

Memo

To: Marcelina Rejwerska

From: Cathy Holwill (RBC Ecology Consultations)

CC:

Date: 9 July 2025

Re: Planning application ref: PL/25/0896

Address: Land to South Of 104 Berkeley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6HY

Description: Application for the discharge of conditions 4: (Brel Report, Full SAP Calculation, and SAP New Build Report.), 8 (Habitat Enhancement Scheme.), 9: (Japanese Knotweed Eradication Strategy.), 13: (Construction Method Statement.) of PL/24/0415.

The application is for the discharge of conditions 4: (Brel Report, Full SAP Calculation, and SAP New Build Report.), 8 (Habitat Enhancement Scheme.), 9: (Japanese Knotweed Eradication Strategy.), 13: (Construction Method Statement.) of PL/24/0415 [*Erection of a detached dwelling with parking and amenity space*]

Condition 8 reads:

No development shall commence on site (including demolition or preparatory works) until details of a habitat enhancement scheme are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme is to include a programme for implementation and ongoing maintenance. The habitat enhancement scheme shall thereafter be implemented and adhered to in accordance with agreed programme.

REASON: Details are required prior to commencement as insufficient information was submitted with the application and in order to avoid harm to habitats and species whilst securing biodiversity enhancement in the long term. This accords with Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024), Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

The applicant has submitted an Ecological Enhancement Plan (Cherryfield Ecology, June 2025). This provides details of a range of species to be used in the hedgerow – however this does not accord with the landscaping plans where the edgerow (sic) is shown as entirely *Ligustrum ovalifolium*. Similarly, the extensive list of plants suggested in the document under “Vegetation in Proposed Amenity Areas” do not appear to be on the approved landscaping plans and there is no reference in the document itself to where these may be located. Could the applicant clarify where and whether these plants will be used. (It is noted also that the enhancement plan does not reference the proposed new trees and how they will be managed which seems to be an omission)

Furthermore, bat and bird boxes are shown as a mix of integrated and non integrated types. Whilst the numbers of these features is appropriate, these will need to all be integrated into the

fabric of the building as non integrated boxes often fall off and do not provide long term sustainable habitats for roosting bats and birds.

The plan also shows two hedgehog holes which appear to be located in a new hedge on the northern side of the boundary. However it appears there is an existing brick wall behind the proposed hedge and the applicant should confirm that they have permission to put a hedgehog hole through this wall. We would also like to see a hedgehog hole put in the dividing fence directly to the north of the new building.

Condition 8 should not be discharged until an updated document addressing the above points is submitted.

Condition 9 reads:

. No development hereby permitted shall commence until a Japanese Knotweed eradication strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the council. The strategy shall include details of and timescales for knotweed eradication, and, if the knotweed has not been eradicated at the time of commencement of works, details of the measures to be put in place to ensure that works do not cause its spread. The eradication strategy shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless the local planning authority gives written approval for any variations.

REASON: Japanese knotweed is an invasive weed that can have a significant adverse effect on biodiversity – this condition will ensure that it is controlled and not spread, in accordance with Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

The applicant has provided a single page document entitled “Japanese Knotweed Eradication Strategy”. This is not sufficient to discharge the condition. The document is scant on details and is unclear who has prepared the document and whether the strategy has been informed by a suitably qualified Japanese Knotweed (JW) specialist.

To discharge the condition, we would expect as a minimum the following information:

- (a) **a site survey by a JK specialist**, with a plan showing the extent, severity and location of the knotweed on the site. The name and qualifications of the person & company responsible for preparing the strategy will also need to be provided.
- (b) **proposed treatment method and timescales and follow up measures**. This should include details of eradication of the JW as well as justification for the chosen method along with confirmation of compliance with relevant legislation. Full details of monitoring along with confirmation of any guarantees and or post treatment details are required
- (c) **measures to prevent spread during construction** (if JW eradication is not complete before works begin) This should include details of containment and all biosecurity measures to avoid spread for example soil management, machine/wheel cleaning etc. This is vital as tiny fragments of JK rhizomes or stems can regenerate and without proper management, all construction activities can cause the plant to spread across the site and to neighbouring land

Condition 9 cannot be discharged until an acceptable document is provided that addresses the points above

Other conditions:

Conditions 4: (Brel Report, Full SAP Calculation, and SAP New Build Report.) is not ecology related and there would be no objections to this condition being discharged.

Condition 13: (Construction Method Statement.) will likely need to be updated to reflect any changes arising from an updated Japanese Knotweed Eradication Strategy – particularly those

items related to site access, wheel washing , exclusion and biosecurity zones etc. These items may need to be incorporated into the Construction Method Statement to stop the further spread of knotweed during construction.