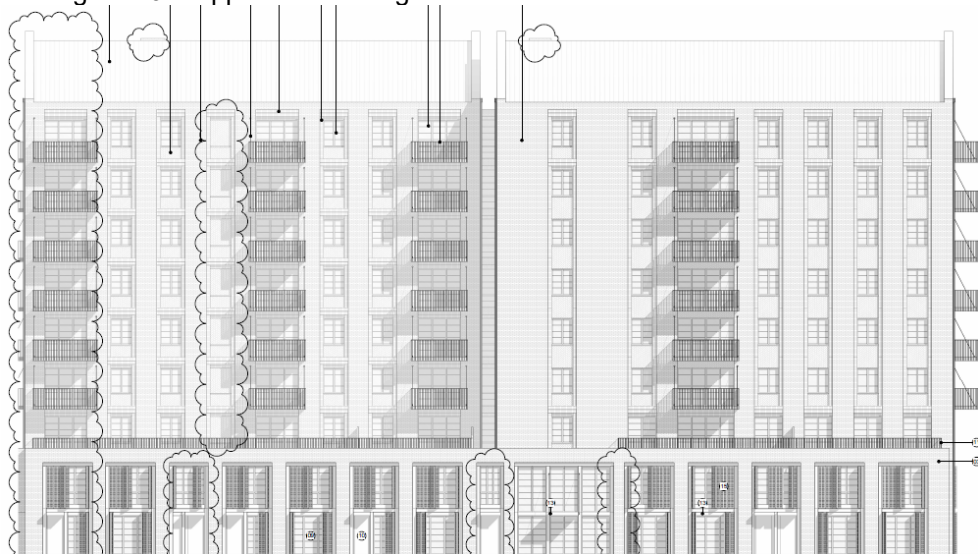


Figure 11 – Proposed Building B South Elevation (proposed changes shown circled)

- 7.7 As the largest building within the development the increase in width of the building would have a visual impact notably when viewed from the River Kennet, albeit it is considered that this impact would not be a significant one when viewed in the context of the approved development as a whole nor one which would be detrimental to the appearance of the development as a whole when viewed from the surrounding area.
- 7.8 External changes at roof level are also proposed to Building A (5 storeys) and Building B which include additional of lift overruns, enlarged risers' additional risers, vent, plant equipment and addition of photovoltaic panels. Figures 12 and 13 below show the approved and proposed north and west elevations of Building A. The approved roof design of both Buildings A and B is distinctive and includes full twin gable design presenting a wharf/warehouse style development and was considered a positive aspect of the

development when planning permission was granted. The proposed minor roof top additions would not interrupt the twin gable appearance of the development with the additional elements set back from the edges of the roof and below the ridge height of both of the buildings such that they are not considered to have a detrimental impact upon the appearance of these buildings or the development as whole when viewed from the surrounding area.



Figure 12 – Approved Building A North and West Elevations



Figure 13 – Proposed Building A North and West Elevations (changes shown circled)

- 7.9 Further changes are proposed to the ground floor elevations of Building B with the addition of ventilation louvres to the ground floor car park level of Building B to the north elevation facing the railway and additional windows to the south elevation serving the new stair core. No concerns are raised in respect of these changes from a visual perspective; the louvres would introduce some limited visual interest in what under the approved scheme is a plain brick wall (see figures 14 and 15 below).



Figure 14 – Approved Building B North Elevation

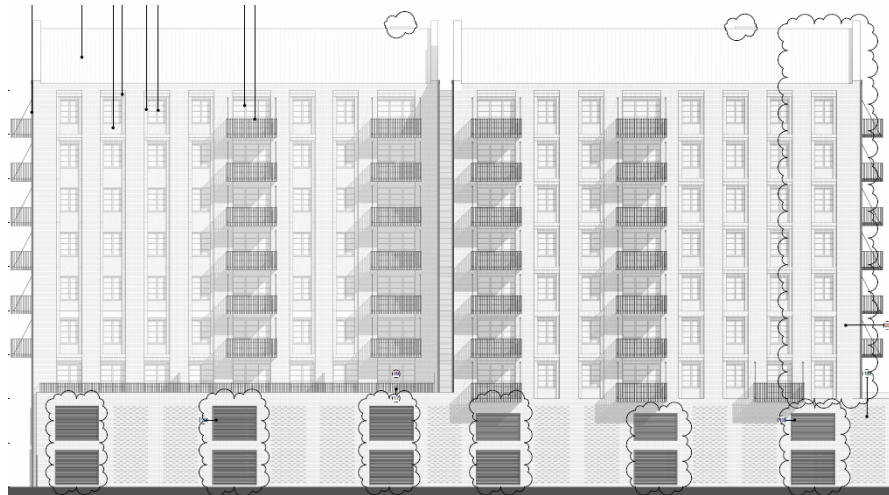


Figure 15 – Proposed Building B North Elevation (proposed changes shown circled)

- 7.10 The proposed partial removal of the approved flat roof from the first floor of the two-storey covered car park in the north west corner of the site which connects Buildings B and C to provide nature ventilation to this space is considered to have limited impact from a visual perspective given the flat nature of the approved roof (see figures 16 and 17 below). Whilst this may result in some minor additional light spill from car headlights from some more distant views it is not considered that this would have a significant adverse impact upon the appearance of the car park or wider development.



Figure 16 – Approved Site Layout Plan



Figure 17 – Proposed Amended Site Layout Plan

- 7.11 Some changes to ground level external areas with the site are also proposed. This includes a 10m extension to the eastern end of the approved access road replacing an area of grasscrete with hardstanding to allow fire trucks to service Building B at a suitable distance in accordance with latest Fire Safety regulations. A further 5m long strip of grasscrete is also proposed to be removed and replaced with hardstanding in front of Building B from where the bin collection point is proposed in order to prevent bins from becoming stuck or difficult to move over the grid structure surface of grasscrete (see figures 16 and 17 above). The proposed removal of the specified grasscrete areas also necessitates re-location of 3 new trees to be planted as part of the approved scheme. In order to facilitate safe access to the car park 2 new trees approved to be planted either side of the car park entrance are also proposed to be to be re-located. The trees are to be re-located to the riverside area within the site. To mitigate for the loss of the grasscrete area together with the partial loss of the green roof to the car park it is also proposed to plant 8 additional trees within the site also along the riverside.
- 7.13 Whilst loss of the areas of grasscrete and replacement with hardstanding is disappointing the reasons behind this are understood and are required in the case of fire tender access to accord with separate statutory legislation. It is not considered that loss of the grasscrete would result in a significant adverse impact upon the appearance of the development or the landscaped character of the area between the buildings and the river frontage which would be retained and was considered a benefit of the approved development. The planting of 8 additional trees within the site to mitigate for loss of these areas is welcomed whilst it is also pertinent to note that that the proposal variations to the approved development would not change the overall amount of functional communal outdoor open space to be provided. The approved 520m² community garden, located between Buildings A and B and the river frontage which includes 2 x 50m² play areas (to Local Area for Play specifications) and space for informal play, native planting and sheltered seating area by the river including viewing platform projecting out into the river and a 'nature corner' to the east of Building B, which provides an ecologically diverse area of approximately 160m² would continue to form part of the development as already approved.

- 7.14 In overall terms the proposed external changes to buildings and external areas within the approved development are considered to be minor in nature and acceptable. The proposed amendment to do not change the conclusions officer reached when considering the design and appearance of the development subject to the extant planning permission and the varied development is considered to be an enhancement to the character of the site, surrounding area and waterside area and would continue to comply with Policies CR13d (Gas Holder Site), CC7 (Design and The Public Realm), EN11 (Waterspaces) and CR2 (Design in Central Reading). Condition 34 attached to the extant planning permission to secure submission and approval of a schedule of all external materials prior to commencement of the development beyond foundation level in order to ensure a high-quality finish to the development would be carried across and re-applied to a s37 variation of condition planning permission. and.

ii) Amenity Matters

Neighbouring Occupiers

- 7.15 The site's only immediate neighbours are the residential properties to Alexander Turner Close and Robert Parker Road to the west. The proposed enlargement of Building B and additional of the new column of windows from 1st to 8th floor has most potential to impact on neighbours surrounding the site. However, this building is located 45m from the closest residential properties on these roads such that the proposal to move the 1st to 8th floor flank elevation of this building 3.5m closer to Alexander Turner Close and Robert Parker Road would still retain significant separation distance such that no additional overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of daylight or overshadowing impacts are considered to result from the proposed changes. The proposals would not move the development any closer to the river and a separation distance of over 50m to the dwellings to the south on the opposite side of the river along Kennet Side and the playground of New Town Primary School would be retained as per the approved scheme such that no adverse impacts are identified as a result of the proposed changes in this respect.
- 7.16 The other changes to the proposed development as set out in paragraph 2.18 to Buildings A, B and C and external areas within the site are considered to be minor and to not result in any adverse impacts upon the amenity of existing neighbouring occupiers as per the approved development.

Standard of Accommodation for Future Occupiers

- 7.16 To accommodate the proposed additional stair and lift core to Building B and to meet the storage requirements for some dwellings in line with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) which require between 1 and 2.5 square metres of built in storage to be provided for each dwelling a number of the flats are proposed to be reconfigured internally within Buildings B and C. This results in various changes to the internal floor spaces of the dwellings within these buildings, with the floorspace of some units increasing and some decreasing. However, in all cases the dwellings would continue to adhere to the NDSS. The proposed amendments are not considered to adversely impact upon outlook or receipt of daylighting to any of the proposed dwellings. in accordance with Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).
- 7.17 A noise assessment and mitigation scheme for all the new residential units was submitted and approved when the extant planning permission was granted which included consideration of noise from the railway line to the north of the site. An updated noise assessment has been provided with the current variation application which takes into potential noise from the proposed additional plant equipment which includes the air source heat pumps and mechanical ventilation heat recovery (MVHR) system. The updated noise assessment has been reviewed by RBC Environmental Protection Officers who are satisfied that the noise mitigation measures including glazing and ventilation specifications are sufficient and would ensure that the additional plant equipment proposed would not adversely impact upon noise levels within the proposed dwellings or that of existing

residential occupiers surrounding the site and would accord with Policies CC8 and EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources).

- 7.18 The proposed variations to the approved development are not considered to result in any adverse impacts upon the residential amenity of existing occupiers surrounding the site or future occupiers of the development itself. Conditions 11 (noise assessment) and 12 (ventilation) of the extant planning permission would be updated as part of any new s73 variation of condition planning permission to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the updated noise and ventilation strategy.

iii) Sustainability

- 7.19 The approved energy strategy for the development proposed that each flat would be provided with a gas combi boiler for hot water provision and heating. The revised energy strategy submitted with this variation application sets out that in line with latest Building Regulation requirements the gas combi boilers for each flat would be replaced within Exhaust Air Source Heat Pumps (EASHP) equipped with hot water cylinders and MVHR for hot water generation whilst electric panel heaters are now proposed for heating. The proposed incorporation of decentralised energy provision in the form of EASHP together with roof based photovoltaic panels is considered to be a benefit of the development resulting from the proposed changes and accords with Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) which requires development to incorporate decentralised energy provision. The proposed switch away from gas combi boilers reduces the development's reliance upon fossil fuels, minimises energy use and would reduce carbon emissions of the development.
- 7.20 The approved development was projected to achieve a 20% improvement of the carbon emissions savings required under 2013 Building Regulations whereas the revised proposal is projected to achieve an 80.6% improvement which represents a significant improvement in the projected carbon savings performance of the development. This projection has been independently reviewed on behalf of the Council by a specialist energy consultant who has verified applicants revised energy strategy and approach. The s106 agreement linked to the extant planning permission includes a requirement to provide a carbon off-setting contribution to off-set the carbon savings of the development to zero and this requirement would be carried across and linked to any s73 variation of condition planning permission. In this instance given the projected performance of the development is higher the contribution required to offset the development to carbon zero is likely to be lower. Condition 42 of the extant permission requires the applicant to provide as built confirmation in the form of SAP assessments that the development has achieved the projected performance in respect of carbon savings. This condition would continue to comply and would be carried across to any new s73 variation of condition planning permission, and it would be the SAP assessments submitted under this condition which would determine the level of carbon off-setting contribution required for the development.
- 7.21 The Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019) which was not adopted when the extant permission was granted outlines that Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP's) should be sequentially prioritised over Air Source Heat Pumps. The applicants revised energy strategy outlines that GSHP's were considered but that concerns over the level of additional plant equipment and space required for this in terms of impact this would have upon the building layouts and amount of open space able to be provided adjacent to the river mean that they were discounted. Officer view is that this justification is weak. However, the revised energy strategy with removal of reliance upon gas combi boilers and introduction of on-site decentralised energy sources represents a very significant improvement in the energy efficiency performance of the development (as has been independently verified) compared to the approved scheme and as such officers consider the revised proposals to be acceptable and welcome changes to the approved development.
- 7.22 A revised SuDS strategy for the development has been submitted. This has been reviewed by the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) who advise the scheme is acceptable

and incorporates only very minor changes compared to the approved SuDS strategy for the development which was approved under condition 26 of the extant planning permission. Condition 26 would be updated as part of this s73 variation of condition application to refer to the updated strategy. The scheme ensure that run off rates at the development would result in betterment compared to the existing site and therefore comply with Policy EN18 (Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems).

- 7.23 The revised proposals are considered to comply with Policies H5 (Standards for New Housing) and CC4 (Decentralised Energy).

iv) Transport Matters

- 7.24 RBC Transport Officers have reviewed the revised proposals and raise no objection to the reduction in overall number of parking spaces for the development by 6 from 127 to 121 spaces. The site is located partly within Zone 1 and partly within Zone 2 as defined by the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011) which are the parts of the Borough located in and around the town centre and which are well served in terms of public transport. The level of parking provision required for a development in accordance with the SPD differs depending upon what zone it is located in, for example each 1 bed dwelling in Zone 1 is required to be served by 0.5 parking spaces whereas in Zone 2, 1 space per 1 bed dwelling is required.
- 7.25 Given the sites location partly within both Zones 1 and 2 parking provision requirements for the approved development were agreed with RBC Transport Officers at a bespoke level in between the requirements for Zones 1 and 2. A survey of car ownership for flats within Reading based upon census data was provided at the time to help inform what the required level of car parking provision for the development should be. The survey at the time identified that 48% of flats within Reading did not have car or van in the household. Based upon this it was agreed with RBC Transport Officers that a ratio of 0.62 spaces per flat was representative. This resulted in a total parking requirement for the development of 81 spaces. However, 127 spaces at a ratio of 0.97 spaces per flat were approved as part of the development which included 13 visitor parking spaces in excess of the agreed minimum requirements for the development.
- 7.26 An updated parking survey for flats within Reading has been submitted with the current variation application which shows that the number of flats within reading without a car or van in the household has increased to 52%. Given this, the sustainable location of the site and that the approved development already provided in excess of the parking provision that was agreed when planning permission for the approved scheme was granted RBC Transport Officers do not object to the proposed reduction in parking provision for the development by 6 spaces to 121 spaces and the amended development is considered to comply with Policy TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) and the SPD. Condition 35 of the extant planning permission would be updated to require provision of the revised number and layout of vehicle parking spaces prior to occupation of the development.
- 7.27 Given the overall reduction in parking spaces at the site as well as the proposals to relocate all the electric vehicle (EV) charging spaces to external parts of the site (in front of Building C) the proposals also seek to reduce the number of EV charging points to be provided from the approved 13 to 12 to minimise the impact of the spaces on external pedestrian movements and landscaping to the front of Building C. Policy TR5 requires that for communal car park area for flats at least 10% of spaces should be provided with EV charging points. Given the revised parking provision for the development of 121 spaces the proposed provision of 12 EV charging spaces meets this requirement as it considered to be acceptable. Condition 43 of the extant planning permission secures submission and approval of full details of the EV charging points prior to occupation of the development, and this would be carried across and re-applied to a s73 variation of condition planning permission.

7.28 The approved development secures provision of 74 secure, covered and lockable cycle parking spaces for the development which spaces located within stores within each of the three buildings. This exceeds the cycle parking provision required for the development in accordance with the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011) of 68.5 spaces by 5 spaces. As a result of internal re-configuration of the buildings to provide more waste storage and additional plant requirements the revised proposals would provide 72 cycle parking spaces in stores spread through the 3 buildings. This number of cycle parking spaces still exceeds the minimum number of spaces required as per the SPD and therefore is considered to be acceptable and accord with Policy TR5. Condition 3 (cycle parking) of the extant permission would be carried across to a s73 variation of condition planning permission which requires full specifications of the cycle stands to be submitted prior to occupation of the development.

Waste Storage and Collection

7.28 The approved bin stores within each building have been enlarged to accommodate food waste bins. This is because food waste collection service was not offered by RBC when planning permission for the approved development was granted. RBC Waste Officers have reviewed the stores and are satisfied that these are of adequate size for the requisite number of bins required for each building. Revised refuse collection points within the site have also been proposed and are considered to be acceptable by RBC Waste Officers with these all being located within 10m of the access road and therefore appropriate for the RBC Waste Collection Operatives to empty to bins into the refuse collection lorries. Figure 18 below shows the refuse collection points highlight in green and the routes from the stores to the collection points shown with a red dotted line. The submitted Waste Strategy plan confirm that building management staff would be responsible for moving the bins from the stores to the collection points and back on collection days. Condition 5 of the extant permission would be updated to secure that the development is carried out and operated in accordance with the updated waste storage and collection arrangements and condition 40 from the extant permission would be re-applied to secure details of measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing the bin stores are submitted and agreed with the LPA prior to occupation of the development. The revised waste storage and collection proposals for the site are acceptable and would comply with Policy CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage).

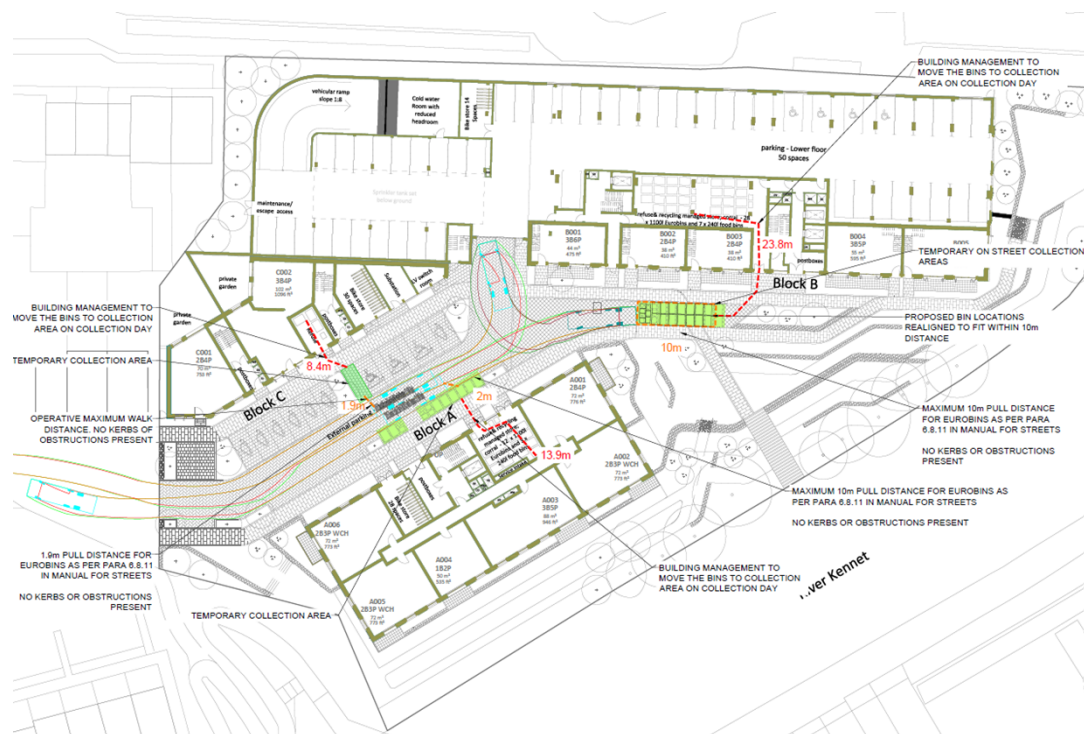


Figure 18 – Refuse Collection Points (Highlighted Green)

- 7.29 Swept path drawings have been submitted to demonstrate how waste collection vehicles would access the waste collection points and turn within the site in order to enter and leave in forward gear. RBC Transport Officers have reviewed the swept path plans and are satisfied that safe access to the waste collection points and within the site generally would be achieved. Suitable access to the waste collection point for Building B would be provided as a result of the 10m extension of the access road in front of this building.
- 7.30 The proposed amendments to the vehicle parking, cycle parking, access and waste storage and collection arrangements considered to be acceptable and to comply with Policies TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy), TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters), TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) and CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage).

v) Natural Environment

Trees and Landscaping

- 7.31 The proposed changes do not increase the overall footprint of built development within the site and would, including the proposed extension to the access road, not result in any additional impacts upon the limited existing trees within the site which are located to the site perimeter, nor do they necessitate any additional tree removal. Condition 21 attached to the extant permission ensures that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan (as approved under approval of details reserved by condition application ref. PL/23/1546/APC) and this condition would be carried across to a new s73 variation of condition planning permission. The RBC Natural Environment Officer is satisfied that the proposed amendments to the scheme would not result in any additional adverse impact upon existing trees at or near the site, subject to the details already approved under condition 21 being secured as part of a new s73 planning permission.
- 7.32 The RBC Natural Environment Officer is satisfied with the proposed siting of the 5 trees to be relocated within the development as well as the siting of the 8 new trees to be planted to provide mitigation for partial loss of the green roof to the car park. Figure 19 below shows the proposed locations for the trees to be re-located and for the additional new trees. The amended development is considered to ensure that there would be no additional harm to retained trees and would, as per the approved scheme, continue to provide an acceptable landscaped setting for the development next to the river in accordance with Policies EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland), CC7 (Design and The Public Realm), CR2 (Design in Central Reading), CR3 (Public Realm in Central Reading) and EN11 (Waterspaces). Conditions 33 and 38 of the extant planning permission require full details of the hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment details for the development to be submitted and approved by the LPA prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level and this condition would be carried across and re-applied to a s73 variation of condition planning permission.

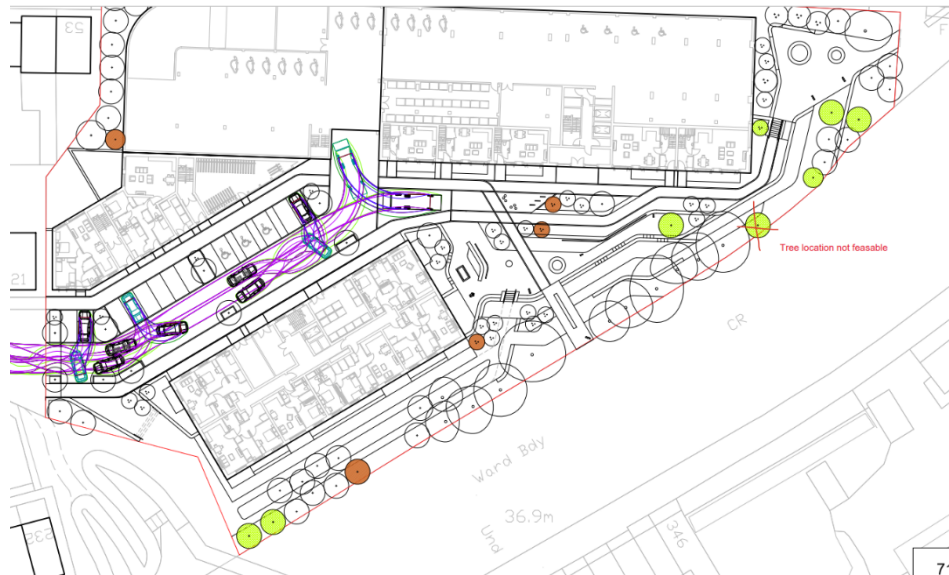


Figure 19 – Proposed trees to be relocated shown in brown and proposed new trees shown in green

Biodiversity

- 7.33 An addendum to the biodiversity assessment considered when the approved development was granted planning permission has been submitted with the proposed variation application. This considers the proposed partial loss of the green roof from the car park and loss of the grasscrete area in front of Building B. The addendum assessment concludes that, even with partial loss of the green roof and loss of the grasscrete area the proposed planting of 8 additional trees would ensure that in terms of habitat units the development would provide for a betterment of on-site biodiversity compared to the approved scheme. Grasscrete by its nature carries very limited to no biodiversity benefit. Given the extant planning permission was granted prior to the introduction of statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements then any s73 variation of this permission is exempt from these requirements. Nonetheless, the RBC Ecology Adviser has reviewed the proposals and whilst acknowledging that partial loss of the green roof is disappointing is satisfied with the mitigation for this proposed in terms of the additional tree planting which would result in an overall betterment compared to the approved scheme. The reviewed proposals are considered to comply with Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and The Green Network) and would ensure that a net gain in on-site biodiversity is achieved.
- 7.34 The minor nature of the proposed changes to the development is such that this is not considered to result in any new impacts upon protected species on or around the site. When planning permission for the approved scheme was granted evidence of peregrine falcons was reported near the site and condition 22 (habitat enhancement) of the extant planning permission includes a requirement for a peregrine perch to be integrated into Building B. This requirement and condition would be carried across and replicated on a s73 variation of condition planning permission. The Construction Method Statement (CMS) approved under condition 24 of the extant planning permission requires a temporary perch to be installed during construction of the development and this has been in place at the site since the gas holder structure was demolished under the separate prior approval consent. A temporary nest was also provided with the perch which was in use by peregrines at the site in 2023. After the nest was vacated the nesting box was then closed to allow the developer to implement the planning permission at the site given if there were nesting peregrines present on site Natural England would very likely not issue a licence for such works to commence in such proximity to the nest. However, as per the requirements of condition 24 the temporary perch remains and would do for the duration of the construction period of the development. The RBC Ecology Adviser has confirmed that in 2025 the peregrines nested in a nesting box location on the rooftop of The Blade.

- 7.35 The proposed amendments to the development are considered to be acceptable from a trees, landscaping, biodiversity and ecological perspective and would comply with Policies EN12, EN14, CC7, CR2, CR3 and EN8.

vi) Other Matters

- 7.36 The site as a result of its former use as a gas holder is subject to potential contamination. The extant permission includes conditions 17 (contamination assessment), 18 (contamination remediation), 28 (land gas assessment) and 29 (land gas remediation) to secure strategies to bring the site into a suitable condition for its proposed use as a residential development in accordance with Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources). Since the extant planning permission was granted approval of details reserved by condition applications (ref. PL/23/1565, PL/23/1589, PL/1060 and PL/24/0361) have been submitted in respect of these conditions and strategies approved. These conditions would be carried across and re-applied to a s73 variation of condition planning permission to secure that the development is carried out in accordance with these details.
- 7.37 Condition 24 of the extant permission required submission and approval of construction method statement (CMS) prior to the commencement of development to demonstrate how construction activities from the development would not result in adverse impacts upon surrounding occupiers and the surrounding highway network in accordance with Policies CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity), EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) and TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters). A CMS was approved under approval of details reserved by condition application ref. PL/23/1585. A condition requiring the development to be carried out only in accordance with the approved CMS would be applied to the new s73 variation of condition planning permission.
- 7.38 Condition 25 of the extant permission secured submission and approval of a scheme to demonstrate how an Ecological Buffer Zone alongside the River Kennet would be protected during construction and then subsequent occupation of the development at the request of the Environment Agency (EA) and to protect the watercourse and its ecological value in accordance with Policies EN12 (Biodiversity and The Green Network) and EN11 (Waterspaces). A subsequent non-material amendment application (ref. PL/23/1544) was approved to split the condition into 2 parts, with part i) to require details of how the buffer zone would be provided and maintained during construction of the development to be submitted and agreed prior to development commencing and part ii) to require details of how the buffer zone would be provided and maintained during occupation of the development to be submitted and agreed at a later stage, prior to commencement of development above foundation level. Part i) of the condition was approved under approval of details reserved by condition application ref. PL/24/0550 with the development having not yet reached a stage where part ii) requires details to be approved. This condition would be carried across to a new s73 variation of condition planning permission to require the development to be constructed in accordance with the details already approved under part i) of the condition and to require the details under part ii) to be submitted for approval prior to commencement of any development beyond foundation level.
- 7.39 The EA have been consulted on the proposed changes to the development and raise no objection subject to implementation of relevant conditions as attached to the extant planning permission (including condition 25 discussed above, condition 6 (no construction piling unless methodology agreed with the LPA in consultation with the EA) and condition 7 (surface water infiltration details) where a scheme has already been approved under approval of details reserved by condition application re PL/23/1852/APC. Compliance with all these conditions would be secured as part of a new s73 variation of condition planning permission.
- 7.40 Conditions 31 and 32 of the extant planning permission requires details of the external lighting for the development and a glint and glare study to be submitted and approved by the LPA prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level in order that the lighting is design as to not adversely impact upon existing surrounding occupiers, future

occupiers of the development, biodiversity or the railway line to the north of the site in accordance with Policies CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity), EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) and EN12 (Biodiversity and The Green Network). These conditions would be re-applied and carried across as part of a s73 variation of condition planning permission.

- 7.41 Condition 36 of the extant permission requires a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to be submitted and agreed prior to occupation of the development in order to ensure establishment and success of the landscaping and ecological enhancements proposed as part of the development in accordance with Policies EN12 (Biodiversity and The Green Network), EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) and CC7 (Design and The Public Realm). This condition as well as condition 39 to secure provision of all on-site play facilities prior to occupation of the development in accordance with Policy EN9 (Provision of Open Space) would be carried across and re-applied as part of a s73 variation of condition planning permission.
- 7.42 Condition 37 of the extant planning permission requires the development to be undertaken in accordance with approved flood mitigation measures in accordance with Policy EN18 (Flooding and Drainage). No changes to these measures are proposed as part of this application and this condition would be re-applied to a s73 permission.
- 7.43 Condition 23 of the extant planning permission requires a scheme for re-use of the cast iron sign formerly present within the gas holder site to be submitted and agreed with the LPA. This condition was amended under non-material amendment ref. PL/23/1545 to require these details to be submitted and agreed prior to the commencement of development beyond foundation level (rather than prior to the commencement of development as originally approved). Condition 41 of the extant permission requires details of new signage and sculptural elements at the entrance to the site from Alexander Turner Close to be submitted and approved by the LPA prior to occupation of the development. Both conditions would be carried across and re-applied to a section s73 variation of condition planning permission in the interests of the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area in accordance with Policies CC7 (Design and The Public Realm), CR2 (Design in Central Reading) and CR3 (Public Realm in Central Reading).
- 7.44 Condition 44 of the extant permission required details of the finished floor level of the development to be submitted and agreed prior to commencement of development beyond foundation level and would be re-applied as part of a new s73 variation of condition planning permission in the interests of the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area in accordance with Policies CC7 (Design and The Public Realm) and CR2 (Design in Central Reading).
- 7.45 Condition 45 of the extant planning permission requires submission and approval of a CCTV Strategy prior to occupation of the development in the interest of the safety of future occupiers of the development and public and would be re-applied in accordance with Policy CC7 (Design and The Public Realm).
- 7.46 Conditions 46 and 47 secure submission and approval of a Travel Plan within 5 months of occupation of the development and subsequent annual review of this document to encourage modal shift away from the car in accordance with Policy TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy) and would be carried across to a s73 variation of condition planning permission.
- 7.47 It should also be noted that a non-material amendment (ref. PL/23/1655) to the original planning permission was granted to allow for phased implementation of the development with phase 1 consisting of the de-contamination of the entire site and construction of the new access road and Building C (containing 10 x affordable dwellings only) and construction of the rest of the development forming phase 2 of the development. This non-material amendment revised the wording of a number of conditions of the original planning permission to facilitate approval of relevant details on this phased basis. Paragraph 4.11 above shows the full description of the non-material amendment that was granted above

and the conditions which were amended to facilitate phased approval and this approach to these conditions would be carried across and replication on any s73 variation of condition planning permission granted as a result of this current application to incorporate the proposed changes with the phased approach to the development.

Unit Mix

- 7.48 As discussed in the above sections of this report various minor internal changes to the layout of each building are proposed. As a consequence of this a small change to the approved dwelling mix of the development is proposed. The mix would change from 48 x 1-bedroom apartments (36.9%), 74 x 2-bedroom apartments (56.9%) and 8 x 3-bedroom apartments (6.2%) as approved to 48 x 1-bedroom apartments (36.9%), 73 x 2-bedroom apartments (56.15%) and 9 x 3-bedroom apartments (6.92%). The revised dwelling mix would continue to comply with Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) which states that development in Central Reading should provide for no more than 40% of the total number of dwellings proposed as 1-bedroom units and a minimum of 5% of the total number of dwellings as 3-bedroom units. The proposed increase in 3-bedroom units is a welcomed change.

Fire Safety

- 7.49 HSE Fire Safety were not a statutory consultee when planning permission for the approved development was granted but have reviewed and commented on the current variation of condition application and advise that they are content with the proposed fire safety design in so far as it relates to land use planning considerations. HSE identify a number of detailed fire safety matters that the applicant will need to take into account during the more detailed later regulatory stages of the development design.

S106 Legal Agreement

- 7.50 The existing s106 agreement linked to the extant planning permission stipulates within in it that it would also be linked to any s73 variation of condition planning permission that is granted and therefore all the s106 obligations secured as part of this existing agreement (which are set out in the recommendation box at the top of the main agenda and update reports to November 2019 Planning Applications Committee attached as appendix 1 and 2 to this report) would continue to be secured and linked to a s73 variation of condition planning permission.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.51 In terms of the Reading Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the proposals are a CIL liable development. The total CIL liability of the approved scheme is around £2.6 million with the increase in floor space proposed as art of this s73 variation of condition application increased the total liability to around £2.7million. Albeit these figures are likely to reduce given the applicant can claim exemption from CIL for any affordable housing provided as part of the development.

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. Conclusion

- 9.1 As confirmed at paragraph 7.1 to 7.3 above, section 73 applications are required to be considered against the development plan and material considerations, under section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and conditions attached to the existing permission, with a particular focus on national and development plan policies, and other material considerations which may have changed significantly since the original grant of permission. This has been set out in the above assessment.
- 9.2 As is the case for all planning applications, including applications under s73, any harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits in the context of national and local planning policies.
- 9.3 When considering the application and development subject of the extant planning permission (ref. PL/19/0627) officers concluded that the development demonstrated a number of public benefits including provision of 130 good quality new dwellings on a sustainably located brownfield site in the town centre, including 15 affordable dwellings (12% provision) and deferred payment mechanism to ensure the Council shared in any future improvements in the viability position of the development. The approved scheme also secures provision of high-quality riverside area of open space including landscape and biodiversity enhancements and provision of new pedestrian link to the footbridge over the river Kennet from within the site whilst the design and appearance of the buildings was found to show good visual quality. The approved development satisfied the majority of the requirements of the site allocation Policy CR13d (Gas Holder) with the East Side Major Opportunity Area of the town centre in terms of using the site for residential development, enhancing the character of the Kennet, providing a set back from the edge of the river to reflect its wildlife significance and addressing contamination at the site.
- 9.4 The only notable shortfall of the approved development identified was that it did not provide for continuous public access along the river frontage within the site which Policy CR13d states should be sought. However, this was due to the location of the existing ramped access to the footbridge over the Kennet which severs this route whilst the Environment Agency also advised that they would not support continuous across the river frontage of the site given this would be within the 10m buffer zone area between the development and river secured to be provided under condition 25 of the extant permission to protect the biodiversity of the waterway. Overall, in carrying out a planning balance assessment it was accepted that the benefits of the development outweighed the harms and the officer recommendation to grant planning permission was confirmed by November 2019 Planning Applications Committee.
- 9.5 Officer can advise that with regard to the changes sought through this application then, the revised proposals represent a significant improvement in the development in respect of carbon emissions and provision of decentralised energy. That aside the benefits and harms of the development summarised above are considered to remain materially unaltered for the reasons outlined in this report. Therefore, the planning balance assessment of the proposals is still considered to fall in favour of granting planning permission for the proposed varied development subject to the recommended varied conditions and the obligations forming part of the existing s106 legal agreement that would continue to apply to and be linked to any variation of condition planning permission granted under s73.
- 9.6 Furthermore, as set out in paragraphs 6.6 to 6.11 of this report and unlike when planning permission for the approved scheme was granted in 2024 the Council cannot now

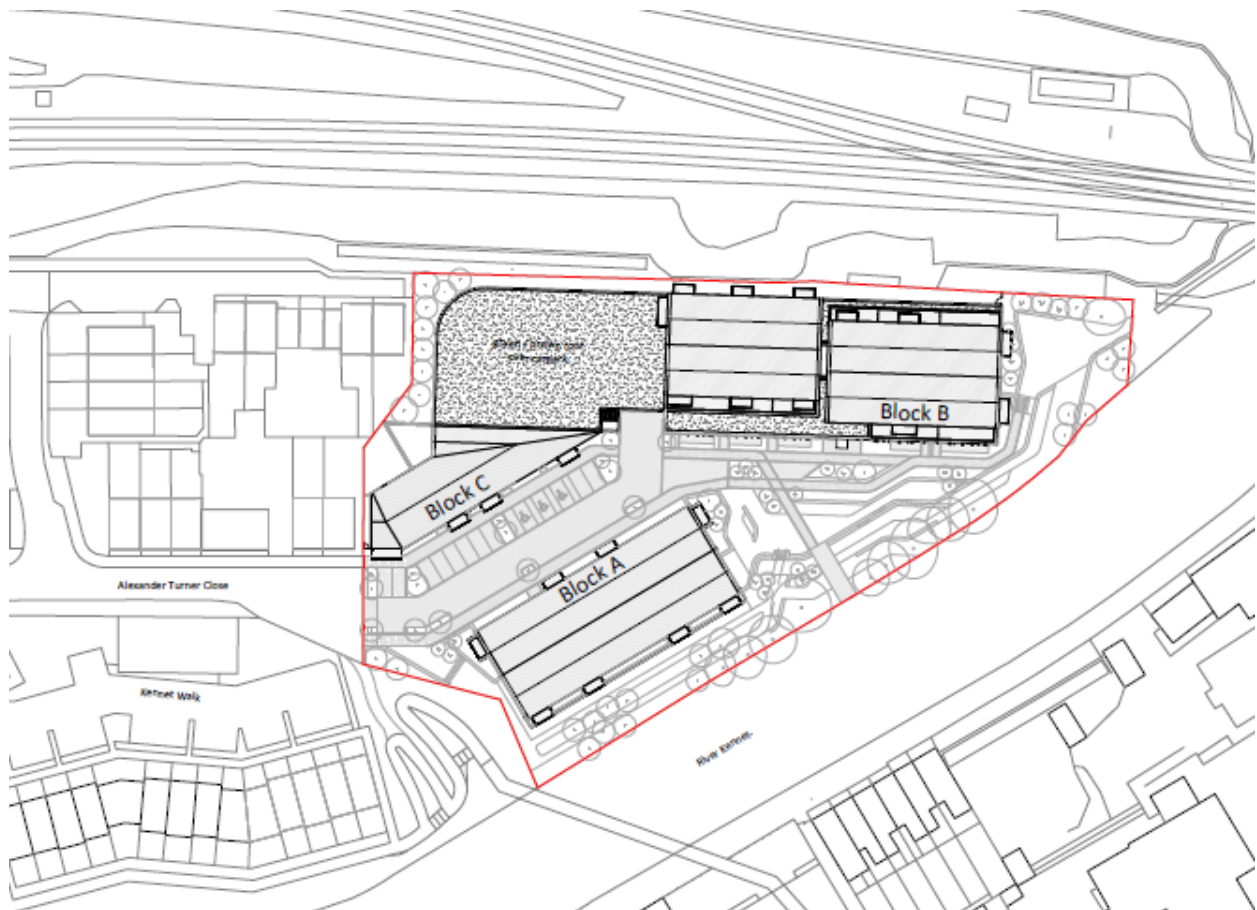
demonstrate a 5-year housing supply as Policy H1 of the Local Plan 2019 is out of date, and therefore the development must be assessed in line with Paragraph 11d(i and ii) of the NPPF (December 2024) referred to as the 'titled balance' and against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole. When applying the titled balance as described in paragraph 11 it is considered that the planning balance weighs more heavily towards granting planning permission for the development and more so than when the extant planning permission was granted. The limited harms identified would not significantly or demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits and therefore the officer recommendation to grant the variation planning application subject to the varied conditions and terms of the existing s106 legal agreement is considered to be reinforced.

Plans & Appendices

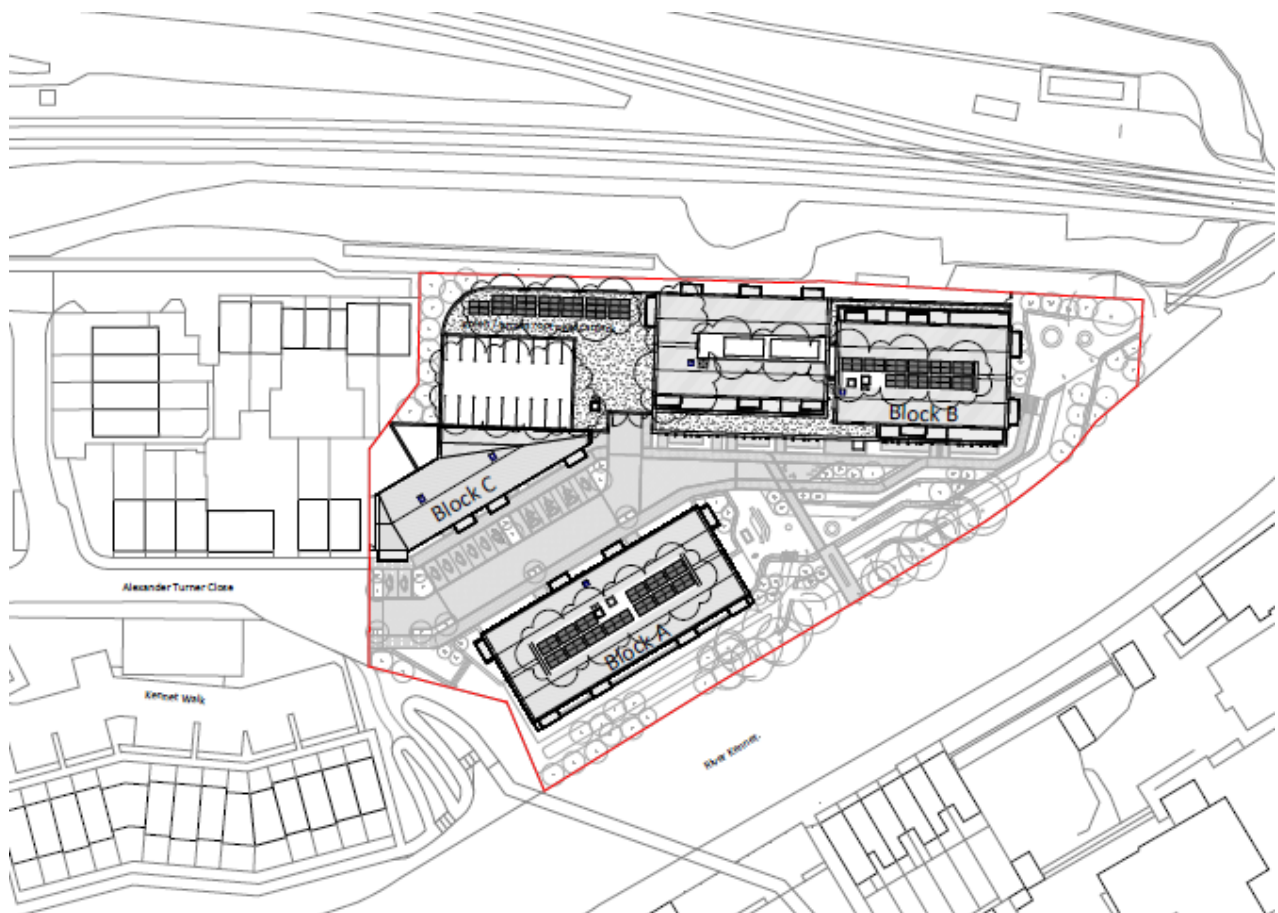
Appendix 1 - Committee report to November 2019 Planning Applications Committee for original planning permission ref. PL/19/0627 including approved plans.

Appendix 2 – Update report to November 20219 Planning Applications Committee for original planning permission ref. PL/19/0627

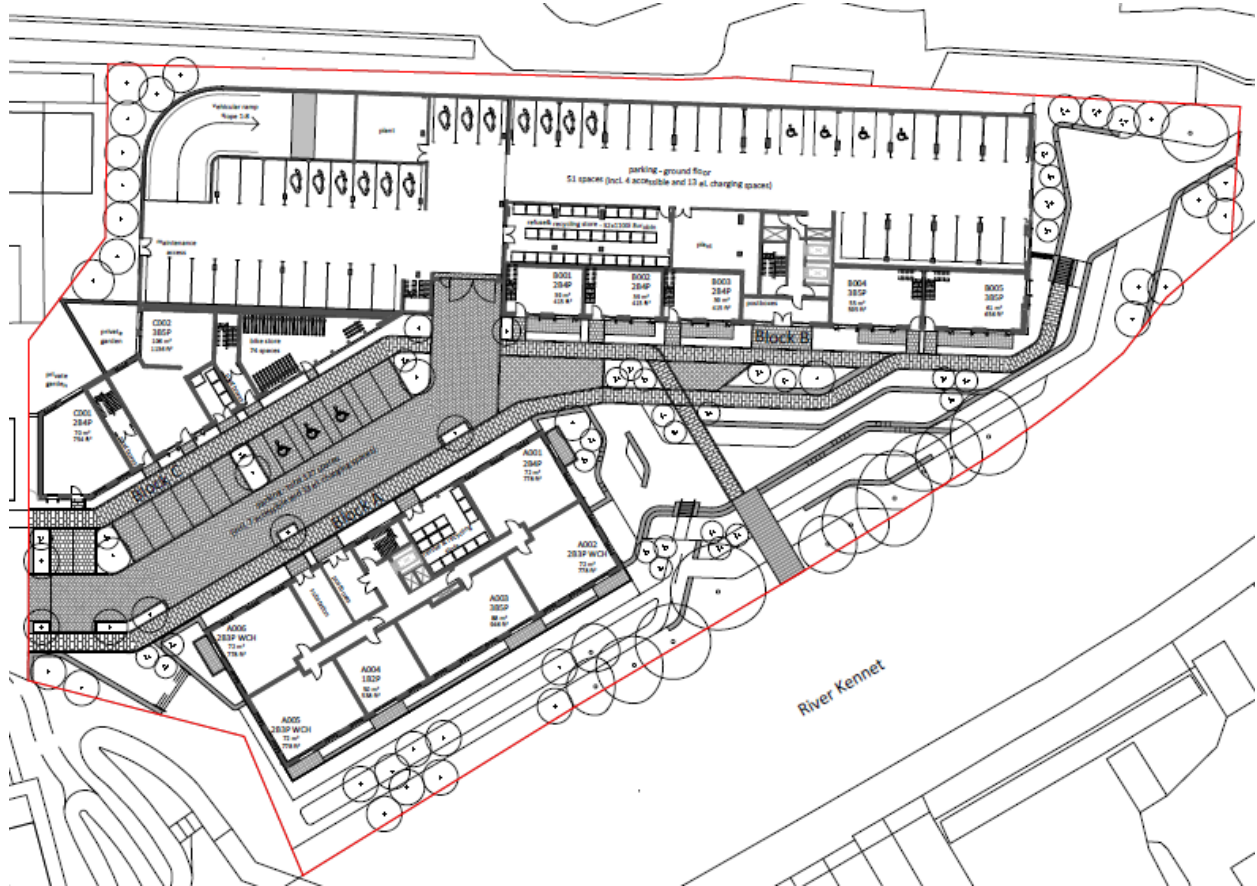
Appendix 3 – Decision notice for original planning permission ref. PL/19/0627



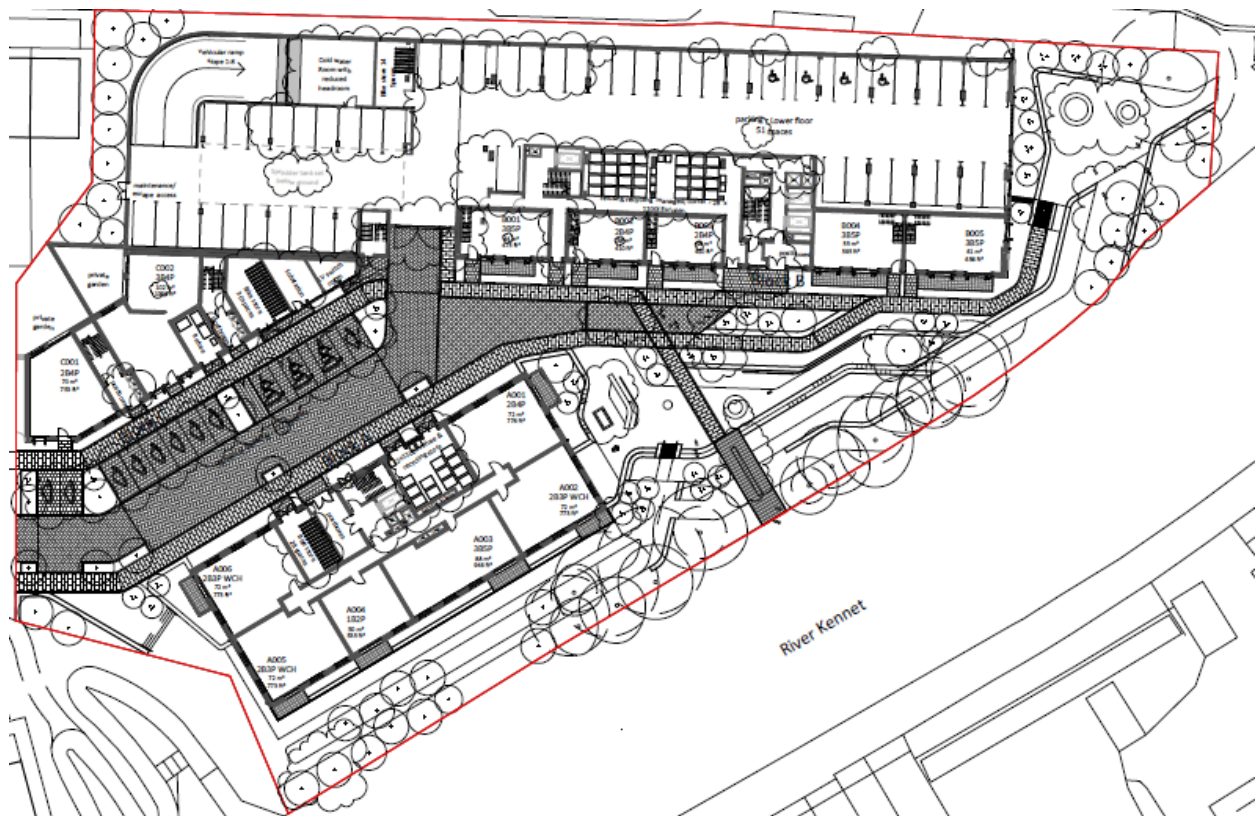
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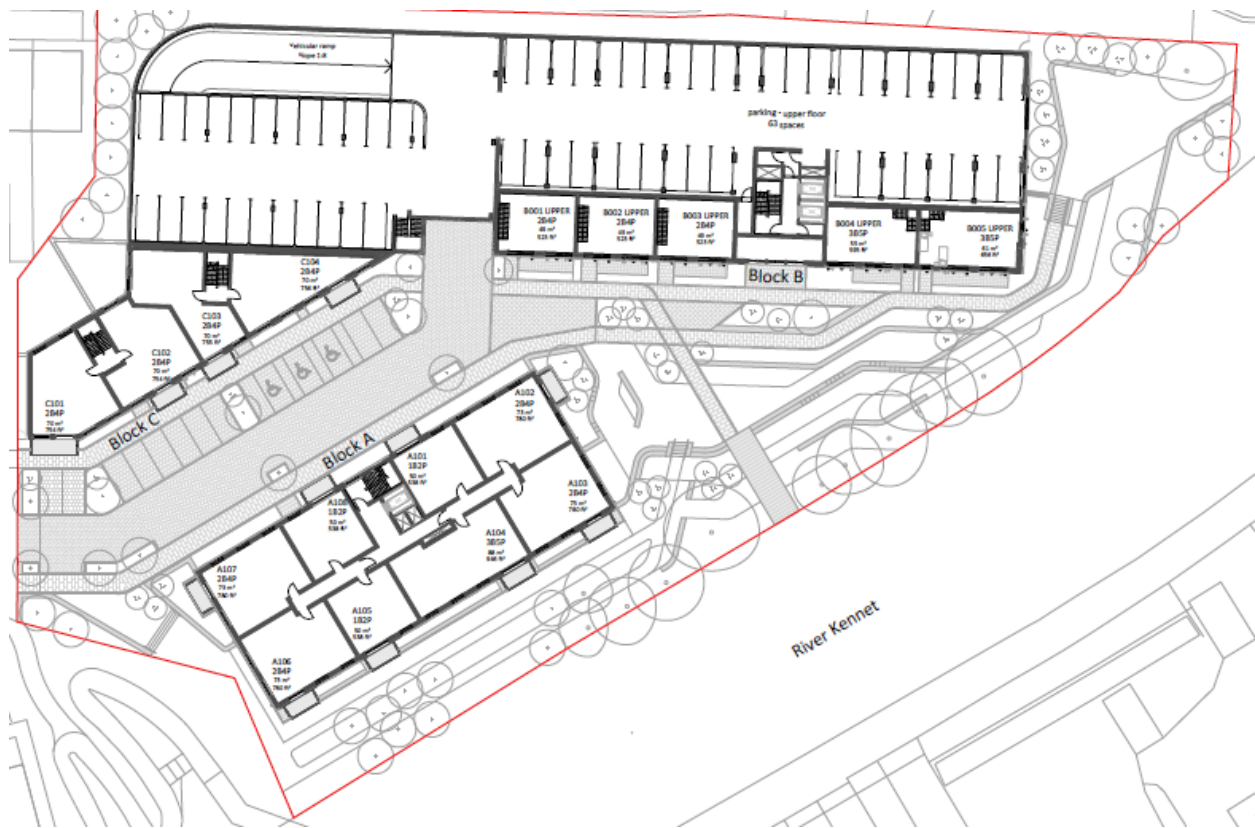
Proposed Site Plan



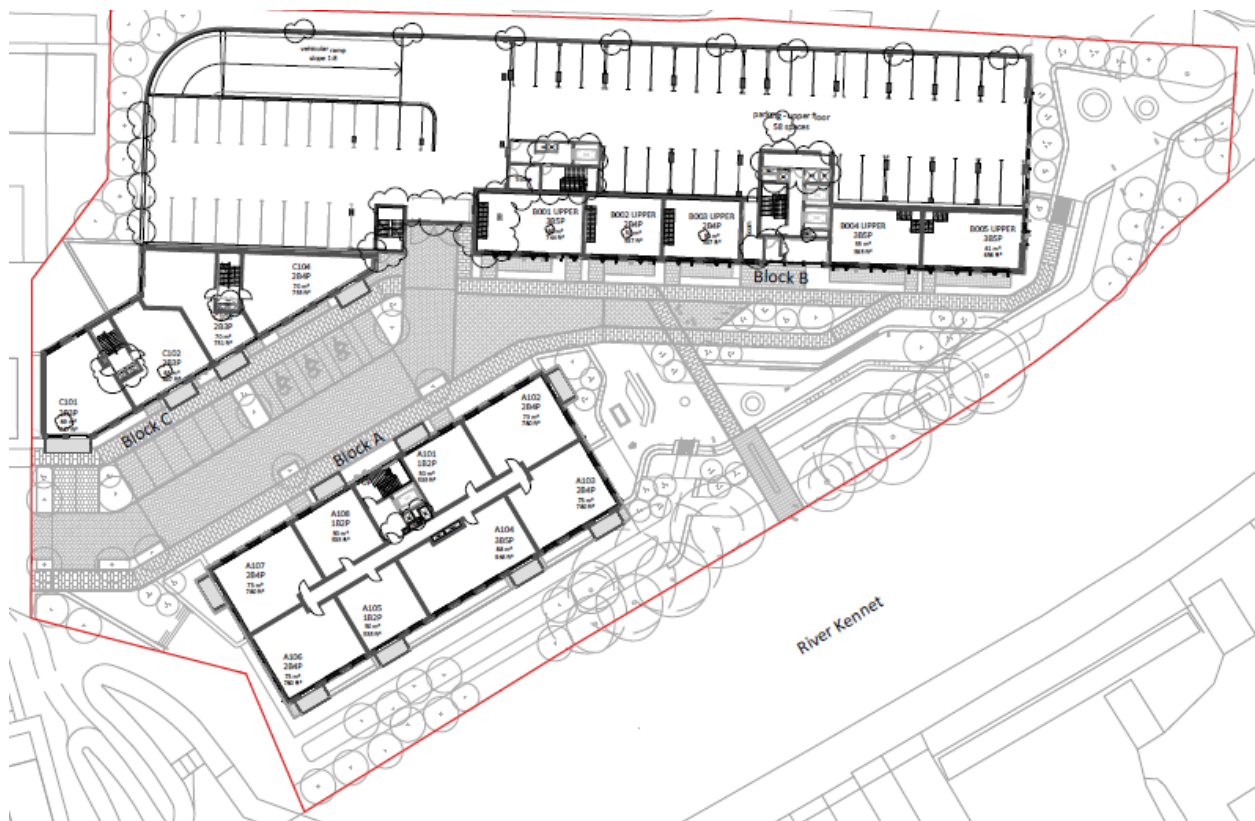
Approved Ground Floor Plan



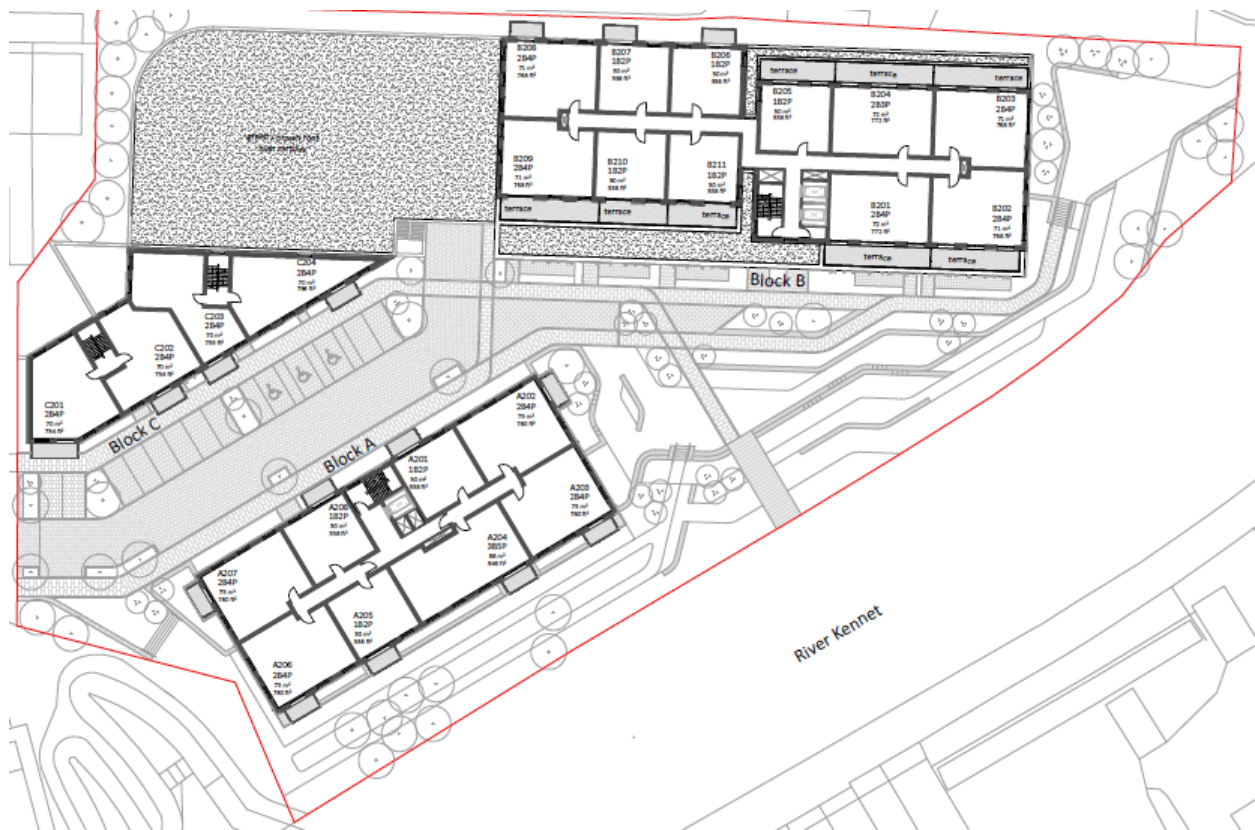
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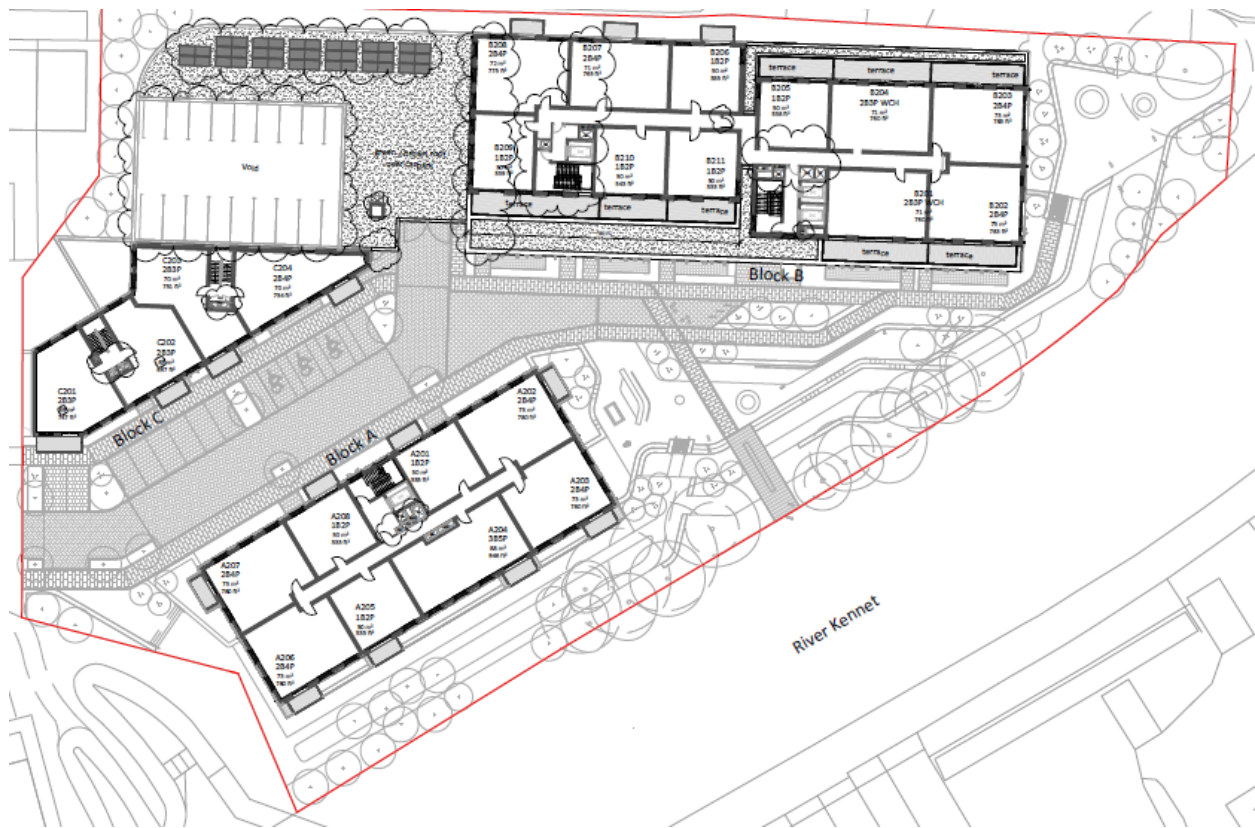
Approved First Floor Plan



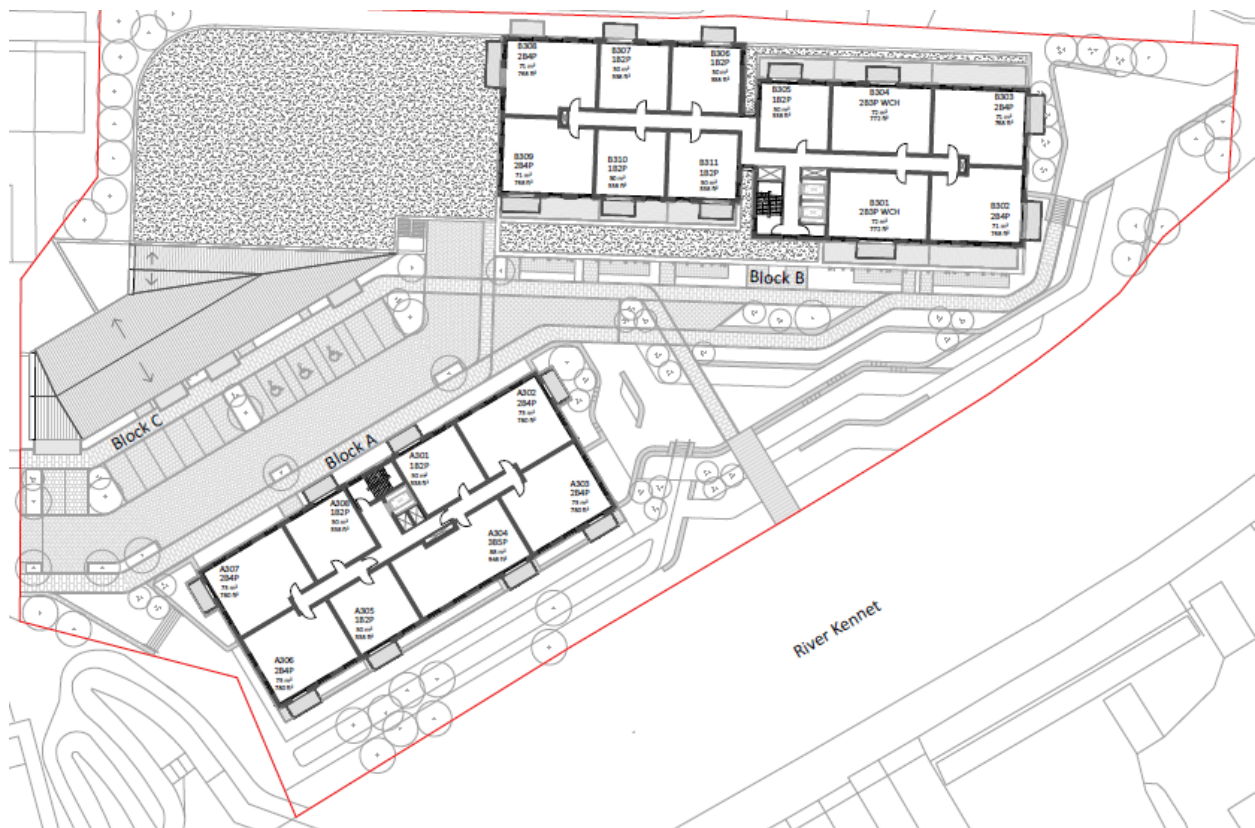
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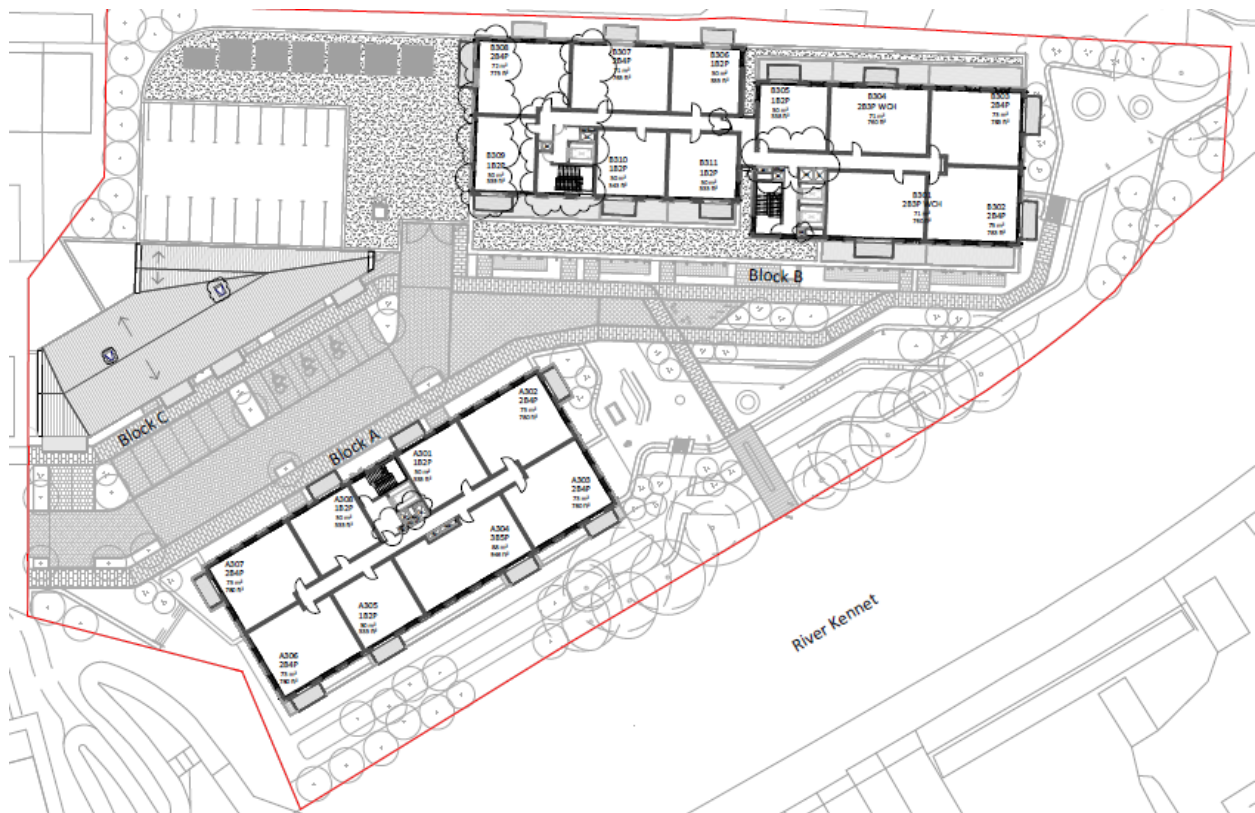
Approved Second Floor Plan



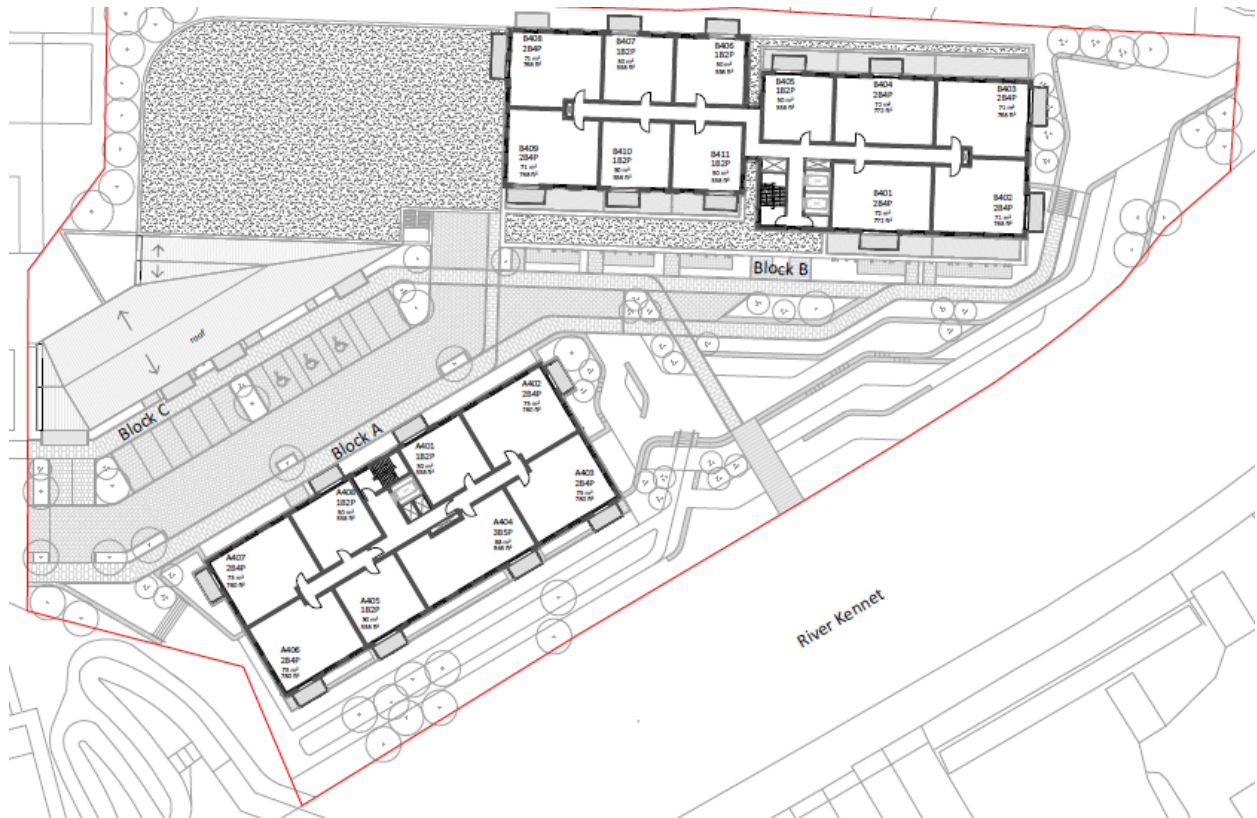
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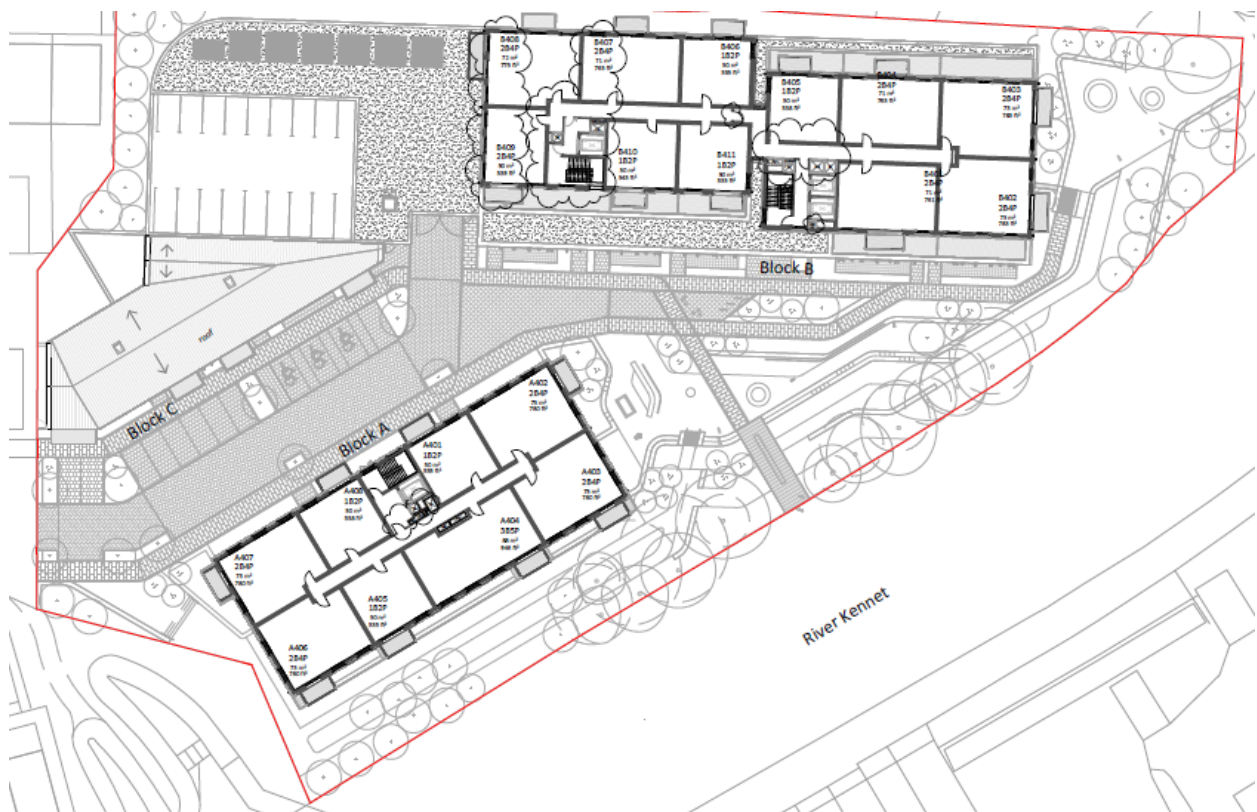
Approved Third Floor Plan



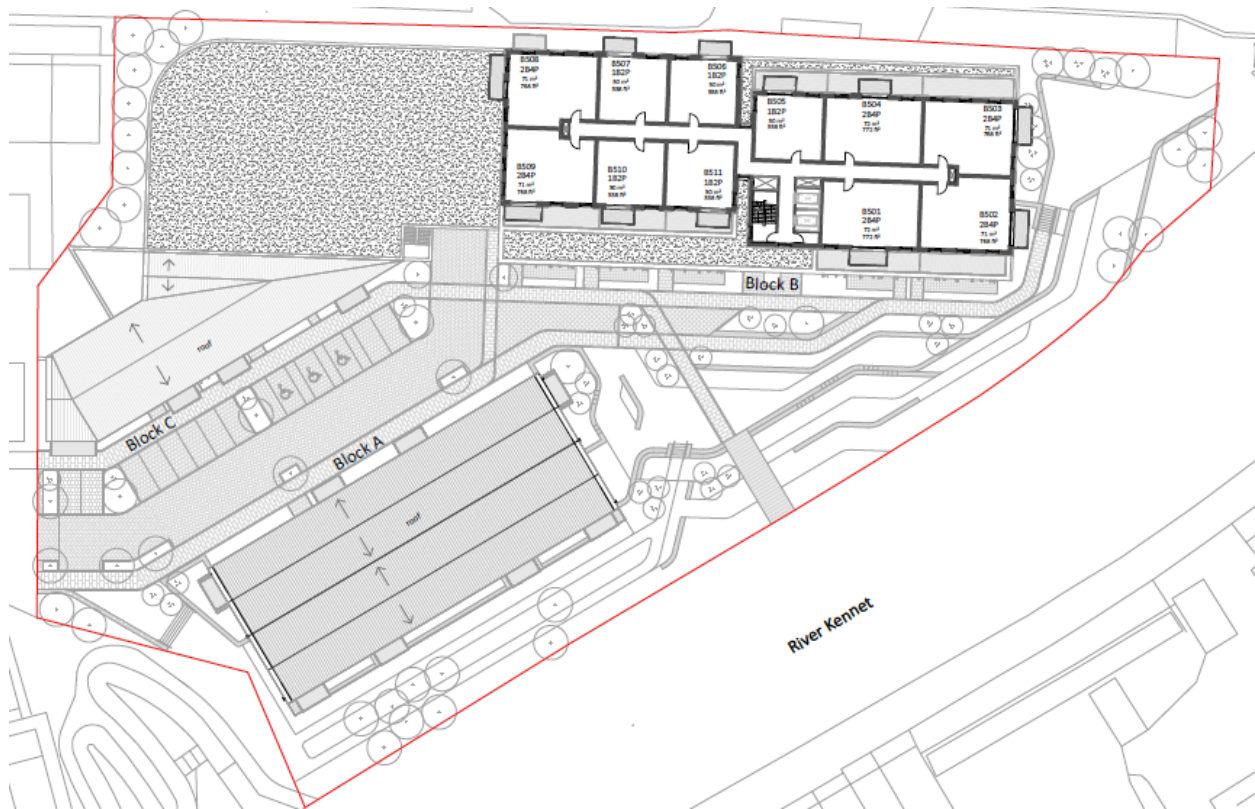
Proposed Third Floor Plan



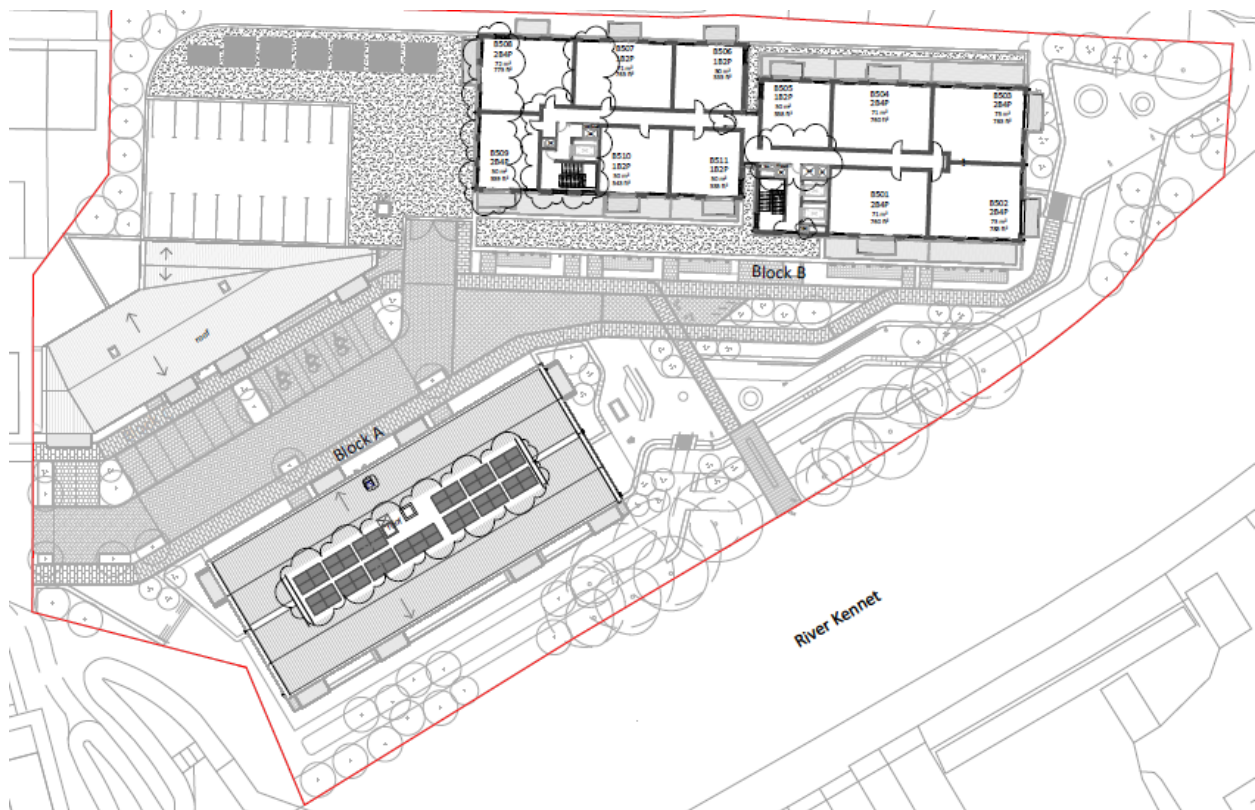
Approved Fourth Floor Plan



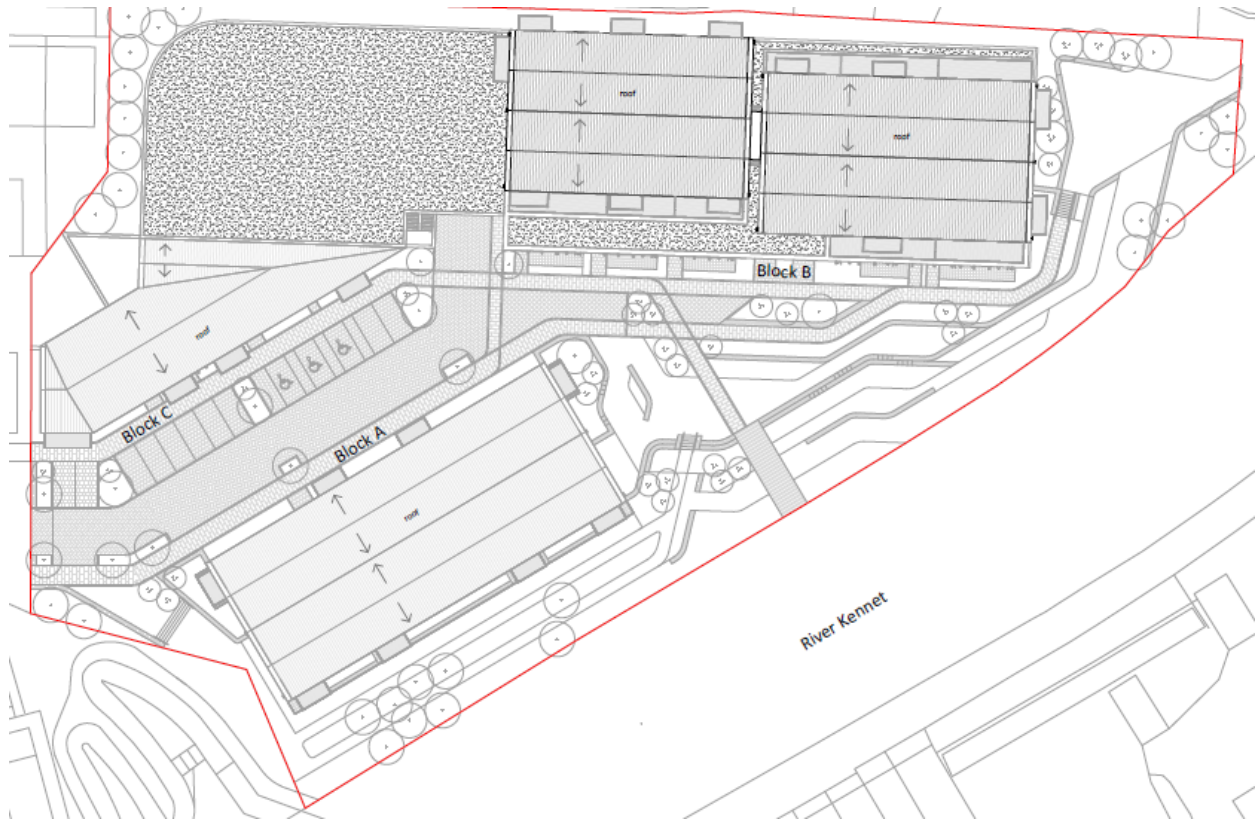
Proposed Fourth Floor Plan



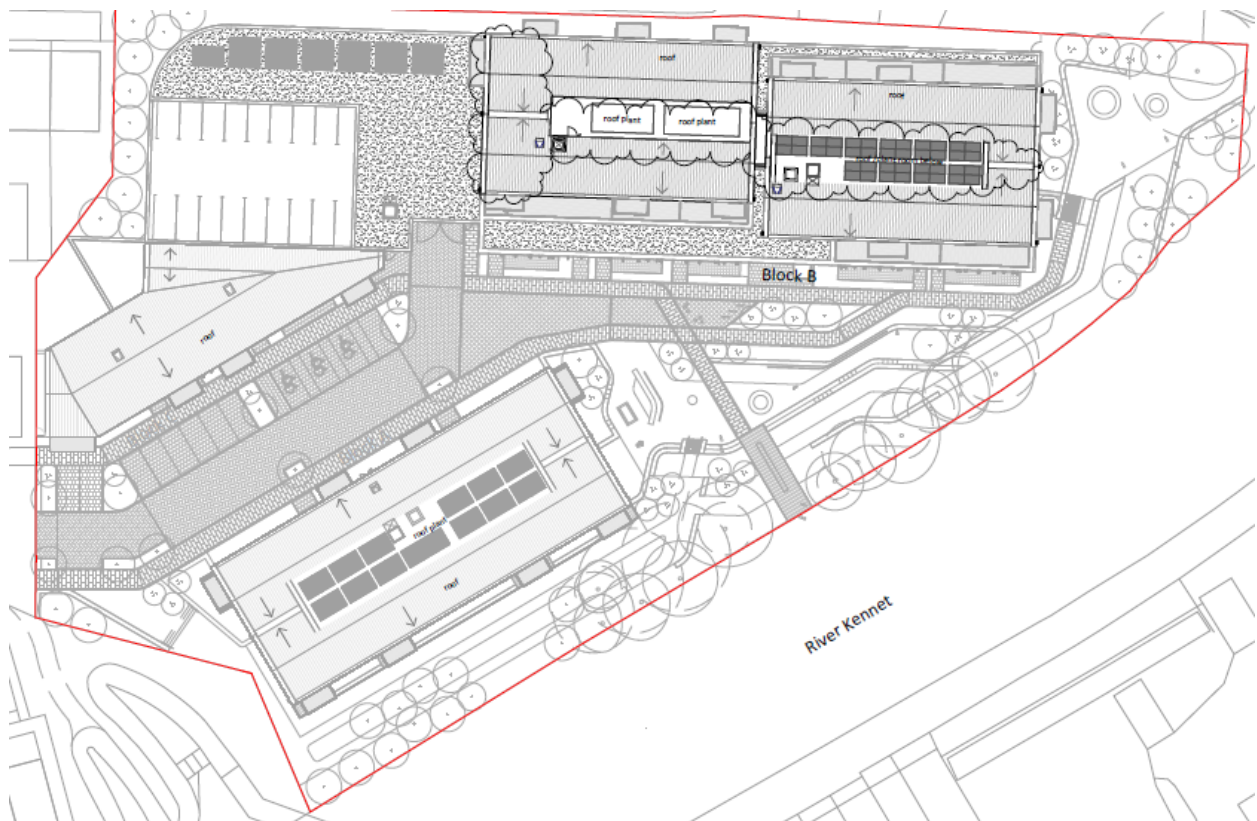
Approved Fifth to Eighth Floor Plans



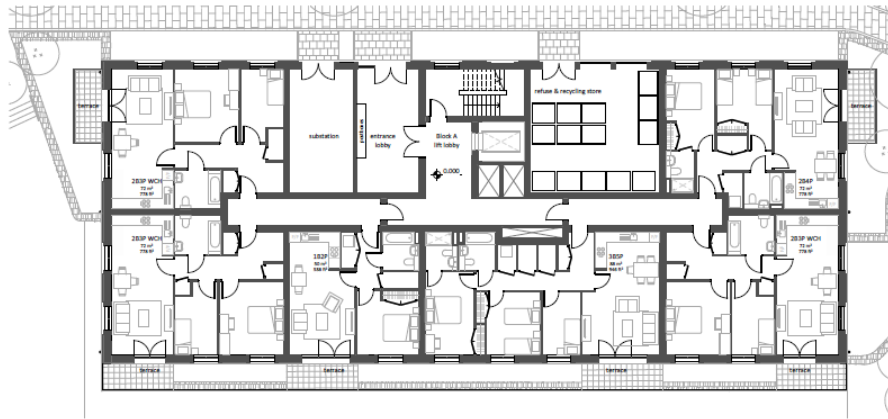
Proposed Fifth to Eighth Floor Plans



Approved Roof Plan



Proposed Roof Plan

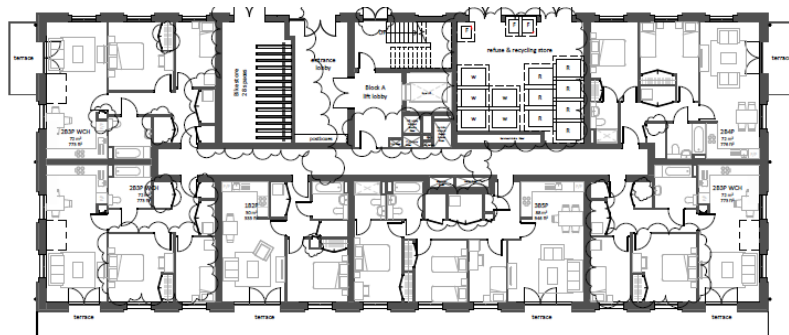


1 Ground Floor Plan
1 : 100



2 First to Fourth Floor Plan
1 : 100

Building A Approved Floor Plans



1 Ground Floor Plan
1 : 100



2 First to Fourth Floor Plan
1 : 100

Building A Proposed Floor Plans



Building A Approved South and East Elevations



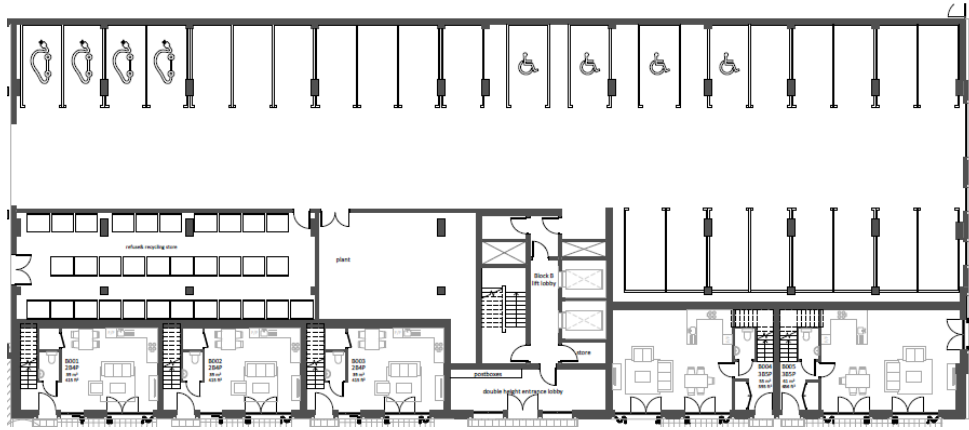
Building A Proposed South and East Elevations



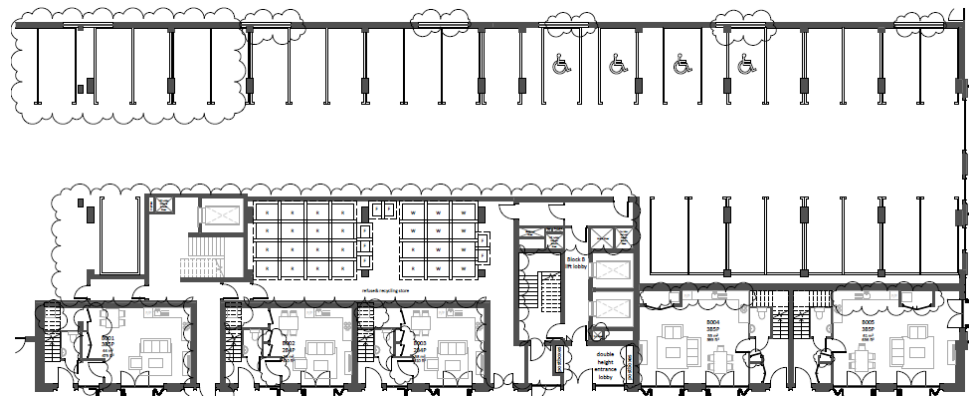
Building A Approved North and West Elevations



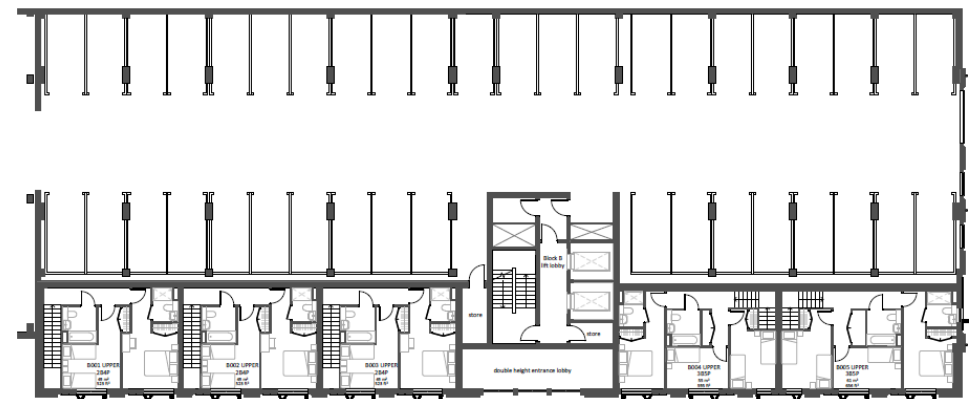
Building A Proposed North and West Elevations



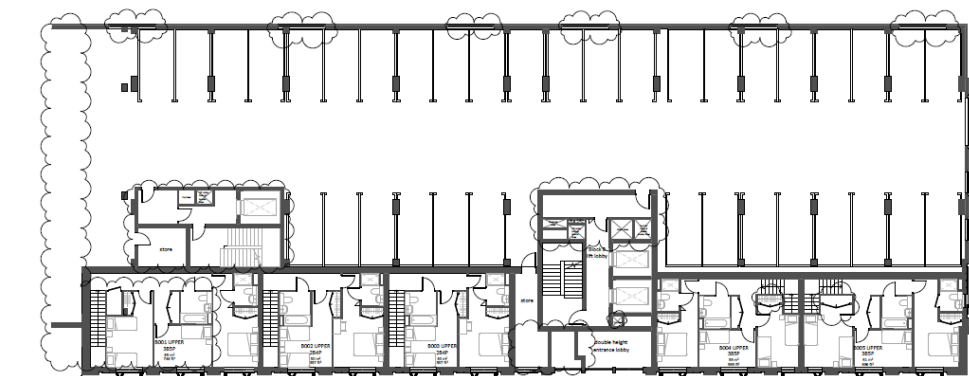
Approved Building B Ground Floor Plan



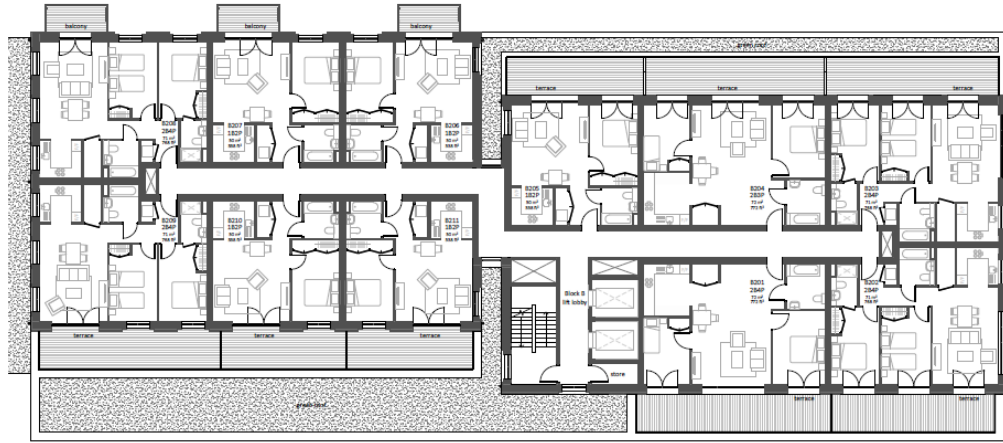
Proposed Building B Ground Floor Plan



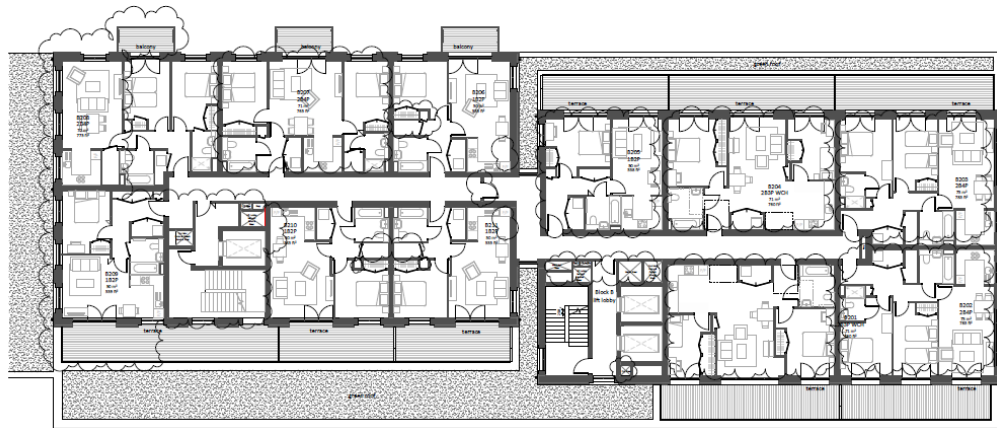
Approved Building B First Floor Plan



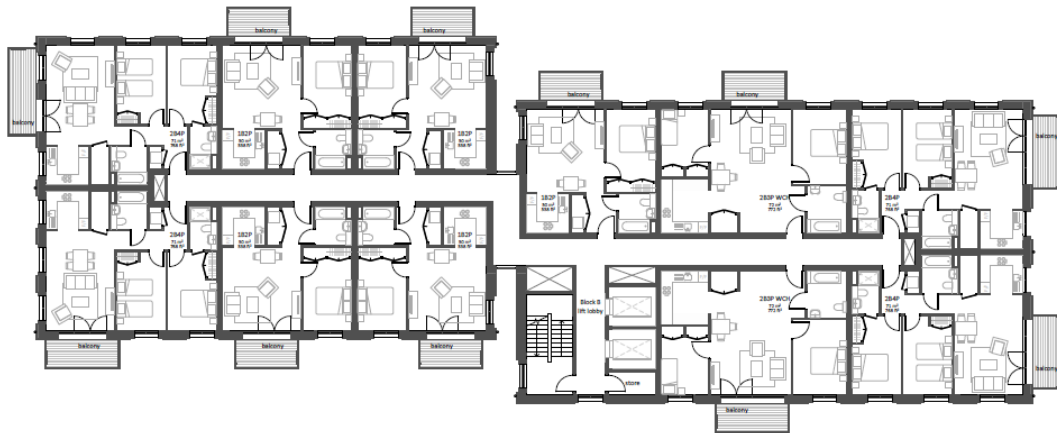
Proposed Building B First Floor Plan



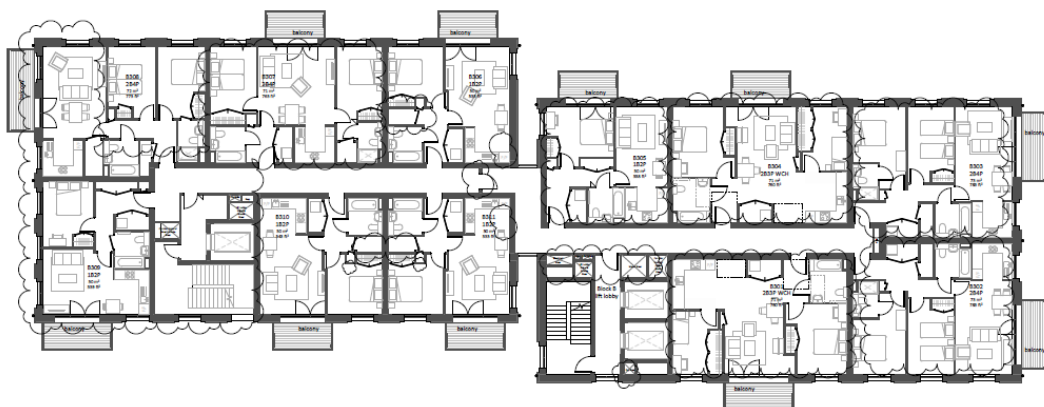
Approved Building B Second Floor Plan



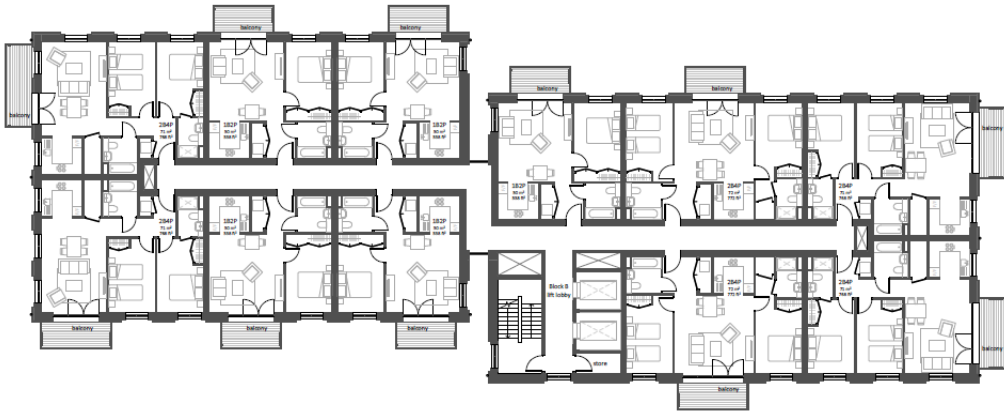
Proposed Building B Second Floor Plan



Approved Building B Third Floor Plan



Proposed Building B Third Floor Plan



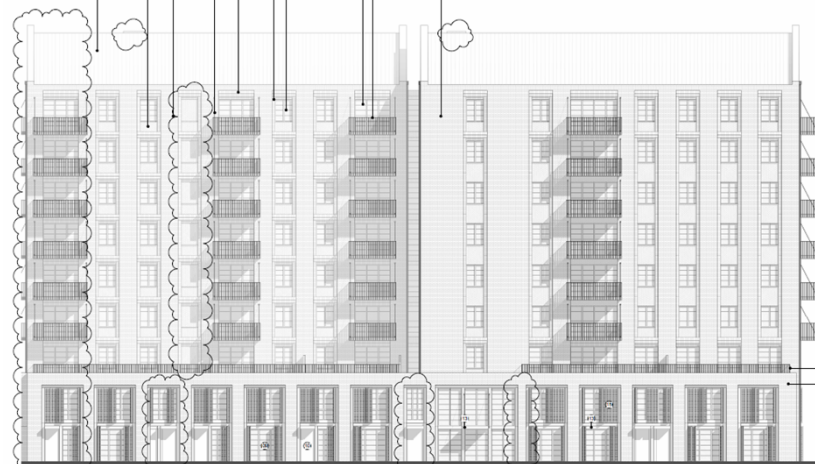
Approved Building B Fourth to Eighth Floor Plans



Proposed Building B Fourth to Eighth Floor Plans



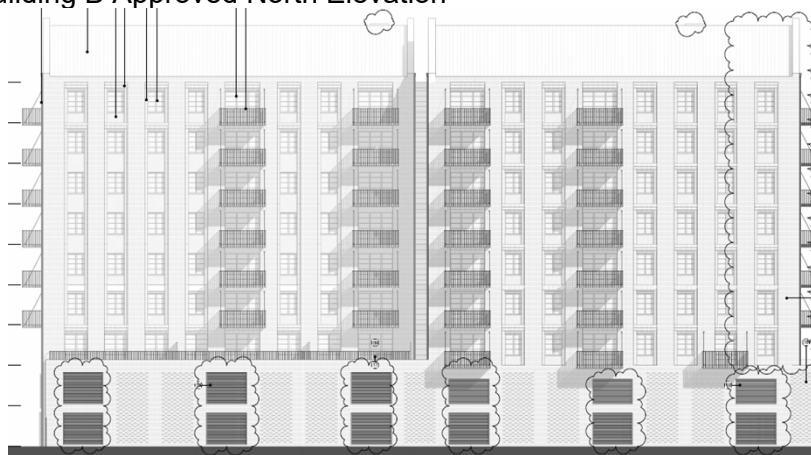
Building B Approved South Elevation



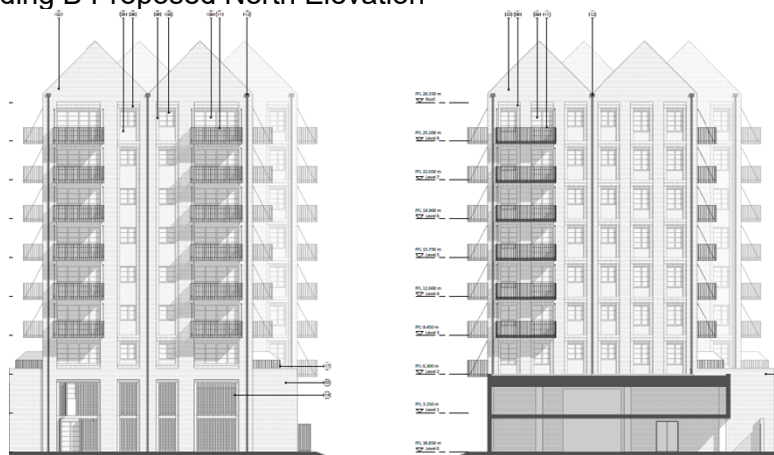
Building B Proposed South Elevation



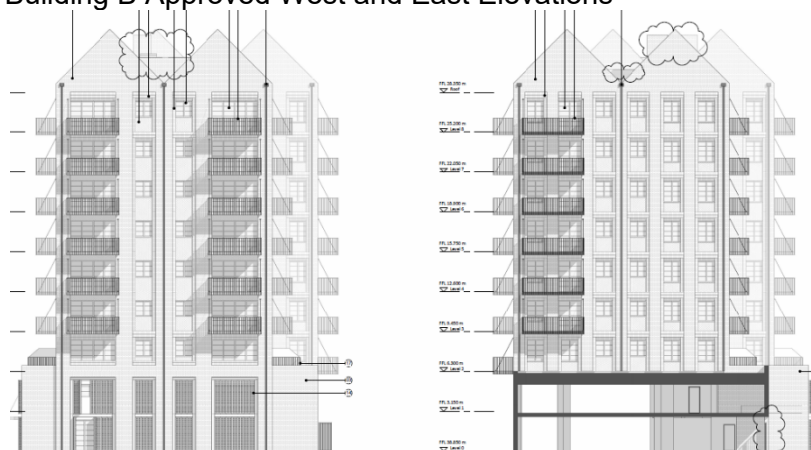
Building B Approved North Elevation



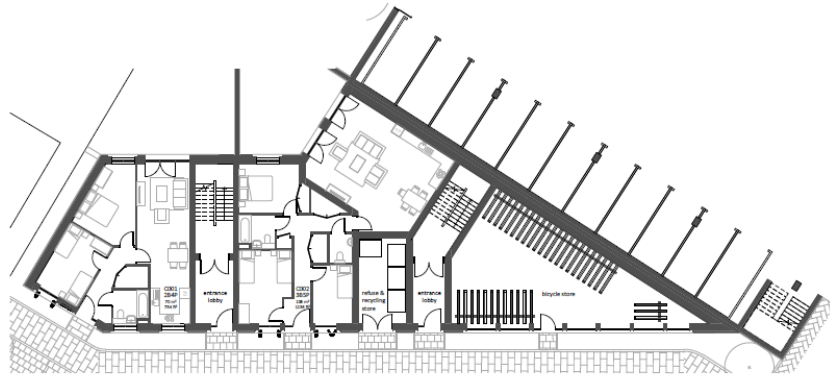
Building B Proposed North Elevation



Building B Approved West and East Elevations



Building B Proposed West and East Elevations

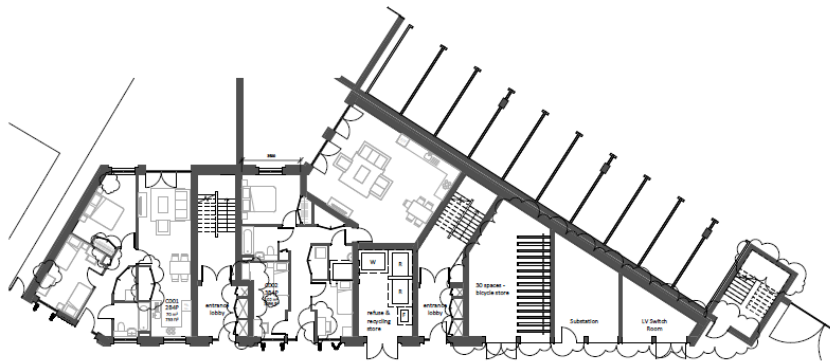


Ground Floor Plan
1:100

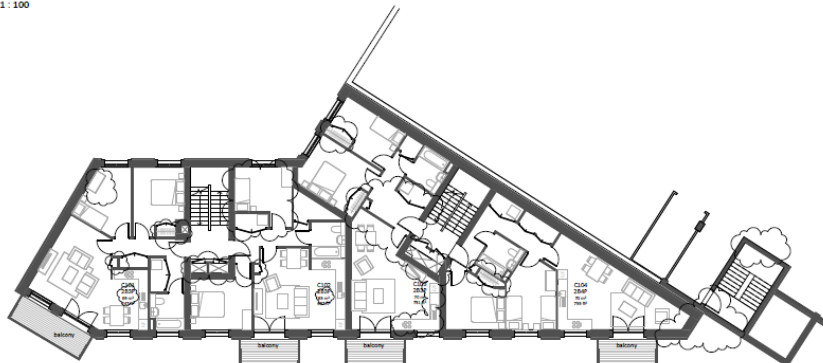


First to Second Floor Plan

Building C Approved Floor Plans

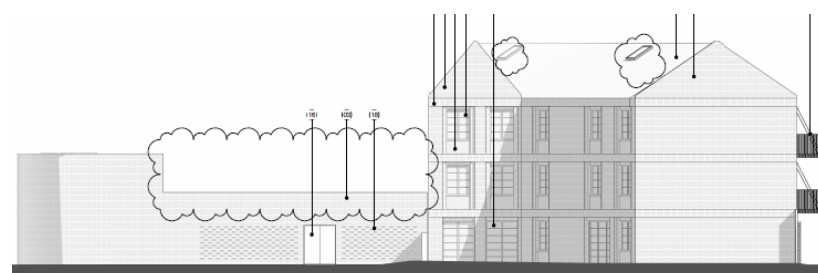
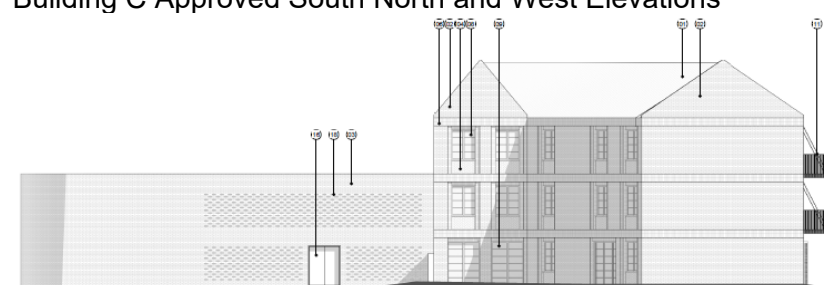
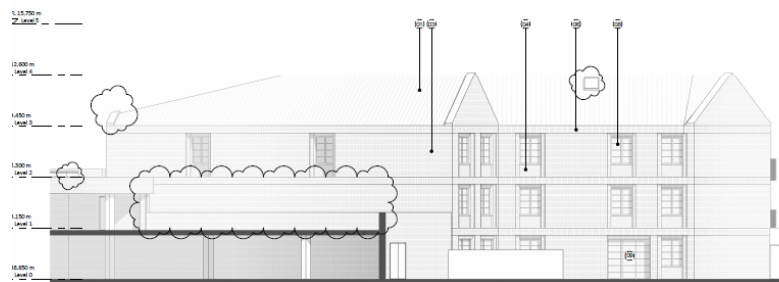
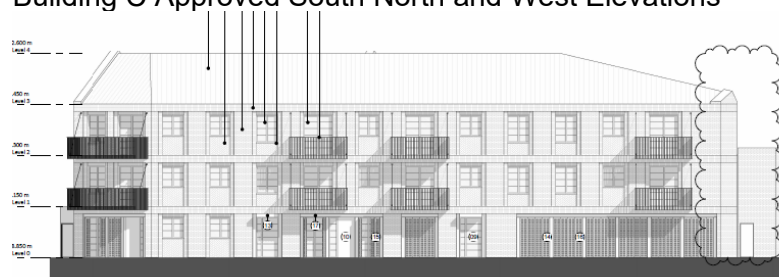
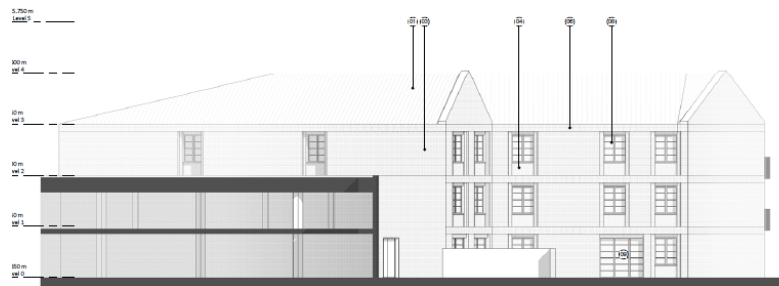


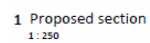
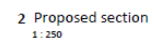
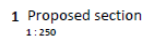
1 Ground Floor Plan
1:100



2 First to Second Floor Plan

Building C Proposed Floor Plans



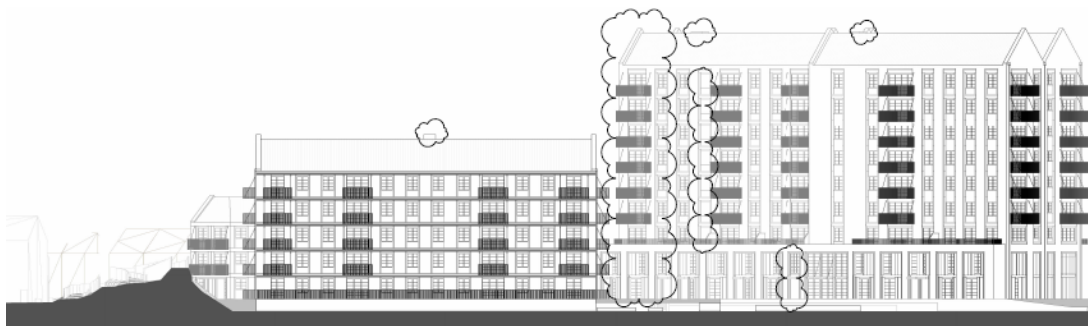




1 Context Elevation



Approved Development Context Elevations Building A and B



h Context Elevation



Approved Development Context Elevations Buildings A and B



1 Proposed East Context Elevation
1 : 250



Approved Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



1 Proposed East Context Elevation
1 : 250



Proposed Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



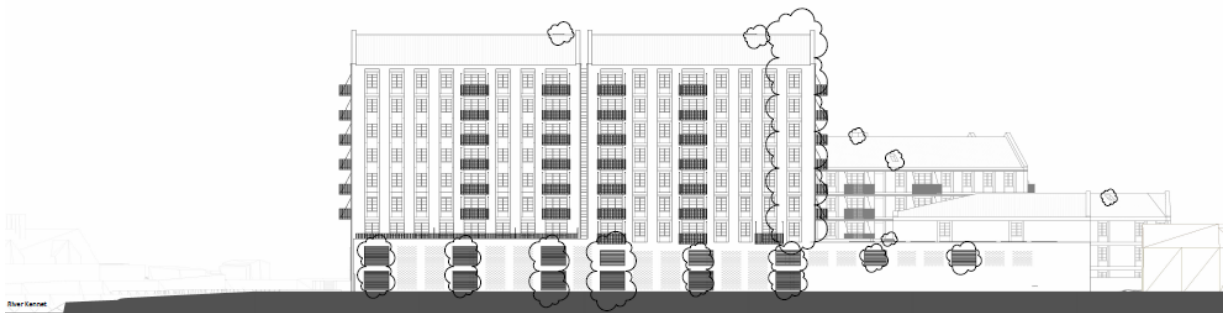
Context Elevation



Approved Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



Context Elevation



Proposed Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



Context Elevation



Approved Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



Context Elevation



Proposed Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



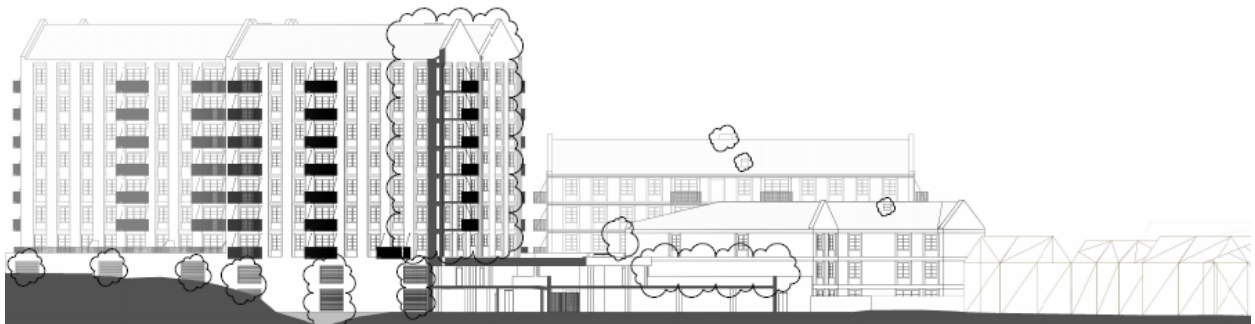
ed South Context Elevation



Approved Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



ed South Context Elevation



Proposed Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



Approved Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C



Proposed Development Context Elevations Buildings A, B and C