

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

Our ref: WA/2025/132605/01-L02
Your ref: PL/25/1348
Date: 27 October 2025

Dear Reading Borough Council

SITE ALTERATIONS INCLUDING NEW HARDSTANDING AND FOOTPATHS AND THEIR ASSOCIATED LIGHTING, NEW BOLLARDS, PLANTERS, NEW AND REPLACEMENT CCTV AND NEW ANPR, WITH ASSOCIATED ELECTRICAL CABINET; NEW SMOKING SHELTER, BIKE SHELTER AND ASSOCIATED CHARGING AND A NEW BUS DROP/PICK UP POINT WITH WAITING SHELTER AND PEDESTRIAN BARRIERS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

250 BROOK DRIVE, READING, RG2 6UA

Thank you for consulting us on the above application. We have reviewed the submitted plans and the submitted Flood Risk Assessment reference ENV20926 Rev 03, June 2025, in order to provide you with this response.

The majority of the development site lies within Flood Zone 2 with a small section in the west in both Flood Zone 3a and Flood Zone 3b. This is land defined by the flood risk and coastal change planning practice guidance as having a medium and high probability of flooding respectively.

The majority of the proposed development is within Flood Zone 2 and will therefore have a negligible flood risk impact. The proposed footpath on the west side of the building is within Flood Zone 3b and we therefore consider it necessary to request that land levels in this location are retained as existing to prevent the loss of any flood storage.

Environment Agency position

The proposed development will only meet the NPPF'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 ENV20926 Rev 03, June 2025) and the following mitigation measures it details:

There shall be no raising of existing land levels along the proposed footpaths as indicated in paragraph 8.10 of 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(s)

To prevent flooding elsewhere by ensuring that no flood storage is lost in accordance with paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Flood warning and emergency response - advice to LPA

Our involvement with this development during an emergency will be limited to delivering flood warnings to occupants/users covered by our flood warning network. We therefore do not normally comment on or approve the adequacy of flood emergency response procedures accompanying development proposals, as we do not carry out this type of role /responsibility during a flood.

[Planning practice guidance](#) (PPG) states that, in determining whether a development is safe, the ability of residents and users to safely access and exit a building during a [design flood](#) and to evacuate before an extreme flood needs to be considered. One of the key considerations to ensure that any new development is safe is whether adequate flood warnings would be available to people using the development.

In all circumstances where warning and emergency response is fundamental to managing flood risk, we advise LPAs to formally consider the emergency planning and rescue implications of new development in making their decisions. As such, we recommend you refer to '[Flood risk emergency plans for new development](#)' and undertake appropriate consultation with your emergency planners and the emergency services to determine whether the proposals are safe in accordance with paragraph 181 (inc. footnote 63) of the NPPF and the guiding principles of the PPG.

We have considered the findings of the flood risk assessment in relation to the likely duration, depths, velocities and flood hazard rating against the design flood for the proposal. We agree that this indicates that there is a very low hazard rating for the majority of the site with the exception of the proposed footpath on the west side of the building which will be:

A danger to some people (e.g. the elderly and infirm) and danger to most people (e.g. there will be danger of loss of life for the general public).

This does not mean we consider that the access is safe, or the proposal is acceptable in this regard. We remind you to consult with your emergency planners and the emergency services to confirm the adequacy of the evacuations.

Environmental permit – Flood risk activities - advice to applicant

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any of the following activities:

- erecting any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, such as a culvert, outfall, weir, dam, pipe crossing, erosion protection, scaffolding or bridge
- altering, repairing or maintaining any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, where the work could affect the flow of water in the river or affect any drainage work
- building or altering any permanent or temporary structure designed to contain or divert flood waters from a main river
- dredging, raising or removing any material from a main river, including when you are intending to improve flow in the river or use the materials removed
- diverting or impounding the flow of water or changing the level of water in a main river
- quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- any activity within 8 metres of the bank of a main river, or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river
- any activity within 8 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on a main river, or 16 metres on a tidal river
- any activity within 16 metres of a sea defence structure
- activities carried out on the floodplain of a main river, more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure (or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river), if you do not have planning permission (you do not need permission to build agricultural hay stacks, straw stacks or manure clamps in these places)

For further guidance please visit [Flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits) or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk.

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.

Closing comments

As you are aware, the discharge and enforcement of planning conditions rests with your authority. You must therefore be satisfied that the proposed condition meets the requirements of the 6 tests in paragraph 57 of the NPPF.

Please notify us immediately if you are unable to apply our suggested condition, to allow further consideration and advice.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact the advisor identified below.

Please re-consult us if further relevant information is submitted. We will aim to provide comments within 21 days of re-consultation.

Yours sincerely

Miss Sarah Green
Sustainable Places - Planning Advisor

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