05 February 2025

Title	**PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT**
Ward	Whitley
Planning Application Reference:	PL/24/1520 (FUL)
Site Address:	300 Brook Drive, Green Park, Reading RG2 6UA
Proposed Development	External refurbishment of an existing office building (Use Class E) including alterations to the main entrance space, elevations, installation of solar photovoltaics (PV) panels and electric vehicle charging points, replacement plant equipment, external lighting, erection of a new cycle store with changing facilities, a new external pergola and associated landscaping works.
Report author	Anthony Scholes
Applicant	Green Park (Reading) No. 1 LLP C/o Boyer Planning
Deadline:	19 February 2025
Recommendations	Approve, subject to conditions.
Conditions	1. Time Limit 2. Approved Plans 3. Materials (as proposed) 4. Pre-commencement Green Roof Details (to be approved) 4. Pre-occupation Cycle Parking (details to be approved) including implementation 5. Flood Risk Measures implementation (EA requirement) 6. Pre-occupation biodiversity Enhancements (to be approved) 7. Pre-commencement landscaping large scale (details to be approved, including implementation) 8. Pre-commencement Arboricultural Method Statement (To be approved) 9. BREEAM Post-assessment confirmation (Excellent) 10. Car parking to be provided (As proposed) 11. Waste storage to be provided (as proposed) 12. EV Charging Points (as specified) 13. Pre-commencement Acoustic Assessment (to be submitted and approved by LPA) 14. Pre-commencement Land gas risk assessment and remediation (to be submitted, including approval by LPA , and implementation as recommend)
Informatives	1. Mandatory BNG requirements (Biodiversity Gain Plan to be submitted and approved by LPA)

	2. Positive and proactive 3. Pre-commencement conditions 4. Highways 5. Terms 6. Building control 7. Bats & works to roofs

1. Executive summary

1.1. The proposal is recommended for approval subject to the conditions set out above.

1.2. This application seeks permission for the external refurbishment of the existing three-storey commercial building at 300 Brook Drive, Green Park. The proposal involves a light touch in changes to the building itself, with minor architectural detailing, some additional fire escape routes, and other additional staff or service doorways installed. The installation of additional plant enclosures to the roof would also be required. All minor alterations to the building are considered minor, and not detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.

1.3. The primary area of consideration for the application relates to the surrounding grounds, predominantly the existing lawn, and ground floor plant area which is sought to be removed in favour of 'sedum' green roofed 'end of journey' facility for cyclists, including shower rooms. The surrounding lawn area would be re-designed through a comprehensive landscaping scheme which includes an earth mound amphitheatre, rain garden, orchard and wildflower planting. The proposal increases the cyclist/pedestrian permeability through the site and provides greater connection to the spinal walking/cycling route connecting Green Park Station toward Madjeski Stadium.

1.4. Overall, the development is considered a positive scheme for the improvement to the building, and grounds. The general layout, appearance, and function of the site will be therefore improved through the development.

2. Introduction and site description

2.1. The proposed development is classified as a 'major' development as development over a site with an area greater than 1ha. The application is therefore reported to Planning Committee.

2.2. The application site is part of the wider Green Park area, within the commercial and/or light industrial portion. The site contains the existing 3 storey office building, part two-storey carparking structure, a detached plant enclosure at ground floor, associated landscaping, and a landscaped area fronting Foudry brook. The site is part of a site of three buildings of a similar scale and design. To the immediate north of the site is an existing pedestrian footpath which links Green Park Station to the wider green park area, with a series of smaller connected footpaths, and through to the football stadium.

2.3. The site is located within Flood Zone 2.

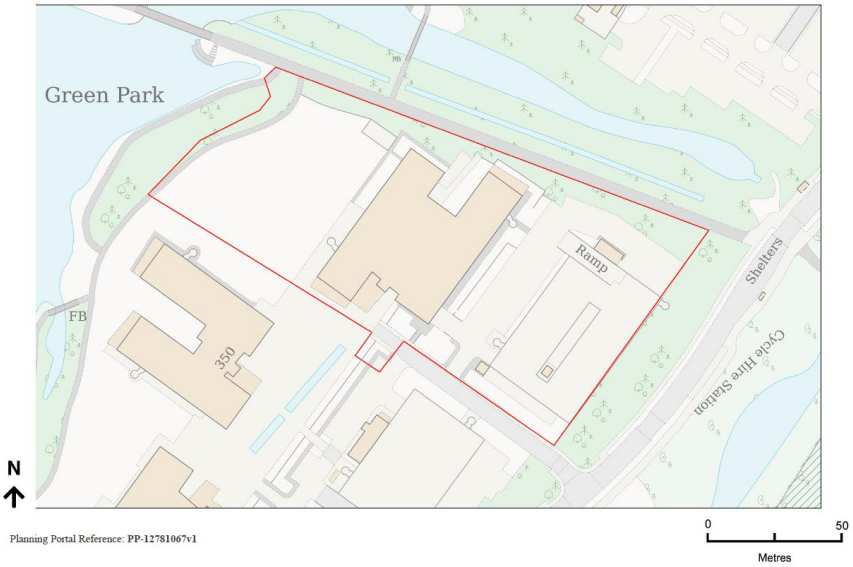

Figure 1 - Location Plan

Figure 2 - Site photos

3. The proposal

3.1. The proposal seeks permission for the external refurbishment of the office building, the removal of an existing plant equipment and its enclosure at ground level and the erection of a new end of journey facility including showers, lockers, and changing facilities. The proposed end of journey facility is sought to be timber framed, with a 'sedum' green roof.

3.2. The external alterations include the following:

- Rooftop solar installations;
- Rooftop installation of an air source heat pump system in place of existing plant;
- 6 additional openings at ground level (including 2 new fire escape exits);
- An additional outdoor covered pergola area with replacement decking, accessed from ground floor;

- New decorative metal archways to multiple openings;
- Alterations to the parking provision including loss of 1no. parking bay to facilitate an additional 1 accessible parking bay (11 total) and provision of 22 electric vehicle charging points;
- Provision of a landscaping scheme to create a natural amphitheatre, including tree planting, orchard ring, and rain garden
- Additional wayfinding lighting from the building to the end of journey facility.

3.3. Submitted Plans and documents:

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-XXXX-17003 – Refuse Enclosure

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-XXXX-61002 – Proposed GA – Feature Archway

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-ZZ-E2003 – Existing Site Plan

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-ZZ-E1000 – Existing Plan – Level 00

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-01-DR-A-ZZ-E1001 – Existing Plan – Level 01

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-02-DR-A-ZZ-E1002 – Existing Plan – Level 2

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-03-DR-A-XXXX-10204 – Proposed Roof Plan

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-03-DR-A-ZZ-E1004 – Existing Roof Plan

Drawing No. WP500-B1-R-C1 and 2-RD-M13 – Building 1 Roof Level Cores 1&2 mechanical services plant areas

Drawing No. 1004_PL_001 – Landscape General Arrangement

Drawing No. 1004_PL_002 – Rendered Master Plan

Drawing No. 1004_PL_003 – Existing tree plan

Document No. 1004-LS-003 – Landscape Strategy – Stage 2

Document No. 156210-300BD Pergola Planning Pack

Document No. 156210-A – Design and Access Statement

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-XXXX-10000 – EOJF – Proposed GA Plan

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-XXXX-10002 – EOJF – Proposed Site Plan

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-XXXX-10200 – Proposed Ground Plan

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-XXXX-17001 – Site Location Plan

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-00-DR-A-XXXX-17002 – Proposed Site Plan

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-XX-DR-A-XXXX-20001 – Proposed Building Elevations Sheet 01

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-XX-DR-A-XXXX-20002 – Proposed Building Elevations – Sheet 02

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-XX-DR-A-XXXX-20003 – EOJF – Proposed Elevations

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-XX-DR-A-ZZ-E2001 – Existing Elevations – Sheet 01

Drawing No. 156210-STL-XX-XX-DR-A-ZZ-E2002 – Existing Elevations – Sheet 02

300 Brook Drive Covering Letter

300 Brook Drive Planning Statement

Document No. 552638JB17DEC23FV03-EA – Ecological Appraisal

Document No. 552638sr18Jan24FV03-BNGA – Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Document No. 332611112 – Flood Risk Assessment

Application Form

The 'Stantec' Flood Risk mapping package

Drawing No. 102475-1 – Topographical Survey

Drawing No. 332611112-200-0001 – Modelled Flood Extents Present Day Scenario

Drawing No. 332611112-200-0002 – Modelled Flood Extents Climate Change Scenario

ASHP End of Journey Specifications

Form 1 CIL - 300 Brook Drive November 2024

Green Park Travel Plan 2023

Location Plan

Document No. PAE881Kp – ASHP Specifications

Document No. 332611112 – Transport Statement

Document No. 35 / 1.0.20231004.1111558 – Toilet AHUs AHU07 and 08 Datasheets

Solar Panel Specification sheet

Document Ref: v482 300 Brook Drive BREEAM Pre-Assessment and Sustainability Statement RevE 20241021 – BREEAM Pre-Assessment

Drawing No. W.001175-RED-XX-00-DR-M-2900 – Mechanical Services Layout (Ground)

Drawing No. W.001175-RED-XX-RD-DR-E-2002 – Electrical Services Roof PV Services

Drawing No. W.001175-RED-XX-RF-DR-M-2900 – Mechanical Services Layout (Roof)

Document No. W.001478_300 Brook Drive Energy Statement_R003 – Energy Statement

As received 14 November 2024

Archaeological statement

Green roof illustrative drawing

As received 19 December 2024

Biodiversity Net Gain Metric Spreadsheet

As received 16 January 2025

4. Planning history

PL/11/0693 (DIS) – Discharge of conditions of planning permission PL/00/00656 (REM) Conditions Discharged 17 December 2024

PL/00/00656 (REM) – Application for reserved matters of planning consent TP/85/690, to erect 3 three storey offices buildings (Use Class B1) Approved 6 December 2000

TP/85/690 (OUT) – Business uses (including light industrial) and warehousing and ancillary offices; together with associated service areas, road, aprons and car parking areas. Approved 26 July 1995

5. Consultations

Statutory:

Environment Agency

5.1. The environment agency provided a response dated 8 January 2025 which recommended one condition be attached, should an approval be recommended. This condition seeks to secure implementation of the flood risk mitigation measures as contained within the submitted flood risk assessment.

Non-Statutory

RBC Transport Officers

5.2. The site is located within Green Park Business Park and the proposals consist of external refurbishment to the existing office building.

5.3. It has its own multi-storey car park consisting of 216 spaces, including 10no. Accessible parking bays. The new proposal will provide a total of 218 bays in the new scheme including 11no. accessible parking bays. The proposals also include new end of journey facilities such as secure, covered cycle storage and showers/ lockers/drying rooms. A new footpath approach through the landscape from Foudry Brook will be provided which will provide a pedestrian connection to the building from the newly opened rail station and the business park's central facilities.

5.4. In transports terms, there are no objections to the proposals. The proposed location of the new cycle facilities is acceptable, however, detailed plans are required confirming that the cycle parking provision meets the Council's adopted standards in terms of layout and design as no details have been submitted regarding the type of stands. Further details regarding the type and manufacturer of the proposed cycle racks should be provided to ensure the frame and wheels can be secured and is easy to facilitate the use of 'D' type locks and/or conventional chains/cables. Transport are happy to cover this by condition.

RBC Ecology

5.5. The application site lies within Green Park, in Reading where it is proposed to refurbish an existing office building, including the addition of a new changing facility and changes to the landscaping including new paths, a performance area and tree planting across the site.

5.6. The Ecology report (Greengage, October 2024) has been undertaken to the appropriate standard and concludes that the site is of very limited ecological value, and it is considered unlikely that the proposals will adversely affect protected species. Nonetheless, the vegetation may be used by nesting and roosting birds and if removal of such vegetation is required, it is recommended that a condition is set to ensure that the site is not cleared during the bird nesting season.

Biodiversity Net Gain

5.7. A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has been undertaken (Greengage, October 2024) using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and based on the landscaping documents provided. The assessment results indicate that the development will result in a net gain of +0.84 Area habitat units, equivalent to 14.97% net gain as well as a net gain of 0.03 Hedgerow units (24.51%). The net gain appears to be mostly achieved through the addition of trees/orchards , wildflower areas and rain gardens.

5.8. The applicant supplied a Biodiversity Net gain spreadsheet in line with national guidance. The information informatoin provided satisfies the requirements at this stage to demonstrate the mandatory BNG can be provided. Subject to the BNG condition, the development would be acceptable.

Biodiversity Enhancements

5.9. The Ecology report recommends the inclusion of bird boxes and bee bricks within the development. These will be installed on existing trees which seems given the type of the existing building and the impracticability of installing them on the existing structure itself. However, a greater number of bird boxes should be installed, together with a small number of bat boxes. The Landscape Strategy plan shows a green roof which is welcome.

However, it is recommended that a biodiverse green roof, rather than a sedum roof, is provided.

5.10. Should the application be approved, it is recommended that a condition be set to ensure that full details of these wildlife enhancements are provided (including specification, locations and management details).

RBC Natural Environment Officer

5.11. Landscape Strategy - Stage 2 October 2024 1004-LS-003 P07 – this explains all the changes which are positive and will result in increased landscaping on site and greater biodiversity value.

5.12. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) is required for this area as thus far it has not been addressed. In this instance, a condition securing provision of an Arboricultural Method Statement prior to commencement of any development would be acceptable.

Berkshire Archaeology

5.13. Though a condition was originally suggested by Berkshire Archaeology. A response from the applicant demonstrated that sufficient archaeological investigation and mitigation has been previously undertaken over the site, and further would yield limited meaningful results. As such, Berkshire Archaeology accept that the works would not have a negative impact upon archaeological interests.

Lead Local Flood Authority

5.14. No objection to the proposal.

RBC Environmental Protection

5.15. The site is located within a past landfill buffer. To ensure safety of future occupants and works, a land gas risk assessment is required. This should be secured by condition.

5.16. The proposal includes potentially noise equipment. An acoustic assessment to ensure noise is managed to an appropriate level should be provided. This is to be secured by condition.

6. Legal context

6.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

6.2. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

6.3. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC1 - PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC2 – SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

CC3 – ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

CC5 – WASTE MINIMISATION AND STORAGE

CC7 – DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8 – SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

CC9 – SECURING INFRASTRUCTURE

EN1 – PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN2 – AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

EN11 – WATERSPACES

EN12 – BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK

EN14 – TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLANDS

EN15 – AIR QUALITY

EN16 – PULLUTION AND WATER RESOURCES

EN17 – NOISE GENERATING EQUIPMENT

EN18 – FLOODING AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

EM4 – MAINTAINING A VARIETY OF PREMISES

TR1 – ACHIEVING THE TRANSPORT STRATEGY

TR3 – ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERSP[5

TR4 – CYCLE ROUTES AND FACILITIES

TR5 – CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

Supplementary Planning Documents and other guidance

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)

Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

Employment, Skills and Training (2011)

7. Appraisal

The main considerations are:

- Design and Impact on the Character and Amenity of the Area
- Natural Environment
- Transport Matters
- Other Matters

7.1 Design and Impact on the Character and Amenity of the Area

7.1. Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) states that: *"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…"*

7.2. Policy EN11 (Waterspaces) states that: *"Reading's waterspaces will be protected and enhanced, so that they can continue to contribute to local and regional biodiversity and ecology, flood mitigation, local character, heritage and visual amenity, the provision of accessible leisure and recreational opportunities … Where development in the vicinity of watercourses is acceptable, it will:-*

- *Provide appropriate, attractive uses and buildings that enhance the relationship of buildings, spaces and routes to the watercourse, including through creating or enhancing views of the watercourse, and create a high quality public realm;*
- *Make positive contributions to the distinct character, appearance, historic significance, landscape and amenity of the watercourses;"*

7.3. As the proposal includes various elements, each will be addressed separately below.

Alterations to the main building

7.4. The proposal, would implement modest, and sympathetic alterations to the main building. The minor works around the building, to improve fire escape access, and also provide distinctive entrance for the building is considered to respect the overall Green Park design rationale, and maintain the distinctive green and metallic elements on the prominent facades. As shown in figure 3 below, the alterations to the building are minor.

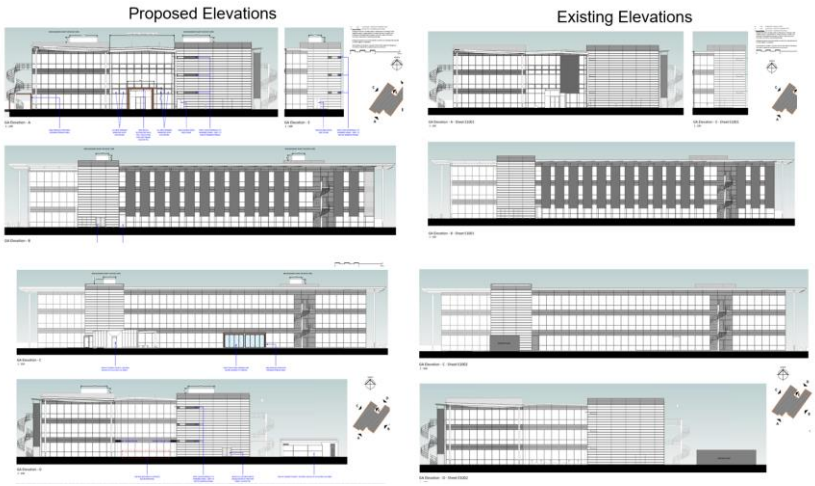

Figure 3 - Side-by-side elevations

7.5. Notably, the proposal includes two plant enclosures to the roof, and the provision of a new pergola structure to the western side of the building. Given the scale of the existing building, the rooftop additions will have little impact on the appearance of the building, being predominantly seen from long views of the building, than via the grounds of the site.

7.6. The pergola structure proposed on the western side of the building would be constructed over an area of existing decking, accessed from an existing opening. At the officer's site visit, it was noted that the decking was in a poor state of repair. The black metal pergola, with slatted roof, and light coloured deck would provide a refreshed outdoor area for use for future tenants. It would also connect to the works in the grassed area as discussed below.

New End of Journey Facility

7.7. The development includes the demolition of the existing ground level plant area located on the north-western side of the site. Following the removal of the existing structure, this is to be replaced with a 3.85m tall, timber clad 'end of journey facility'. This facility is to contain external bicycle storage within a secure gated enclosure, the provision of men's, women's, and an accessible changing/shower room, and an area of outdoor seating to the southern side. The small scale of the building, within an area already provided as built form is considered non-objectionable, and with the addition of a sedum roof, and timber cladding will be an improvement in appearance of the area.

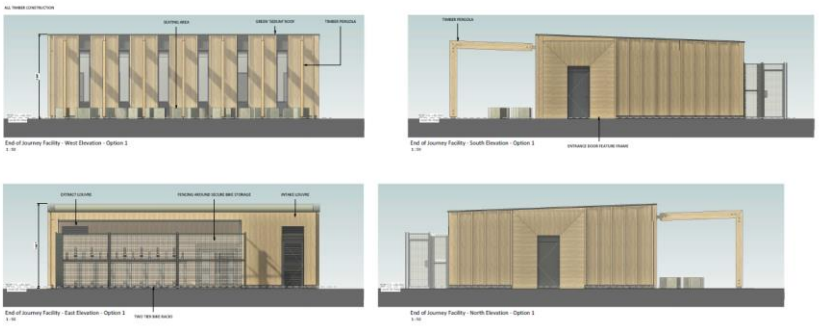

Figure 4 - Proposed End of Journey Facility

Proposed Landscaping Works

7.8. The development includes the removal of one tree toward the main entrance of the building, and the removal of a small portion of a hedge. In addition to offsetting those losses, the scheme seeks to improve the access to the proposed 'end of journey' facility from the west (Green Park Station side), and access to, and use thereof the current open grassed area through a significant landscaping scheme.

Figure 5 - Partial extract of landscaping scheme

7.9. The additional pedestrian access ways through the site would provide greater pedestrian permeability via non-car routes. The provision of a natural amphitheatre through the creation of a sloped earth mound would provide a functional and relaxing area for future users of the site. The implementation of additional planting areas, including trees, wildflowers, a rain garden area, orchard planting within the lawn area, as well as to the north of the building, within a small recess in the building. There is also proposed planting at ground level within the carparking area to establish larger trees where existing vegetation has been less successful.

Other Minor Alterations

7.10. The proposal includes the re-organisation of the carparking area to provide one additional accessible parking space, and the provision of waste storage within an existing area of the carparking structure. The installation of rooftop solar, and wayfinding lighting around the proposal are also very minor. With regard to the lighting installations, this is primarily provided between the building and the proposed 'end of journey' facility. This would

improve safety and accessibility to the cycle storage facility and be a benefit to the development.

7.11. Overall, the changes to the building, and the wider site, are considered to be positive. They both respect the existing character of the area, and implement a scheme which would seek to improve the sites appearance and functionality for future occupants. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the design requirements of the Local Plan, specifically CC7 and EN11.

7.12. Natural Environment

7.13. From 12 February 2024, all major developments were required to provide a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Before granting planning permission, LPA's must be satisfied that the BNG calculations, and the proposed net gain plan are satisfactory. The granting of permission automatically includes the pre-commencement condition for a 10% BNG that requires submission of, and approval of a biodiversity gain plan by the LPA.

7.14. Policy EN11 (Waterspaces) states: *"Reading's waterspaces will be protected and enhanced … (development will) Provide a strengthened role for watercourses as important landscape features, wildlife corridors, historic features and recreation opportunities; Wherever practical and consistent with its biodiversity role, provide good, level access to and along the waterside for all those who want to use it; Be set at least ten metres back from the watercourse wherever practicable and appropriate to protect its biodiversity significance; Improve the quality of watercourse environment through protecting and enhancing habitats and ensuring that habitat creation is balanced with access and urban uses; and Pursue opportunities for deculverting of watercourses"*

7.15. Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) states: *"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"*

7.16. Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) states: *"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."*

Trees

7.17. The application site forms part of the wider Green Park area, which among other things included significant care and detail surrounding Fourdry brook, by way of a focal point for the surrounding development, and the integration of blue and green spaces within the development. Therefore, great care to maintain and enhance tree cover within this area is considered necessary.

7.18. The proposal includes relatively minor works that would have the potential to affect existing vegetation within the site. Beyond the purposeful removal of one tree, and a small portion of hedging, the provision of services has the potential to impact existing trees (foul drainage, power, telecommunications).

7.19. A particular area of trenching, to the north of the proposed 'end of journey' facility, would be in proximity to an established row of trees. These trees currently, and would continue to screen the functional areas of the development, and therefore would be important to retain. In accordance with the RBC's natural environment officer's comments, a arboricultural method statement should be secured as a pre-commencement condition to ensure sufficient protection for existing trees near any proposed underground/trenching works.

7.20. Full details of the proposed landscaping scheme, and 'sedum' green roof are also sought to be secured as pre-commencement requirements.

Ecology

7.21. The demolition of the existing plant area, and replacement with a green 'sedum' roof structure would result in a gain in biodiversity value. The works around the grounds, including the various planting types, the rain garden which will provide amenity and ecological value . The earth mound, surrounding orchard, wildflower planting, and other installations will improve the existing lawn area, from that of limited ecological value, to a higher ecological value area. The BNG spreadsheet outlines the implementation schedule will achieve a 14.8% increase in habitat units on site.

Commented [VS1]: See comment in consultation section above… do we need the metric? Or are we happy that they are well above 10%BNG without it? Do we need to explain that this is subject to mandatory 10% BNG and that the LPA needs to be satisfied that the proposal is capable of complying with mandatory requirements?

7.22. In addition to this, RBC's ecologist has requested a condition be attached to include further wildlife enhancements on the building, including 6 bird and 2 bat boxes. In addition to the BNG requirements, the development will secure additional enhancements to the benefit of wildlife.

7.23. Therefore, the development is considered to comply with the requirements of policies EN11, EN12, and EN14 with regard to waterspaces, trees, and ecological values.

7.24. Transport Matters

7.25. Policy TR1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 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."*

7.26. Policy TR5 states: *"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."*

7.27. Green Park is already home to a number of improvements to, or provision of various transport options for those who live and work within the area. With a new train station (circa 2023), provision of a circular bus route connection Green Park Station to the Town Centre, and a high quality network of cycle routes (including wayfinding).

7.28. The development would provide additional convenience facilities for those who may choose to cycle to work, possibly also split by a train journey. The shower, changing, and storage facilities would be a great benefit to a future tenant and their staff, and would be in line with a number of broad principles of the Reading Transport Strategy 2040 and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2020).

7.29. The proposed development would include minor tweaks to the car parking, with loss of 1 general parking space for 1 accessible parking space. This is considered immaterial given the scale of parking across the site, and the wider area. The provision of 22 electric vehicle charging points is also considered a positive step in line with broad decarbonisation goals.

7.30. As such, the proposed development is considered to comply with policy TR1 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan subject to the condition as recommended by RBC transport officers.

7.31. Other Matters

Sustainability

7.32. Policy CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 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".*

7.33. Though the development does not include the internal refurbishment of the building, the applicant has submitted a BREEAM pre-assessment report which states that 'Excellent'

standards will be met, including a margin above the threshold of excellent. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy CC2.

Amenity

7.34. The proposal includes additional Air Source Heat Pumps installed on the roof of the building. These are potentially noisy installations. Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) and EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) require development to not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties. Though it is not anticipated to be a major concern given the distance to residential uses, the reporting should be provided to ensure no impacts.

Flooding

7.35. No objections were received by the Lead Local Flood Authority, and subject to implementation in line with the Flood Risk Assessment (as per the EA condition recommended), the proposal would not have a detrimental impact in terms of flood risk.

7.36. The Environment Agency was also a statutory consultee for the application. A response was received on 8 January 2025 confirming no objection to the works, subject to implementation in accordance with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment.

Land Gas

Whilst the building is largely existing, the groundworks have the potential to introduce new risks associated with the mapped landfill buffer area, and these need to be assessed and where necessary, mitigated. A condition is recommended to secure investigations, and where necessary a mitigation strategy.

Employment, Skills, and Training

7.37. Policy CC9 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."*

7.38. In accordance with the Employment, Skills, and Training Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) all 'major' development within Reading would be expected to contribute toward local employment and skills. However, the scale of the proposed development is not considered of a scale that would require such a contribution, as it would not include the construction of 1,000m^2 of Gross Floor Area, which is the metric for calculating contributions in the SPD.

8. Equality implications

8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application

9. Conclusion & planning balance

9.1 As with all applications considered by the Local Planning Authority, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material

considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

9.2 The proposed development is required to be considered in the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. It is considered that the proposal is would provide external improvements to the subject site to the benefit of future users, and the wider area. The development would also improve the biodiversity and ecological interest within the area and contribute positively the appearance of the waterspace of Foudry Brook.

9.3 As such, this application is recommended for approval subject to conditions and informatives as noted above.

Case Officer: Anthony Scholes

Plans & Appendices (delete appendices if none)

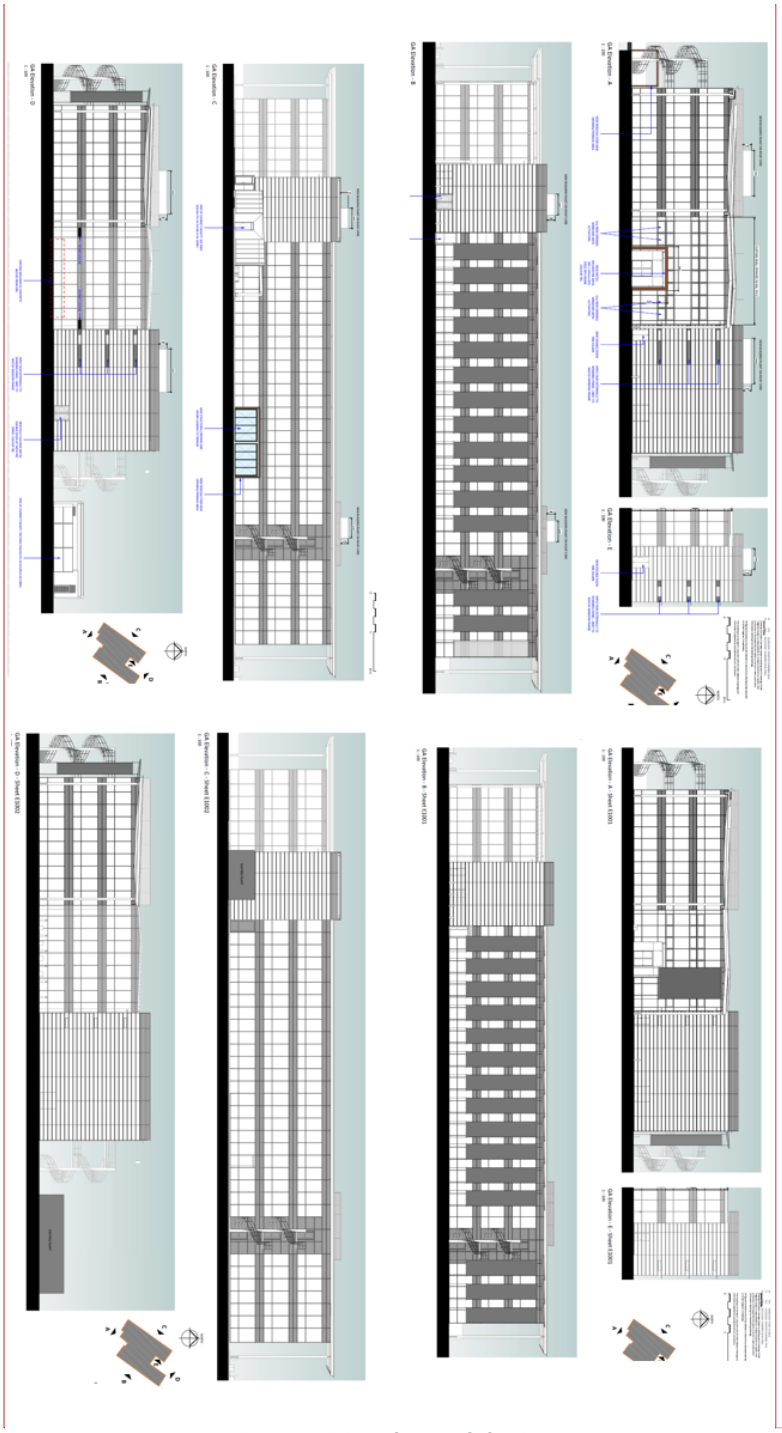

Figure 6 – Existing and Proposed Elevations

Commented [VS2]: This is quite hard to read… are there any particular extracts that would benefit from being enlarged??

Figure 7 - Site Landscaping and layout plan

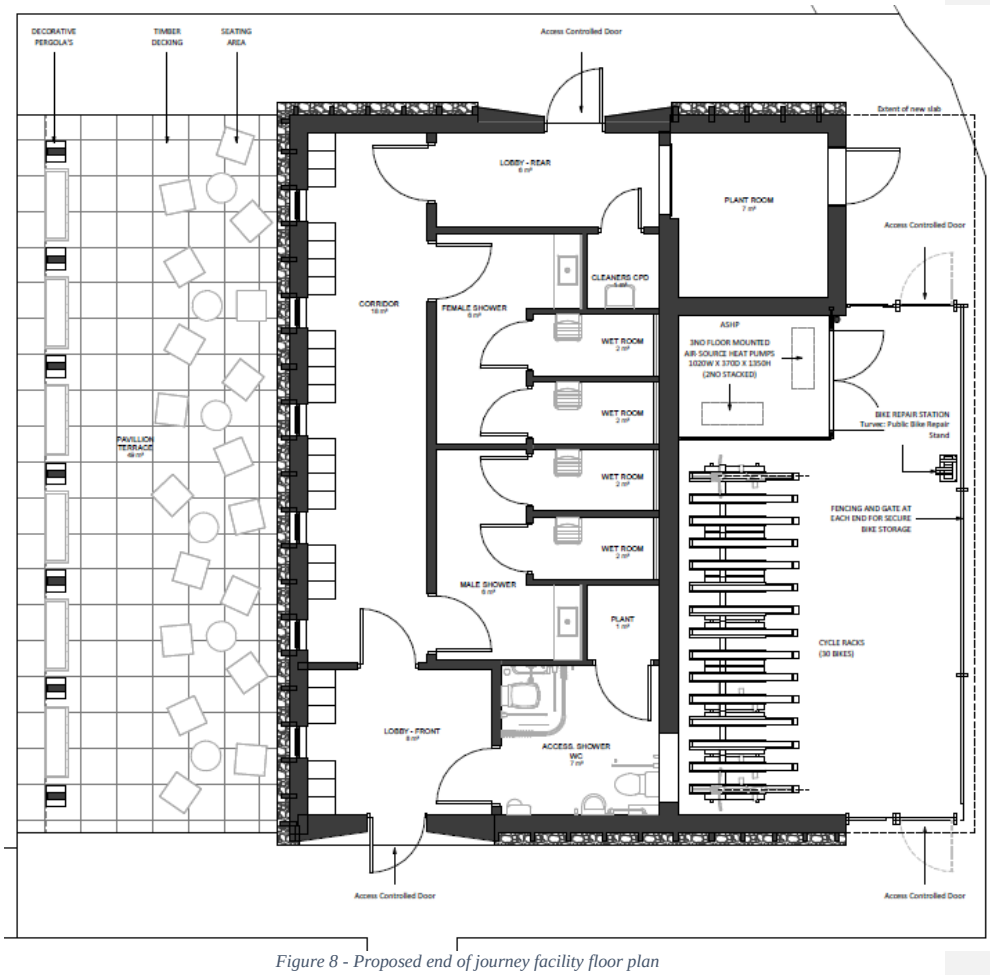

Figure 8 - Proposed end of journey facility floor plan

Figure 9 - Proposed Pergola attached to building

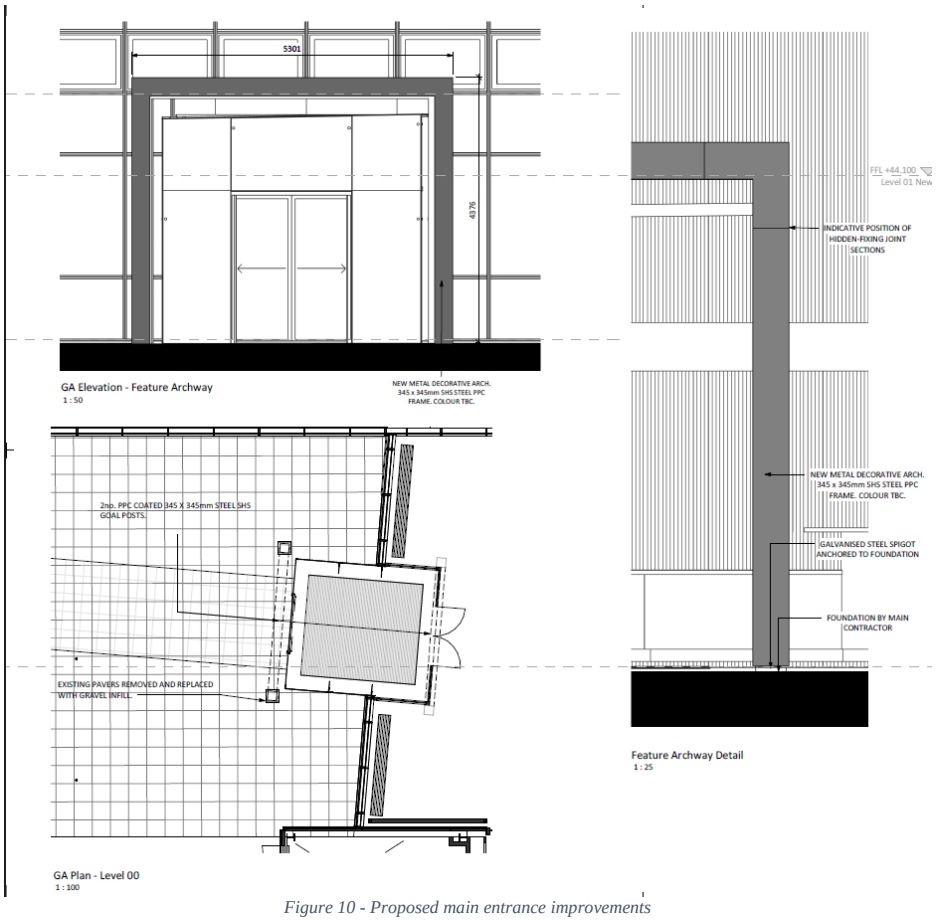

Figure 10 - Proposed main entrance improvements

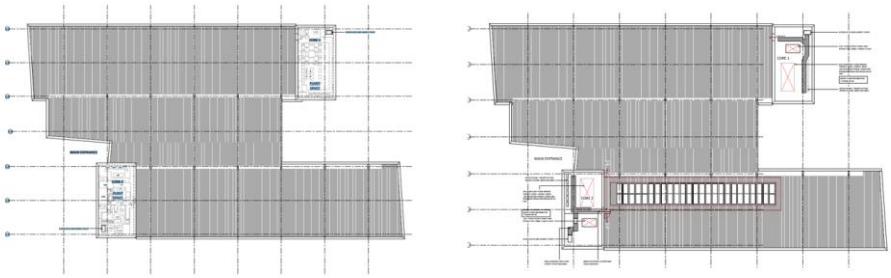

Figure 11 - Existing and proposed roof plan

Figure 12 - Additional site photos

Figure 13 - Additional Site Photos