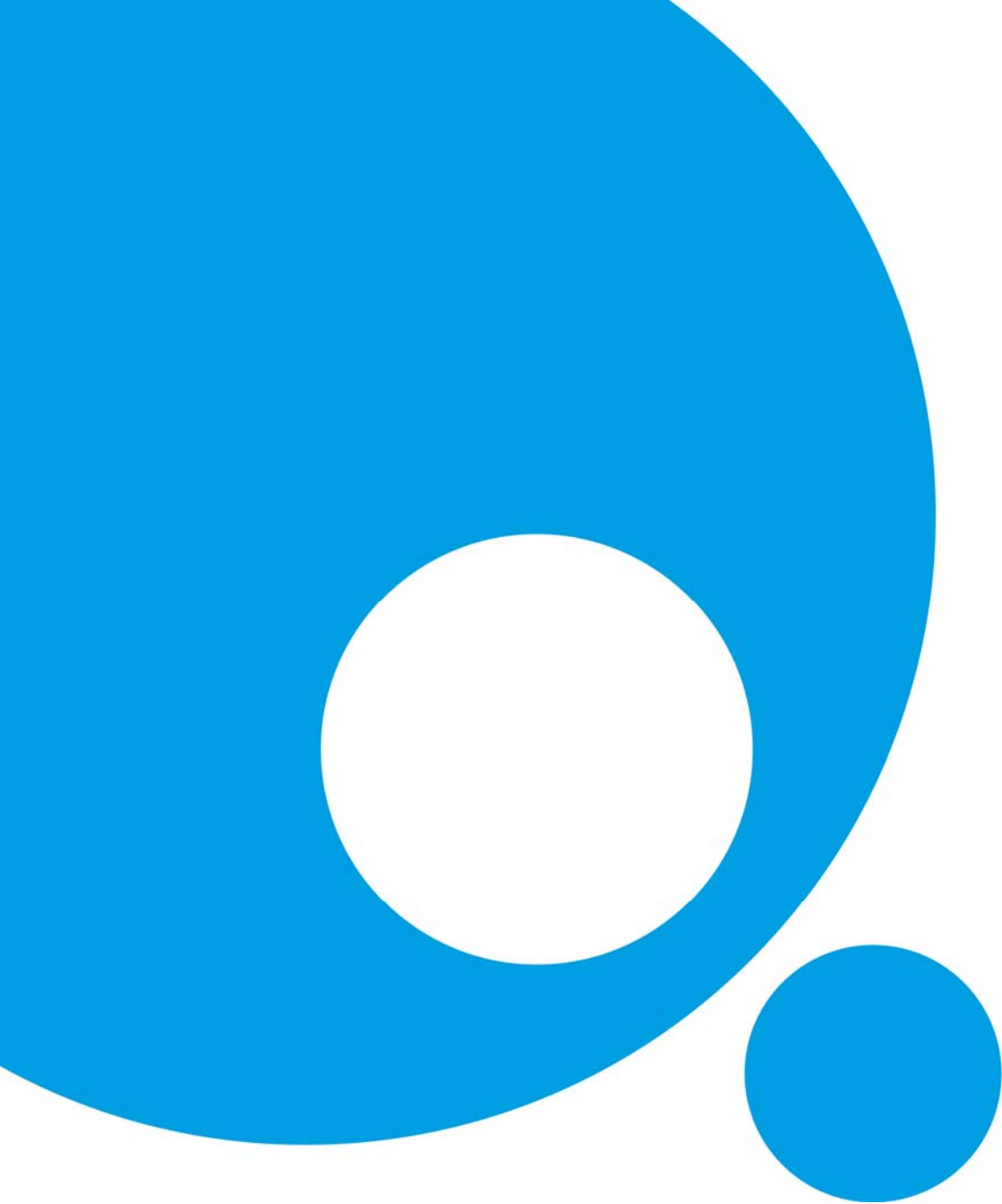




PLANNING STATEMENT

71-73 CAVERSHAM ROAD, READING RG1 8JA

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement accompanies a full planning application submitted on behalf of S2 Caversham Ltd in respect of the redevelopment of 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading RG1 8JA ("the Application Site"). The application seeks planning consent for the following:

"Demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a new part 1, part 5, part 7 storey mixed-use building comprising 44 residential units, 239 sqm of retail floorspace (Use Class A1) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping."

This Planning Statement reviews the planning application proposals in light of the development plan, national policy, relevant guidance and material considerations and sets out the clear and demonstrable benefits of redeveloping the existing vacant building in order to deliver new homes in this highly sustainable location.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires development proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For reasons more fully set out in this planning statement, the development accords with the development plan and its compliance with other significant material considerations, principally the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) ("NPPF") further reinforces the case for a grant of planning permission.

The application is submitted with the following accompanying documentation:

Table 1.1 – Planning Application Submission Documents

Document	Author
Planning Application Cover Letter	Quod
Planning Application Forms	Quod
Planning Statement	Quod
CIL Submission	Quod
Application Drawings	JTP
Accommodation Schedule	JTP
Design and Access Statement	JTP
Statement of Community Involvement	KANDA
Affordable Housing and Viability Statement	Quod
Air Quality Assessment	RPS
Phase 1 Contaminated Land Preliminary Risk Assessment	RPS
Energy Strategy	Hoare Lea
Sustainability Statement	Hoare Lea
Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy	RPS
Flood Risk Sequential Assessment	RPS
Utilities Assessment	RPS

Planning Noise Assessment	Waterman
Planning Obligations – Draft Heads of Terms (included in Planning Statement)	Quod
Transport Statement	Mayer Brown
Daylight and Sunlight Report	Calfordseaden
Heritage and Townscape Assessment	Iceni Projects
Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment	Amphibian, Reptile & Mammal Conservation Limited

This suite of documents demonstrate that the application proposals accord with development plan policy and that there are significant material considerations which weigh in favour of development.

This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2 - Development Context:** This section discusses the planning history for the Application Site, the local surrounding area and pre-application consultation.
- **Section 3 - Details of the Proposed Development:** This section describes the application proposals.
- **Section 4 - Development Plan Policy:** This section provides a commentary on the development plan and NPPF, together with other material considerations.
- **Section 5 - Planning Assessment:** This section evaluates the proposed development against the relevant policies of the development plan and National Planning Policy/Guidance and material considerations.
- **Section 6 - Planning Obligations:** This section reviews the potential planning obligations that will be provided in connection with the development and considers the Community Infrastructure Levy liability arising out of the development.
- **Section 7 - Conclusions:** This section provides a summary of the justification for granting planning permission for the development proposals.

This application submission follows a period of pre-application engagement with Reading Borough Council. The full extent of this consultation is discussed in detail within the following section and Statement of Community Involvement.

2 DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

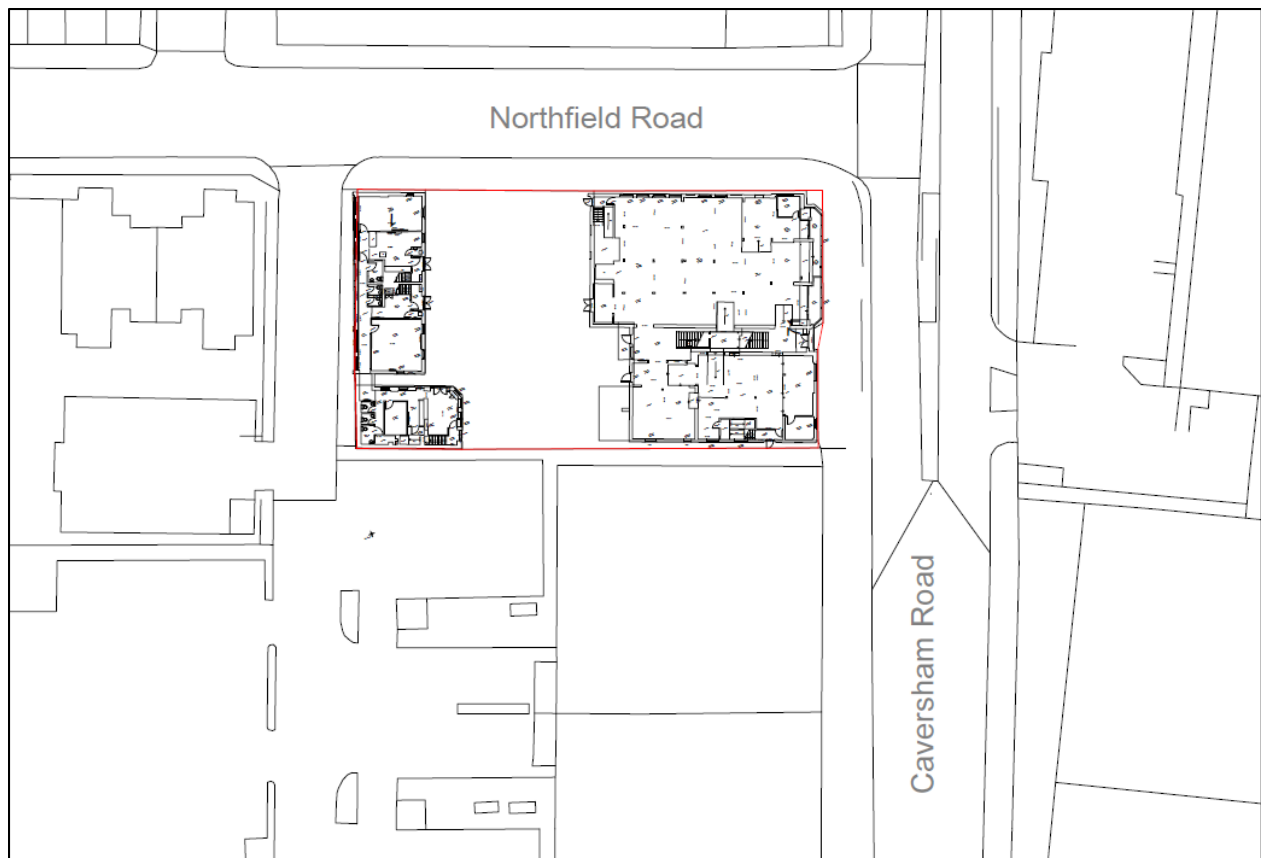
This section reviews the current characteristics of the Application Site and provides an overview of the surrounding area to provide a physical context to the application proposals. Photographs of the Application Site appear within the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

This section also identifies the historic context of the proposals and their evolution through discussion with Reading Borough Council.

Application Site

The Site Location Plan is re-provided below:

Figure 2.1 - Site Location Plan



The site is level, rectangular in shape and extends to approximately 0.159 hectares (0.393 acres).

Presently the site comprises a 2-storey vacant retail warehouse, known as 71-73 Caversham Road, with a service yard and car parking area situated on the eastern part of the site fronting Caversham Road, together with 2 no. detached 2.5 storey office buildings, known as The Brewery and The Malthouse, with further car parking space situated on the western part of the site.

The Brewery and The Malthouse office buildings are within the site application boundary but are proposed to be retained and remain unchanged by the proposal.

The retail warehouse on the site is vacant and was formerly used as an ironmonger. The site is bordered by Caversham Road at its eastern boundary, Northfield Road at its northern boundary, a development of 3 storey flats known as Monmouth Court at its western boundary and a gym at its southern boundary.

Vehicle and pedestrian access to the site is achieved from Northfield Road whilst the retail warehouse is accessed via Caversham Road.

The buildings on site are not listed, nor are there any located in the immediate vicinity. The site is not located in a conservation area.

Surrounding Context

The immediate area is largely characterised by commercial and service sector uses. To the immediate south of the site is a single storey (with mezzanine) D2 (Pure Gym) unit. In addition to Pure Gym, is an adjoining music shop and Reading Fire Station. A three storey B8 (Safeguard) unit lies to the north of the site along with other town centre uses – including a furniture shop and several restaurants.

To the west of the site is a part two, part three storey residential block of flats (Monmouth Court).

The site to the east (former Royal Mail Depot), beyond Caversham Road, is currently the subject of a major application (ref: 182252) for the following development:

Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 – 25 storeys in height, providing 658 (79 x studio, 227x1, 335x2 & 17x3-bed) residential units, office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor Class A1-3 uses, a community centre(Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking, servicing, public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works.

This application was validated on 03 April 2019 and has a target determination date of 24 July 2019, at present there is no further update on the application. Heights proposed opposite the site are 8 storeys, but as highlighted above range from 2 – 25 storeys across the site.

Planning History

A full review of available planning records indicates one application relative to the site:

Table 2.1 - Planning History

Ref. No.	Description of Development	Decision/Date
950014	To fit roller shutters to front windows on outside.	Refused 15/06/1995

The above application is therefore not relevant to the proposed residential development of the site.

Pre-application Consultation

The applicant completed a comprehensive pre-application consultation process as part of the design process. Details of this are provided below:

Pre-application (I)

The completed an initial pre-application meeting on 14th January 2019. This submission was conceptual and contained limited detail seeking to establish land use principles.

The overall proposal for the site at this stage comprised 33 units and retention of the existing office buildings on site.

It was agreed at a high level and subject to wider development plan considerations that the retail warehouse element of the site was suitable for residential redevelopment, particularly in the context of the existing building being vacant.

Design Review Panel

Following the initial pre-application submission, the Applicant met with Reading Borough Council's Design Review Panel on 2nd May 2019.

The proposal at this stage had responded to initial comments and comprised the following:

49 residential units comprising both one- and two-bedroom units (35no. and 2no. respectively). Retention of the existing office buildings on site and provision of 27no. car parking spaces (including 2 disabled spaces), in addition to 50no. secured bicycle racks.

Design feedback was presented by the panel and helped shape the following pre-application submission.

The scheme responded to the feedback by proposing the following:

- Uplift in housing delivery;
- efficient use of land;
- provision of an appropriate mix of dwellings;
- re-provision of modern commercial unit with active frontages;
- re-designed roofscape;
- updated material pallet with a consistent material used throughout;
- increased amenity space provision; and
- increased "greening" of the site.

The full detail of the design response following the DRP is provided within the Design and Access Statement. In addition to the design response, the applicant is supported by a full heritage assessment that supports the redevelopment of the existing retail warehouse building.

Pre-application (II)

The applicant met with Reading Borough Council for a second pre-application meeting on 10th June 2019.

The pre-application was made in relation to a full application comprising the following development:

57no. residential units with both one- and two-bedroom units (49no. and 8no. respectively) over 7 floors to be delivered as an 8-storey building. Retention of the existing office buildings on site and provision of 27no. car parking spaces (including 2 disabled spaces), in addition to 50no. secured bicycle racks.

Written comments were received 5th July 2019. Officers concluded that there were several positive aspects to the proposed development, including the uplift in housing delivery, the efficient use of land in a sustainable location and a positively evolving design concept.

Officers also suggested several revision to the scheme including a wider mix of dwellings and an affordable housing commitment. It was also suggested the height be lowered from 8 storeys to 7 storeys to reflect the transitional location and emerging heights opposite.

The scope of the planning application was also agreed.

Public Consultation

A public consultation event was held 24th July 2019 at Greyfriars Church, Reading located in close proximity to the site. The public exhibition gave residents an opportunity to see the proposals for the site and discuss the scheme with the project team.

Community groups were formally invited to the public exhibition. These groups included:

- Bell Tower Community Association
- Caversham and District Residents Association
- Reading Civic Society
- Reading and Wokingham Chamber of Commerce

The key themes of discussion during consultation included:

- The height of the proposals
- The heritage aspects of the site
- The mix of uses
- Parking provision
- The precedent set by the new scheme

The exhibition was attended by approximately 30 residents.

Feedback from stakeholders was generally positive, demonstrating broad support for the principle of redevelopment and the proposal for a mixed-use development delivering additional housing.

Summary

To summarise, the proposed development seeks to deliver 44 new homes and 239 sqm retail floorspace in a highly sustainable, underutilised town centre location benefiting from proximity to Reading Railway Station. As highlighted the surrounding area contains a range of built forms and scales, which is set to significantly increase through the redevelopment of the former Royal Mail depot.

Further to the above and as demonstrated in Section 4 the principle of a high quality, resident-led mixed-use redevelopment at this site is strongly supported by planning policy.

Additionally, the pre-application process has informed and shaped the development proposals that deliver significant associated benefits, as described at Section 3. Positive responses are presented within the application relative to themes identified throughout the pre-application process. This represents a positive pre-application process to attempt to front-load planning issues ahead of submission, to enable a swift determination, cognisant of relevant material considerations; this is supported by policy guidance at all levels.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This section describes the proposed development and defines the principle components of the scheme. The application is accompanied by a full set of visual and illustrative material, prepared by JTP which illustrates the development proposals and explains the rationale behind the design of the building.

Key Development Proposals

The scheme proposes the following:

- High quality 7-storey marker building at the junction of Caversham Road and Northfield Road.
- A total of 44 new homes including the following mix:
 - i. 1 bedroom 2 Person: 17 (typical size 50m²)
 - ii. 2 bedroom 3 Person: 19 (typical size 61-66m²)
 - iii. 2 bedroom 4 person: 5 (typical size 70m²)
 - iv. 3 bedrooms 4 person: 3 (typical size 74m²)
- Residential apartments that meet Nationally Described Space Standards and provide good quality internal space.
- Residential apartments provided with individual private amenity spaces accessed directly from both living areas and bedrooms.
- Re-provision of high-quality commercial space at ground floor totalling 239 sqm, increasing the employment generating potential of the site.
- Retention of existing Brewery and Malthouse office buildings on site.
- Provision of 16 car parking spaces designed to serve both residents and existing/proposed commercial units.
- Provision of 22 two-tier bicycle racks in a secure, covered storage area on the ground floor, providing 44 cycle spaces (a cycle space per residential). All the cycle parking will be secure and accessible via pin pad-controlled entry points.
- Additional provision of 5 Sheffield stands located in an external but covered area within the car park, which provide an additional 10 cycle parking spaces for visitors and other users.
- High level of amenity provision achieved across the site in the form of private individual winter gardens (totalling 255sqm) and two podium communal roof terraces (totalling 236sqm).
- Communal refuse store located at ground floor and designed in accordance with adopted waste capacity guidelines.
- Access to south facing shared podium gardens accessed from the main stair/ lift core.
- Incorporation of brown roofs and green landscape within the scheme to assist biodiversity.
- Improved local views towards the site.

4 DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

This section provides a commentary on the nature of the development in the context of development plan policy, policy guidance and other material considerations. An assessment of local development plan policy and specific local policy issues are dealt with in Section 5 within this statement.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that proposals shall be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The site is in Reading, and as such the development plan consists of the Reading Core Strategy (2015) and Reading Central Area Action Plan (2010).

Reading are currently working on their new Local Plan. Following the examination process, the independent planning inspector submitted her final inspector's report on 24th September 2019. Subject to several identified modifications, this found the Local Plan to be sound and legally compliant. The Local Plan will be considered for adoption at the meeting of full Council on 4th November 2019.

In the context of the new Local Plan being adopted imminently, this document will form the basis of the planning assessment at Section 5.

The development plan should be read in the context of National Policy Guidance which is a material consideration.

Development Plan

Reading Borough Local Plan (Submission Draft – 2018)

The Local Plan for Reading is the document that contains the policies for how Reading will develop up to 2036. It identifies the amount of development that will take place, the areas and sites where development is expected to be accommodated, and where it will be restricted, and sets out policies for how planning applications will be decided.

The document sets out a vision and nine objectives for the borough which comprise the following:

- 1. Strengthen the role of Reading, including central Reading, as the hub for the Thames Valley, providing an accessible focus for the development of employment, housing, services and facilities, meeting the needs of residents, workers, visitors, those who study in Reading Borough, and the wider area;*
- 2. Make the most efficient use of Reading's limited land, particularly previously developed land, to ensure that as many new homes as possible are delivered to meet identified needs, particularly needs for affordable housing;*
- 3. Improve the quality of life for those living, working, studying in and visiting the Borough, creating inclusive, sustainable communities with good access to employment, open space and waterspace, transport, education, services and facilities (such as sustainable water supplies and wastewater treatment, healthcare services, social and community facilities, sport and recreation, etc.) to meet identified needs;*

- 4. Form the basis for co-operation with neighbouring authorities to consider the wider West of Berkshire area as a whole;*
- 5. Ensure new development and existing areas are accessible and sustainable, in accordance with the sustainability appraisal objectives, including reducing its effects on, and adapting to, climate change;*
- 6. Maintain and enhance the historic, built and natural environment of the Borough through investment and high quality design, and capitalise on these assets to contribute to quality of life and economic success;*
- 7. Improve and develop excellent transport systems to improve accessibility within Reading and for the wider area by sustainable modes of transport, including walking and cycling;*
- 8. Offer outstanding cultural opportunities, which are based on multiculturalism, local heritage and high quality, modern arts, leisure and visitor facilities;*
- 9. Ensure that Reading is a healthy, clean, safe and socially-inclusive community where the needs of all its citizens are met by high quality, cost effective services and outstanding levels of community involvement.*

Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009)

The Reading Central Area Action Plan sets out the planning principles for the centre of Reading up to 2026.

The document sets a vision for central Reading alongside a set of 9 key principles which are re-provided below:

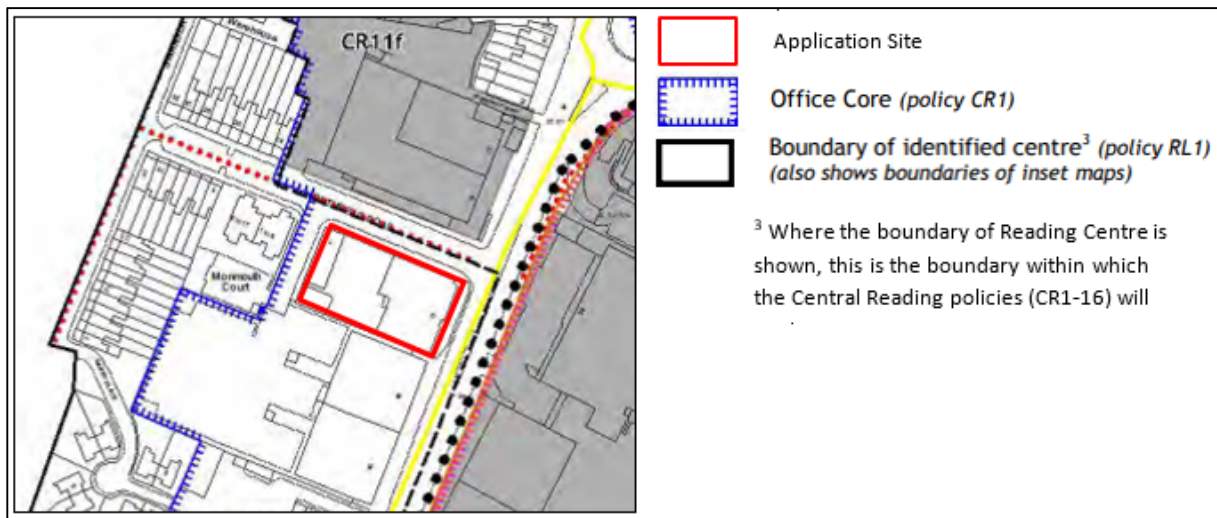
- 1. The centre will contain a broad range of different but complementary uses within an area easily accessed by foot.*
- 2. The centre will appeal to all sectors of Reading's population as a place to live in, work in, study in and visit.*
- 3. New development will exhibit an excellent, safe and sustainable quality of design that contributes to the attraction of the centre.*
- 4. The centre will make the most of its waterside areas as a destination for leisure and recreation, and protect and enhance wildlife habitats.*
- 5. Areas of designated open space within the centre will be protected and new opportunities will be sought.*
- 6. Access to the centre by foot, cycle and public transport will be improved.*
- 7. Access within the centre by foot and cycle will be improved and barriers to this improved access will be overcome, particularly in a north-south direction through the core.*
- 8. Development in the centre will benefit from and contribute towards forthcoming major transport improvements.*

9. Areas and features that positively contribute to the unique and historic character of central Reading will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced

Development Plan Designation – Proposals Map (March 2018 – Submission Draft)

The relevant extract from the emerging proposals map is provided below:

Figure 2 – Proposals Map Extract



This confirms the site is subject to the following designations:

- Office Core; and
- Reading Central Area.

The building on site is not listed or located in a Conservation Area.

The policies relevant to the current proposals are considered individually within the analysis part (Section 5) of this report.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

The revised National Planning Policy Framework was published in February 2019.

Paragraph 2 of the NPPF states:

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.

The NPPF introduces the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states:

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.

As clearly stated at paragraph 11:

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

*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-date, granting permission unless:

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. 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.

Section 5 of the revised NPPF relates to delivering a sufficient supply of homes. Paragraph 59 states:

To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

Section 11 of the NPPF relates to making effective use of land. Paragraph 118 sets out several objectives for planning policies and decisions including:

Support(ing) opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions where the development would be consistent with the prevailing height and form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers.

The central theme of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development and encourages local authorities to approve applications swiftly that are in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusions

Development plan policy and guidance is supportive of sustainable development. The delivery of housing in sustainable locations is encouraged at all policy levels particularly where this relates to previously developed land in town centre locations.

The proposals present an opportunity to replace a vacant retail warehouse and provide much needed housing alongside new, modern format commercial unit with active frontage.

The following section sets out the topic-based references to the relevant policies from the documents identified within this section.

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

This section provides an assessment of the application proposals in light of the development plan and material considerations relevant to the scheme. In the context of the new Local Plan being adopted imminently, this document forms the basis of the planning assessment with the adopted AAP document referenced where relevant.

The planning assessment considers the main issues and planning considerations raised by the planning application proposals as follows:

- Principle of Development – Commercial floorspace;
 - Employment;
- Principle of Development – Residential Accommodation;
 - Affordable Housing;
 - Residential Design;
- Design;
 - Building Height;
- Heritage;
- Daylight/Sunlight;
- Parking and Transport;
- Energy/Sustainability;
- Air Quality;
- Noise; and
- Waste Storage/Management.

Each consideration is addressed in turn within this section.

Principle of Development – Commercial Floorspace

Paragraph 121 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises local planning authorities to take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular it states that they should support proposals to:

“use retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres.”

Emerging Local Plan Policy RL1 relates to the network and hierarchy of centres and identifies Reading as the Regional centre within area. The policy highlights the vitality and viability of these centres should be maintained and enhanced. The following improvements will be acceptable in all centres:

- [Accessibility and transport improvements;](#)
- [Broadening range of facilities;](#)

- [Residential use of upper floors; and](#)
- [Environmental enhancements.](#)

The policy also highlights that Central Reading will see the greatest level of development and change.

Emerging Local Plan Policy RL2 (Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development) states provision will be made for up to 34,900 sq m of retail and related facilities in Reading to 2036.

The application proposal seeks to demolish the existing two storey retail warehouse at the corner of Caversham Road and Northfield Road. However, it should be highlighted that the retail warehouse is vacant and has been for a considerable period dating back to December 2018. The existing floorspace on site does not meet the requirements for modern occupiers as demonstrated by internal photographs provided within the enclosed Design and Access Statement.

It should be highlighted that the commercial use of the site is being re-provided as part of the proposals with a new 239sqm commercial unit being provided at the ground floor. The new unit will provide floorspace suitable for a modern occupier while also providing active frontage at the site and meeting all criteria set out in Policy RC1.

In light of NPPF support for alternative uses for unallocated land being used to better suit strategic needs for a local area, and the lack of policy protection for retail warehouse provision in this location, the demolition of the existing vacant retail warehouse and re-provision of a new commercial unit is considered to be appropriate.

The provision of the new unit is considered to align with emerging Local Plan Policy RL2 and aspirations of Policy RL1 which will be delivered as part of the development and therefore ought to be supported.

[Employment](#)

Given the proposed development involves the retention of the existing office buildings on site (Malthouse and Brewery), and the redevelopment of the vacant existing retail warehouse, it is not necessary to review these proposals against policies concerning the retention of employment uses in the borough.

In the context of the existing retail unit being vacant it's important to note the proposals will increase the employment generating potential of the site.

Principle of Development – Residential Accommodation

The NPPF makes clear the following:

- LPA's should boost significantly the supply of housing;
- LPA's should meet the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area;
- LPA's should only expand into the green belt after considering brownfield development options.

Emerging Local Plan Policy H1 of the New Local Plan supports the provision of housing across Reading Borough Council stating:

Provision will be made for at least an additional 15,847 homes (averaging 689 homes per annum) in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036.

The Council will continue to work with neighbouring authorities within the Western Berkshire Housing Market Area to ensure that the shortfall of 230 dwellings that cannot be provided within Reading will be met over the plan period.

Supporting justification for the policy highlights there is a pressing need for additional housing in Reading and the surrounding area.

The provision of 44 new homes on an underutilised, highly sustainable brownfield site is therefore a significant material consideration in the determination of this planning application. The benefits of the proposal are significant, in contributing to meeting an identified need for housing within Reading, which fully accords with development plan policy and therefore ought to be supported.

Affordable Housing

Emerging Local Plan Policy H3 relates to Affordable Housing and states residential development will make appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading. On sites of 10 or more dwellings, 30% of the total dwellings are required to be in the form of affordable housing.

Policy H3 goes on to highlight for sites of more than 4 dwellings, provision should be made on site in the first instance with a financial contribution being negotiated to make up the full requirement as appropriate. In all cases where proposals fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open-book approach will be taken and the onus will be on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.

The scheme provides the maximum contribution to the borough's affordable housing provision as set out in the enclosed Housing Delivery & Viability Statement which will be presented to Reading Borough Council, confidentially. It is therefore considered to be in compliance with development plan policy outlined above.

The provision of new homes in this location is explicitly supported by the emerging development plan and therefore ought to be acceptable.

Residential Design

Density

Emerging Local Plan Policy H2 (Density & Mix) states the appropriate density of residential development will be informed by:

- the character and mix of uses of the area in which it is located, including the housing mix, and including consideration of any nearby heritage assets or important landscape or townscape areas;
- its current and future level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- the need to achieve high quality design;
- the need to maximise the efficiency of land use; and

- the need to minimise environmental impacts, including detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers.

Policy H2 goes on to highlight that the indicative density for Town Centre sites is above 100 dwellings per hectare, but the criteria above may indicate that a different density is appropriate.

The application proposes a density of 276 per hectare at the site. As demonstrated in Section 2 of this report the character and mix of uses surrounding the site is varied, with building heights in the direct vicinity of the site set to increase significantly through the re-development of the former Royal Mail Sorting Office (currently the subject of planning application ref: 182252). This application seeks to deliver building heights ranging from 2-25 storeys, and 8 storeys fronting the development site on the opposite side of Caversham Road. The existing buildings on site are not listed and the site is not within a Conservation Area.

As identified in the enclosed Transport Statement, the site has an accessibility index (AI) of 23 (which is the equivalent of a PTAL of 5) and translates to a Very Good level of accessibility to public transport rating (further evidence of the AI level can be found within the Transport Statement).

With regards to design quality, the proposal has been the subject of multiple design discussions with both Reading Officers and subject to Reading's Design Review Panel. As demonstrated within the accompanying Design and Access Statement the design has been updated as a direct response to feedback and therefore considered to be of high design quality. Additionally, as further detailed later in this assessment the site sits in a transitional location between the River Major Opportunity Area and the low density residential to the west, the building height responds to this location and is therefore considered to be appropriate.

The existing site comprises two office buildings and a vacant retail warehouse located on previously developed land within the town centre. The proposal therefore seeks to retain the existing office buildings and re-develop the vacant retail unit in order to provide new homes alongside a new commercial unit and is therefore considered to maximise the efficiency of land use.

The application site is in a predominantly commercial area on a busy road with therefore sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the site are limited with the closest residential building being Monmouth Court which lies some 40m west of the proposed building. The application is supported by a full suite of technical documents including Noise, Air Quality and Daylight and Sunlight Assessment, all of which demonstrate the acceptability of the proposals.

In the context of the above the proposed density of 276 per hectare is appropriate for the site and ought to be supported.

Mix

With regards to mix, emerging Local Plan Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) states:

All proposals for residential development within the central area will be required to contribute towards a mix of different sized units within the development. This will be measured by the number of bedrooms provided within individual units. Ideally, a mixture of one, two- and three-bedroom units should be provided. As a guide, in developments of 15 dwellings or more, a maximum of 40% of units should be 1-bed/ studios, and a minimum of 5% of units should be at least 3-bed, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable.

The proposal seeks to deliver the following unit mix:

Table 2 - Proposed Unit Mix

Unit Type	Number of Units	%	Policy Requirement
1B2P	17	39%	>40%
2B3P	19	43%	No set requirement
2B4P	5	11%	
3B	3	7%	<5%

The application would therefore deliver a mix of one, two- and three-bedroom units aligned with the guide composition set out in Policy H2 and therefore the proposed mix is in direct compliance with emerging development plan policy.

Amenity Space

Amenity space on site comprises the following:

Table 3 - Amenity Space Provision

Type	Size (m ²)	Total Provision (m ²)
Balcony	6-7.5	82.5
Winter Garden	6-7	216
Private Terrace (1 st & 5 th Floor)	9-27	37
Communal Terrace (1 st & 5 th Floor)	107-129	236

All apartments have been provided with individual private amenity space with direct access from each unit provided via either projecting or winter garden balconies.

The projecting balconies are on south and west facing facades to allow for maximum sunlight.

Winter gardens are provided for the north and south facing facade along Northfield Road and Caversham Road, which provides amenity space sheltered from the noise of the road.

In addition to the private balconies, two communal podium terraces are provided at 1st and 5th floors to the rear of the development located away from the noise of Caversham Road.

The proposals therefore maximise the provision of amenity space given the limitations of the existing site.

Design

Emerging Local Plan Policy CR2 identifies the overarching design criteria for Central Reading. A detailed assessment of the proposals considering the requirements of CR2 is provided in the table below:

Table 4 - Policy CR2 Matrix

CR2 Requirement	Proposal Response	Compliance
a. Development will build on and respect the existing grid layout structure of the central area, providing continuity and enclosure through appropriate relationships between buildings and spaces, and frontages that engage with the street at lower levels, and contributing towards enhanced ease of movement through and around the central area;	The application site sits in a transitional location as identified by the Reading Central Area Action Plan. Emerging development to the east (Former Royal Mail Sorting Office) proposes 8 storeys fronting the site, while this scale steps down to 2-3 storeys at the residential area to the west of the site. In response to this context the building proposes 7 storeys fronting Caversham Road stepping down to 5 storeys at the rear. It is therefore considered the proposed development respects and responds to both existing and emerging relationships. The site also proposes a new commercial unit at ground with active frontages and is therefore considered to comply with this element of Policy CR2.	✓
b. Development will provide appropriate, well designed public spaces and other public realm, including squares, open spaces, streetscape, utilising high quality and well maintained hard and soft landscaped areas, and public art, that provide suitable functions and interest, sense of place and safe and convenient linkages to adjoining areas;	The existing site is completely covered in hardstanding and therefore opportunities to improve public realm and landscaping are limited. The proposal does however seek to maximise hard and soft landscaping through the provision of communal podium terraces and new planting at ground floor fronting the Northfield Road entrance to the development.	✓
c. Development should consider and, where possible, include ways of providing green infrastructure designed into the development, for instance through roof gardens, green walls and green roofs, to enhance the otherwise very urban environment;	As highlighted above opportunities to enhance the greening of the existing site are limited owing to it being entirely formed of hardstanding. The proposal does however seek to maximise landscaping through the provision of planted communal podium terraces and new planting at ground floor fronting the Northfield Road entrance to the development.	✓
d. The architectural details and materials used in the central area should be high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in areas local to the development site;	As detailed by the Design and Access Statement, the proposed building draws influences from both the existing building to be demolished and surrounding context of the site.	✓

e. Development and any associated public realm should contribute to the diversity of the central area, be capable of easy adaptation over time to meet changing circumstances, and be designed to enhance community safety;	The proposal seeks to enhance the active frontage on the corner of Northfield and Caversham Road and is therefore considered to be compliant with this element of the policy.	✓
f. Development should be designed with consideration of adjacent development sites and should not prevent or cause unreasonable burdens on the future development of those sites.	As highlighted above emerging development to the east (Former Royal Mail Sorting Office) proposes 8 storeys fronting the site, while this scale steps down to 2-3 storeys in the residential area to the west of the site. In response to this context and the sites transitional location (as set out in the AAP and further detailed below) the building proposes 7 storeys fronting Caversham Road stepping down to 5 storeys to the east of the site, reflective of the transitional location. The office buildings on site have also been retained. Further to the above the proposal provides a blank wall on its southern elevation to enable a 'party wall' approach and facilitate further development on Caversham Road should it come forward at a later date.	✓

The above matrix demonstrates that the proposed development is in full accordance with emerging Local Plan Policy CR2.

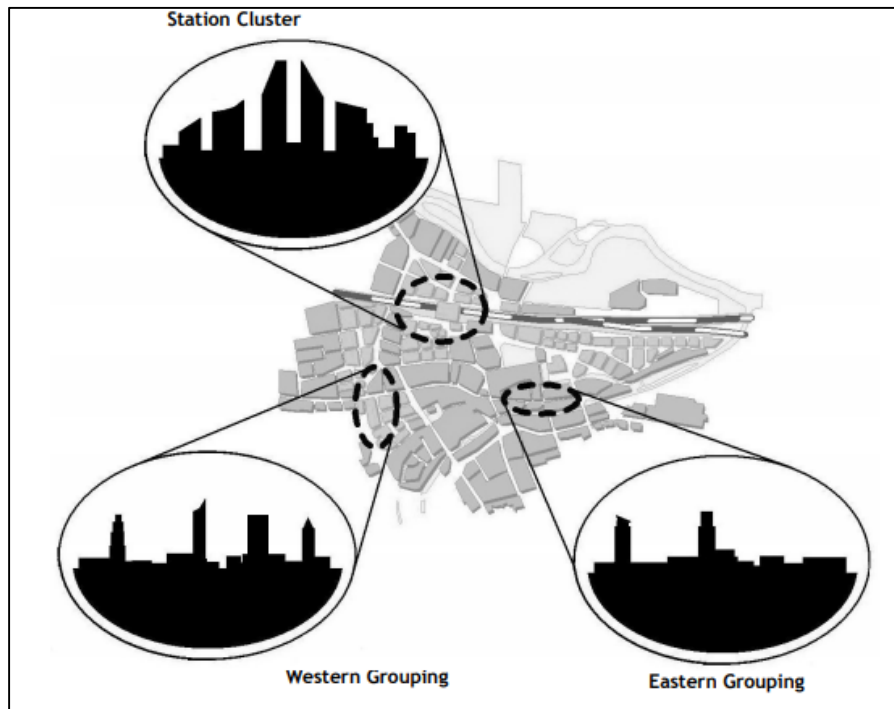
Building Height

The site lies close to the boundary of the Station Area Cluster of tall buildings identified as part of New Local Plan Policy CR10 – Tall Buildings. The policy defines a tall building as being 12 storeys for residential developments. The policy highlights that within Reading Borough, tall buildings will only be appropriate within the 'areas of potential for tall buildings' as defined on the Proposals Map. These areas are as follows:

- CR10a: Station Area Cluster
- CR10b: Western Grouping
- CR10c: Eastern Grouping

Figure 5.2 gives an 'at a glance' diagrammatic indication of the principles for each area and is re-provided below:

Figure 3 - Figure 5.2 Diagrammatic indicative representation of the differing approach to tall buildings in each area



Policy CR10a relates to the Station Area Cluster and states:

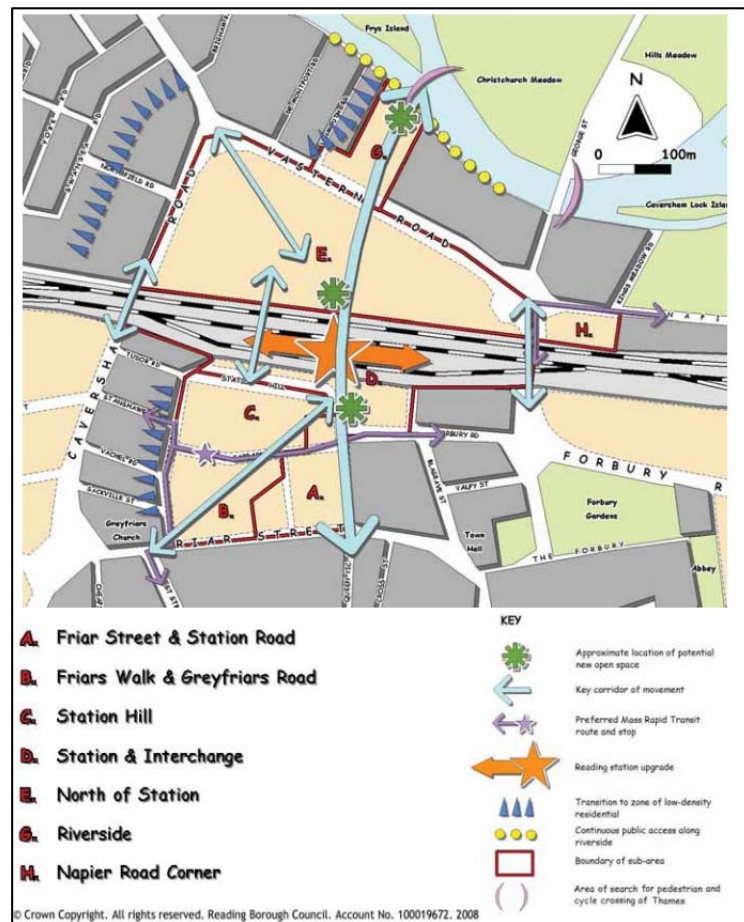
A new cluster of tall buildings with the station at its heart will signify the status of the station area as a major mixed-use destination and the main gateway to and most accessible part of Reading.

Tall buildings in this area should:

- *Follow a pattern of the tallest buildings at the centre of the cluster, close to the station, and step down in height from that point towards the lower buildings at the fringes;*
- *Contribute to the creation of a coherent, attractive and sustainable cluster of buildings with a high quality of public realm;*
- *Ensure that adequate space is provided between the buildings to avoid the creation of an overly dense townscape and to allow buildings to be viewed as individual forms;*
- *Be designed to fit within a wider planning framework or master plan for the area, which allows separate parcels of land to come forward at different times in a coordinated manner.*

Further to the above the site lies just outside the Major Opportunity Area, but within the Reading centre boundary. The site performs a transition between the central, higher density and commercial uses around the site and to the east (noted in Section 2 and described visually within the accompanying Design and Access Statement), and the lower scale, predominantly residential areas to the west. This is acknowledged within Figure 6.2 of the Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009) and is re-provided below:

Figure 4 - Figure 6.2 Station/River Major Opportunity Area



The urban design strategy conceived relative to the Opportunity Area and Station Area cluster to the east recognises the appropriate transition point toward lower density arising at the west and beyond the subject site.

There are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the site, nor are there any conservation designations in the vicinity that would constrain development in this location.

Whilst not comprising a tall building (by Reading's established definition) this site is appropriate for higher density development with a building of 7 storeys fulfilling the transitional requirement of the site. Notwithstanding this, the transition in scale and density is performed comfortably by the retention of the existing 2-3 storey office buildings on the western element of this site.

Heritage

Emerging Local Plan Policy EN1 relates to the protection and enhancement of the historic environment and states:

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

The planning application is supported by a full Heritage Assessment which concludes the following with regards to the site:

Whilst the buildings are of minimal historical value in terms of the history of industrial development in the area, they are not representative or reflective of a particular local building form. The architectural character of the main building along Caversham Road has been wholly eroded by its subsequent and unsympathetic reuse and alteration, throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, which have involved a large amount of demolition, rebuilding and poor-quality extensions.

The Site has not been in maltings use for over a century, does not retain any industrial machinery indicative of this former use, and as such is highly unlikely to retain any communal value for this use amongst the local community. It is clear in our view that the poor architectural character and lack of heritage significance means that the main building in particular should not be considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.

The design of the updated proposal by JTP Architects has evolved through intelligently considering the Site's heritage and previous use, which have either been decayed or lost entirely on the current building, incorporating these into this final design. From a townscape view, we have concluded that the current proposal to replace the existing front building with a new mixed-use residential block, would make a significant contribution that would enhance the character and appearance of the Area which had been noted as 'soulless' by the Councils Heritage Consultant.

Observing these, the proposed redevelopment clearly outweighs the loss of the main building when considering the public benefits of the proposed scheme, including its high-quality contextual design and townscape merits. We consider the scheme to meet the requirements of the relevant policies, notably paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework, as supported by the recently updated Planning Practice Guidance (2019), specifically regarding Non-Designated Heritage Assets. Accordingly, it is our clear view that the proposal satisfies current legislation, policy, and good practice principles and achieves a sustainable use for the Site, and should therefore be supported.

It's important to note that there are no listed buildings in the vicinity of the site, nor are there any conservation designations in the vicinity that would constrain development in this location.

In the context of the above the proposed demolition of the vacant retail warehouse is appropriate particularly when considered in the context of the significant benefits to be delivered as part of the development.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in compliance with development plan policy relating to heritage and ought to be supported.

Parking and Transport

Transport

Emerging Local Plan Policy TR1 (Achieving the transport strategy) states:

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.

The planning application is supported by a full Transport Assessment which identifies the application site as being a 550m walk from Reading train station. The location of the site provides convenient access to a wide range of existing public services and local amenities, within reasonable walking distance.

The site is well located for access to regular bus services with six routes offering half-hourly services or better available from bus stops on Caversham Road, which are within 2 minutes-walk of the site access with further bus services available from the A4155 Caversham Road and Station North Interchange.

The accessibility of the site to public transport has been rated as Very Good, based on a PTAL assessment.

The Transport Assessment demonstrates it is estimated that the site would generate an additional eight vehicle trips in the AM peak hour and 18 less vehicle trips during the PM peak hour. As a result of the redevelopment of the site, public transport trips are estimated to increase by up to five during weekday peak hours with active modes (pedestrians and cyclists), increasing by five trips during weekday peak hours. This change in activity is therefore unlikely to result in any noticeable effect on the operation of the local transport network.

Based on the findings in the Transport Statement, the location of the site, near to the centre of Reading, provides convenient access to a wide range of existing public services and local amenities and the development proposals are unlikely to result in any adverse impacts on the operation of the local transport

network. Therefore, it is considered that there is no reason why the scheme should be resisted on transport grounds and that the proposal is compliant with development plan policy relative to Transport.

Car Parking

Parking requirements have been taken from the Reading Borough Council Revised Parking Standards and Design and are based on accessibility zones. The site is in Zone 2, which is the primary core area.

Table 5 - Proposed Development Car Parking

Parking Type	SPG Standard	Requirement	Proposed Provision
Car parking (Residential)	A requirement of one car parking space per 1-2 bed flat and 1.5 car parking spaces per 3+ bed flat	46	16
Car Parking (Offices)	A maximum of one car parking space per 100 sqm	4	8
Car Parking (Non-Food Retail)	A maximum of one car parking space per 50 sqm	5	
Car Parking Total		55	24

Car parking will be arranged in an 'L' shape within the site with 16 residential parking spaces (including two disabled spaces) located on the eastern side of the site access and along the southern boundary of the site with eight office / commercial parking spaces (including one disabled space) located adjacent to the offices.

The above demonstrates car parking provision for the offices and commercial elements of the development are below maximum standards and the disabled parking requirement has been met by the proposals.

Residential parking provision is proposed at a ratio of 0.35 spaces per dwelling, which is compliant with the Council's requirements. However, during the pre-application process (at which time the proposed ratio was 0.29 spaces per dwelling), officer's advised that given the site's close proximity to the centre of Reading, and it's easy access to public transport connections and the facilities in the town centre, a lower parking provision can be considered.

The proposed car parking is therefore considered to be appropriate and reflective of the site's highly sustainable location.

Cycle Parking

The following table outlines the cycle parking provision for the site.

Table 6 - Proposed Development Cycle Parking

Parking Type	SPG Standard	Requirement	Proposed Provision
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Cycle Parking (Residential)	Minimum of 0.5 cycle parking space per 1-2 bed flat and 1 cycle parking space per 3+ bed flat	24	44
Cycle Parking (Offices)	Minimum of one cycle parking space per 200 sqm	2	10
Cycle Parking (Non-Food Retail)	Minimum of one cycle parking space per 6 staff and one cycle parking space per 200 sqm	2	
Cycle Parking Total		28	54

The proposed cycle parking provision exceeds minimum policy requirements with each household having access to a cycle parking space in a secure cycle store and therefore ought to be supported.

Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems

Emerging Local Plan Policy EN18 relates to Flooding and sustainable drainage systems and states:

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 developments must incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as appropriate and in line with the Government's Technical Standards⁶². 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.

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy as well as a Flood Risk Sequential test prepared by RPS.

The Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy concludes that it has been demonstrated that the development would be safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and that a positive reduction in flood risk would be achieved through the inclusion of surface water attenuation techniques.

Further to the above the Flood Risk Sequential Test demonstrates:

That there are no reasonably available, sequentially preferable sites within the surrounding area which are at a lower probability of flooding and that would be suitable for the proposed development. On this basis, it is considered that the Sequential Test has been satisfied.

The development is considered to pass the Exception Test as it is providing further residential housing on a brownfield site that has existing transport links and services. The proposed development will provide positive benefits in accordance with the three pillars of sustainability. Additionally, a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared demonstrating that the residential units will be safe for their lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere. This demonstrates that elevation of the flats to first floor level and above and the incorporation of flood resilience techniques can mitigate the flood risk at the site.

The proposal is therefore considered to be in direct compliance with development plan policy set out above relating to Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Air Quality

Emerging Local Plan Policy EN15 relates to Air Quality and states:

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.*

The application is supported by a full Air Quality assessment (prepared by RPS). The assessment considers dust effects during the construction phase and the air quality impacts during the operational phase of the proposed development. The document identifies:

- Implementation of recommended mitigation measures described in the IAQM construction dust guidance should reduce the residual dust effects to a level categorised as “not significant” during the construction phase.
- The operational impact of the proposed development on existing receptors in the local area is predicted to be ‘negligible’ considering the changes in pollutant concentrations and absolute levels.

- Regarding suitability of air quality at the site for introducing new occupants, pollutant concentrations at the façades of the proposed residential receptors are predicted to be within the relevant health-based air quality objectives.

The document therefore concludes that the resulting air quality effect of the proposed development is 'not significant' overall.

The application proposals do not, in air quality terms, conflict with national or local policies, or with measures set out in RBC's Air Quality Action Plan. There are no constraints to the development in the context of air quality. It is therefore considered that the proposal follows development plan policy relating to Air Quality.

Noise

Emerging Local Plan Policy CC8 relates to safeguarding amenity and states 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 (amongst other items) noise and disturbance.

A Noise Assessment was undertaken by Waterman to assess the potential impact resultant from the Development once operational; namely from any plant that may form part of Development.

The noise assessment indicates that through incorporation of good acoustic design and selection of appropriate glazing and ventilation, together with compliance with building regulation requirements, suitable residential amenity would be provided.

Potential impacts associated with the operation of the development can be controlled to a level of negligible significance provided careful attention is paid to the building design, plant selection, installation and noise attenuation and therefore it is considered compatible with surrounding land uses and would not adversely impact on the existing residential amenity. Therefore, it can be concluded that the scheme complies with development plan policy in relation to noise.

Energy and Sustainability

Emerging Local Plan Policy CC2 relates to sustainable design and construction and states 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.

The policy outlines that to meet these requirements:

- *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; and*
- *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.*

The application is supported by a Sustainability Statement (prepared by Hoare Lea). The Reading Borough Council Revised Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document, and Draft Supplementary Planning Document, states that a Sustainability Statement should be submitted with all major developments, this statement should cover the relevant Sustainable Design Checklists (included at Appendix 1 & 2) of the sustainability statements. The report also covers the following, demonstrating the acceptability of the proposal with regards to sustainability:

- Climate Change and Adaptation;
- Water Management, including water conservation and flood risk and drainage;
- Waste Reduction;
- Material Usage;
- Transport;
- Ecology;
- Pollution;
- A BREEAM Pre-Assessment;
- Energy Efficiency of the Building; and
- Health and Wellbeing.

With regards to Energy, emerging Local Plan Policy CC3 relates to adaption to climate change and states all developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. The policy also outlines criteria which should be incorporated into new development.

The application is supported by an Energy Strategy (prepared by Hoare Lea). The report evaluates the proposed development against the energy hierarchy; Be lean, Be clean and Be green.

The commercial unit of the proposed development has been assessed as a 'shell only' assessment in lieu of the fit-out details for these areas. An initial simulation has been evaluated using standard fabric and system performance values. Initial simulations show that the commercial unit could achieve a 6% decrease in carbon emissions when compared to a Part L baseline.

Combining passive design and energy efficiency measures with ASHPs and PV, the Proposed Development demonstrates that the annual regulated carbon dioxide emissions are 95.1% less than the Part L 2013 Target Emission Rate (TER) and the Fabric Energy Efficiency (FEE) is approximately 11.47% better than the Target Fabric Energy Efficiency (TFEE).

Through the use of efficient building fabric and building services, Air Source Heat pumps and PV the Caversham Road development can meet the requirements of the emerging Reading Borough Local Plan. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with emerging policy set out above.

Daylight and Sunlight

Emerging Local Plan Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) states 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 (amongst other items) access to sunlight and daylight.

The application is supported by a daylight and sunlight assessment prepared by Calfordseaden which considers daylight and sunlight impacts for both existing and proposed buildings.

Existing Buildings

With regards to existing buildings the report states all the surrounding windows analysed will meet the BRE recommendations for Vertical Sky Component or are within a negligible distance of the recommendations.

All the rooms analysed for Daylight Distribution in the emerging scheme opposite at 80 Caversham Road either meet the BRE recommendations or are within a negligible distance of the recommendations.

Proposed Development

With regards to the proposed building on site the results show that the majority of rooms will meet the BRE recommendations for Average Daylight Factor and Daylight Distribution or will be within a negligible distance. Where the rooms are below negligible, these rooms are situated on the elevation that faces the proposed scheme at 80 Caversham Road. Calfordseaden have advised that any building proposed for this site will struggle to meet the recommendations on this elevation due to the bulk and massing of the emerging scheme at 80 Caversham Road.

Having due consideration for the nature of urban development it is encouraging to note that this scheme causes the minimum impact on existing surrounding dwellings whilst achieving results expected in an urban area within the proposed development.

In the context of the above it is considered the proposal is compliant with planning policy relating to daylight sunlight.

Waste Storage/Management

Emerging Local Plan Policy CC5 (Waste minimisation and storage) notes that developments should provide adequate, well-designed spaces to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.

A communal refuse store beneath the development is provided for the apartments, and the size and location of the residential refuse store has been designed in accordance with current borough policy as described in the Reading Borough Council Waste Management Guidelines.

The proposed location of the communal refuse store and route of the refuse collection vehicle has been given careful consideration to the servicing of the residential apartments on site. It is therefore considered to comply with development plan policy.

Summary

This section discusses all relevant development plan policies and material considerations in respect of the application proposals, providing an assessment to demonstrate that the application accords with the provisions of the development plan.

The principle of development is justified in the context of development plan policies. Additionally, there are several material considerations weighing in favour of the application proposals.

The proposal will deliver a significant improvement to this prominent, highly sustainable location, providing a new high-quality building of excellent design quality. The palette of materials, general design, layout and bulk and massing represent a strong response to the sites context.

Additionally, the benefits of providing 44 new homes in a sustainable location, on a brownfield site are significant in meeting identified need for housing within Reading.

6 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

This section considers the implication of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

CIL

The proposed development will be subject to Reading's CIL Charge. Reading's CIL Charging Schedule was agreed by Council on 27th January 2015 and was implemented from 1st April 2015. The Charging Schedule is index linked to the BCIS All-in Tender Price Index and elements relative to this proposal are set out as follows:

Table 11.1 - Community Infrastructure Levy – Charging Schedule (2015) – Adopted

Use	Charging Zone Location	Charge £/m ²
Residential/Hotels/Sheltered Housing/Private Rented Hostel Accommodation (including student accommodation)	Boroughwide	£120
A1 Retail	Central Reading	£0

The Regulation 123 list sets out the projects and types of infrastructure that will be funded in whole or in part by the CIL income. This includes:

- Transport infrastructure;
- Education;
- Leisure, sport and open space infrastructure relating to 'green links' and Public Rights of Way;
- Community facilities infrastructure;
- Public Services infrastructure;
- Flood Management Infrastructure;
- Strategic nature conservation Infrastructure.

In accordance with Regulation 40 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations the following is calculated based upon the below assumptions:

- Proposed GIAm²
- Less qualifying affordable housing GIAm²
- Less existing floorspace (in lawful use for the prescribed period pursuant to the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended) to be demolished) GIAm²

The CIL calculation is provided below, it should be noted that this is not index linked:

- RBC CIL = Proposed Residential @ 2655.5m²
- RBC CIL = Proposed Retail @ 239
- Less proposed affordable GIAm²: 0m²

- Less existing floorspace in lawful use: 1258m² GIA
- **Total CIL = £272,540.63**

Based on the adopted Reading CIL charge set out above, the CIL charge liable for the application proposals (non-indexed) amounts to **£272,540.63**.

Section 106 Contributions

Emerging Local Plan Policy CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) states:

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.

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.*

Developers are required to contribute towards the ongoing local authority costs of monitoring the implementation and payment of planning contributions.

As identified by the enclosed Energy Statement the Draft Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document for Reading Borough confirms that if achieving Zero Carbon is not possible on site, a Section 106 contribution can be provided. The rate of this S106 contribution is £1,800 per remaining tonne of carbon emissions.

The proposed development achieves a 95.1% improvement over a Part L compliant baseline emission of 40.307 TonnesCO₂/year. The remaining 4.9% (1.95 tonnesCO₂/year) could be offset via a S106 contribution approximately equal to £3,510.

Any further S106 contributions will be the subject of negotiation during the determination period.

7 CONCLUSION

This Planning Statement addresses all relevant planning considerations relative to the development proposed at 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading RG1 8JA. The Planning Statement is one of a suite of supporting documents which justify the proposed development, all of which should be read holistically.

To conclude, planning permission should be granted without delay as it would deliver the following benefits:

- Facilitate the delivery of 44 much needed homes that positively contribute to housing supply in Reading.
- Provide dedicated private amenity space in the form of balconies and winter gardens in addition to communal roof terrace space.
- Provide a range of apartment types ranging from 1 bed to family 3 bed units, appropriate for the highly accessible location.
- Provide a new commercial unit, providing active frontages and increasing the employment generating potential of the site.
- Deliver a high quality, carefully considered design solution, refined throughout the pre-application process.
- Deliver 54 cycle parking spaces in excess of planning policy requirements, promoting the sustainable location of the site.
- Deliver units with level thresholds that follow the requirements set out in Part M of the Building Regulations.

The NPPF states that where the development plan is silent or absent on a particular matter, then planning permission should be granted unless “any adverse effect of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits” of the development. There are no “significant and demonstrable adverse effects” of this development that exist in the first instance. Secondly, even if there were, then they would not outweigh the “benefits” of the proposal.

This development proposal therefore accords with the up-to-date development plan. There are also significant material considerations which weigh in favour of the grant of planning permission.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This proposal is in accordance with the development plan, and in addition, there are other material considerations which strongly support the grant of planning permission, such as its compliance with the NPPF.