

Reading Borough Council
Development Control
PO Box 17
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 7TD

Our ref: WA/2025/132042/01-L01
Your ref: PL/25/0202
Date: 02 April 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

Change Of Use Of Part Of Ground, First, Second, Third, Fourth And Fifth Floors From Class E (Offices) To C3 (Dwelling Houses) To Comprise 84x1 Bed And 8x2 Bed Flats. Prior Notification Under Class Ma, Part 3 Of Schedule 2 Of The Town And Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

Abbey Gardens, 4-6 Abbey Street, Reading, RG1 3BA

Thank you for consulting us on this application on 20 February 2025. Thank you for allowing us an extension of time in which to provide this response.

We have reviewed the documents in line with our planning remit including:

- Flood Risk Assessment - Abbey Gardens, 5292/2025, January 2025.

This site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 according to the Flood Map for Planning. This is defined as areas having a medium and high probability of flooding respectively in accordance with Table 1 'Flood Risk' of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). A designated main river is within the site.

Environment Agency position

The proposed development will only meet the National Planning Policy Framework's requirements in relation to flood risk if the following **planning condition** is included.

Condition

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment (ref FRA- Abbey Gardens, 5292/2025) and the following mitigation measures it details:

On 25 March 2025, we published updated Flood Zones alongside other datasets for use in development. Planners and flood risk professionals – find out more at [Development planning \(including Flood Map for Planning\)](#). Guidance for developers is available through the [Town and Country Planning Association](#) [New national flood and coastal erosion risk information - Town and Country Planning Association](#)

- Finished floor levels shall be set no lower than 38.05 metres above Ordnance Datum (AOD), in accordance with paragraph 4.11 in the FRA.
- There shall be no raising of existing ground levels on the site, in accordance with the FRA.

These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason

To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants. To prevent obstruction to the flow and storage of flood water, which would lead to an increase in flood risk elsewhere, in line with paragraph 181 of the NPPF.

Environmental permit - advice to applicant

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit to be obtained for any activities which will take place:

- on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culverted main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
- involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- in the floodplain of a main river if the activity could affect flood flow or storage and potential impacts are not controlled by a planning permission

For further guidance please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits> or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506. The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

Advice to Applicant - Other Consents

As you are aware we also have a regulatory role in issuing legally required consents, permits or licences for various activities. We have not assessed whether consent will be required under our regulatory role and therefore this letter does not indicate that permission will be given by the Environment Agency as a regulatory body.

The applicant should contact 03708 506 506 or consult our website to establish if consent will be required for the works they are proposing. Please see www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-need-an-environmental-permit.

Final comments

Thank you again for consulting us. Our comments are based on the best available data and the information as presented to us.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number below. Please quote our reference number in any future correspondence.

Yours faithfully

Sarah Warriss-Simmons
Planning Advisor

Direct dial 0203 025 9855

Direct e-mail Planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk