

Planning, Design and Access Statement

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The Abbey School

Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement

**The Abbey Senior School, 17 Kendrick Road, Reading,
RG1 5DZ**

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Executive Summary

Background

The Abbey Senior School is an independent selective day school for girls in Reading. It currently has 549 students plus 157 students that attend the 6th Form, for a total of 706.

The school was founded in 1887 and moved to its present Kendrick Road site in 1905. Today, the school comprises of part of the original Victorian building and a number of modern extensions. However, a number of the mid 20th century buildings are due an upgrade, especially the 6th Form block, as these are particularly dated. The school also lacks an informal social space for students.

This project forms part of a wider phased masterplan for the school, concerned with improving teaching spaces and facilities throughout the school and increasing social well-being and student productivity.

Proposals

The proposed development entails the renovation and expansion of the dated 6th Form building, delivering an exceptional environment for students to thrive and enjoy their learning experience. A new green roof and a 6th Form common room will provide informal social spaces which do not exist at present, promoting social cohesion and encouraging students to socialise.

A new dining hall will also be created by infilling an unused courtyard, which will serve all students. Hard landscaped areas to the rear (east) of the school will be enhanced and rationalised. All the elevations of the 6th Form block will be re-cladded, creating a new, high quality design, for the rear elevation of the school. The existing car parking area will be re-designed, making its layout more efficient.

There will be no increase in the number of pupils or staff as a consequence of this application.

There is strong planning policy support for all elements of the school proposals. The design is of the highest quality and respects the special character of the conservation area. The scheme has been subject to pre-application discussions with the Council, which has been well received.

On balance therefore, the proposal is considered to constitute a sustainable form of development, which would go towards meeting the identified pressing need for school places in Reading and is in accordance with paragraph 94 of the NPPF and the 'Policy Statement – Planning for Schools Development'.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by KEW Planning, on behalf of The Abbey School, to support and justify the planning application for the proposed development, which comprises the school renovation works and extension at The Abbey Senior School, 17 Kendrick Road, Reading RG1 5DZ (the Senior School). The application site falls within the administrative boundary of Reading Borough Council (RBC) and within the Kendrick Road Conservation Area.
- 1.2 This Statement provides an assessment of the proposals against the provisions of the statutory Development Plan covering the site, the National Planning Policy Framework and other material planning considerations.
- 1.3 The actual application site encompasses only the rear of the Senior School. The front and central buildings and part of the rear blocks do not form part of the proposal.
- 1.4 This project forms part of a wider phased masterplan for the school, concerned with improving teaching spaces throughout the school to increase social wellbeing and student productivity.

The Proposed Development

- 1.5 The proposal seeks to renovate and expand the existing 6th Form building, provide a new dining hall, and a more efficiently designed car parking area for 6th Form students. The hard landscaped areas to the rear (east) of the school will be enhanced and rationalised.
- 1.6 The formal description of development, which is subject to this detailed planning application is:
- “Erection of a new dining hall with green roof over the existing courtyard; rooftop extension to the 6th Form block to provide a new common room; extension to the south-east to provide additional classroom space and a new study area for the 6th Form block; reconfiguration of hard landscaped area to remove 1 of 4 netball courts and convert one pitch to a flexible netball/tennis use; reconfiguration of existing 6th Form car parking area; relocation of existing flood lighting; recladding of the 6th Form building.”***
- 1.7 There will be no increase in the number of pupils or staff as a consequence of this proposal.

The Planning Application

1.8 This planning application comprises:

- Planning Application fee (submitted under separate cover);
- Planning application forms, including ownership and agricultural certificates prepared by KEW Planning;
- CIL form prepared by KEW Planning;
- Site Location Plan prepared by Kendall Kingscott;
- Application Drawings (as listed on the attached drawing issue sheet) prepared by Kendall Kingscott;
- Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement prepared by KEW Planning, including landscape proposal prepared by The Landmark Practice;
- Transport Statement prepared by Motion;
- Travel Plan prepared by Motion;
- Environmental Noise Assessment prepared by Acoustic Consultants Limited;
- Interim Drainage Strategy prepared by Momentum Engineering;
- Arboricultural Survey Report and Tree Constraints Plan prepared by Eight Associates;
- Arboricultural Implication Assessment and Draft Tree Protection Plan prepared by Eight Associates;
- Energy Assessment and Sustainability Statement prepared by Eight Associates;
- BREEAM Pre-Assessment prepared by Eight Associates; and
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Eight Associates.

Statement Structure

1.9 This Statement is set out as follows:

- **Section 2** – sets out the background to The Abbey School;
- **Section 3** – provides a description of the site and surrounding area;
- **Section 4** – summarises the planning history of the site;
- **Section 5** – summarises the relevant national and local planning policies, and other material considerations;
- **Section 6** – describes the proposed development;
- **Section 7** – provides the case for planning permission;
- **Section 8** – provides a detailed analysis of the impact of the proposal on the conservation area; and
- **Section 9** – set outs the conclusions.

2 The Abbey School

- 2.1 The Abbey School is an independent selective day school for girls in Reading. The school has Church of England traditions and has evolved to accept girls of all faiths.
- 2.2 The school was founded in 1887 as a consequence of the increase of population in Reading, when the Church Schools' Company took over the privately owned Blenheim Ladies' School and renamed it Reading High School. The high school was originally located at London Road (in the building which became the Gladstone Club) and moved to its present Kendrick Road site in 1905.
- 2.3 After parting from the Church Schools' Company in 1914, the Reading High School was renamed The Abbey School in honour of Jane Austen who had been a pupil at a ladies' boarding school, adjacent to Reading Abbey's gateway.
- 2.4 Today The Abbey School offers education for girls aged 3 to 18 and comprises:
- The Nursery School, located in Vicarage Road;
 - The Junior School, located in Christchurch Road; and
 - The Senior School, located in Kendrick Road (subject to this application).
- 2.5 The Senior School currently has 549 students, plus 157 students that attend the 6th Form, creating a total of 706. It also employs 227 members of staff.

Vision, Mission, Ethos and Values

Source: <https://theabbey.co.uk/about-the-abbey/vision-and-values>

- 2.6 The Abbey's vision is to remain academically selective, committed to girls' education, pastoral support and developing well-rounded individuals. The Abbey girls are encouraged to aim high both academically and personally, to develop a sense of moral and spiritual responsibility for themselves and others and to explore broad extra-curricular interests. This is the essence of an Abbey education.
- 2.7 The Abbey's mission is to empower girls to become active, happy and successful students equipped to lead creative, fulfilled and productive lives in a rapidly changing world. The Abbey girls develop a strong moral compass and the qualifications, skills and interests to help them thrive and give them choice now and in the future.

2.8 The Abbey's ethos is about creating learners with a strong sense of their inner worth who value kindness, honesty, tolerance and acceptance, who are courageous and confident and have a strong sense of social responsibility based upon a strong Christian foundation.

- **Creative Learners** - The School's ethos is centred on empowering girls to become confident, independent and enthusiastic learners. Abbey girls learn to think creatively within a culture of reflection and innovation, with a positive attitude, hard work and dedication. The School encourages and enables all pupils to aim for their very best and set their sights high.
- **Individual Value** - Abbey girls have a sense of their true inner worth and that of others. The School believes in making every individual count, both for herself and in her interaction with those around her. The Abbey is a community where everyone is valued; where there is kindness, tolerance, positive thought for, and encouragement with, others.
- **Social Responsibility** - The Abbey encourages girls to reflect on their responsibility to society, empowered and motivated to make a difference. The Abbey ethos promotes a sense of responsibility to oneself, to society and to our community.
- **Confident Future** - The School encourages girls to think broadly, as well as deeply, and to make connections, developing an approach to life both inside and outside the classroom that will make them resilient, balanced and open-minded, well prepared for whatever their future holds. Abbey girls are equipped to seize life's opportunities with intelligence, enthusiasm and perspective, leading them towards a fulfilled and happy future.
- **Christian Foundation** - A dynamic, positive and supportive moral and spiritual ethos underpins and enhances everything the School does. With a Church of England foundation, Christian values are at the heart of the School that welcomes girls of all faiths and none.

2.9 The values of the Abbey are: kindness, honesty, tolerance, acceptance, courage and confidence.

3 The Site and Surrounding Area

- 3.1 This section reviews the prevailing conditions of the existing site and the surrounding area, which are material factors when assessing the suitability of the proposed development.
- 3.2 Before describing the application site, the following paragraphs offer an overview of the Senior School in its entirety, to provide a better understanding of the site context. The actual application site encompasses only the rear of the Senior School: the front and central buildings and part of the rear blocks do not form part of the proposal.

The Abbey Senior School

- 3.3 The Senior School is located on Kendrick Road, just south of Reading town centre, and sits within the Kendrick Conservation Area.

Figure 3.1 – Aerial image of the Abbey Senior School. The application site is outlined in red whilst the rest of the School is outlined in blue. Source: Google Maps.



- 3.4 The school comprises part of the original Victorian building and a number of modern extensions. However, a number of the school's buildings, teaching spaces and facilities are in need of an upgrade. The school also lacks an informal social space for students, who tend to congregate in corridors, locker areas and classrooms.

Front Buildings

- 3.5 On the Kendrick Road front, the school comprises what remains of the original Victorian building (known as Hardcastle Hall) and a large modern extension. It is important to note that the Conservation Area Character Appraisal's description of the front elevation is no longer relevant: further to planning permission ref. 06/01507/FUL/BP, part of the original building and the 1920s extension were demolished to make space for a safer and more efficiently designed block.
- 3.6 Hardcastle Hall is an attractive building of Victorian character and whilst the later addition is unapologetically modern, its fenestration pattern and brickwork complement the historic school building and neighbouring properties.
- 3.7 Overall, the Kendrick Road frontage has the appearance of a small terrace of different structures which are two storeys high, plus attic with pitched roofs, which are in keeping with the appearance and height of the surrounding buildings.

Figure 3.2 – View of the western elevation showing Hardcastle Hall and the modern extension fronting Kendrick Road. The Science Block can be seen in the background to the left. Source: Google Maps.



- 3.8 The frontage of the school is set slightly back from Kendrick Road, with the staff and visitor car park located directly in front. It provides 59 parking spaces, of which 4 are for blue badge disabled holders.

3.9 The Kendrick Road boundary is characterised by red brick piers, low level wall with iron railings, along with stone copings.

3.10 The front buildings contain:

- The main entrance;
- Administrative space;
- Hardscastle Hall;
- The Art Block; and
- The conference room.

Central and Rear Buildings

3.11 The central and rear buildings are of modern design and two to three storey high. They were all constructed in red brick cladding, in-keeping with the character of the site and surroundings and present varying roof types and fenestration patterns. Whilst their design seeks to positively integrate within the local context, none of these buildings have specific architectural merit.

3.12 For the purpose of this description, the modern blocks can be divided based on their location.

3.13 Specifically, the central blocks are organised around the Rose Garden and comprise:

- The Science Block;
- The swimming pool;
- Staff offices and rooms;
- Gym and changing rooms;
- The Dance Studio.

3.14 The rear blocks that do not form part of the application site comprise:

- The Richards Hall;
- Kitchen and dining hall; and
- Music rooms.

3.15 It is noted that the dining hall was built in the 1970s and its size and function are no longer adequate. This is because it does not provide enough space during lunchtime. The school has had to set up a timetable to even the space occupancy over the lunch period. Despite this, the dining hall is still not adequate enough in size.

The Application Site

- 3.16 The application site is located to the east of the wider Senior School site and forms part of the rear of the school. The site encompasses a number of buildings that look onto the Quadrangle, a courtyard which is currently underused during the winter or when it rains. As explained above, these have no architectural merit.
- 3.17 The application site measures circa 1.62 ha and comprises of:
- The 6th Form building - A two storey building with clerestory roof lights and a vertical fenestration pattern. It includes the 6th Form common room, kitchen, dining hall and classrooms.
 - The General Teaching Block - A three storey building with flat roof and horizontal fenestration pattern. It includes classrooms, locker rooms, the library office and book store and the head of year office.
 - The southern block – a two storey building with a distinct sawtooth shaped roof, which includes the Lecture Theatre, the drama studios and the Taylor Library.
 - The 4 sports courts (organised in two areas).
 - The 6th Form parking area located to the rear of the Senior School, providing 20 parking spaces. To the south of the main school buildings there is also a school minibus parking area and 7 covered Sheffield cycle stands, providing cycle parking for 14 bicycles.
 - A very small area of the Richards Hall, kitchen and dining hall, to guarantee a link between the proposal and the existing buildings.
- 3.18 As is the case for the rest of the school, the buildings that form part of the application site are dated and in need of significant upgrade.
- 3.19 The 6th Form block is not adequate to accommodate the current number of students. Its common room is not large enough and its layout does not promote a socially inclusive environment. It also lacks a dedicated study area.
- 3.20 The 6th Form students currently enter from the east side of the school. This entrance is unwelcoming and has a secondary feeling. Furthermore, the east elevation as a whole is in need of refurbishment.
- 3.21 The library and drama studios are oversized and underutilised.

Figure 3.3 – Aerial view of the application site. In the foreground, the Senior School's rear buildings, sports courts and 6th Form parking area. Source: Google Maps.



Access

- 3.22 'Way finding' throughout the Senior School is poor due to a lack of signage and entry points are generally unclear.
- 3.23 The school's main entrance and parking, used by staff and visitors, is off Kendrick Road. It is noted that this parking area suffers from daily congestion.
- 3.24 6th Form students can currently drive along the south of the site and park by the sports courts. However, the existing chevron bay parking layout is cramped and makes turning difficult.
- 3.25 A service access is provided off Acacia Road.
- 3.26 Reading railway station is a 20 minute walk north of the Senior School. It provides links to many UK cities and town, including fast and frequent trains to London. This connection will be further strengthened with the opening of Crossrail (the Elizabeth Line) anticipated to be in 2021.

- 3.27 The school is also accessible by public transport: bus no.21 operates throughout the day and connects the station directly to Kendrick Road. Additional bus stops are located on Kendrick Road, London Road, Redlands Road and Whitley Street, which all provide services into the town centre and station as well as providing links to out of town destinations. In addition to this, the school operates an extensive coach service.

The Surrounding Area

- 3.28 The Senior School is located immediately to the south of Reading town centre, in a quiet residential area.
- 3.29 It is bound to the north by Crown Place and two storey plus attic buildings, used by The Urology Partnership. To the rear, opposite the properties' gardens, there is the University of Reading's London Road campus.
- 3.30 To the east, there is the Museum of English Rural Life (part of the University of Reading), which is screened by mature vegetation.
- 3.31 To the south, there are two storey plus attic residential buildings and the Reading School's Morgan Road Playing Fields.
- 3.32 To the west, the site is bound by Kendrick Road. On the opposite site of Kendrick Road there is an Olympic sized hockey pitch, which belongs to the Senior School.
- 3.33 Kendrick Road is a planned, straight road laid out c.1850 as part of Reading's post-railway expansion. Houses are generally two storeys high, plus attic or three storeys.
- 3.34 Whilst the east side of Kendrick Road is characterised by individually designed and imposingly detailed Victorian villas, the west side presents modern blocks of three to four storey flats of mixed quality, which lack historic or architectural interest.
- 3.35 The main retail attractions are also located within walking distance. Broad Street, the Oracle Shopping Centre and Broad Street Mall are to the north-west of the site and can be reached on foot within 15 minutes.
- 3.36 Other attractions such as the River Kennet, the Reading Abbey ruins, Forbury Gardens and the Reading Museum are located to the north of the site and can also be reached on foot.

4 Planning History

- 4.1 Research of the statutory online planning register has revealed the records for the subject site shown in [Table 4.1](#) below.
- 4.2 The planning history records set out below, demonstrate that demolition, extensions and alterations have been permitted historically on this site, to accommodate the evolving needs of the school.
- 4.3 The proposed development that this planning application is seeking to demolish an existing non-original part of the building and replace is with a high quality designed extension for the future needs of the school. This is in line with the ethos of the previous applications.

Table 4.1 – Subject site planning records

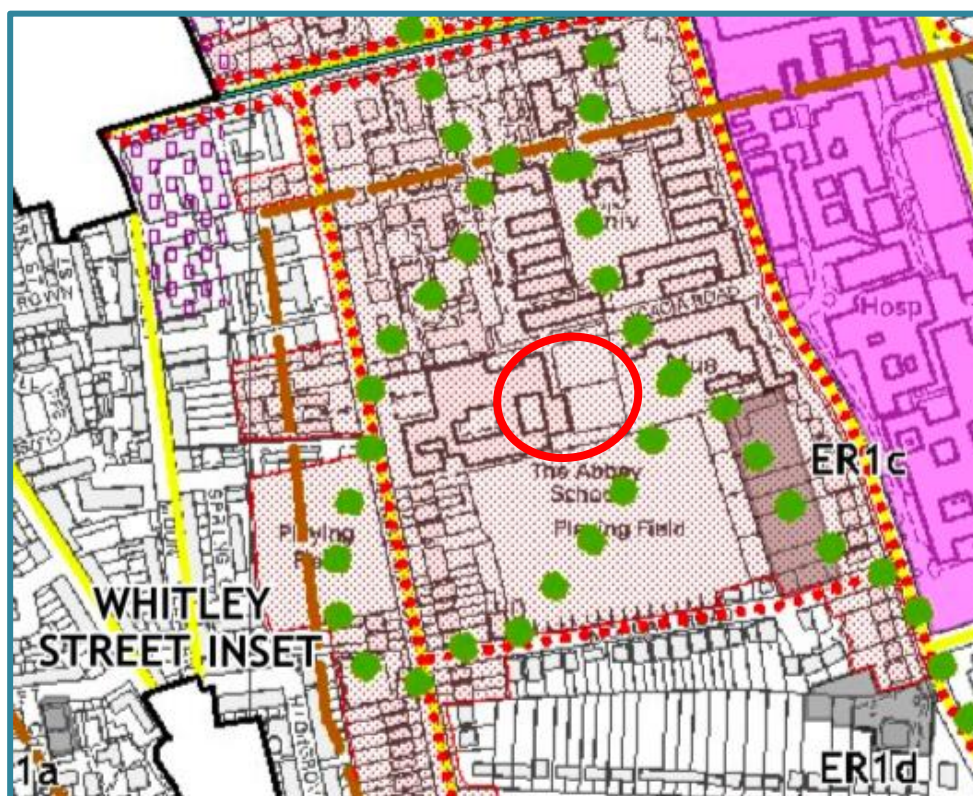
No.	Reference	Description of Development	Decision	Date
1	88/0044	Erection of two timber sheds for store/garage and workshop	Permitted	24/11/1988
2	99/1181	Erection of a single storey extension to provide cloakroom for kitchen staff	Permitted	03/08/2000
3	99/1869	Extension of existing laboratory block; new roof and external windows to existing laboratories plus new staff room. New area of parking to replace spaces lost to the laboratory extension	Permitted	08/03/2000
4	01/0414	Alteration to existing building to create new dormer and 6sqm extension to provide new tuck shop	Permitted	27/11/2001
5	06/0068	Partial demolition of most of the existing front section of the building and erection of new three storey replacement	Withdrawn	10/10/2006
6	06/0069	Removal of wing at the front of the school and the timber classroom (Conservation Area Consent)	Withdrawn	06/10/2006
7	06/01507/FUL/BP	Partial demolition of existing front section of the school	Permitted	09/03/2007

		building and erection of new additional and replacement buildings		
8	06/01507/CON/BP	Removal of wing at the front of the school and the timber classroom	Permitted	09/03/2007
9	07/00318/FUL	6 floodlights to illuminate existing 6 tennis courts	Permitted	06/06/2007
10	12/01629/FUL	Development of an all-weather playing field with floodlights and fencing	Permitted	23/01/2013
11	13/00288/FUL	Erection of 30m length of 3m high weld mesh security fence. Erection of 1.5m high bund	Permitted	10/05/2013
12	13/00316/APPCON	Discharge of conditions 3 and 9 of planning 12/01629/FUL	Permitted	01/05/2013
13	13/0773	Removal of section of existing boundary wall to create opening for new gate and brick pier. New paved pathway along with dwarf wall and brickpiers. Relocation of existing gates	Permitted	20/08/2013
14	13/0774	Removal of section of existing boundary wall to create opening for new gate and brick pier. New paved pathway along with dwarf wall and brickpiers. Relocation of existing gates (Conservation Area Consent)	Permitted	20/08/2013
15	13/1091	Remove minor regrowth from one Sycamore	Permitted	26/07/2013
16	14/0908/APPCON	Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 2 (Materials), 3 (Landscaping) and 5 (Landscape Maintenance). (130773)	Permitted	04/08/2014

5 Planning Policies

- 5.1 This chapter summarises the national and local planning policy framework, that is relevant for the determination of this application.
- 5.2 All development should be in accordance with the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this context, the statutory development plan for RBC comprises the recently adopted Local Plan (November 2019).
- 5.3 National planning guidance (the National Planning Policy Framework 2019) is a material consideration. Other material considerations which should be taken into account are local Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Sport England Playing Fields Policy and Guidance (2018).

Figure 5.1 – Extract from Proposals Map, site outlined in red.



Conservation area*



Air Quality Management Area*

Site designation

- 5.4 The application site is located within the Kendrick Road Conservation Area and an Air Quality Management Area.

- 5.5 The Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD locates the Abbey Senior School within Zone 2 Primary Core Area. This is the zone that directly surrounds the Central Core Area and that is typically well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone.

National Planning Policy

- 5.6 Regard has been had to the Government's revised National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF', 2019). The key sections and paragraphs that relate to these proposals are:
- Section 2, Achieving Sustainable Development;
 - Paragraph 94 (schools);
 - Paragraph 97 (open space);
 - Paragraphs 108 to 111 (promoting sustainable transport);
 - Paragraphs 124, 127, 130 and 131 (design);
 - Paragraphs 150 to 153 (climate change);
 - Paragraph 170 (natural environment);
 - Paragraph 175 (habitats and biodiversity);
 - Paragraph 180 (pollution and noise);
 - Paragraph 181 (air quality); and
 - Paragraphs 189, 193, 196, 197, 200, 201 (conservation).

- 5.7 Specifically, paragraph 94 states that great weight will be afforded to developments which seek the improvement of schools:

"It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and*
- b) work with schools promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted."*

Local Planning Policy

- 5.8 The following policy documents have informed the proposals:
- The Reading Local Plan (2019)
 - Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

- Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- Policy CC4: Decentralised Energy
- Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- Policy CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- Policy CC9: Securing Infrastructure
- Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- Policy EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
- Policy EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
- Policy EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- Policy EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodlands
- Policy EN15: Air Quality
- Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- Policy EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
- Policy EN18: Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- Policy TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
- Policy OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

5.9 Appendix 1 contains the full policies.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

5.10 The following SPDs are relevant for the proposal:

- Revised Parking and Design Standards (adopted October 2011)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (adopted December 2019)
- The Kendrick Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2005)

Sport England Playing Fields Policy and Guidance

5.11 This document focuses on Sport England's Playing Fields Policy which states the following:

"Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of:

- *all or any part of a playing field, or*
- *land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or*

- *land allocated for use as a playing field*
- *unless, in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meets with one or more of five specific exceptions”*

5.12 Section 6 ‘Applying the policy and the five exceptions’ is relevant to the proposed development, specifically Exceptions 1 and 3.

5.13 Policy Exception E1 states that an exception can be made to the Playing Fields Policy if:

“A robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.”

5.14 Exception 3 sets out that an exception can be made to the Playing Fields Policy if:

“The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- *reduce the size of any playing pitch;*
- *result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);*
- *reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;*
- *result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site;*
or
- *prejudice the use of any part of a playing field and any of its playing pitches.”*

6 The Proposal

- 6.1 This section outlines the details of the development proposals. Further details are set out in the technical reports accompanying this planning application.

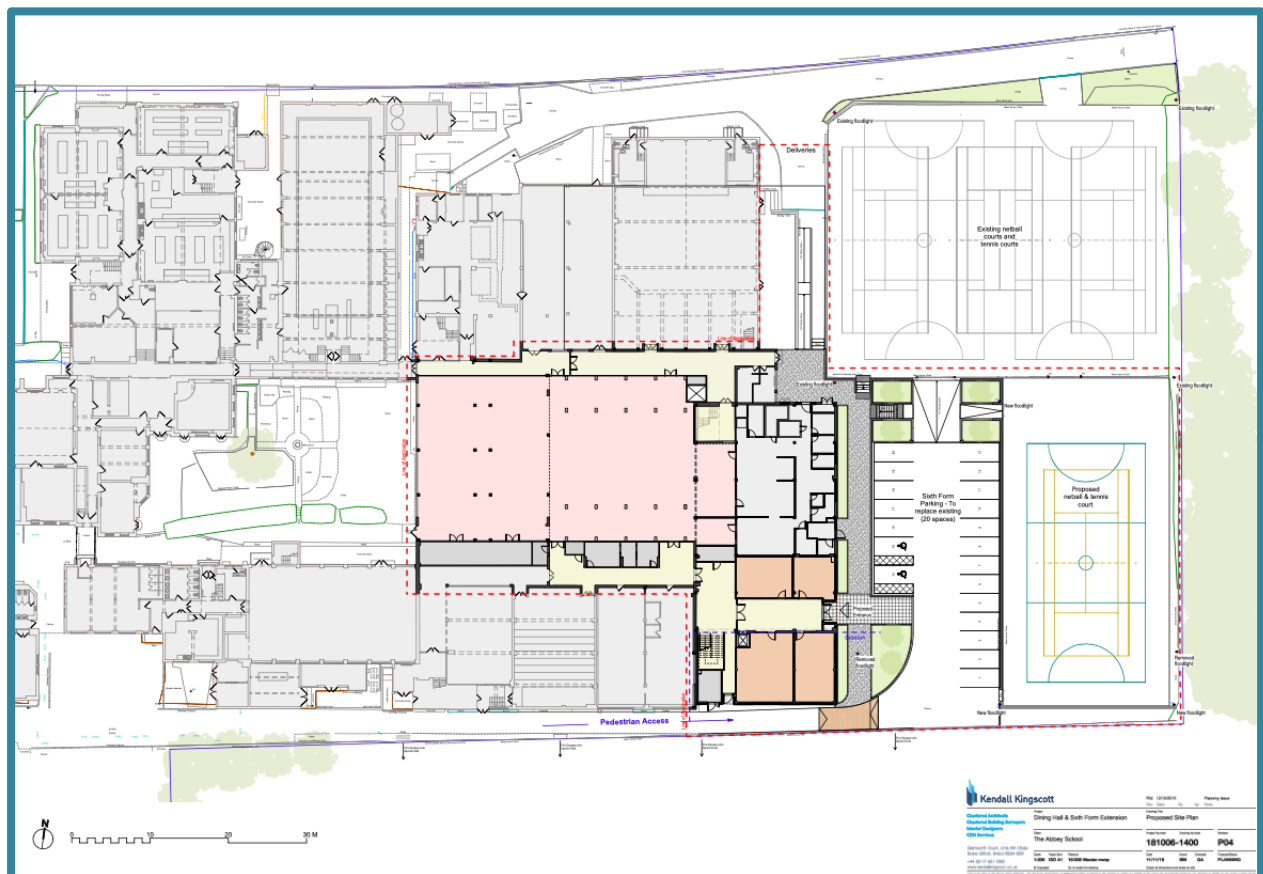
Description of the development

- 6.2 The formal description of development, which is subject to this application for full planning permission is:

“Erection of a new dining hall with green roof over the existing courtyard; rooftop extension to the 6th Form block to provide a new common room; extension to the south-east to provide additional classroom space and a new study area for the 6th Form block; reconfiguration of hard landscaped area to remove 1 of 4 netball courts and convert one pitch to a flexible netball/tennis use; reconfiguration of existing 6th Form car parking area; relocation of existing flood lighting; recladding of the 6th Form building.”

- 6.3 The number of students and staff will remain as existing.

Figure 6.1 – Proposed site plan



6.4 It is proposed to articulate the proposals as follows:

- A two storey, freestanding building will be erected on the Quadrangle courtyard to form the new Dining Hall with a void at first level. This extension will have a green roof accessible to students of all years.
- The ground floor of the 6th Form block will be converted to accommodate the new school kitchen and servery area, two group rooms and the 6th Form entrance.
- A three storey extension to the south of the 6th Form block will provide additional classroom space at ground and first levels, and a new study area, toilet block and staff area at second floor. The erection of this extension will require the felling of two small trees.
- A roof extension will provide a new 6th Form common room to include a small café and study rooms. This will provide access to the new green roof and will be connected to the south extension.
- The frontage to the 6th Form building will be enhanced.
- The existing hard landscaped areas to the rear (east) of the school will be reconfigured, resulting in the loss of 1 of the 4 netball courts and relocation of the existing flood lighting.
- The existing 6th Form parking area will be reconfigured.

6.5 In addition to the above, the ground floor of the General Teaching Block will be converted to create additional dining hall space and a chair and table storage room. As this is an internal change, it does not count towards the creation of new floorspace.

6.6 The total additional Gross Internal Area (GIA) across the three storeys is 1,479sqm. This excludes the void over the dining hall at first floor level.

Table 6.1: Proposed areas

Proposed facilities	Area, sqm GIA
New dining hall	385 sqm
Including remodelled ground floor of the General Teaching Block	737 sqm
Roof garden over new dining hall	427sqm
New third floor to 6 th Form block: common room, café, office, study space and circulation. This includes the south extension.	629sqm

Proposed facilities	Area, sqm GIA
South extension	156sqm (on each floor)

School layout

- 6.7 As a consequence of this proposal, the Abbey Senior School will be provided with a new, state of the art 6th Form block. Internal spaces will be rationalised and new spaces added to comply with modern standards.
- 6.8 At ground level, a new kitchen, servery area and dining hall will be created, replacing the existing ones which are duplicated in two different buildings: one immediately to the north of the application site and one in the 6th Form block.
- 6.9 The 6th Form block will be provided with a new dedicated entrance to its east elevation, thus enhancing the identity of the 6th Form centre.
- 6.10 The first floor will be dedicated to classrooms, as per current arrangements, with the addition of two classrooms created within the south extension. This extension will also provide two new classrooms at ground level.
- 6.11 The new common room at second floor (the roof extension) is a key part of the proposal, which replaces the small common room currently located at ground level. This new area will provide a much needed social area, together with a dedicated study space, which currently does not exist.
- 6.12 Equally important is the creation of a green roof above the dining hall, which makes up for the current lack of informal social spaces. The proposed green roof will provide an attractive external place for all students and will encourage them to socialise outside.

School Operation

- 6.13 The school operation will remain the same as that existing. A typical school day commences at 8.40am and finishes at 3:45pm. However, girls are welcome to be at school from 8am to 5.45pm.

Scale and Massing

- 6.14 The proposal has been designed to complement the height and massing of the existing school buildings. The scale and massing is considered to appropriate to the site and existing buildings.
- 6.15 Indeed, the proposed south extension extends the footprint of the 6th Form block and its height will equal that of the proposed roof extension.
- 6.16 The new dining hall will occupy the footprint of the Quadrangle courtyard and is therefore a logical extension of the existing school buildings. At two storeys, it will remain below the height of the General Teaching Block or the new 6th Form block.

External Appearance

- 6.17 All the existing elevations of the 6th Form block will be refurbished to improve the aesthetic appearance of the building. The same architectural language will be applied to the south extension, to ensure a consistent architectural approach. It is proposed that the existing concrete plain tile clad spandrel sections are to be re-clad with colour matched brick slips and enhanced with feature patterning taking inspiration from the local multi-coloured brickwork that is unique to Reading. Generous new entrance doors will be provided and enhanced with a glazed screen with school crest manifestation at 1st floor level.

Figure 6.2 – Proposed image of the east elevation: the 6th Form block.



- 6.18 The common room extension on the roof will have a lightweight feel, with large glazed areas to let natural light in. Vertical brise-soleil fins will be provided as a shading device whilst giving the rooftop extension a clean contemporary appearance.

Landscape Proposal

- 6.19 The landscape proposal encompasses two different areas:
- *The arrival* – Variation in paving colour and type will mark a clear separation between the new 6th Form entrance and the pavement along the building, whilst two trees will be planted by the entrance to soften the arrival space. Planted beds alongside the 6th Form block will soften the building edge and contribute to biodiversity net gain. Four new additional trees will be planted by the northern edge of the reconfigured parking areas, offsetting the loss of the 2 existing trees on the southern boundary of the site.
 - *The roof garden* – The design is simple and contemporary: the arrangement of features, planting and hard surfaces will be built around the diagonal structure, which supports the roof garden. To the north, steel railings have been designed as edge protection which will be complemented by adjacent planting. To the south, timber and/or steel trellis will be installed to prevent access on to the adjacent roof. Walkways and seating areas have been moved away from the edge to discourage uncontrolled access. Plants play a key role in the design: they are integrated in the seating areas, they surround and protect light wells and roof lights, and they climb on the pergolas offering partial shading to seating areas and walkways.

Inclusive Design

- 6.20 The School has an ongoing commitment to meeting the needs of all users and ensuring that that the premises are fully inclusive. The guidance in Part M is therefore to be followed across both the internal and external spaces.
- 6.21 The new 6th Form entrance will provide step-free access into the building. Lift access and accessible toilets will be provided on all floors.
- 6.22 There will be good tonal contrast between the floor and walls. Illuminance levels will follow the relevant British Standard.
- 6.23 Emergency egress provides step free exit to the ground floor and refuges are provided to each staircase.

Sport facilities

- 6.24 Three netball courts will be retained as part of the proposal, fronting the east boundary. One of them will be reconfigured to become a flexible netball and tennis court, enriching the variety of sport choices available to the students.
- 6.25 As previously explained, the students also have access to the hockey pitch on the opposite side of Kendrick Road.

Community and Venue Hire

- 6.26 The school operates a venue hire programme, including a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities, ranging from conferences and training courses to musical, theatrical and sporting events, children's parties and private receptions. The new facilities will also be available for venue hire.

Access

- 6.27 A vehicle access exists to the north of the netball courts, via Acacia Road and Redlands Road to the east. This is currently used for kitchen and Facilities Management deliveries.
- 6.28 The main vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access will remain via the main entrance to the Senior School on Kendrick Road.

Vehicle and Cycle Parking

- 6.29 As part of the landscaping works to the rear (east) of the 6th Form block, the existing parking area will be moved and reconfigured to improve safety and manoeuvrability. The number of car parking spaces will therefore not change: 20 spaces of which 10% designated for blue badge disabled holders.
- 6.30 New electricity charging points (10no.) are being provided to ensure that electric vehicle have sustainable means of fuelling.
- 6.31 The proposal will also retain the current 14 covered cycle parking spaces.

Delivery and Servicing

- 6.32 A new area for kitchen deliveries will be located right next to the Richards Hall. This will have direct access to the new kitchen.

- 6.33 Deliveries and other servicing activity will take place via Acacia Road as per the existing arrangements.

Travel Plan

- 6.34 A Travel Plan has been prepared in support of the proposals, designed to bring together hard (infrastructure) and soft (information) measures to support, encourage and facilitate more active and sustainable travel choices among staff and pupils where possible.
- 6.35 The school already has a Travel Plan in place which aims to reduce the use of private vehicles. Indeed, over 250 girls use coaches and minibuses, hired by the school to get to and from school each day. Whilst the existing Travel Plan covers the four campuses of The Abbey School, this proposal is accompanied by an ad hoc Travel Plan, which supports specifically the proposed school extension.

Energy, Sustainability and BREEAM

- 6.36 The proposed energy strategy for the new extension follows a best practice approach based on the established Energy Hierarchy:
- Use less energy: 'Be Lean'
 - Supply energy efficiently: 'Be Clean'
 - Use Renewable Energy: 'Be Green'
- 6.37 The development will reduce carbon emissions by 29.4% by utilising fabric energy efficiency measures ('be lean'). A number of measures have also been incorporated in the scheme in accordance with the cooling hierarchy to reduce overheating and the need for cooling ('be clean'):
- Minimise internal heat generation through energy efficient design.
 - Reduce the amount of heat entering the building in summer through control of direct solar gains, heat transfer and infiltration of the new build envelope.
 - Manage the heat within the building through thermal mass, room height and green roofs.
 - Passive and mechanical ventilation.
- 6.38 Having assessed the most appropriate low and zero carbon zero energy technologies ('be green'), it was concluded that solar photovoltaic panels and an air source heat pump can be included in the proposal leading to a reduction of carbon emissions of 36.9% over Building Regulations Part L.

6.39 A Sustainability Statement has been produced to demonstrate the development's holistic approach to sustainable design and construction. In addition to the energy strategy explained above, the Statement explains that the proposed development will achieve further sustainable design and construction criteria:

- Minimise embodied carbon through efficient design, procurement of materials from a local source, or with a high-recycled content.
- Ensure that materials are responsibly sourced and of low environmental impact.
- Promote sustainable transport by the use of public transport and provision of safe cycle storage.
- Incorporate health and wellbeing measures through design and operational procedures, including daylight, optimum indoor air quality and thermal comfort.
- Protect and enhance the ecological value of the site.
- Follow best practice policies in terms of air, water and ground pollution during construction, manage and minimise construction waste and follow the principles of the Considerate Constructors Scheme.

6.40 The proposed extension has been assessed against BREEAM 2018, the latest version of BREEAM UK New Construction. It is currently projected that the proposal will achieve BREEAM Very Good.

6.41 The BREEAM Pre-Assessment confirms that the proposal is currently projected to achieve BREEAM Very Good. Whilst Policy CC2 requires major non-residential developments to meet BREEAM Excellent standard, supporting paragraph 4.1.1 confirms that *"some types of development, such as industrial uses, warehouses and schools might find it more difficult to meet these standards. In these cases, developments must demonstrate that the standard to be achieved is the highest possible for the development, and at a minimum meets the BREEAM 'Very Good' standard"*.

6.42 The proposed development is designed to a very high sustainability standard and it meets the requirements of policies CC2, CC3, and CC4 and of the Revised Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, plus paragraphs 150, 151, 152 and 153 of the NPPF.

Arboricultural considerations

6.43 It is proposed to fell four Scots Pine trees currently located along the southern boundary in order to make space for the proposed south extension and the vehicular and pedestrian access road. These have been identified to have moderate to low value.

- 6.44 Six new trees will be planted to compensate the proposed loss: two will be located by the new 6th Form entrance and four by the reconfigured car parking space. This is in addition to a substantial amount of new soft landscaping and the green roof.

Drainage and SuDS

- 6.45 An Interim Drainage Note has been prepared and will be updated following the results of the CCTV surveys. The note recognises that there will be an increase in surface water run-off from traditional impermeable road structures. Subject to the site infiltration tests, a soakaway located beneath the new parking area will be the preferred option for surface water disposal. An alternative option would be to discharge to the local water asset via flow controlled attenuation. Further details will be supplied on receipt of the surveys and agreement with RBC on the method and discharge rate.

Pre-Application Discussion

- 6.46 The project team met with Susanna Bedford, Principal Planner of RBC, on 2nd October 2019. The purpose of the discussion was to obtain detailed feedback on the principle of the proposal, the proposed design, massing and other technical matters. [Appendix 2](#) contains the meeting minutes from this discussion.
- 6.47 The officer expressed support for the principle of the proposal and gave advice on a number of aspects of the scheme, such as heritage, arboricultural and highways matters.

7 Justification for Permission

7.1 This section identifies the planning issues associated with the proposed extension and refurbishment and explains how each have been considered in relation to the adopted development plan and its policies.

7.2 The relevant planning issues are as follows:

- a) Principle of development**
- b) The proposed design**
- c) Loss of play area**
- d) Local amenity impacts**
- e) Transport implications**
- f) Arboricultural and landscape considerations**
- g) Ecological considerations**

a) Principle of development

7.3 As the current use of the site is Class D1 (education), the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of land use, having been used for education purposes since 1905. Indeed, the planning history of the site demonstrates that demolition, extensions and alterations have been permitted historically to accommodate the evolving needs of the school.

7.4 The proposals are therefore considered to be in line with policy OU1, as well as paragraph 94 of the NPPF.

b) The proposed design

7.5 The proposals are the result of a careful analysis of the school site and surrounding context, as well as of the needs of students and members of staff.

7.6 The paragraphs below confirm that the scheme meets the requirements of local policies CC1, CC6, CC7 and CC8, and NPPF paragraphs 124, 127, 131.

Proposed Extensions and Relationship with Local Context

7.7 The proposal takes cues from the massing of the existing school buildings.

7.8 The new dining hall is the natural infilling of the Quadrant, an underused courtyard. At two storeys high, this extension will not be visible from the outside and will therefore have no

impact on the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area; the school and the surrounding area.

- 7.9 This not only meets local policies but also Exception 3 of Sport England's Playing Fields Policy: the courtyard does not form part of a playing pitch and could not form part of one in the future. Therefore, the proposed infilling will not lead to the loss of or prejudice the use of a playing field.
- 7.10 The proposed south extension extends the footprint of the 6th Form block and its height will equal that of the proposed roof extension. Therefore, they will appear as one building forming the school's new east elevation (refer to drawing number 181006-1500 Rev P02.)
- 7.11 This is a significant improvement on the current situation where the 6th Form block appears to be just a building in the group of modern additions.
- 7.12 A new welcoming and accessible entrance will be created for the 6th Form students. This ensures that the 6th Form block is perceived as an integral and equally important part of the Senior School, instead of as a secondary addition, as the current dated 6th form building appears.
- 7.13 The proposed roof extension will match the height of the General Teaching Block and conforms with the average height in the wider urban context: two to three storeys.
- 7.14 In terms of materials, all the elevations of the 6th Form block will be cladded with brick or brick slips, matching the colour brick of the other school buildings, as well as neighbouring properties. This ensures that the same high quality architectural language is applied to all parts of the 6th Form block. The proposed fenestration pattern is similar to the existing and echoes the character of the modern extensions of the school.
- 7.15 The 6th Form roof extension will have large glazed areas to let natural light in. The lightweight feel and appearance ensure that the proposed extension remains subservient to the main building. The metal frames of the glazing have a vertical partition system, that recalls that of the windows at ground and first levels.
- 7.16 Overall, it is considered that the proposals respect the appearance and character of the local context, while providing a welcome improvement of the school's rear elevation.

- 7.17 It should also be noted that the proposed changes to the school's rear buildings will have very limited impact on public views: the only direct view of this part of school is from Morgan Road to the south, across the extensive Reading School's playing fields. Also, the only building directly overlooking the site is one of the University's lecture and teaching blocks.
- 7.18 A detailed analysis of the impact of the proposal on the Kendrick Conservation Area is provided in the Heritage Statement, section 8 of this Statement.

Internal layout

- 7.19 The proposed internal design delivers an exceptional environment for 6th Form students to thrive and enjoy their learning experience. Not only will they now have the required amount of high quality teaching space, but the proposed common room and dedicated study area will promote social cohesion and provide support during challenging examination times.
- 7.20 The new dining hall is a welcoming environment, able to accommodate all students at once, without the need of a staggered timetable. It is important to note that there currently are two kitchen and dining areas within the school. By creating a single new space for these functions, valuable space will be made available for the senior school students, which the school can re-arrange and utilise as required.
- 7.21 Furthermore, the new dining hall has been designed to be a flexible space that could accommodate meetings and events after school hours.
- 7.22 The proposed green roof above the dining hall will create an informal social space which does not exist at present, encouraging students to socialise outside. This space will be significantly more beneficial than the current Quadrant courtyard, which is an unwelcoming and underused space.
- 7.23 Health and safety are of paramount importance: glazed balustrade will be erected around the roof garden to ensure that this outdoor area can be enjoyed safely by all users. The use of glazing also ensures that there would be minimal visual impact on the surrounding area.
- 7.24 All spaces have been designed to meet BB103 requirements.
- 7.25 The supporting Environmental Noise Survey Report confirms that acceptable internal noise levels can be achieved subject to careful design and adequate sound insulation measures: a

ventilation strategy has been created which takes into account the differing noise levels encompassing the site.

Play area

- 7.26 As part of the proposal, 3 netball courts will be retained. One of these will become a flexible netball / tennis court, thus increasing the variety of sport facilities available to the students. This court will be built to Sport England guidelines with regard to dimensions and run off compliance.
- 7.27 It is noted that many girls in upper 5th have a range of sport options, and choose not to play netball, opting for more popular options of gym or swimming. Also, should the School require a fourth netball court, the hockey pitch across the road can be used for netball, as required.

c) Loss of play area

- 7.28 The proposal includes the loss of 1 netball court to facilitate the much needed reconfiguration of the hard landscaped area and parking area for the 6th Form students.
- 7.29 NPPF paragraph 97 states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built upon unless the buildings or land are surplus to requirements, the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in a suitable location or the development is for alternative sports provision, the needs of which outweigh the loss. Comparably, local policy OU1 states that sports pitches should only be developed where an assessment clearly shows the area to be surplus to requirements.
- 7.30 It is also noted that paragraph 94 of the NPPF indicates that Local Planning Authorities should afford great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.
- 7.31 Currently, the school has four netball courts within the application site and an Olympic sized hockey pitch, on the opposite side of Kendrick Road.
- 7.32 Timetabling analysis has confirmed that the delivery of the school's sports curriculum programme will not be affected by the loss of a single netball court. Indeed, the school will continue to enjoy a great variety of sport facilities that meet the needs of its students: a hockey pitch, 2 netball courts, flexible netball / tennis court, a swimming pool and a sports hall. The one netball court is surplus to requirement, as it does not drain well and even after having applied non-slip coating, they have very slippery surfaces. Consequently, the netball

courts are not well used. In addition, as stated above, there is the ability to utilise the hockey pitch for netball. Therefore, the loss of the one netball court is not considered to have a negative impact on the sports provision and facilities available to the students, whilst allowing the considerable enhancement and extension of the existing school.

7.33 In addition to the above, Sport England Playing Fields Policy and Guidance is a material consideration in determining this application. However, in relation to the criteria of Policy Exception 1, the proposal is considered to be acceptable as:

- The proposed loss will not be significantly detrimental to the sport facilities enjoyed by the school;
- The application site does not have any specific features that would make it of special significance to the interests of sport.
- The proposal includes the loss of one netball court, which is offset by the presence of other existing and the provision of a new court (re-built) and pitches within the school ownership.

7.34 It should also be taken into account that due to the variety of sport facilities within the school, students do not require the use of external sport facilities and would therefore not put added undue pressure on the existing sports facilities in RBC.

7.35 On balance therefore, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the aims of Sport England Playing Fields Policy and Guidance, and not to have a negative impact on the sport provision of the school.

d) Local amenity impacts

Noise

7.36 A comprehensive Environmental Noise Assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development, taking into account the operation of the surrounding highway network and the adjacent land uses. It confirms that the main source of noise affecting the site is distant road traffic and occasional aircraft traffic. It also confirms that there will not be any noise generating activities as a consequence of this proposal.

7.37 Based on the measured noise levels, no specific sound attenuating measures would be required to the building fabric and either natural or hybrid ventilation can be used. No external plant equipment is proposed as part of this application.

- 7.38 The paragraphs above demonstrate that the proposals meet policies CC8, EN16 and EN17.

Air Quality

- 7.39 The site is located within an Air Quality Management Area and policy EN15 requires the proposal to demonstrate that there would be no detrimental impact on human health or the environment. The windows to the extension will not be opened to avoid air particles entering the classrooms. In addition, a new mechanical extract ventilation to the kitchen will be provided. The location for this equipment will be further from the boundary than the existing. A balanced flue will be provided for the new boiler, servicing the new heating system. The proposed development is therefore considered to meet the requirements of policy EN15.

e) Transport implications

- 7.40 The proposals are supported by a Transport Statement and a Travel Plan which demonstrate that the scheme complies with local policies TR1, TR2, TR4 and TR5, the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD and paragraphs 108 to 111 of the NPPF.

Traffic and car parking

- 7.41 The proposed 6th Form car park retains the existing 20 car parking spaces but is designed with a more efficient layout compared to that existing. In addition, 10% of these spaces are designated for disabled blue badge holders.
- 7.42 As part of the school's drive to promote sustainable transport modes, three car parking spaces within the front car park will be converted to three car sharing spaces and eight car parking spaces will be provided with electric car charging points. However, none of these require planning permission: no additional spaces will be created and the charging points comply with Schedule 2, Part 2, Class E of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).
- 7.43 The Transport Statement explains that as the proposals will not result in the increase of the school's pupil capacity or staff numbers, the development is expected to generate no additional trips to the site. Therefore, it is considered highly unlikely that the proposals will lead to any material impact on the operation of local transport networks
- 7.44 Additionally, the Travel Plan will continue to monitor travel patterns for both the pupils and staff and encourage modal shift towards more sustainable options.

Cycle parking

- 7.45 The existing cycle parking provision will be retained.

School delivery and servicing

- 7.46 Deliveries and other servicing activity will continue to take place via Acacia Road as per the existing arrangements. Given that there is no increase of staff or students proposed, it is not anticipated that there will be any impact on the local transport network.
- 7.47 A new area for delivery and servicing is located right next to the Richards Hall. This will have direct access from the new kitchen.

f) Arboricultural and landscape considerations

- 7.48 Appendix 3 contains the Landscape Design Concept prepared by the Landmark Practice. The paragraphs below demonstrate how the proposed landscape and arboricultural strategies meet the requirements of policies CC7, EN12 and EN14.

Trees

- 7.49 The proposed development includes the loss of 4 moderate to low quality Scots Pine trees, located in an inconspicuous location to the south of the 6th Form block, close to the site boundary. Given their location and limited quality, the proposed loss of trees will not be detrimental to the character of the site, or its arboricultural and ecological value.
- 7.50 The Scots Pine trees will be replaced by 6 new trees, to be planted as part of the proposed landscaping of the 6th Form arrival area. This will improve the appearance and character of the 6th Form informal spaces, support biodiversity, as well as soften the visual appearance of the proposed 6th Form block.
- 7.51 As the subject trees are to be removed and no protective measures necessary, it has not been necessary to prepare an Arboricultural Method Statement.

Landscape

- 7.52 The proposed landscape design makes an important contribution to character and appearance of the site.
- 7.53 The arrival area of the new 6th Form block will become a welcoming and pleasant environment, with planters, new trees and variation in paving colour and type. This will contribute to the new identity for the 6th Form block, which is currently understated and is

perceived as a secondary element to the school buildings. The proposed plants and trees will also promote biodiversity.

- 7.54 The roof garden above the dining hall will provide a much needed opportunity for outdoor social activities for all students. This area has been designed so to be enjoyed all year round, with evident benefits to the wellbeing of students.
- 7.55 The hard and soft landscape features chosen for the roof garden promote legibility and also ensure safety by discouraging and preventing uncontrolled access to adjacent roof area.
- 7.56 Plants, especially native wildflowers and herbs, have been incorporated in all aspects of the design, delivering a biodiverse green roof and ensuring that students will feel immersed in nature.

g) Ecological considerations

- 7.57 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal confirms that the site has low ecological value.
- 7.58 There is no presence on site or records within 1km of the site boundary for great crested newt, hazel dormouse, badger, otter, water vole and white clawed crayfish.
- 7.59 There are no statutory sites within 1km of the development site, it is therefore unlikely that any will be affected as part of the works. It is also considered that there will be a negligible effect on greenspaces nearby as a result of the development.
- 7.60 A number of ecological enhancements are proposed for the site in order to benefit local wildlife populations, in line with Reading's biodiversity policies and Biodiversity Action Plan:
- Incorporation of a biodiverse green roof;
 - Installation of at least three bird nesting boxes on the site;
 - Installation of at least two bat boxes on the site;
 - External lighting in line with BCT guidelines;
 - Incorporation of native or fruiting and flowering plant species;
 - Incorporation of a stag beetle logger; and
 - Hedgehog corridors.

- 7.61 The above and the findings set out below demonstrate that the proposed development respect protected species and local biodiversity, thus meeting the requirements of policy EN12 and paragraph 175 of the NPPF.

Bats

- 7.62 A field survey was undertaken in support of this application. Buildings within the application site were found to have negligible potential to support roosting bats. One hole was found in the brick work of a building in the Rose Garden, too high to categorise it with certainty. However, as there is no construction work planned for this area of the site, it is unlikely that any potential bat roosting features in this position would be negatively affected by the proposal.
- 7.63 The 4 trees along the site southern boundary, which will be felled, present dense ivy cover, which may provide potential to support roosting bats. Observation has shown that the westernmost tree, with the largest densest ivy cover, can be categorised as providing low potential to support roosting bats. Therefore, it is recommended that a minimum of one dusk emergence survey is undertaken to identify whether any of the four trees are being used by bats.
- 7.64 On a precautionary basis, it is recommended that if these trees are felled, they should be subject to a soft felling exercise undertaken by a suitably qualified contractor. In the very unlikely event that a bat is encountered, all works should cease, and advice sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 7.65 It is advised that night-time work, using artificial lighting, be avoided. Where this is not possible, construction lighting should be minimised and directed away from trees, shrubs and other natural habitats, to minimise disturbance to notable species, such as bats, which may be using habitats within or adjacent to the site.

Reptiles

- 7.66 Whilst the application site is not considered to provide suitable habitat for reptiles, the nearby Reading School Morgan Road Playing Fields contains two small areas of unmanaged scrub, which provide small pockets of suitable habitat for reptiles. However, given the limited connectivity between the playing fields and similar habitats in the surrounding areas and considering that the application site is made up predominantly of buildings and hardstanding, it is unlikely that reptiles will be negatively impacted by the proposed works.

Nesting birds

- 7.67 Suitable bird nesting habitat was present in the form of scattered trees and introduced shrub both within the boundary of the site and within the Reading School Morgan Road Playing Fields in the Zone of Influence. Two bird nests were identified within the cluster of four trees that will be removed on the southern boundary of the site.
- 7.68 It is therefore recommended that demolition and vegetation clearance work are undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March to August). If works are scheduled to take place within the bird nesting season, an ecologist should visit to inspect the site within 24 hours prior to clearance to confirm the presence/absence of nesting birds. If birds are found to be nesting, then works in the area around the nest must be delayed until after the young have fledged.

8 Heritage Statement

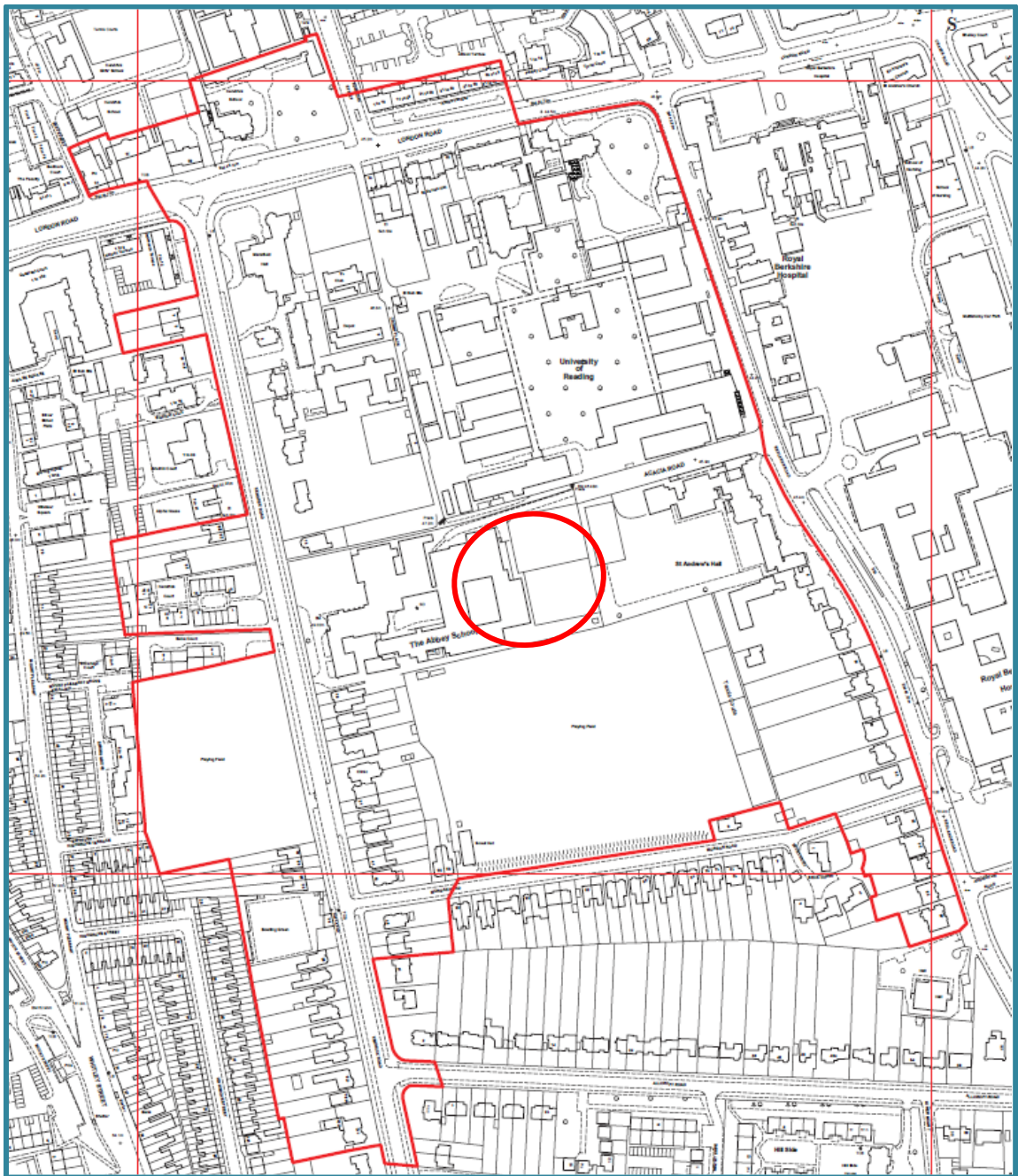
- 8.1 This section analyses the significance of the Kendrick Conservation Area and the impact that the proposal will have on its character, appearance and significance. It is required because the application site is within a conservation area.
- 8.2 A detailed description of the application site, its planning history and proposed development have already been provided at sections 3, 4 and 6 of this document.
- 8.3 It should also be noted that the proposal does not fall within or affect:
- A Scheduled Ancient Monument or its setting; or
 - A statutory or locally listed building or its setting; or
 - An archaeological sensitive area.

The Kendrick Conservation Area: description and significance

- 8.4 The conservation area is divided into four distinct character areas due to their townscape characteristics. The application site is located within the Kendrick Road Area.
- 8.5 The Conservation Area Character Appraisal notes that Kendrick Road is a planned, straight road laid out in circa 1850 as part of Reading's post-railway expansion. The trees formed one of the first avenues in the town.
- 8.6 On the east side of the road, dwellings are set back from the wide footway behind small front gardens with much larger gardens to the rear. Houses are generally brick clad and two storeys high, plus attic or three storeys. Victorian buildings in Kendrick Road are unusual in retaining most of their original exterior features and they exist in sufficient numbers to create an area of special character and appearance. Of particular interest, they are fine examples of the mid-Victorian eclectic style of domestic architecture.
- 8.7 The Character Appraisal explains that the High Victorian style grew out of revivals of past styles and that historically, Kendrick Road catered for upper class living. Indeed, today many of these residences retain their original character and status.
- 8.8 Overall, the area is residential in character with a number of buildings in education or health use.

- 8.9 Beginning at the northern end of the road at its junction with London Road, Mansfield Hall (east side) is notable for its simple detailed but imposing character and for the many mature trees in its grounds. Leading from Mansfield Road, the east side of Kendrick Road is characterised by individually designed and imposingly detailed villas, displaying many of the fashionable design features typical of the period. Those at the northern end of the road are large single dwellings in individual plots (e.g nos. 5-15), whilst further south, semi-detached is the norm with only a small gap between buildings (e.g. nos19-43).

Figure 8.1 – Map of the Kendrick Conservation Area, the application site is highlighted in red.



- 8.10 In contrast to the east side, on the west side of Kendrick Road there are a number of modern blocks of three to four storey flats of mixed quality (e.g. Brechin Court, Bispham Court and Dartmouth Terrace), which lack historic or architectural interest and have been omitted from the conservation area.
- 8.11 Opposite the Senior School is Kendrick Court. This is an architecturally interesting and unusual self-contained enclave of 1930s houses, described in the Character Appraisal to be designed in “*what could loosely be termed a “Modern Movement’ style*”.
- 8.12 The Character Appraisal mentions the Abbey Senior School:
“The original part of the school boasts an attractive Victorian frontage to Kendrick Road and a large modern extension is an example of the successful integration of new and old. The extension has been successfully broken down into smaller units which are in sympathy with the scale and form of surrounding historic buildings while being unashamedly modern in concept and performance”.
- 8.13 However, as explained at section 3, it is important to note that the Conservation Area Character Appraisal’s description of the front elevation is no longer relevant as further to planning permission ref. 06/01507/FUL/BP, part of the original building and the 1920s extension were demolished to make space for a safer and more efficient block.
- 8.14 South of the school’s playing field and of the bowling green, nos. 96-112 (even) and nos. 45-49 (odd) Kendrick Road date from circa 1890-1910 and are included within the conservation area because they make a positive contribution to Kendrick Road’s late Victorian character and appearance. No. 110a is an exception being a modern infill dwelling of little architectural merit.
- 8.15 The Character Appraisal sets out a summary of the specific elements of interest that justify the Kendrick Road Conservation Area designation. The following points are relevant to this application:
- *“The architectural and historic interest of the area’s buildings, including twelve grade II and two grade II* listed buildings;*
 - *The architectural quality and coherence of late Victorian and Edwardian dwellings in Kendrick Road and Redlands Road;*
 - *The historic interest of Kendrick Road, a planned mid-19th century urban road, designed as a tree lined avenue aligning with the spire of Christ Church;*

- *The architectural interest of Kendrick Court, an unusual 1930s housing estate;*
- *The area's mature trees and, in particular, the fine avenue of plane trees along Kendrick Road.*
- *Notable red brick boundary walls and historic iron railings."*

Impact of the proposal on the conservation area

- 8.16 The proposed development is limited to the rear modern extensions of the Senior School, specifically the 6th Form block. It does not affect the front elevation and the historic Hardcastle Hall.
- 8.17 The rear buildings of the Senior School were designed to complement the height and design of the school and surrounding buildings. Nevertheless, having no architectural merit and being largely obstructed from public views, they are not considered to be of significance to the character and appearance of the school or of the conservation area.
- 8.18 The proposed development comprises extensions that are relatively modest in size, extending no further than the existing 6th Form building line and being no taller than other school buildings.
- 8.19 Overall, the proposal provides a number of benefits to the school and the wider area:
- It will create a new, coherent east elevation, including a new entrance for the 6th Form students.
 - It will enhance the appearance of the rear of the school by utilising a high quality architectural language across all elevations, adding an attractive, lightweight roof extension.
 - It will provide the 6th Form students with a state of the art building through extensions, external improvements and internal reconfiguration.
- 8.20 As explained above, houses in this section of the conservation area are generally brick clad and two storeys high plus attic or three storeys.
- 8.21 The whole 6th Form block, new and existing elevations, will be clad with brick or brick slips which match the colour of the existing school buildings as well as that found within the conservation area. The existing concrete plain tile clad spandrel sections will also be enhanced with feature patterning taking inspiration from the local multi-coloured brickwork that is unique to Reading.

- 8.22 The proposed height is also in line with that of other buildings within the conservation area.
- 8.23 It is therefore considered that the proposal will have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the school and that this in turn will have a positive impact on the character of the conservation area. It will not affect the setting of Kendrick Court on the opposite side of Kendrick Road.
- 8.24 In terms of visual impact, it is important to stress that the proposed additions will not be visible from Kendrick Road and will not appear in any important views, as identified by the Character Appraisal: the only direct view of the eastern side of the school is from Morgan Road to the South, across the extensive Reading School's playing fields. Also, the only building directly overlooking the site is one of the University's lecture and teaching blocks.
- 8.25 Nevertheless, the view from these vantage points will be enhanced as a consequence of the proposal, by creating an aesthetically improved and architecturally coherent east elevation. This is clearly an improvement on the current situation.
- 8.26 On balance, the proposal is considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Kendrick Road Conservation Area and is therefore acceptable in policy terms.
- 8.27 The table below shows how the proposal relates to key elements of the Kendrick Road Conservation Area, as identified in the Character Appraisal.

Table 8.1 – How the proposed development relates to the key character and appearance elements of the conservation area

Key character and appearance elements of the conservation area	Proposed development
The architectural and historic interest of the area's buildings, including twelve grade II and two grade II* listed buildings.	The proposal will not impact on the architectural and historic interest of the area's buildings, affecting only the rear modern extensions of the Senior School.
The architectural quality and coherence of late Victorian and Edwardian dwellings in Kendrick Road and Redlands Road.	The proposal will not impact on any residential buildings.

The historic interest of Kendrick Road, a planned mid-19 th century urban road, designed as a tree lined avenue aligning with the spire of Christ Church.	The proposal will not affect the historic interest of Kendrick Road. It only relates to the rear modern extension of the Senior School, that are not visible from the main road.
The architectural interest of Kendrick Court, an unusual 1930s housing estate.	The proposal does not affect Kendrick Court.
The area's mature trees and, in particular, the fine avenue of plane trees along Kendrick Road.	The proposal does not affect any trees along Kendrick Road. Four pine trees will be felled along the southern boundary of the application site, however, these have moderate to low arboricultural value and will be replaced with six new trees, which will make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the 6th Form block, especially its arrival area.
Notable red brick boundary walls and historic iron railings.	The proposal does not affect any red brick boundary walls or historic iron railings.

Pre-Application Discussion

- 8.28 Further to the pre-application meeting, comments were received from the RBC Conservation Officer. The officer confirmed that as the proposed extensions are confined to the modern extensions of the school site, there would not be any objection, in principle, to the proposed development, subject to conditions regarding the submission of materials for the proposed extensions.
- 8.29 The officer also noted that, because of its location, the proposed development was not considered to harm the character of the conservation area.

9 Conclusions and Benefits

- 9.1 All development should be sustainable in order to meet the national and local planning policy objectives. Sustainable development must meet the three key deliverables, which are environmental, economic and social factors. The proposed development meets all of the key criteria as demonstrated below.

Environmental

- 9.2 The proposed development is within the urban boundary in Reading, where new development is directed. The principle of development is established, through this virtue, where development should make efficient use of land. The development is within the curtilage of an existing school campus and on previously developed land, which is promoted, reducing the impact on greenfield sites.
- 9.3 The proposed development promotes the use of sustainable forms of transport through the provision of cycle parking, shared transport solutions, walking and the introduction of electric vehicles charging points. This seeks to mitigate against the impact on the highway network and also improve sustainable forms of transport. This is confirmed in both the Transport Statement and the Travel Plan.
- 9.4 The ecological value of the site has been assessed to ensure there would be no negative impact from the proposed works. Any potential species have and will be surveyed to avoid the risk of any loss of protected species. Enhancement works are proposed through the creation of new planting areas, a green roof and new trees. This improves the site's ecological value, encouraging wildlife and species to flourish.
- 9.5 A BREEAM Pre-Assessment has been undertaken and the proposed new build element of the development is to achieve a 'Very Good' rating. This, alongside measures to address drainage and mitigate surface water run-off and reduce the overall impact on climate change and ensures the development is as sustainable as possible.

Economic

- 9.6 The development of the site will result in short term economic investment through the construction phase. There will be a requirement for local contractors to be employed to deliver the project within the programme delivery timescale. This creates employment opportunities for the local skilled labour force.

- 9.7 The project seeks to provide young people with an improved teaching environment to learn, encouraging young people to enjoy gaining the required knowledge in the national curriculum, resulting in the ability to gain employment.

Social

- 9.8 The project will improve an existing education facility and provide important shared community space in the form of a new roof garden and 6th Form common room. It will therefore promote social cohesion, encourage students to socialise and benefit students' mental health and wellbeing.
- 9.9 The proposed facilities will be added to the variety of indoor and outdoor school facilities available for venue hire. The scheme will therefore provide the opportunity to build and foster community relationships and partnerships.

Alignment with the Development Plan

- 9.10 In conclusion, the proposed development has been assessed in relation to the adopted planning policy framework that constitutes the development plan. The proposals seek to enhance the education facilities, which is high in demand, within an existing school campus. Measures have been adopted to ensure that the development would not have any negative impact upon the surrounding land uses and is as environmentally sustainable as possible. Consequently, we consider that the development aligns with the objectives of the development plan and should be approved.

Appendix 1 – Relevant Planning Policies

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK 2019

PARAGRAPH 7

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

PARAGRAPH 8

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

PARAGRAPH 9

These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

PARAGRAPH 10

So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

PARAGRAPH 11

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For plan-making this means that:

- a) plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas⁵, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; 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.

For decision-taking this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁷, granting permission unless:
 - i. i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. 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.

PARAGRAPH 12

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

PARAGRAPH 94

It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
- b) work with schools promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

PARAGRAPH 97

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

PARAGRAPH 108

In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and
- c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

PARAGRAPH 109

Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

PARAGRAPH 110

Within this context, applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

PARAGRAPH 111

All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

PARAGRAPH 124

The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

PARAGRAPH 127

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

PARAGRAPH 130

Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not

materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used

PARAGRAPH 131

In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

PARAGRAPH 150

New development should be planned for in ways that:

- a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and
- b) can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.

PARAGRAPH 151

To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

- a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);
- b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
- c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

PARAGRAPH 152

Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.

PARAGRAPH 153

In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:

- a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and
- b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.

PARAGRAPH 175

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁵⁸ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

PARAGRAPH 180

Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
- b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
- c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

PARAGRAPH 181

Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.

PARAGRAPH 189

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

PARAGRAPH 193

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

PARAGRAPH 196

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

PARAGRAPH 197

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

PARAGRAPH 200

Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

PARAGRAPH 201

Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

ADOPTED READING LOCAL PLAN 2019

POLICY CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Where appropriate, the Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan (including, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or the policies which are most important to determining the application are out of date at the time of making the decision then permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

POLICY CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

To meet these requirements:

- All major non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible;

- All minor non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Very Good' standard as a minimum;
- All non-residential development or conversions to residential should incorporate water conservation measures so that predicted per capita consumption does not exceed the appropriate levels set out in the applicable BREEAM standard. Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.

POLICY CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

All developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. The following measures shall be incorporated into development:

- Wherever possible, new buildings shall be orientated to maximise the opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation and reducing exposure to wind and other elements;
- Proposals involving both new and existing buildings shall demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change for example by including measures such as solar shading, thermal mass, heating and ventilation of the building and appropriately coloured materials in areas exposed to direct sunlight, green and brown roofs, green walls, etc;
- Use of trees and other planting, where appropriate as part of a landscape scheme, to provide shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets and to help to connect habitat, designed with native plants that are carefully selected, managed and adaptable to meet the predicted changed climatic conditions; and
- All development shall minimise the impact of surface water runoff from the development in the design of the drainage system, and where possible incorporate mitigation and resilience measures for any increases in river flooding levels as a result of climate change.

POLICY CC4: DECENTRALISED ENERGY

In meeting the sustainability requirements of this plan, developments of the sizes set out below shall demonstrate how consideration has been given to securing energy for the development from a decentralised energy source.

Any development of more than 20 dwellings and/ or non-residential development of over 1,000 sq m shall consider the inclusion of decentralised energy provision, within the site, unless it can be demonstrated that the scheme is not suitable, feasible or viable for this form of energy provision.

Where there is existing decentralised energy provision present within the vicinity of an application site, further developments of 10 dwellings or more or non-residential development of 1,000 sq m or more will be expected to link into the existing decentralised energy network or demonstrate why this is not feasible.

POLICY CC5: WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE

Development should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management, including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts and designs that provide adequate, well-designed space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.

POLICY CC6: ACCESSIBILITY AND THE INTENSITY OF DEVELOPMENT

The scale and density of development will be related to its level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities, with the densest and largest scale development taking place in the most accessible locations. Unless it can be demonstrated that the accessibility of a site is to be significantly upgraded, for example, by providing high quality pedestrian routes or providing access to good public transport services, any new development must be at a scale, density and intensity appropriate to that level of accessibility.

POLICY CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form, including:

- Layout: urban structure and urban grain;
- Landscape;
- Density and mix;
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials

will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to the following urban design objectives:

- Character - a place with its own identity and sense of place
- Continuity and enclosure
- Quality of the public realm and provision of green infrastructure and landscaping
- Ease of movement and permeability
- Legibility - clear image and easy to understand
- Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time
- Diversity – meets a wide range of needs.

Developments will also be assessed to ensure that they:

- Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;
- Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion;
- Address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily;
- Are visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces, the inclusion of public art and appropriate materials and landscaping.

Applications for major developments, or other relevant developments, should be accompanied by a design and access statement that deals with all the above matters.

POLICY CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- Harm to outlook;
- Noise and disturbance;
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Dust and fumes;
- Smell;
- Crime and safety; or
- Wind, where the proposals involve new development of more than 8 storeys.

The position of habitable rooms, windows and outdoor living spaces will be particularly important. A back-to-back distance of 20 metres between dwellings is usually appropriate, although the circumstances on individual sites may enable dwellings to be closer without a detrimental effect on privacy.

As well as immediate impacts, other aspects to which this policy applies will include matters such as hours of operation of businesses, and effects of traffic movements, particularly of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). Proposals which would generate regular movements of HGVs on residential roads will not be acceptable.

Where an otherwise acceptable development could change its character to a use that would have a greater impact on amenity without needing planning permission, conditions will be applied to restrict such changes.

POLICY CC9: SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE

Proposals for development will not be permitted unless infrastructure, services, resources, amenities or other assets lost or impacted upon as a result of the development or made necessary by the development will be provided through direct provision or financial contributions at the appropriate time.

Employment development should provide mitigation measures in line with its impacts on labour and skills and on the transport network.

In determining appropriate provision or contribution, the highest priority will be given to the following:

- Transport infrastructure, including major cross boundary or sub-regional infrastructure projects;
- Open space, green infrastructure and other measures to improve or enhance biodiversity;
- Education, including cross-boundary facilities;
- Economic development services and infrastructure, including employment, skills and training development initiatives and childcare provision.

Where relevant a high priority will also be given to the appropriate provision of the following:

- Energy infrastructure, including decentralised energy projects;
- Health provision; and
- Police Service infrastructure.

Other measures, as follows, should also be considered where a specific need is identified and justified:

- Community facilities;
- Leisure and cultural infrastructure;
- Reading Central Area infrastructure and amenities, including public realm and street care enhancements;
- Environmental improvements outside the Central Area, such as within local centres, including off-site street tree and other tree planting;
- Measures to tackle poor air quality or for on-going air quality monitoring; and
- Flood mitigation and prevention measures.

POLICY EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings will be protected and where possible enhanced. This will include:

- Listed Buildings;
- Conservation Areas;

- Scheduled Monuments;
- Historic parks and gardens; and
- Other features with local or national significance, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and assets on the Local List.

All proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits.

Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.

Applications which affect Historic Parks and Gardens will safeguard features which form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park or garden. Development will not detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance, features or setting of the park or garden, key views out from the park, or prejudice its future restoration.

Applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, the significant features of heritage assets should be justified by a Heritage Statement.

The Council will monitor buildings and other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, proactively seeking solutions for assets at risk including consideration of appropriate development schemes that will ensure the repair and maintenance of the asset, and, as a last resort, using its statutory powers.

Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect or of damage to a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

POLICY EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

The special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Positive consideration will be given to proposals which take opportunities to enhance the character of conservation areas. These may include:

- Reducing visual clutter caused by negative factors, such as poles and overhead wires, satellite dishes or unnecessary street furniture;
- Restoring original building features;
- Removing inappropriate additions or alterations to buildings;
- Protecting and encouraging the maintenance of green spaces and important trees, particularly where they are intrinsic to the history and character of the area;
- Improving signage and street furniture;
- Restoring or re-establishing appropriate paving, railings or walls;
- Sympathetic landscaping and planting;
- Improving or restoring green spaces, including front gardens, that are appropriate to the historic interest of a Conservation Area;
- Signage that reveals and promotes the Conservation Area and its boundaries;
- Interpretation panels to inform the public of the area's historical significance.

Where a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been adopted for a particular Conservation Area, this will be a material consideration in determining applications for development.

POLICY EN6: NEW DEVELOPMENT IN A HISTORIC CONTEXT

In areas characterised by heritage assets, the historic environment will inform and shape new development. New development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development. When determining planning applications for new development, the following factors will be taken into consideration:

- a) The positive contribution of the development to the existing historic townscape (scale, height, mass, proportion, plot size, street form, materials, significant vistas and views, and open space);
- b) Sensitivity to historic context;
- c) Reflection of borough-wide major heritage themes that contribute to local distinctiveness (e.g. patterned brickwork or former worker terraced housing);
- d) Whether development promotes and/or improves access to previously undiscovered or neglected historic significance.

POLICY EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK

a) The identified Green Network, the key elements of which are shown on the Proposals Map, shall be maintained, protected, consolidated, extended and enhanced. Permission will not be granted for development that negatively affects the sites with identified interest or fragments the overall network. The Green Network comprises:

- Sites with identified biodiversity interest - Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, protected and priority species and their habitats, Priority and Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, and the River Thames and all its tributaries (including the River Kennet and the Kennet & Avon Canal); and
- Areas with potential for biodiversity value and which stitch the Green Network together – designated Local Green Space and open green spaces, and existing and potential Green Links.

New development shall demonstrate how the location and type of green space, landscaping and water features provided within a scheme have been arranged such that they maintain or link into the existing Green Network and contribute to its consolidation. Such features should be designed to maximise the opportunities for enhancing this network. All new development should maximise opportunities to create new assets and links into areas where opportunities are as yet unidentified on the Proposals Map.

b) On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. Development should:

- Protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site, incorporating and integrating them into development proposals wherever practicable; and
- Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (such as wildlife ponds, bird and bat boxes) wherever practicable.

In exceptional circumstances where the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site, and it is demonstrated that the impacts cannot be: 1) avoided; 2) mitigated or; 3) compensated for on-site; then new development will provide off-site compensation to ensure that there is “no net loss” of biodiversity. Provision of off-site compensation shall be calculated in accordance with nationally or locally recognised guidance and metrics. It should not replace existing alternative habitats, and should be provided prior to development.

POLICY EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLANDS

Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading’s vegetation cover will be extended. The quality of waterside vegetation will be maintained or enhanced.

New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. Measures must be in place to ensure that these trees are adequately maintained.

POLICY EN15: AIR QUALITY

Development should have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality.

i. Development that would detrimentally affect air quality will not be permitted unless the effect is to be mitigated. The following criteria should be taken into account:

- Whether the proposal, including when combined with the cumulative effect of other developments already permitted, would worsen air quality;
- Whether the development is within, or accessed via, an Air Quality Management Area; and
- Whether it can be demonstrated that a local worsening in air quality that would not detrimentally affect human health or the environment would be offset by an overall improvement in air quality, for instance through reduction in the need to travel.

ii. Where a development would introduce sensitive uses (such as residential, schools and nurseries, hospitals, care facilities) into, or intensify such uses within, an Air Quality Management Area, detrimental effects on that use will be mitigated. Mitigation measures should be detailed in any planning application. If there are significant detrimental effects that cannot be mitigated, the application should be refused.

iii. Where required, planning obligations will be used to secure contributions to measures to tackle poor air quality or for air quality monitoring.

EN16: POLLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES

Development will only be permitted where it would not be damaging to the environment and sensitive receptors through land, noise or light pollution; where it would result in no deterioration in, or ideally enhance, ground and surface water quality; and where adequate water resources, sewerage and wastewater treatment infrastructure will be in place to support the proposed development prior to occupation.

Proposals for development that are sensitive to the effects of noise or light pollution will only be permitted in areas where they will not be subject to high levels of such pollution, unless adequate mitigation measures are provided to minimise the impact of such pollution.

Development will only be permitted on land affected by contamination where it is demonstrated that the contamination and land gas can be satisfactorily managed or remediated so that it is suitable for the proposed end use and will not impact on the groundwater environment, human health, buildings and the wider environment, during demolition and construction phases as well as during the future use of the site.

POLICY EN17: NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT

Where noise generating equipment is proposed, the noise source specific⁶¹ level (plant noise level) should be at least 10dBA below the existing background level as measured at the nearest noise sensitive receptor.

POLICY EN18: FLOODING AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Development will be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding in the first instance, following the Sequential and Exceptions Test set out in the NPPF, and taking into account the effects of climate change. It will consider flooding from all sources, including fluvial, surface water, groundwater and

sewer flooding. Where development in areas at risk of flooding is necessary, it will not reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store floodwater, impede the flow of floodwater or in any way increase the risks to life and property arising from flooding. Wherever possible, development should be designed to reduce flood risk, both on- and off-site.

All major developments⁶³ must incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as appropriate and in line with the Government's Technical Standards⁶⁴. Smaller schemes are encouraged to incorporate SuDS, where possible. Runoff rates should aim to reflect greenfield conditions and, in any case, must be no greater than the existing conditions of the site. Schemes should ensure that the movement of water through vertical infiltration as well as horizontal run-off does not worsen contamination effects. Wherever possible, SuDS provision should maximise ecological benefits, link into the existing Green Network, incorporate tree planting and landscaping and avoid damage to existing significant trees, including through changes to the site hydrology. All new developments in areas of flood risk should give priority to SuDS.

POLICY TR1: ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Proposed development should contribute appropriately to meeting the objectives of the most up-to-date Local Transport Plan or any successor document, including sub-strategies, specific projects identified and the local action plans.

Planning permission will not be granted for major development proposals unless there is a commitment to implement measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities, such as through provision to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; and through agreed travel plans, safe routes to local facilities and services, including schools and parks, and similar measures.

All development proposals should make appropriate provision for works and contributions to ensure an adequate level of accessibility and safety by all modes of transport from all parts of a development, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling, in accordance with any agreed transport assessment submitted as part of the application.

POLICY TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

In determining proposals involving a new or altered access onto the transport network, improvement works to the transport network, the creation of new transport infrastructure or the generation of additional trips on the transport network, consideration will be given to the effect on safety, congestion and the environment.

Development will only be permitted where:-

- i. Accesses and works to the highway comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority;
- ii. The development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network;
- iii. The proposals would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists;
- iv. The proposal would not generate regular movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on unsuitable roads, or on roads without easy access to the Classified Highway Network; and
- v. For non-residential uses, or new dwellings on classified roads, off-street servicing would be provided.

Proposals involving either the construction of a new site access, or a material increase in the use of an existing site access, directly onto the Classified Highway Network will not be acceptable if they would be likely to result in the encouragement of the use of the network for short local trips or compromise the safe movement and free flow of traffic on the network or the safe use of the road.

POLICY TR4: CYCLE ROUTES AND FACILITIES

Developments will be expected to make full use of opportunities to improve access for cyclists to, from and within the development and to integrate cycling through the provision of new facilities. Development of new facilities for cycling, such as cycle hire points and cycle parking, will be acceptable.

The cycle routes identified in the most up-to-date Cycling Strategy will be maintained, enhanced and added to or extended. Development will not detrimentally affect an identified cycle route. Where opportunities exist, improvements to that route, including the provision of connecting routes, and/or cycling facilities will be sought within developments or through planning contributions.

POLICY TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.

Development should make the following provision for electric vehicle charging points:

- All new houses with dedicated off-street parking should provide charging points;
- Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point.

POLICY OU1: NEW AND EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Proposals for new, extended or improved community facilities will be acceptable, particularly where this will involve co-location of facilities on a single site. Proposals for on-site intensification of important facilities, such as schools and healthcare uses, will be supported, subject to other policies in the plan. Proposals for additional development for further and higher education will only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated that it would not lead to a material increase in the need for student accommodation, or that it will be supported by an appropriate increase in existing or planned student accommodation.

On-site intensification of some facilities, particularly schools, may result in some loss of open areas. This may be acceptable where the impact on open areas is minimised, and the area has no specific use, or where that use can satisfactorily be accommodated elsewhere on the site, subject to other policies in the plan. The above does not include loss of sports pitches and playing fields, which should only be developed where:

- a) an assessment clearly shows the area to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

New community facilities should be located where there is a choice of means of travel (including walking and cycling), and in existing centres where possible.

Where a proposal for a new school meets a clear need, and it would otherwise accord with national and local policy, it will be acceptable on sites identified for residential or other development.

Proposals involving the redevelopment of existing community facilities for non-community uses will not be permitted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a need to retain that facility.

Appendix 2 – Pre-Application Minutes

Minutes of Meeting

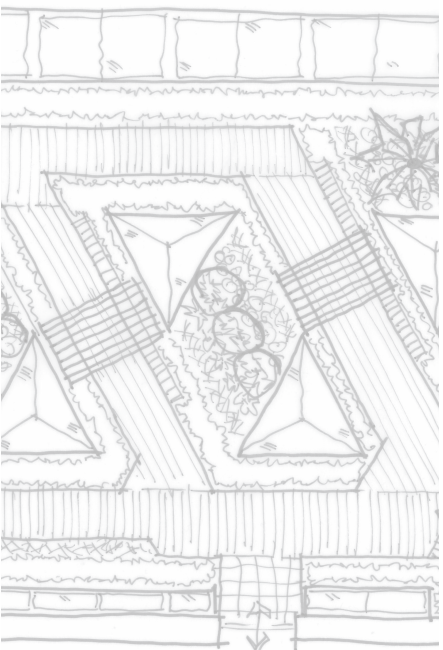
Client:	The Abbey School		
Project:	Sixth form & Dining hall extension		
Date:	2 nd October 2019	Job/File	2019/Abbey/6thform_dininghall/01
		ref:	
Purpose of meeting:	Pre-application Meeting	Time	3.30pm
Place of meeting:	Reading Council Civic Offices	Time	4.30pm
		finish:	
Present:	Representing:		
Susanna Bedford (SB)	Reading Borough Council		
Giuseppe Amesbury (GA)	Kendall Kingscott Architects		
Mark Lucas (ML)	The Abbey School		
Kathryn Williams (KW)	KEW Planning		

Minutes:	Action:
1) The Scheme	
SB outlined that the Local Plan is due to be adopted shortly with the plan due to be presented to Cabinet Council for adoption on 4 th November 2019. This is pertinent for forthcoming applications at the Abbey School, with an increase in the number of planning policies relating to Conservation Areas.	
SB stated that the proposed scheme is acceptable, in principle, however, further reference to policy OU1 (new and existing community facilities) needs to be made in the planning application.	
SB explained that there is concern over the loss of the 2 netball courts for the parking area. SP noted the details on the frequency of the use of the netball courts and the quality of these facilities is required in order to justify the loss of the courts. Alternatively if the re-provision of these facilities elsewhere could be proposed it would be beneficial. This justification is necessary in order to address the planning policy and also Sport England requirements.	
2) Design	
SB confirmed that the design of extensions, with the bulk and massing, were considered acceptable. SB stated that RBC has concerns relating to the health and safety, with the proposed rooftop terrace and further	KW

details relating to the balustrades would be required for the application. This related to both health and safety, and the visual impact from long views of the building. KW noted that the site is relatively enclosed and therefore any new balustrades would be obscured from long views. SB requested that a section drawing of the roof terrace area would be useful, in order to demonstrate that there would not be any issues.	
SB stated that the conservation officer had commented that the proposals appear to be acceptable and has made a request to see the proposed materials.	
3) Highways	
SB queried whether there would be any additional pupils and staff as a result of the extension. ML confirmed there would not be any increase, and the rationale for the proposals is to provide a modern, fit-for purpose facilities. The dining hall was built in the 1970s and is not adequate in terms of the size and function for pupils. The 6 th form extension is also dated and the new facility would seek to help encourage pupils to stay at the school. SB commented that this should be included within the planning application, making it clear there is no intention to increase pupils / staff.	
GA confirmed that there would be no additional pupils or staff as part of the proposed development and this will be made clear within the planning application submission and further details on the rationale behind the proposed works would be contained within the application.	
Highways are objecting to the proposed increase in parking, stating that the site is located within Zone 2. The parking standards are maximum and the justification for the additional parking has not been substantiated within the pre-application documents.	
ML confirmed that there would be 38 spaces proposed on the 2 netball courts. SB stated that as set out in policy CS24 this needs to be justified in relation to the parking standards.	
SB also made reference to policy DM12 which relates to access changes, safety and the environment. A Transport Statement is required to demonstrate that 2-way vehicular traffic could take place on the new access proposed. In addition, the baseline situation needs to be reviewed. In addition, Highways have commented that the proposed new access road is private and is sub-standard at present.	
SB stated that Highways have requested vehicle tracking information to be included for the servicing and delivery vehicles, along with frequency.	
GA explained the intention is to pedestrianize the narrow road on the other side of the school campus leading to the 6 th form parking area, and that there was a general requirement to improve the campus roads.	

4) Trees	
SB confirmed that a tree survey would be required for the 2 pine trees that will be removed on the boundary and there may be a requirement to re-provide the loss of these trees elsewhere. These trees do have a TPO in place due to the conservation area designation.	
5) Planning Application Requirements	
In relation to the planning application requirements, SB confirmed the following are required to support the application: • A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and bat surveys would be required within this. • Air quality; SB is to confirm whether or not we are zone which requires this report. • BREEAM Report in line with 2014 regulations achieving 'Very Good' rating, within a Sustainability Statement. • A Noise Report is required due to the provision of flues and vents. • A Flood Risk Assessment may be required, depending on whether the red line is put around the entire school campus. SB to confirm to only put the red line around the proposed area in which the extension would take place to thereby reducing the site area to less than 1 ha.	SB is to confirm whether or not we are in zone needing an air quality report and the red line for the FRA.
SB noted that the application would be a Major due to the level of floor space being introduced (over 1000 square meters) and therefore must be determined at planning committee.	
6) Any other business	
KW discussed that there are a number of future proposals to improve the entire school campus and that a masterplan with these is being prepared. KW queried the best way to approach engagement with RBC on the scope of works. SB confirmed that the pre-application procedure was the recommended route for feedback on this.	

Appendix 3 – Landscape Concept Design by Landmark Practice



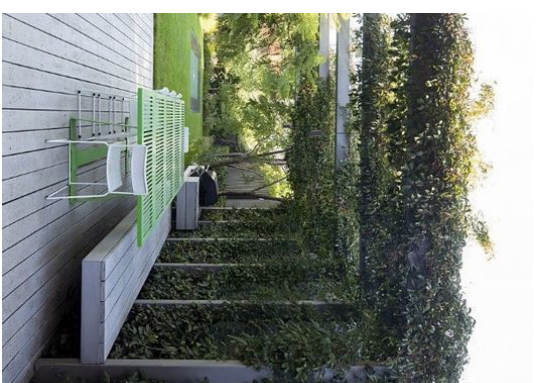
ABBEY SCHOOL, READING

ROOF GARDEN AND ARRIVAL SPACE CONCEPT DESIGN

DATE: DECEMBER 2019

LANDMARK REF: 3260

1.0 Abbey School - Roof Garden Precedent Imagery



Design approach.

The adjacent imagery suggests a simple and contemporary approach to the design of the space.

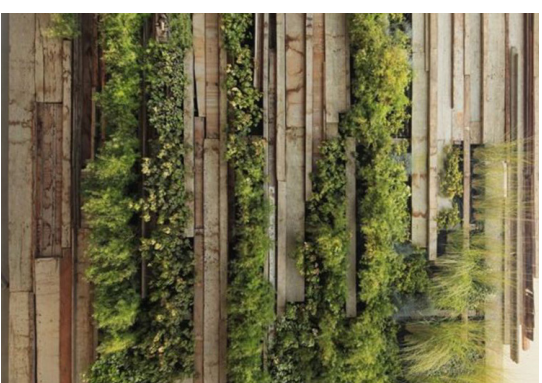
The arrangement of features, planting and hard surfaces will be built around the diagonal roof structure which supports the roof garden.

A considered and simple palette of hard surfaces will be used which are robust and complement the design and form of the proposed building.

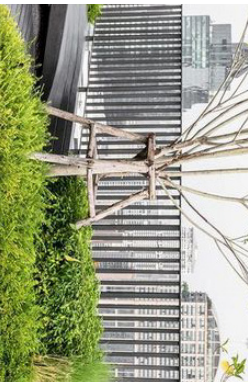
Planting

Planting will focus on a structured planting design which is:

- Visually attractive;
- Offers numerous wildlife/biodiversity benefits;
- Drought tolerant and robust;
- Provides variation in height and texture; and
- Contains species which offer medical and health benefits and forms part of a learning resource for the school.



2.0 Abbey School - Roof Garden Concept



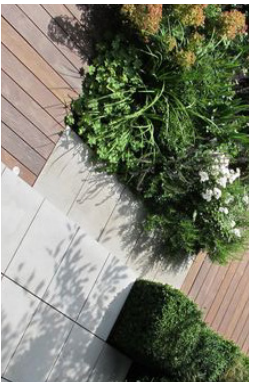
Barrier system - steel with vertical infill bar



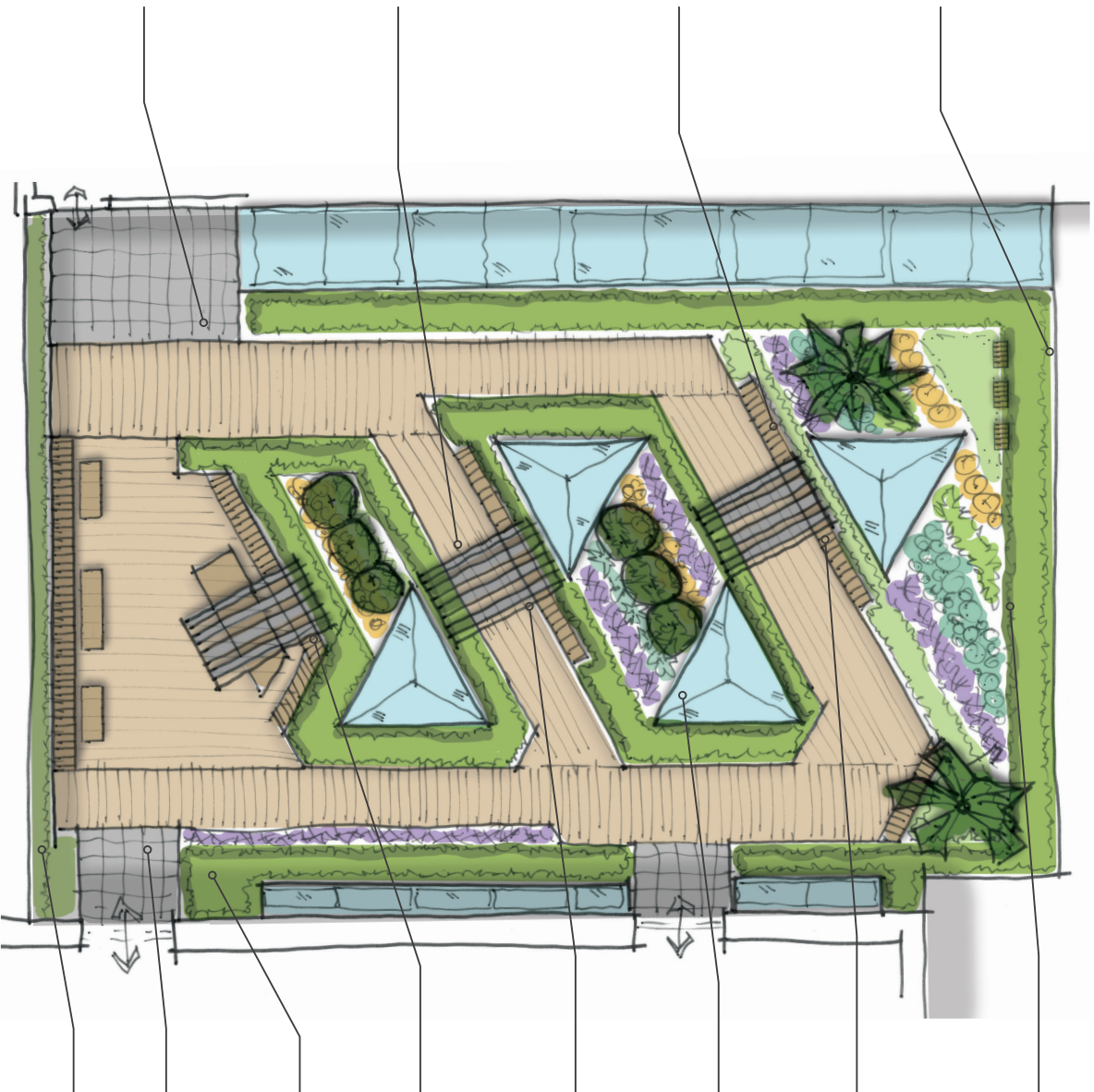
Planter and Seats - integrated system



Pergola - steel structure



Surfaces - Paving and deck on pedestal system



Edge protection will use a physical structure in the form of steel railings which will be complemented by adjacent planting. The design of the space has pushed any walkways and seating away from the edge to discourage uncontrolled access.

Seating areas integrated into planters. Seats are orientated to maximise sunlight and direct views out across garden space.

Light wells surrounded by evergreen hedging provide buffer between walking routes and glazing. Planting is low level so ensure light wells are a distinct feature within the roof garden landscape.

Simple steel pergola's provide vertical element within the space whilst offering partial shading to seating areas and walkways. Climbers are able to grow up the pergola's creating a vertical greening to the space.

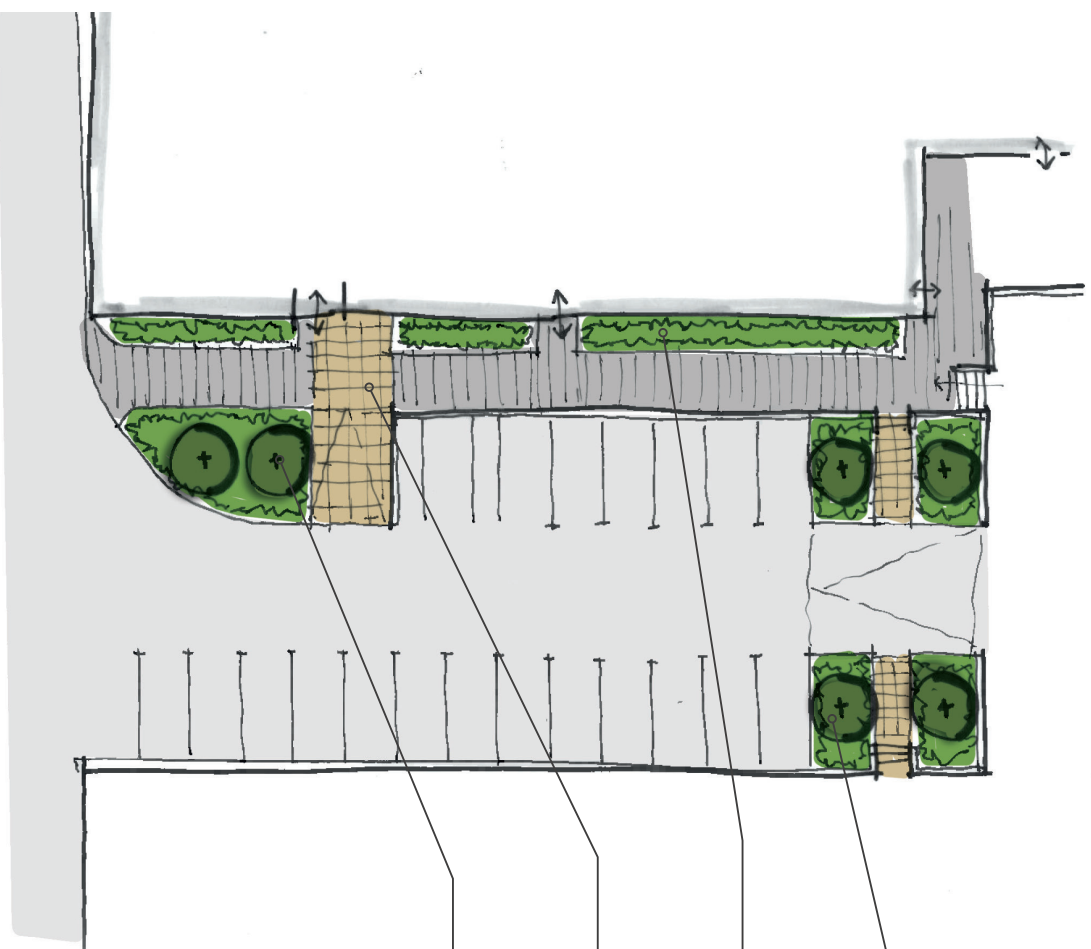
Central seating area with fixed table. Table and seating arrangement allows for inclusive access.

Low evergreen hedging set within raised planter discourages access to roof lights whilst still allowing access for maintenance. Height of planter and planting circa 300-450mm so that light levels below are not effected.

Variation in hard surface treatments helps identify entrance points into and out of the roof garden.

A simple timber and/or steel trellis system will be installed along this façade to prevent access on to the adjacent roof. This vertical feature could include a number of habitat features such as bee and insect houses.

3.0 Abbey School - Arrival Space - Concept



4no. trees set within planted area. Trees and planting offset the loss of 4no. existing trees on the southern boundary of the site.

Planted bed alongside building. Shade and drought tolerant species proposed, these will soften the building edge whilst contributing to biodiversity net gain.

Variation in paving colour/product to announce the main entrance.

2no. trees set within planted bed soften the arrival space to the building and car park.