

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

Project
New Relief Lock Keepers Welfare Facilities at Blakes Lock

Subject
Design & Access Statement

Date
March 2020

PROJECT No. 1912-19

This Design and Access Statement has been written in support of an application for Planning Permission for demolition of the existing relief lock keepers welfare facilities at Blakes Lock, Reading & their replacement with a new building. This document should be read in conjunction with the proposed scheme drawings, submitted as part of this application as an explanation of the adopted design philosophy and justification of the scheme's approach.

The proposal for the new building is based on the tender documents supplied by the Environment Agency.

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1.1 Supporting Planning Statement

The on-site lock keeper has the use of his own house on Kennet Island for welfare purposes, however, when other lock keepers are on site there are separate facilities for them to use. These facilities are in a bad state of repair & do not offer appropriate levels of comfort. The Environment Agency, has therefore, identified the need for new facilities for relief lock keepers on the site.

Due to the lack of access onto the island, the favored approach is to use an off-site constructed building in order to minimize the numbers of barge movements for plant & materials.

1.2 Form & Layout

The proposed building will sit on the site in the same location as the existing WC & storage building. It is to be constructed using vandal resistant materials.

The internal layout of the building is to have a kitchen facility & an accessible shower & WC.

The exterior finish will be plastic coated steel in with 2 steel external doors & a uPVC window.

1.3 Appearance and Impact Assessment

The existing buildings are a timber shed & steel WC.

The new building will be grey plastic-coated steel with a black EPDM single ply roof membrane.

2.1 Local Context

The proposed building will be on the lock island, behind and area of hedging & fencing with no access by the general public. The land around the existing buildings is largely un kept vegetation & storage space.

2.2 Archaeology

There are no know archaeological finds within the site, nor the immediate vicinity, as such no archaeological survey has been undertaken at this stage. During the works a strict 'stop-work' policy will be operated in the unlikely event that anything is uncovered.

2.3 Site Appraisal

Whilst the boundaries of the proposed site are entirely on the lock island, the site boundaries are as follows:

1. North: River Kennet
2. East: Fence to the end of the lock keepers garden
3. South: Wooden fence and hedges to the edge of the Lock Cut.
4. West: The end of the lock island

Although there are no substantial trees with the immediate vicinity of the works or proposed access routes, an arboricultural survey will be submitted as part of the planning application.

2.4 Visual

The welfare facilities are largely hidden from the surrounding area and canal towpath due to the fences, hedges and perimeter of reasonably dense vegetation, although there is a residential development to the north side of Blakes Lock, their view into the site is only of the roofs. The proposed site of the new building is only visible in part from the residential developments to the south side of the River Kennet. The roof height proposed building is similar to the existing shed ridgeline and will have little to no visual impact on views from or into the site.

2.5 Design Principles & Concepts

The proposed new building is sited over the location of an existing shed & wc which are to be demolished as part of the development.

The proposed new building has been located to minimise any impact on the green areas of the site.

2.6 Access & Circulation

Vehicular: The proposed building makes no alteration to the existing vehicular access routes.

Pedestrian: The proposed building makes no alteration to pedestrian or cycle access routes.

Circulation: Within the grounds all proposed paths and access routes will be DDA compliant with levels access thresholds and compliant gradients.

Security: The existing site boundary remains unchanged and thus existing security arrangements remain unchanged. All windows and doors will be of a secure nature and all rooves will be high enough to prevent easy access via climbing the face of the building.

3.1 Statement of Flood Risk Planning Statement

The proposed site is located in Flood Zone 1. A separate Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared to be read in conjunction with this report.

4.1 Existing Buildings

Steel WC And Timber Shed to be replaced



The Site



Blakes Lock Office

