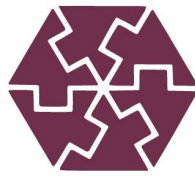


Planning, Reading Borough Council
 Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
 Website: www.reading.gov.uk
 Tel: 0118 9373787



Reading

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Demolition of Buildings
 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B

Publication of applications on planning authority websites

Please note that the information provided on this application form and in supporting documents may be published on the Authority's website. If you require any further clarification, please contact the Authority's planning department.

Site Location

Disclaimer: We can only make recommendations based on the answers given in the questions.

If you cannot provide a postcode, the description of site location must be completed. Please provide the most accurate site description you can, to help locate the site - for example "field to the North of the Post Office".

Number	33
Suffix	
Property Name	
Address Line 1	Copenhagen Close
Address Line 2	
Address Line 3	Reading
Town/city	Reading
Postcode	RG2 8UH

Description of site location must be completed if postcode is not known:

Easting (x)	472143	Northing (y)	169049
Description			

Applicant Details

Name/Company

Title

First name

Surname

Company Name

Address

Address line 1

Address line 2

Address line 3

Town/City

County

Country

Postcode

Are you an agent acting on behalf of the applicant?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Contact Details

Primary number

Secondary number

Fax number

Email address

Agent Details

Name/Company

Title

First name

Surname

Company Name

Address

Address line 1

Address line 2

Address line 3

Town/City

County

Country

Postcode

Contact Details

Primary number

***** REDACTED *****

Secondary number

Fax number

Email address

***** REDACTED *****

Proposed Demolition Works

Please describe the building(s) to be demolished

The Whitley Wood Community Centre is currently a vacant building exhibiting significant signs of disrepair. A comprehensive structural survey has confirmed that the building has surpassed its intended life, and key elements have deteriorated to the point of potential collapse. Due to the risks associated with the building's poor structural integrity, the existing building is no longer considered fit for purpose as a community centre. As a result, operations have been moved to Swallowfield Drive Estate, which is only 450m to the south of the Site, making the building redundant.

The Proposed Development is to demolish the existing Whitley Wood Community Centre building in its entirety. The proposal also includes the removal of a cypress tree on the Site's eastern portion. The Whitely Wood Community Centre was originally built as a temporary structure in the 1960s and has since been subject to a side extension (1970s) and front extension (2011). The Whitley Wood Community Centre is a lightweight building with a steel frame and shallow-pitched tin roof. The original building contains an open-plan hall space/ function room with associated service facilities in separate rooms located on the southern end of the building.

Please refer to the cover letter and Demolition Specification Document for further detail.

Please state the reasons why demolition needs to take place

The building is currently disused and no longer actively supports community use, with operations having been fully accommodated at Swallowfield Drive Estate just south of the Site. Therefore, there is no longer a need to retain the facility to deliver community benefit as it has been made redundant. In its current condition, the structure presents a risk to public health and safety, posing more of a liability than an asset. Accordingly, the demolition of the building is not viewed as the loss of a significant community asset, but rather a necessary and proactive step to address health and safety risks associated with the building's deteriorated state and create an opportunity to facilitate future enhancements to the site in the long term.

Notably, the building was originally granted permission as a temporary structure (ref: PL/92/0894) and was thus not intended for permanent use. A comprehensive structural inspection of the buildings' existing form and materials was undertaken in 2021. The subsequent Structural Report (2022), which is submitted alongside this letter, confirmed that the building has surpassed its intended life span. It was determined that key elements of the structure, such as the precast concrete superstructure and the south elevation wall, have deteriorated to the point of potential collapse. Therefore, the building is no longer considered safe or fit for purpose.

An asbestos survey conducted in July 2025 is also included within this submission. This survey identified asbestos in several areas of the building. These areas included spray coating in the hall, on metal beams in the office ceiling and in the corridor ceiling. The survey recommended that all areas where asbestos is present should be treated or removed immediately by a licensed asbestos contractor.

As such, refurbishment or repair of the existing structure is not considered technically feasible or economically viable, given the severity of the structural issues and the temporary nature of the existing structure. Due to the building's designed temporality, structural instability, and presence of asbestos, the proposed demolition is therefore considered to be both necessary and appropriate. The building no longer serves its intended community function and poses a growing risk to health and safety. Its removal will not only eliminate these risks but also create an opportunity for a more beneficial use to emerge in its place.

Given that the proposal complies with the criteria outlined in B.1, we maintain that the demolition of the existing structure would constitute Permitted Development and therefore would automatically benefit from a grant of planning permission.

Please refer to the cover letter for further details.

Please describe the proposed method of demolition

The structural demolition proposed will remove the superstructure in its entirety and break-up and remove internal ground floor slabs. However, all existing foundations will remain as per the structural report. No adjacent buildings will be affected by the demolition.

Please refer to the demolition management plan for further information.

How and where would spoil/rubble be disposed of?

All materials, including non-structural materials, will be disposed of off-site.
Please refer to the Site Waste and Resource Management Plan submitted alongside this application for further detail.

Please provide details of the proposed restoration of the site

Please see the demolition management plan for further details.

When do you expect the works to commence (date must be post application submission)?

31/10/2025

When do you expect the works to be completed (date must be post application submission)?

30/11/2025

Are there any public Rights of Way within the site or immediately adjoining the site?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Is redevelopment or rebuilding proposed at a later date?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Does the proposal involve the felling or pruning of any tree(s)?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

If Yes, please show details on a plan and provide the reference number of the plan(s):

The Proposed Development includes the removal of a cypress tree (ref: T1) located in the eastern part of the Site to facilitate the proposed demolition works. The location of this tree is illustrated on the Tree Constraints Plan, which has been submitted alongside this application. An Arboricultural Survey has also been conducted on the Site. The Arboricultural Survey noted that the tree is in poor condition and subject to decline, supporting its removal. The survey consequently categorised the tree as 'U,' indicating that it is of a low quality and is unsuitable for retention. Category U trees are also known to suppress adjacent trees that are of better quality. Its removal will therefore enhance the overall arboricultural value of the Site. Its removal is thus deemed appropriate and necessary to facilitate the demolition of the existing building.

Site Visit

Can the site be seen from a public road, public footpath, bridleway or other public land?

- ☒ Yes
☐ No

If the planning authority needs to make an appointment to carry out a site visit, whom should they contact?

- ☒ The agent
☐ The applicant
☐ Other person

Pre-application Advice

Has assistance or prior advice been sought from the local authority about this application?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Declaration

I/We hereby apply for Prior Approval: Demolition of building as described in the questions answered, details provided, and the accompanying plans/drawings and additional information.

I/We confirm that, to the best of my/our knowledge, any facts stated are true and accurate and any opinions given are the genuine opinions of the person(s) giving them.

I/We also accept that, in accordance with the Planning Portal's terms and conditions:

- Once submitted, this information will be made available to the Local Planning Authority and, once validated by them, be published as part of a public register and on the authority's website;
- Our system will automatically generate and send you emails in regard to the submission of this application.

☒ I / We agree to the outlined declaration

Signed

Sophie Heritage

Date

25/09/2025