

Your ref: WA/2019/126603/01-L01

Our ref: 45834/4001/CBH/RMF/RM

07 June 2019

Environment Agency,
Kings Meadow House,
Kings Meadow Road,
Reading,
Berkshire,
RG1 8DQ.

Attn: Rachel Rae – Planning Team

By email: planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk

Dear Rachel,

**RE: 51 VASTERN ROAD, READING CHANGE OF USE OF PROPERTY FROM SHOPS TO RESIDENTIAL FLATS
RESONSE TO ENVIRONMENT AGENCY LETTER DATED 28/05/2019**

We are writing in relation to the proposed works at 51 Vastern Road, Reading, where a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was submitted for the change of use of ground floor from class A1 (shops) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise of 2 studio flats. The Environment Agency (EA) objected to the application due to concerns over finished floor levels in their letter dated 28th May 2019. We hope the further clarification below will allow this objection to be removed. The EA letter states:

'We require further clarity regarding the levels for the development. The FRA states a level of 38.33mAOD, which is above the 1 in 100 AEP, plus 35% climate change allowance, flood level of 38.32mAOD (River Thames (Sandford to Mapledurham) model 2018). However, the topographical survey shows there is a lower level for the property of 38.25mAOD. In a 1 in 100, plus 35% climate change, scenario the property would flood.'

We understand the applicant has supplied further information in the email dated 21 May. However, we still require further clarification as to whether the 38.33mAOD is threshold, finished floor or ground level?

The reference EA modelled 1 in 100 annual exceedance probability (AP) plus 35% climate change allowance flood level at the site is 33.32mAOD. The applicant has confirmed that the current (and proposed) finished floor level is at 38.33mAOD. This is above the EA modelled 1 in 100 AP plus 35% climate change allowance flood level therefore should be considered acceptable.

The applicant has stated that the level of 38.25AOD is the threshold of the entrance to the upper floor flat and that it is not part of this application. However, the applicant will need to consider that flood waters may be able to access the flats via this low point causing potential flooding.

This elevation of 38.25mAOD is a door to a private staircase up to a flat above the application property, all of which is not part of the proposed development. There is a step up to the door from the adjacent pavement.

The concern raised by the EA is therefore not an issue because (i) there is no potential flow route between the flat entrance and the proposed development, and (ii) even if a flow route existed, the development is already above the reference flood level to prevent any such flood flow.

If this is a determining factor in the EA approval, there is scope for the applicant to raise the base of the adjacent staircase to match the development floor level (i.e. at 38.33m AOD) so both floor levels are above the flood level (the flat also lies in the applicant's ownership)

We hope this clarifies the situation and allows the EA to remove their objection. If you have any further concerns or queries please get in touch and we will aim to resolve these.

Yours sincerely



Rachel Moore
For and on behalf of
PETER BRETT ASSOCIATES LLP

cc. Reading Borough Council
Chris Keen