

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

SITE ADDRESS: Warren Creek, The Warren, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7TQ

APPLICATION NUMBER: PL/24/1614

PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and the erection of a 4-bed detached dwelling (amended description).

DETERMINATION DATE: Originally 18/02/2025, but an extension of time has been agreed with the applicant until 12/11/2025

CASE OFFICER: Jonathan Markwell

1. Site Description and Surrounding Area

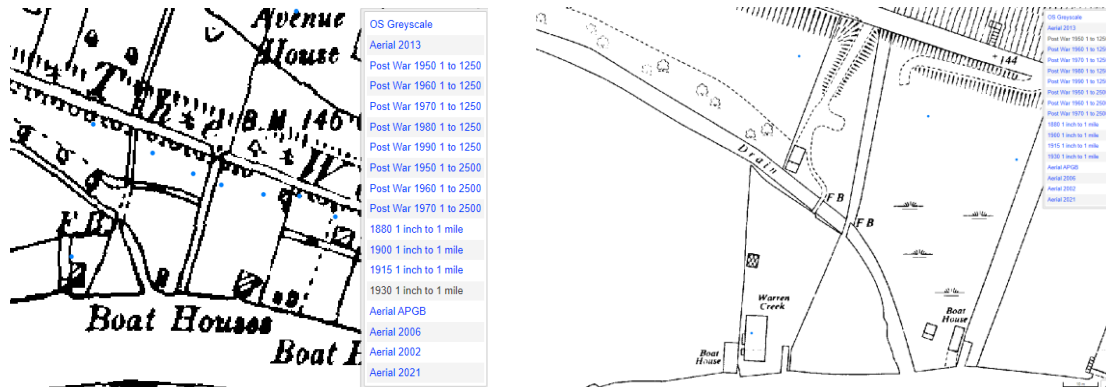
- 1.1 The application site is located on the south side of The Warren and includes an existing dwelling house close to the riverbank of the River Thames, at the southern end of the site. Unusually, there is also a creek running through the middle part of the site, which filters into the Thames further to the east. The site is roughly rectangular in shape, close to 100m in length (north to south) and varying from just in excess of 10m (at the northern boundary) to around 30m (in the mid-point of the site) in width. It is located towards the western end of The Warren (as shown in orange on the map extracted from the RBC Local Plan below – with the blue line to the west representing the Borough boundary).



Above: Location Plan by applicant & The Warren context; Below: Site Photo (14/11/24).



- 1.2 As well as the dwelling house, there is also a garage and two ancillary structures within the plot. Although the dwelling does not appear to have any planning history relating to its creation/use as a dwelling, it has been established that a structure of the same shape of the main building is shown on the 1930 historical map, adjacent to an annotation referencing “Boat Houses”, while the 1950 basemap explicitly specifies Warren Creek, with a separate boat house to the west. Council Tax records also specify that a residential banding exists at the site. In addition, an officer site visit took place on 23/11/2023, whereby it was established that in practice the unit is in residential use. Therefore, the local planning authority has no evidence itself, nor any from others, to contradict or otherwise make the applicant’s version of events (as stated within the submission) that this is a residential property less than probable, there is no good reason to resist the existing main structure being considered as a residential dwelling. Accordingly, it is considered reasonable for the proposals to be considered on the basis of the existing structure being an existing dwellinghouse (rather than a leisure plot for example), with this reflected in the description of development. This same approach has been taken on similar previous applications at the site in 2024 (see relevant history section below).



Extracts of historic maps from 1930 (left) and 1950 (right)

- 1.3 The application site contrasts from its neighbours and the overriding pattern of development in this part of The Warren, where properties are predominantly set well back from the riverbank. The site is within an identified major landscape feature area (Policy EN13 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019), specifically the Thames Valley area, and an area of identified biodiversity interest (Policy EN12). The site is also within Flood Zone 3 (Policy EN18), with the aforementioned unusual feature of a creek leading into the River Thames running through the site. Moreover, separate correspondence with the Environment Agency during the course of application PL/23/1270 (see relevant history below) confirmed that the site is specifically within flood zone 3b (functional floodplain).
- 1.4 The site is subject to TPO 97/07 which includes 3 trees on the site (one Ash, One Oak and one Ash-leaved Maple). There is also a Woodland TPO (96/07) next door to the east at Creek House, that being on the land adjacent to the river. These are shown on the map below:

2. Proposal

- 2.1 Full planning permission is firstly sought for the demolition of the existing dwelling and the existing outbuildings at the site. It is also proposed to erect a 4-bedroom detached single dwellinghouse further to the north (in comparison with the existing dwelling) within the plot. Permission is also sought for the existing slipway on the riverbank to be replaced with a new wet docking area, which covers part of the footprint of the existing dwelling. A cycle store is proposed to the north of the existing creek. The proposed plans also show one externally located air source heat pump to the north-west of the footprint of the proposed dwelling, adjacent to a proposed bin storage area. The proposed plans also indicate a variety of hard and soft landscaping works (including altered access), with no changes specified to the ground levels in the area of the footprint of the proposed dwelling, which is intended to be built on a series of brick plinths and slatted stairs. The proposed site plan is shown below, as are the elevations associated with the proposed house:



Extract of the proposed site plan submitted at the outset of the application (left) and the latest version (right), as received on 19/06/25. The main changes include omitting an originally proposed garage and the provision of a cycle store, reference to the permitted development extension being shown (it was not at the outset of the application), the fixed floor level changing from 39.43 to 39.5 and provision of a new wet dock to replace the existing slipway on the riverbank.



Proposed elevations for the main dwelling

2.2 During the course of the application the applicant has submitted a series of revised and updated plans and documents to seek to address various matters raised in the assessment of the proposals. This includes (but is not limited to):

- the omission of an originally proposed garage and the provision of a cycle store to the north of the creek;
- reference on the site plan to a permitted development extension being shown (it was not at the outset of the application – see relevant history section below for details of that separate proposal);
- the fixed floor level of the ground floor of the dwelling changing from 39.43 AOD to 39.5 AOD;
- provision of a new wet dock area on part of the footprint of the existing dwelling, to replace the existing slipway on the riverbank which is proposed to be infilled;
- further biodiversity net gain based information;
- The submission of revised flood risk assessments.

2.3 Plans and documents considered

List of plans (only those submitted at the time and subsequent to the registration of the application are referenced)

- 3863/50 Rev B - Existing Areas
- ~~3863/51 Rev F - Proposed Areas~~ (Superseded 11/03/2025)
- ~~3863/235 Rev B - Permeability Plan~~ (Superseded 11/03/2025)
- 3863/241 Rev B – Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- 3863/242 Rev B – Proposed First Floor Plan
- ~~3863/244 Rev B - Proposed Elevations~~ (Superseded 09/06/2025)
- ~~3863/245 Rev B - Proposed Elevations~~ (Superseded 09/06/2025)

- ~~3863/246 Rev B – Walls above extg grnd supporting raised ground floor slab (Superseded 11/03/2025)~~
- 3863/252 Rev A – Proposed Air Source Heat Pump Details
As received 04/12/2024
- 3863/101 Rev A – Existing Dwelling
- 3863/102 – Existing Outbuildings
- ~~3863/229 Rev C – Sections – Existing and Proposed (Superseded 11/03/2025)~~
- ~~3863/234 Rev B – Profile Comparison Drawing (Superseded 20/03/2025)~~
- ~~3863/240 Rev E – Existing Location Plan and Proposed Block Plan (Superseded 11/03/2025)~~
- ~~3863/247 Rev E – Proposed Biodiversity Site Plan (Superseded 29/01/2025)~~
- ~~3863/248 Rev B – Proposed Garage (confirmed by the agent as no longer being relevant on 20/03/2025)~~
- ~~3863/251 – CIL Calculations (Superseded 20/03/2025)~~
As received 18/12/2024
- 3863/243 Rev C – Proposed Roof Plan
As received 24/12/2024
- ~~3863/247 Rev F – Proposed Biodiversity Site Plan (Superseded 11/03/2025)~~
As received 29/01/2025
- ~~3863/235 Rev C – Permeability Plan (Superseded 09/06/2025)~~
- ~~3863/240 Rev G – Existing Location Plan and Proposed Block Plan (Superseded 09/06/2025)~~
- ~~3863/246 Rev D – Walls above extg grnd supporting raised ground floor slab (Superseded 09/06/2025)~~
- ~~3863/247 Rev H – Proposed Biodiversity Site Plan (Superseded 09/06/2025)~~
- 3863/260 – Proposed Cycle Store
- ~~3863/51 Rev H – Proposed Areas (Superseded 09/06/2025)~~
- ~~3863/229 Rev D – Sections – Existing and Proposed (Superseded 09/06/2025)~~
As received 11/03/2025
- ~~3863/234 Rev D – Profile Comparison Drawing (Superseded 19/06/2025)~~
- 3863/251 Rev A – CIL Calculations
As received 20/03/2025
- 3863/51 Rev J – Proposed Areas
- 3863/235 Rev D – Permeability Plan
- ~~3863/240 Rev H – Existing Location Plan and Proposed Block Plan (Superseded 19/06/2025)~~
- 3863/246 Rev E – Walls above extg grnd supporting raised ground floor slab
- 3863/247 Rev J – Proposed Biodiversity Site Plan
- 3863/229 Rev E – Sections – Existing and Proposed
- ~~3863/244 Rev B – Proposed Elevations (Superseded 19/06/2025)~~
- ~~3863/245 Rev B – Proposed Elevations (Superseded 19/06/2025)~~
As received 09/06/2025
- ~~3863/244 Rev C – Proposed Elevations (Superseded 06/08/2025)~~
- ~~3863/245 Rev C – Proposed Elevations (Superseded 06/08/2025)~~

- 3863/240 Rev J – Existing Location Plan and Proposed Block Plan
- 3863/234 Rev E – Profile Comparison Drawing
As received 19/06/2025
- 3863/244 Rev D – Proposed Elevations
- 3863/245 Rev D – Proposed Elevations
As received on 06/08/2025

List of other documents (only those submitted at the time and subsequent to the registration of the application are referenced) and relevant correspondence

- Application form
- CIL form
- Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief Ref 3863 – Archaeology WSI Rev A, dated October 2024
- Building Regulations England Part L (BLER) Compliance Report by Chitra Deshpande dated 18/11/2024
- Energy Statement By STL Architecture Ltd, dated October 2024
- BS:5837 Arboricultural Report – Arboricultural Survey, Impact Assessment & Method Statement by Duckworths Arboriculture Ltd Ref AIA/AMS 06560 / 2024 Version 0.1 dated 14/11/2024
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment Issue 2 by Arbtech Consulting Ltd, dated 16/08/2023
- ~~Flood Risk Assessment and SuDS Report by Nimbus Ref C3429 R1 REV B dated November 2024 (Superseded 11/03/2025)~~
- Full SAP Calculation Printout by Elmhurst Energy, dated 18/11/2024
- MCS Planning Standard for Air Source Heat Pumps Issue 1.3 dated 19/06/2019
- Letter from Woolf Bond Planning, Ref TR/9030 dated 22/11/2024
- Sequential Test by Nimbus Ref C3007-R3-REV-C dated November 2024
- Sustainability Statement 2024-11 Warren Creek Ref 3863
- BS:5837 Tree Protection Plan Ref WARREN CREEK TPP 06560 / 2024
- Updated (2024) Nocturnal Bat Survey Report for Warren Creek, The Warren, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 7TQ by NKM Associates Ref 36323-02 NKM Assoc, dated 25/05/2024
As received 04/12/2024
- Addendum to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PEAandPRA - Warren Creek RG4 7TQ - 9.8.23.pdf), Ref Addendum 001
- ~~Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool__Warren Creek, The Warren. Caversham 2 (excel spreadsheet) (Superseded 29/01/2025)~~
- Existing and Proposed River Viewpoints (10 pages)
- Responses for Additional Information, 2024-12-18
As received 18/12/2024
- Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool__Warren Creek, The Warren. Caversham (excel spreadsheet)
- Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/W/23/3332515 - Bickleigh Mead, Loamy Hill Road, Tolleshunt Major, CM9 8LS
As received 29/01/2025

- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614)', dated and received 24/02/2025
- ~~Flood Risk Assessment and SuDS Report by Nimbus Ref C3429 R1 REV C dated March 2025 (Superseded 09/06/2025)~~
As received 11/03/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614)', dated and received 11/03/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614)', dated and received 20/03/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614)', dated and received 15/04/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614)', dated and received 06/05/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614)', dated and received 09/06/2025
- ~~Flood Risk Assessment and SuDS Report by Nimbus Ref C3429 R1 REV D dated June 2025~~
As received 09/06/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614)', dated and received 19/06/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614) (EA ref WA/2025/131946/04)', dated and received 29/07/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614) (EA ref WA/2025/131946/04)', dated 06/08/2025
- Appeal decision APP/Z3635/W/24/3353029 4 Sandhills Meadow, Shepperton, Surrey TW17 9HY, dated 11/06/2025
- Flood Risk Assessment 6510 for 4 Sandhills Meadow, Shepperton, TW17 9HY by Ambiental Environmental Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment and SuDS Report by Nimbus Ref C3429-R1-REV-F dated July 2025
- As all received on 06/08/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614) (EA ref WA/2025/131946/04)', dated 02/09/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614) (EA ref WA/2025/131946/04)', dated 29/09/2025
- Email from Shaun Tanner Architecture & Planning 'RE: Warren Creek, Reading (PL/24/1614) (EA ref WA/2025/131946/04)', dated 06/11/2025

2.4 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – A CIL form has been submitted with the application, together with plans seeking to illustrate the existing and proposed floor spaces at the site. These will aid the future calculation of the CIL liability, which is a separate matter ascertained if/when permission has been granted. Depending on the occupation of the existing dwelling at the time of any permission, it may be the case that the existing floorspace is deducted from the liability. In addition, the completed CIL form also indicates

that the applicant wishes to claim self-build exemption for a whole new home. This will be able to be clarified at a later date, with a complete 'CIL Form 7: Self Build Exemption Claim - Part 1' also being required to be submitted and granted prior to commencement.

3. Relevant Planning History

Application site

3.1 240705/CLP - Single storey ground floor extension on east elevation, dormer roof extensions on eastern and western roofslopes and porch extension on north elevation. Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Development to a dwelling refused 30/07/2024, as it was found that the proposal would not be lawful in the context of Classes A, B and D Part 1, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

3.2 PL/23/1270 - Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and the erection of a 4-bed detached dwelling with garage. Full Planning Permission refused 13/09/2024.

Reasons for refusal:

1. *The proposed development has failed to provide a suitable Sequential Test Assessment to justify that there are no reasonable, available and suitable alternative sites at a lower risk of flooding from any source, thereby failing to address flood risk, contrary to Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and paragraphs 165-168 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.*
2. *The proposed development has failed to adequately assess the flood risks posed, with the submitted Flood Risk Assessment not demonstrating compliance with the requirements for site specific flood risk assessments by failing to: use the most up to date available information to assess flood risk; demonstrate the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere; consider how people will be kept safe from the identified flood hazards; demonstrate that finished floor levels will be set above the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood level with an appropriate allowance climate change, leading to an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the occupants in a flood event, all contrary to Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and paragraphs 165 and 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.*
3. *The proposed development has failed to demonstrate that it does not result in a net loss of biodiversity, thereby failing to protect the existing biodiversity value of the site, contrary to Policies EN12 and H11 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.*

3.3 PL/24/1108 - Extensions to existing dwelling (See submitted plans), works are either class A, B, C or D as set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. Withdrawn 30/09/2024.

3.4 PL/24/1461 - Single storey ground floor extension on east elevation and dormer roof extension on eastern roofslope (amended description). Certificate of Lawfulness for Proposed Development to a dwelling granted 20/11/2024.



- 4.1.8 These include wildflower meadow areas (blue), native scrub planting (pink), native hedge planting and new trees. The plans are not consistent in terms of tree planting hence this needs to be resolved if versions of both plans are to be listed as approved.
- 4.1.9 The maximum number of trees to be planted is 5, which falls short of that initially proposed under 23/1270 and the minimum of 7 new trees requested under that application, given the importance of landscaping here. Whilst final details of landscaping can be secured via condition L2, it would be appropriate to indicate the further tree planting on revised versions of the above 2 plans if these are to be approved and landscaping (at discharge stage) based on those.
- 4.1.10 In conclusion, there are no objections to the proposal itself, subject to conditions L2 (landscape etc) & L7 (AMS) but the extent of tree planting should be resolved prior to a decision in order that versions of Proposed Areas plan and Proposed Biodiversity Site Plan can be listed as approved in order that future discharge of landscaping and biodiversity conditions can be based on those.

4.1.11 Officer note: These comments were fed into the agent, who replied as follows:

- I note there are no objections to the proposal itself, subject to a couple of corrections
- I can confirm the attenuation tank is outside the RPAs.
- I have already acknowledged the need to remove the garage and will do this once the plan is close to being approved
- The inconsistency of trees appears to be 1 small tree on the eastern border. This will be corrected once the plan is close to being approved.

4.1.12 Whilst revised versions of the two plans were later submitted (on 09/06/2025), the error identified by the Natural Environment Officer was not corrected, so the Proposed Areas plan will not be listed on the list of approved plans on the decision notice (as it shows fewer proposed trees than the Proposed Biodiversity Site Plan), with full details secured via condition as recommended.

4.2 **GS Ecology (RBC Ecology consultants)**

4.2.1 Original comments in January 2025:

4.2.2 The application site comprises a detached house (and outbuildings) within a garden on the banks of the River Thames off the Warren in Caversham. It is proposed to demolish the existing buildings and erect a new dwelling and detached garage. The new dwelling will be located approx. 30m north of the River Thames.

4.2.3 The application is similar to planning application 231270 which was refused in September 2024 for reasons that included loss of biodiversity. The revised plans include changes to the amount of hardstanding, a slightly revised house design and relocation of the proposed garage.

4.2.4 In terms of Priority Habitats and Protected Species, the ecology report provided for the previous application (Arbtech, August 2023) concludes that the proposals are unlikely to adversely affect priority habitats, provided recommendations provided within the report are implemented.

4.2.5 These recommendations include (a) best practice measures to include protection of retained hedgerows and trees and (b) minimising impacts of construction on the River Thames (a priority habitat) and watercourse running through the garden, where the plans also propose rebuilding the bridge.

4.2.6 The report concluded that further survey for bats was required. A small number of bat droppings had been found inside the loft of the main house indicating that the house supported a Soprano Pipistrelle bat roost. Three bat emergence surveys subsequently undertaken in 2023/2024 (NKM Associates, May 2024). No bats were observed emerging from the building during the emergence surveys and the report concludes that because of the droppings, the loft was most probably occupied historically and opportunistically by a solitary pipistrelle bat and there is no evidence to suggest current bat roosting.

4.2.7 However, as bats are highly mobile mammals, it is possible that bats could be present when works commence. As such, the report recommends that non-licenced

precautionary measures should be adopted during works. These measures should be included in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for biodiversity and secured via a planning condition.

- 4.2.8 The ecology report states that the habitats on site are unlikely support other protected species such as nesting birds, otters, badgers, hedgehogs etc). However, the site is likely to be traversed or used as a foraging resource by a range of protected and priority species including otter, birds, water vole, badger, as well as bats.
- 4.2.9 As such, all proposed works should be undertaken in accordance with an approved CEMP for biodiversity which details how wildlife, and the Thames and on site watercourse will be protected during construction. This should be secured via a planning condition
- 4.2.10 Moving on to consider Biodiversity Net Gain, the applicant has stated on the application form that this is a self-build and custom build development and therefore exempt from mandatory BNG. However, the development is still subject to local planning policy – namely EN12 within the Reading Local Plan which reads:” On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity”
- 4.2.11 The applicant has submitted a BNG Metric calculation that concludes that the development will lead to a very small net gain in habitat units (0.01 units equivalent to 3.75%), a large increase in hedgerow units 0.03 equivalent to 188.77%) and a gain of 0.04 watercourse units (equivalent to 7.52%). Whilst these values are acceptable in theory, there seem to be discrepancies between the proposed plans and the metric spreadsheet provided. The following points will need to be addressed and clarified:
- The existing site plan (Shaun Tanner Architecture Planning, Drawing number 3863/50 Rev B) shows the total site area to be 2226m². The baseline habitat tab in the metric shows the total site area to be) 2105m²
 - The existing site plan shows the area of hardstanding to be 167m² (buildings) and 368m² other hardstanding (total of 535m²) The value for hardstanding in the metric is shown as 611m²
 - Hedges within private gardens should not be included in the metric. Nonetheless, the baseline habitat tab shows 0.0043km of hedge currently exist with an additional 0.0097 km of hedgerow. It appears that the decimal place is in the wrong place.
 - My understanding is that there are mature trees on the site. These should be included in the baseline data. The Statutory Metric guidance is clear on this subject and reads :

Recording baseline trees within private gardens

Record all medium, large and very large individual trees within private gardens.

- 4.2.12 In summary, the applicant must ensure that all plans and measurements are consistent with the values presented in the metric spreadsheet. Until the above discrepancies are resolved, we cannot be satisfied that the proposals will lead to a net gain in biodiversity.
- 4.2.13 I have not checked the post development numbers as the baseline appears incorrect. Once the baseline is corrected, additional details will be required, including details demonstrating how the nine metres of watercourse will be enhanced

- 4.2.14 With regards to Biodiversity Enhancements, in spite of our previous comments (Planning Officer note: in the context of the previously refused application) the updated Proposed Biodiversity Site Plan still shows non-integrated bat and bird boxes. All of these will be installed on existing trees. With the exception of the single bat box required as part of the bat mitigation measures during the demolition of the existing building, all roosting features should be integrated into the new house.
- 4.2.15 We would expect at least two integrated bat features and two integrated bird features to be included. Full details of these enhancements including specifications, locations and elevations will need to be submitted and approved (the applicant may want to consider universal nest bricks for the bird roosting features - these are described here: https://www.swift-conservation.org/universal_swift_nest_brick02.pdf)
- 4.2.16 In terms of Lighting, as the site is likely to be used by foraging and commuting bats, a condition should be set to ensure that external lighting (which can adversely affect bats and other wildlife) is not installed on the site.
- 4.2.17 Summary: It appears that the Environment Agency (EA) has not yet provided comments on this application. However, it is noted that the EA objected to the previous application. If the concerns raised in the previous objection have been addressed and sufficient details are submitted to address the issues outlined above, it is likely there would be no objections to the application. This would be subject to the following conditions:
- A landscaping scheme showing a net gain in biodiversity
 - Biodiversity enhancements
 - Supervised demolition of the building, as outlined in the bat report
 - Submission and approval of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for biodiversity.
 - Lighting
- 4.2.18 Subsequent correspondence: The agent provided responses on the matters raised, which were fed into GS Ecology, who responded as follows:
- 4.2.19 The applicant appears to have addressed most of our concerns and the BNG calculation, and biodiversity enhancement proposals are now acceptable.
- 4.2.20 The only issues are the up and down lights - given the area and proximity to the Thames and local wildlife sites – these should be down lights only and the applicant will need to update these light specifications accordingly.
- 4.2.21 Once that document is updated, then the remaining requirements for conditions are
- CEMP (Biodiversity),
 - landscaping condition as per plans
 - no other external lighting
- 4.2.22 An informative relating to bird nesting should be included too.
- 4.2.23 Subsequent to these comments, the proposals were slightly amended (e.g. omission of the garage and changes to the location and size of the wet docking point off the Thames). The planning officer sought advice from GS Ecology as to whether this altered the conclusions previously raised in relation to BNG. GS Ecology advised that the water

part of the metric calculation should be updated, but the removal of the garage should not impact the BNG assessment at all.

- 4.2.24 The applicant was advised to update the BNG assessment accordingly, but responded as follows on 15/04/2025:

The continual re-engagement of multiple professionals to update documents to reflect changes aimed at addressing the Planning concerns are becoming over onerous.

The Ecology opinion is that the wet dock proposal at worst will have a zero effect and is likely to result in a minor improvement. Please condition the BNG update. The area of hard standing has been carefully reviewed. Vehicles that would have been stored internally will now be stored externally. The current plan should remain as the latest change will not adversely impact the BNG numbers which are above the minimum requirements.

- 4.2.25 Planning officer comments: It is considered that the changes to the scheme will not have a fundamental impact on the BNG calculations previously provided. Hence, within the context of the proposals being a self-build and custom build development and therefore exempt from mandatory BNG, the proposals are considered to comply with Policy EN12 and it is not necessary/reasonable to secure more details via condition in these circumstances. Further landscaping details will be secured in line with the RBC Natural Environmental comments. The lighting matters have not been resolved, so will be secured via condition, together with the CEMP (Biodiversity). The biodiversity enhancements (integrated bat features and integrated bird features) shown on biodiversity site plan are acceptable, so this will be listed as an approved document, whereby there is a requirement for the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, which negates the need for these to specifically be secured via condition in this instance.

4.3 **RBC Transport Officer**

- 4.3.1 The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically, these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities.
- 4.3.2 The application consists of the demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings and the construction of 1 x 4 bedroom dwelling with garage (Officer note: the garage was subsequently omitted during the course of the application). The development site has a "creek" running through it and an access bridge is proposed to link the house to the rest of the site. No changes to the existing access are proposed.
- 4.3.4 In accordance with the Council's current adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, 2 on-site parking spaces would be required. The submitted Block plan and garage drawing 3863/248 Rev B identify a single garage and car port. It is recommended that the internal dimensions for a single garage are 7m x 3m, and 5m x 3m for a car port, Dimensions for the proposed garage do not conform to current standards, however it is clear from the size of the development that there will be additional on-site parking available on driveway. Submitted Block and Location Plan - 3863/240 Rev E identifies a turning area which will allow for vehicles to exit the site in forward gear. Any surface

water from the parking areas/access drive should not discharge onto the Public Highway and therefore the driveway should be constructed of a permeable material, or a drainage channel should be provided at the boundary to collect the surface water. Proposed parking provision is deemed acceptable. (Officer note: it is acknowledged that the originally proposed garage was omitted during the course of the application – there is considered to be sufficient space in the driveway / turning area for vehicles to park).

- 4.3.5 The Previous application removed the proposed gates, due to differing ground levels, and it would appear that gates are not proposed as part of this application, This is acceptable. However, it is noted that if gates were to be provided these would need to be set back in to the site a minimum of 5m and would need to open into the site and revised plans would be required.
- 4.3.6 The Council's Local Plan was adopted in November 2019 and this includes a requirement at Policy TR5 for each new house to be provided with an electric charging point. Garage plan 3863 248 Rev B illustrates an EV charging point by the garage. This is therefore deemed acceptable; the installation of the charging point will need to conform with the latest building regulations. (Officer note: the garage plan was omitted during the course of the application, with the removal of the garage from the proposal. Accordingly, no EV charging point is now shown on the proposals, but is nevertheless required to comply with Policy TR5. In the circumstances it is considered that details can be secured via condition, with it anticipated that the EV charging point can be incorporated alongside the proposed cycle store, as shown on the revised site plan submitted during the application).
- 4.3.7 In accordance with the Council's current standards a minimum of 2 cycle spaces would be required. The submitted block plan illustrates storage within the garage, which is deemed acceptable. (Officer note: the updated block plan omitted the garage but has provided a standalone cycle store, which is considered appropriate).
- 4.3.8 The applicant should ensure that the refuse storage provisions comply with the Council's Waste Management Guidance which is available to view online. Given this is a replacement dwelling, it is assumed that the refuse servicing will be the same as existing. A collection point has been illustrated close to the access.
- 4.3.9 A Construction Method statement will be required for this development.
- 4.3.10 There are no Transport objections to this application, subject to the following conditions in the event of planning permission being granted:
- CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT
 - VEHICLE PARKING (Officer note: given the dedicated garage originally proposed was omitted during the application, this condition is no longer necessary, with the access and permeable driveway separately secured)
 - VEHICULAR ACCESS
 - CYCLE PARKING
 - REFUSE AND RECYCLING
 - EV CHARGING POINTS

 - Informative regarding Highways works

- 4.3.11 The applicant confirmed via email on 29/01/2025 that the transport observations were duly noted and accepted.

4.4 **RBC Environmental Protection Officer**

- 4.4.1 Some issues are raised with the MSC assessment. The scheme proposes two heat pumps; therefore, the proposal will need to do the assessment for both, not just one as at present, heat pump. The sound power level quote appears to be for one pump, with it suggested that the applicant will need to add the two sound power levels together and assess for the total noise level.
- 4.4.2 The submission appears to have assumed the subject dwelling as the assessment position. It is advised that the assessment should use the most affected neighbouring dwelling, not the subject dwelling, for the assessment. In which case, as this is stated to be 41 metres away, it is anticipated that the proposals are likely to be shown to comply, even with both heat pumps assessed. However, the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate this, so the assessment should be undertaken correctly and accurately, to enable this to be further assessed.
- 4.4.3 The agent responded, advising *"It would appear the requirement may have been over specified. We will leave the assumption of 2 heat pumps at this stage and submit final numbers at a later date, once the detailed design has been completed and final sizing has been established"*.
- 4.4.4 Officer note: No further details were submitted, so on the basis of the above, it is considered necessary for more details regarding the proposed heat pumps to be secured via condition.

4.5 **RBC Lead Local Flood Authority**

- 4.5.1 The proposed drainage design includes an overall discharge rate of 1 l/s with the proposal also reducing the areas of impermeable surfaces across the site which in itself will create a natural slower discharge rate from the site the principle is therefore agreed. However, it is noted that the attenuation tanks are not connected to any wider drainage across the site and so it is not clear how this would work within the overall drainage system.
- 4.5.2 However, these points could be dealt with by way of conditions and as such there are no objections subject to Sustainable Drainage Strategy and associated detailed design, management and maintenance plan of surface water drainage details being secured via condition.

4.6 **Environment Agency** (who are a statutory consultee on this application, given the nature of the proposals and the flood zone classification of the site)

- 4.6.1 First response (dated 12/02/2025): *Environment Agency Position: In the absence of an acceptable flood risk assessment (FRA) we object to this application and recommend that planning permission is refused.*
- 4.6.2 Reasons - The submitted FRA does not comply with the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal

Change planning practice guidance and its site-specific flood risk assessment checklist. This proposal is also contrary to policy EN18 of the RBC Local Plan. The FRA does not therefore adequately assess the flood risks posed by the development. In particular, the FRA fails to:

- take the impacts of climate change into account
- demonstrate the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere
 - o it has not been demonstrated that the loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change caused by the proposed development can be mitigated for.
 - o voids are not an appropriate means of mitigating for the loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change caused by the proposed development
- consider how people will be kept safe from the identified flood hazards
- demonstrate that finished floor levels will be set above the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood level with an appropriate allowance for climate change. Consequently, there would be an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the occupants in a flood event.
- demonstrate the development will be appropriately flood resistant and resilient for its lifetime. For example, the proposed finished floor level is not based on the appropriate climate change allowance.

4.6.3 Overcoming the EA Objection: A revised FRA should be submitted which addresses the points highlighted above. If this cannot be achieved, we are likely to maintain our objection. Specifically, the FRA will need to:

- calculate an appropriate allowance for climate change using those advised in 'Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances'
- demonstrate that any loss of floodplain storage within the 1% AEP plus an appropriate allowance for climate change can be directly compensated for to prevent an increase in flood risk elsewhere.
- demonstrate that finished floor levels are set above the 1% AEP plus climate change flood level to reduce the risk of flooding to people and property.
- demonstrate that a safe access and egress route is not required or;
- confirm the UK Flood Hazard Rating to demonstrate that any proposed access and egress route is; - safe for a Design Flood Event (1% AEP plus Climate Change Allowance) and, - that future occupants will have the ability for a safe evacuation before an extreme flood event.

4.6.4 A series of further information was then provided in relation to climate change allowances, finished floor levels and voids. Information was also provided to the LPA in relation to the sequential test, flood warning and emergency responses. Information was also provided to the applicant in terms of flood resistance and resilience, flood warnings, environmental permits and other consents.

4.6.5 Second response (dated 12/04/2025): *The FRA (Revision C) does not satisfactorily address our earlier concerns and meet the requirements for site specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change*

planning practice guidance. We therefore maintain our objection set out in our response dated 12 February 2025.

4.6.6 Reasons: The submitted FRA does not comply with the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change planning practice guidance and its site-specific flood risk assessment checklist. This proposal is also contrary to policy EN18 of the RBC Local Plan. The FRA does not therefore adequately assess the flood risks posed by the development. In particular, the FRA fails to:

- demonstrate the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere
 - o it has not been demonstrated that the loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change caused by the proposed development can be mitigated for.
 - o voids are not an appropriate means of mitigating for the loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change caused by the proposed development
- consider how people will be kept safe from the identified flood hazards
- demonstrate that finished floor levels will be set above the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood level with an appropriate allowance for climate change. Consequently, there would be an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the occupants in a flood event.
- demonstrate the development will be appropriately flood resistant and resilient for its lifetime. For example, the proposed finished floor level is not based on the appropriate climate change allowance.

4.6.7 Overcoming the EA Objection: A revised FRA should be submitted which addresses the points highlighted above. If this cannot be achieved, we are likely to maintain our objection. Specifically, the FRA will need to:

- calculate an appropriate allowance for climate change using those advised in 'Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances'
- demonstrate that any loss of floodplain storage within the 1% AEP plus an appropriate allowance for climate change can be directly compensated for to prevent an increase in flood risk elsewhere.
- demonstrate that finished floor levels are set above the 1% AEP plus climate change flood level to reduce the risk of flooding to people and property.
- demonstrate that a safe access and egress route is not required or;
- confirm the UK Flood Hazard Rating to demonstrate that any proposed access and egress route is; - safe for a Design Flood Event (1% AEP + Climate Change Allowance) and, - that future occupants will have the ability for a safe evacuation before an extreme flood event.

4.6.8 A series of further information was then provided in relation to climate change allowances, finished floor levels and voids. Information was also provided to the LPA in relation to the sequential test, flood warning and emergency responses. Information was also provided to the applicant in terms of flood warnings, environmental permits and other consents.

4.6.9 Third response (dated 12/05/2025): Environment Agency position: *The additional information provided does not satisfactorily address our previous concerns therefore we maintain our previous objection set out in our previous response (dated 8 April 2025).*

4.6.10 Reasons: The submitted FRA does not comply with the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change planning practice guidance and its site-specific flood risk assessment checklist. This proposal is also contrary to Readings adopted local policy EN18. The FRA does not therefore adequately assess the flood risks posed by the development. Specifically, the FRA fails to:

- Demonstrate the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere
 - o It has not been demonstrated that the loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change caused by the proposed development can be mitigated for.
 - o Voids are not an appropriate means of mitigating for the loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change caused by the proposed development
- Demonstrate that finished floor levels will be set above the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood level with an appropriate allowance for climate change. Consequently, there would be an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the occupants in a flood event.
- Demonstrate the development will be appropriately flood resistant and resilient for its lifetime. For example, the proposed finished floor level is not based on the appropriate climate change allowance.

4.6.11 Overcoming the EA objection: A revised FRA should be submitted which addresses the points highlighted above. If this cannot be achieved, we are likely to maintain our objection. Specifically, the FRA will need to:

- Calculate an appropriate allowance for climate change using those advised in 'Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances'
- Demonstrate that any loss of floodplain storage within the 1% AEP plus an appropriate allowance for climate change can be directly compensated for to prevent an increase in flood risk elsewhere.
- Demonstrate that finished floor levels are set above the 1% AEP plus climate change flood level to reduce the risk of flooding to people and property.

4.6.12 A series of more detailed further information was then provided in relation to climate change allowances, finished floor levels, floodplain storage, level for level floodplain compensation. Information was also provided to the LPA in relation to flood warning and emergency responses. Information was also provided to the applicant in terms of flood risk activity permits.

4.6.13 Fourth response (dated 25/06/2025) - Environment Agency Position - *The FRA (Revision D) does not satisfactorily address our earlier concerns and meet the requirements for site specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change planning practice guidance. We therefore maintain our objection to this application.*

4.6.14 The FRA does not comply with the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change planning practice guidance and its site-specific flood risk assessment checklist. This proposal is also contrary to policy EN18 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems in the Reading Borough Council Local Plan adopted in November 2019. The FRA does not therefore adequately assess the flood risks posed by the development.

4.6.15 In particular, the FRA fails to:

- demonstrate the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere
 - o it has not been demonstrated that the loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change caused by the proposed development can be mitigated for.
 - o voids are not an appropriate means of mitigating for the loss of floodplain storage within the 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) flood extent with an appropriate allowance for climate change caused by the proposed development

4.6.15 Overcoming the EA objection: A revised FRA should be submitted which addresses the points highlighted above. If this cannot be achieved, we are likely to maintain our objection. Specifically, the FRA will need to:

- demonstrate that any loss of floodplain storage within the 1% AEP plus an appropriate allowance for climate change can be directly compensated for to prevent an increase in flood risk elsewhere.
- demonstrate that a safe access and egress route is not required or;
- confirm the UK Flood Hazard Rating to demonstrate that any proposed access and egress route is; - safe for a Design Flood Event (1% AEP + Climate Change Allowance) and, - that future occupants will have the ability for a safe evacuation before an extreme flood event.

4.6.16 A series of detailed notes are then provided in terms of the to be demolished footprint and the existing outbuildings being considered floodable and therefore do not contribute to existing footprint, the permitted development being included in the calculation but has not been constructed and reference to the flood storage hierarchy. Guidance in relation to voids is also provided, concluding that if level for level compensation is unachievable then the applicant should amend the development to ensure that there will be no increase in flood risk elsewhere (for example by reducing built footprint or amount of land raising proposed). Information was also provided to the LPA in relation to flood warning and emergency responses. Information was also provided to the applicant in terms of flood risk activity permits and other consents.

4.6.17 On 23/07/2025, following a meeting between the applicant (and representatives), the EA and the LPA, the EA clarified that a sentence within part of the fourth response was included in error. This was communicated with the applicant by the LPA, with the omitted element marked up in red below:

4.6.18 Fifth response (dated 26/08/2025) – Environment Agency Position - *The Flood Risk Assessment (Revision F) does not satisfactorily address our earlier concerns and meet the requirements for site specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change planning practice guidance. We therefore maintain our objection set out in our response dated 25th June 2025* (Officer note: this was the fourth response).

4.6.19 The FRA does not comply with the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments, as set out in paragraphs 20 to 21 of the Flood Risk and Coastal Change planning practice guidance and its site-specific flood risk assessment checklist. This proposal is also contrary to policy EN18 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems in the Reading Borough Council Local Plan adopted in November 2019. The FRA does not therefore adequately assess the flood risks posed by the development.

4.6.20 In particular, the FRA fails to:

- consider how a range of flooding events (including extreme events) will affect people and property
- consider the requirement for flood emergency planning including flood warning and evacuation of people for a range of flooding events up to and including the extreme event
- take the impacts of climate change into account:
 - o Flood risk mitigation measures to address flood risk for the lifetime of the development included in the design are inadequate because they will not make the development resilient to the flood levels for 2080's Higher Central Allowance.

4.6.21 Consequently, the development proposes inadequate:

- Flood storage compensation
- Safe access and escape routes

4.6.22 Overcoming the EA objection: A revised FRA should be submitted which addresses the points highlighted above. If this cannot be achieved, we are likely to maintain our objection. Specifically, the FRA will need to demonstrate that any loss of floodplain storage within the 1% AEP plus an appropriate allowance for climate change can be directly compensated for to prevent an increase in flood risk elsewhere. The following points must be addressed:

4.6.23 Loss of floodplain storage

a) existing footprint to be demolished

We understand the total footprint to be demolished is 215.28m². This includes a number of outbuildings and a slipway. We have concluded that only the workshop/shed with an existing footprint of 13m² is not floodable. All other existing outbuildings such as garages, sheds and greenhouses are considered floodable and therefore do not contribute to existing footprint.

4.6.24 b) Permitted development built footprint

We note the total footprint to be demolished also includes the built footprint associated with the permitted development of approximately 30m², which was formally approved by Reading Borough Council on 1st November 2024. Please note the proposed extension was never constructed and does not contribute to the existing built footprint.

The proposed built footprint therefore exceeds the existing built footprint by approximately 63m². This increase in built footprint within the floodplain must be compensated for to ensure the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

4.6.25 Floodplain compensation

In conjunction with the NPPF, Paragraph 049 the PPG states: Other flood risk considerations - How to assess the suitability of development where there is a possibility it will increase flood risk elsewhere the following Flood Storage Hierarchy needs to be followed:

- Sequential Approach (Site Layout)
- On site level for level compensation
- Off-site level for level compensation (Hydraulically & hydrologically linked)

Unfortunately, the FRA does not demonstrate why the provision of flood compensation is not possible. We note, section 1.2 (Page 4) of the FRA, confirms "Whilst opportunities to offset a new build by removing earth towards the entrance would be possible, the road suffers from subsidence, and this activity has the potential to exacerbate further road subsidence in the future". The FRA does not expand on this further. This statement should be supported by more evidence, such as drawings/surveys to further support this claim.

4.6.26 Safe access and egress

The FRA has stated that access and egress to the site will be feasible during an extreme fluvial event via a mesh bridge in conjunction with the proposed Flood Action Plan. Unfortunately, the proposed height of the bridge of 38.50m AOD is below the assessed Design Flood Level of 39.20m AOD confirmed in Section 3.3 (Page 12) of the FRA. The bridge must be raised to the design level.

4.6.27 Sixth response (following the LPA advising that the application was minded to be approved and requesting any further comments / recommended planning conditions from the EA, as per previous responses from the EA):

4.6.28 Thank you for contacting us in relation to the above application. We note from your email dated 9th October 2025 that your Authority is minded to approve this application citing the wider sustainability benefits outweighing the harm.

4.6.29 While we acknowledge the proposals to construct a modern property, that is further from the river bank and designed to be resilient to the risk of flooding, we wish to formally maintain our objection to this planning application for the reasons given in our previous responses as our concerns have not been resolved.

4.6.30 Specifically, we remain concerned that:

- The use of floodable voids beneath a building should not normally be used as a way to compensate for the loss of flood storage from new buildings or an increase in the size of existing buildings. This is specified in paragraph 049 of the flood risk and coastal change planning practice guidance. Floodable voids as a compensation measure are unreliable as they can become blocked during a flood event, require the imposition of an enforceable condition to ensure the void space is not used for storage of belongings and materials which would reduce the flood storage capacity

and require a commitment from the occupier to a regular maintenance schedule (again through an enforceable planning condition) to ensure the void space is able to store flood water when needed.

- We acknowledge that there is little opportunity for level for level flood compensation on this site due to other factors and potentially no opportunity for flood compensation off-site, although off-site compensation has not been fully explored by the applicant.
- No evidence has been provided to ensure the void space is able to deliver some form of level for level compensation, so at least as much flood storage capacity is available in comparison to the existing situation. If level for level cannot be provided in the void space then it should be designed to provide a betterment in terms of flood storage volume. While the applicants FRA says some existing solid structures on site will be removed that, in combination with the voids will deliver an increase in flood storage capacity, the photographs provided clearly show that they are not watertight and some internal flooding would almost certainly occur. We normally discount these types of structures from flood storage calculations for this reason.
- Voids should be designed in line with Environment Agency guidelines which are: void openings should extend from ground level to above the design flood level and be on all sides of the building. The voids should be at least 1m wide in every 5m of wall. Submitted elevation drawings show the number of voids but the height is not identified. Based on the finished floor level identified on the plan, the soffit of the voids would be below design flood level.
- Details of the maintenance requirements have not been provided. Access into the void space for maintenance should be possible without training or risk of injury and it must be apparent that blockages can be easily identified and removed.
- Details of blockage scenarios and the likely impact elsewhere have not been provided. Details of the potential risks and consequences to the applicant and the occupants of surrounding properties should be identified. There should be no increase in flood risk elsewhere in order to meet paragraph 181 of the NPPF and the application should ensure there is no reduction in flood storage capacity, no impedance of flood flow and where possible reduce flood risk both on and off site in accordance with policy EN18 of your Authority's local plan.

4.6.31 Taking this into account, should your Authority proceed with approval despite these concerns, we strongly urge the imposition of robust mitigating conditions to reduce the flood risk impact.

4.6.32 Condition 1

The development hereby permitted must not be commenced until such time as a scheme to mitigate flood risk impact has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the LPA. The scheme shall include:

- Detailed proposals of the compensatory flood storage being provided.
- Details of the void design, including the height of the openings from ground level to above design flood level.
- Details to ensure there will be no ground level raising on site.

- Void blockage scenario analysis for multiple flood events up to and including the design flood, including a reasonable worst case scenario.

The scheme shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained, in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the LPA.

Reason

To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants and to reduce the risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere.

4.6.33 Condition 2

The void space beneath the building shall be retained as open and unobstructed at all times. No development, storage, or use of this space shall take place that would impede the free flow of flood water. This area shall not be enclosed, filled, or otherwise altered without the prior written approval of the Planning Authority.

Reason

To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants and to reduce the risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere.

4.6.34 Condition 3

Existing structures as shown on drawing ref. C3429-04 E in Flood Risk Assessment C3429-R1-REV-F, will be removed in accordance with a schedule that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, prior to any development commencing.

Reason

To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants and to reduce the risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere.

4.6.35 Condition 4

The development hereby permitted must not be commenced until details of the maintenance of the flood voids have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The voids and openings shall be maintained a) in accordance with these approved details and b) for the lifetime of the development.

Reason

To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants and to reduce the risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere.

4.6.36 Condition 5

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 or any order revoking and re-enacting that order with or without modification, no structure shall be erected within the curtilage of the property.

Reason

To prevent an increase in flood risk elsewhere.

4.6.37 Advice to Planning Authority - Flood Warning and Emergency Response - We do not normally comment on or approve the adequacy of flood emergency response procedures accompanying development proposals, as we do not carry out these roles during a flood. Our involvement with this development during an emergency will be limited to delivering flood warnings to occupants/users covered by our flood warning network.

4.6.38 The planning practice guidance (PPG) to the National Planning Policy Framework 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 local planning authorities 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 173 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 can confirm that this indicates that there will be:

- A danger to most people (e.g. there will be danger of loss of life for the general public).
- A danger for all people (e.g. there will be danger of loss of life for the general public and the emergency services).

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

4.6.40 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)

4.6.41 For further guidance please visit Flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK 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.

4.6.42 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.

4.6.43 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 conditions meet the requirements of the 6 tests in paragraph 57 of the NPPF. Please notify us immediately if you are unable to apply our suggested conditions to allow further consideration and advice. Please consult us on the details submitted to discharge these conditions and on any subsequent amendments/alterations to the details/proposal.

4.7 **Berkshire Archaeology**

4.7.1 Berkshire Archaeology advise the following:

4.7.2 There are potential archaeological implications with this proposed development as demonstrated by Berkshire Archaeology's Historic Environment Record. The site lies on the river terraces of the Thames in an area of known archaeological potential. There is evidence for palaeolithic activity in the form hand axes now kept in Reading Museum recorded as being from The Warren. On the opposite bank of the Thames is Coombe bank, recorded on the HER as a potential Early Medieval earthwork. Excavations at Mapledurham playing fields to the north have revealed evidence for Late Iron Age-Roman settlement activity. This suggests that the landscape in this area has been used intensively throughout history and that there is therefore some archaeological potential on the site.

4.7.3 Although this is not a largescale development, the plot seems never previously to have been developed and is therefore undisturbed.

4.7.4 As shown, the application site falls within an area of archaeological significance and archaeological remains may be damaged by ground disturbance for the proposed development. It is therefore recommended that the following condition is applied, should permission be granted, in order to mitigate the impacts of development. This is in accordance with Paragraph 218 of the NPPF(2025) [Officer note: it is assumed that this is actually the December 2024 NPPF) which states that local planning authorities should 'require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance

and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible’.

4.7.5 Condition:

A) No development shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved by, the local planning authority in writing. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI.

B) The Development shall take place in accordance with the WSI approved under condition (A).

The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Prehistoric Roman remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through a programme of archaeological work. This is in accordance with national and local plan policy.

4.7.6 The proposed development is of moderate scale involving the demolition of a house and the construction of a new one, alongside the construction of a new garage and landscaping. In view of the nature and scale of the development and the low likelihood of the potential archaeology, should it exist, meriting preservation in situ, an archaeological monitoring and recording exercise in the form of a Watching Brief, on a controlled strip of the area, to the required depth for the development, is likely to represent an appropriate programme of works.

4.8 **RBC Waste Services**

4.8.1 The waste collections for this new development would remain the same to what is currently in place for the existing house at Warren Creek. A single dwelling would need to have space for 1 x 140L general waste bin, 1 x 240L recycling bin and 1 x 23L food waste caddy. Residents may require more than one recycling bin or food waste bin. The bins would be collected from the pavement on The Warren. Residents would need to present their bins for collection no earlier than 7pm the night before collection and no later than 6am on the morning of. Bins would need to be returned to the private property promptly after collection. Crews would not retrieve the bins from within the boundary of the property.

4.8.2 It is expected this development may already have the bins on site but if new ones are required, the developer should get in touch with the Council at least 6-weeks in advance of completion to ensure bins can be delivered.

4.9 **Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service**

4.9.1 At this stage there is no duty placed upon the Fire Authority under the legislation to make any comment relative to the application. The proposals have, however, been cursorily examined and in as much as would affect the planning application and appear to meet the basic principles of means of escape in case of fire.

4.9.2 I note you have specifically consulted on the proposal for a meshed bridge and the safety of access and egress during a flood event. We do not comment on or approve the adequacy of flood emergency response procedures.

4.9.3 Any structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirement. These matters are administered by the local authority Building Control or approved inspectors, who you are advised to contact in this regard.

4.9.4 Please note that under Section 32 of the Berkshire Act 1986 the weight limits for RBFRS fire appliances is 16 tonnes for fire engine and 26 tonnes for three axial aerial appliances. Access and hydrants requirements must meet or exceed Buildings Regulations Approved Document B Volume 02. If access is required for a high reach appliance, a 6m road or hard standing is required. The road or hard standing should be positioned so that its nearer edge is not less than 3m from the face of the building.

4.9.5 Please be advised that any comments made by the Fire Authority in this letter must not be taken as formal approval that your plan/s conform to the requirements of current Guides or Codes of Practice for means of escape in case of fire.

4.10 **RBC Building Control & RBC Emergency Planning**

4.10.1 Both were formally consulted, but no responses have been received.

4.11 Public Consultation – A site notice was erected on 09/01/2025, expiring on 30/01/2025. Three letters in support of the proposals have been received, from immediate neighbours Waimarie and Creek House and also from Ballihoo to the east on The Warren. A summary of the matters raised in support of the proposals are:

- Flooding issues at the site and within the local area are noted (land has flooded every single year for 45 years) - hope that for the health and safety aspect of this property this proposal is granted, it will 100% fix the safety of the property.
- The proposal will raise value of the road tenfold (Planning Officer note: increased land values are not a material consideration in the determination of planning applications)
- A separate response states protecting the existing property in times of flood is perilous and dangerous. Safety to life has to be central to the decision. The owner should be actively encouraged and potentially incentivised to mitigate danger and reduce potential calls to emergency services.
- Proposal is in keeping with the rest of the road and will be safer.

- Support the proposed removal of the current house plinth (adverse impact on the flow of flood water).
- One respondent states that there is a need to rebuild this property at a more flood resilient height and in a location on the plot which allows easier access and exit of the building in flood conditions.
- Various deficiencies of the current property are noted (within the context of the flooding event in January 2024), such as access over the wooden creek bridge, proximity of the house (and entrance door) to the river, lack of places to retreat (owing to being single storey), difficulties for emergency services access. This all means that there is a need to “build back better” and it would be preferable to have a building at a more flood resilient height set back from river.

4.12 Local Groups - Caversham & District Residents' Association (CADRA) has commented as follows:

CADRA has been sent the attached photos which the LPA may find helpful in considering this application. The first is a picture earlier in the flood of January 2024 and the second one at the peak of the flood. The flooding and ecology issues are clearly complex in resolving how to make the site safe.



5 Summary of discussions with the agent/applicant during the course of the application

- 5.1 The applicant/agent has been updated throughout the lifetime of the application, including being provided with opportunities to respond to the various consultee comments received during the application. This included the facilitation of a meeting between the applicant/agent/professional advisors, the LPA and the EA on 22/07/2025 and the agent providing comments on various planning conditions recommended, including those relating to pre-commencement conditions, which is in line with section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act.

6. Equality Act 2010:

- 6.1 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7 Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

7.1 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). In this case the development plan consists of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7.2 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).

7.3 Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

7.4 National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as amended)

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Practice Guidance (2014 onwards) (PPG) (in particular with regard to flood risk and coastal change, as updated 17 September 2025)

7.5 Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

- CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3 Adaption to Climate Change
- CC5 Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC7 Design and the Public Realm
- CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
- EN1 Protection and enhancement of the historic environment
- EN2 Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN5 Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest
- EN11 Waterspaces
- EN12 Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN13 Major Landscape Features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands
- EN16 Pollution and Water Resources
- EN17 Noise Generating Equipment
- EN18 Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems

- H2 Density and Mix
 - H3 Affordable Housing
 - H5 Standards for New Housing
 - H7 Protecting the Existing Housing Stock
 - H10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space
 - H11 Development of Private Residential Gardens
 - TR1 Achieving the Transport Strategy
 - TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
 - TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
- 7.6 Supplementary Planning Documents
Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (2011)
Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
- 7.7 Other relevant guidance
- Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)
DCLG Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard (2015)
Reading Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment by PBA Ref 27560/4002 (June 2017)
Environment Agency Advice Note: Demonstrating the flood risk Sequential Test for Planning Applications Version 3.1 April 2012
Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment (February 2016) by GL Hearn
- 7.8 Local Plan Update
- 7.9 The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024. Subsequent to this consultation a submission draft was sent to the Secretary of State on 9th May 2025. At the time of writing, the examination-in-public of the partial update to the local plan is scheduled to take place in late 2025.
- 7.10 Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.
- 7.11 Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the submission draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the determination of this planning application and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

8 APPRAISAL

8.1 The main considerations are:

- Land use principles
 - o Provision of housing
 - o Development of Private Residential Gardens
 - o Flood Risk
- Affordable Housing
- Design and related matters, including:
 - o Demolition
 - o Layout, scale and massing
 - o Impact on Major Landscape Feature, the Green Network and Waterspaces
 - o Detailed design
 - o Impacts on Heritage Assets, including significant views with heritage interest
- Amenity
- Trees and landscaping
- Ecology
- Transport
- Archaeology
- Sustainable Urban Drainage
- Sustainability and energy
- Planning Balance

8.2 Each element is therefore considered below.

Land use principles

Provision of Housing

8.3 It is firstly acknowledged that the proposal seeks the demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings at the site. Policy H7 guards against the net loss in the number of residential units or gross floor area at sites. However, the proposal also seeks to construct a new single dwelling on the plot, which will be larger in floor area than the existing dwelling. Accordingly, the proposals would comply with Policy H7 in this regard. The proposals result in neither an increase nor a reduction in the number of residential units at the site, which in principle terms raises no initial land use concerns.

Development of Private Residential Gardens

8.4 Another starting point in the assessment of any scheme of this nature is Policy H11. The proposal involves new residential development that includes land within the curtilage of private residential gardens and does not comprise any of the exclusions referenced within the supporting text to the policy. In relation to the various component parts of this policy the applicant has submitted commentary in support of the proposals. The policy is referenced in **bold**, with the commentary provided by the applicant shown in *italics*. The officer assessment / comments are then stated, as underlined, below each point too:

1) The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of: - the relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area; *The existing house is located in very close proximity to the river. It's location*

differs considerably from the existing built form along The Warren which sits closer the road. The proposal seeks to relocate the dwelling further away from the river in order to reflect the prevailing character of the area. Although the proposed dwelling is now closer to neighbouring dwellings, mature trees and a distance of more than 40m will maintain the existing space around buildings in the area. The location of the existing dwelling is atypical (but not unique) along The Warren. Set within this context, the proposal represents an improvement being closer to being adjacent to the highway, where the majority of houses are located. However, the proposed siting in itself does not particularly align with the prevailing character, being set further south away from the highway than the majority of houses in the locality. This is due to the narrower nature of the plot (in comparison with others) and the topography (there being a significant fall in land levels adjacent to the highway). Ultimately, the size and nature of the proposed dwelling aligns with the prevailing character and therefore this criteria is considered to have been met on balance.

- a layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage; *As discussed above, the revised dwelling location seeks to improve the relationship between the building on this site and the existing building line. In terms of built up coverage of the plot, the existing built form proposed to be demolished has a combined built footprint of 168.6m². The proposed dwelling and garage have a combined built footprint of 190m². This is only a 12.5% increase. As such, there will only be a minor increase built up coverage of the plot. The existing pattern of an open frontage onto the river with vegetated side boundaries will remain unchanged. It is firstly noted that during the course of the application the originally proposed garage was omitted from the proposal, with the revised Proposed Areas Plan (3863/51 Rev J) specifying the building footprints total 146.6sqm (the Proposed Areas Plan submitted at the outset of the application - 3863/51 Rev F – stated 185sqm), thereby meaning that the proposals now actually represent a decrease in built footprint at the site. It is clear that in some respects (building lines and rhythm of plot frontages) that this proposal does not integrate with the predominant surrounding context, but given that the existing dwelling does not either and the context referenced in 1) above, some flexibility can be afforded in this regard. The proposed built up coverage is not dissimilar to other plots along this part of The Warren and no changes to the boundary treatment are proposed. Therefore, on balance, this criteria has been suitably demonstrated.*

- providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. This includes features such as the variety of trees, hardstanding/lawns and hedges, etc; *The existing hard standing forming the concrete parking area is to be removed and replaced with a permeable surface. The removed concrete, as described in the previous proposal will be used beyond the flood zone and root zones to improve the structural integrity of the drive. The proposed permeable surface area for parking has been reduced from 275sq m to 217sq m. A new native hedgerow is proposed to the western boundary. No trees are proposed for removal and the scheme has been carefully designed to sit sensitively around the existing trees on site. As per the observations provided at section 4.1 above, RBC Natural Environment has no objections to the proposals, subject to a series of conditions, including the proposed landscaping, being secured. The matters referenced by the applicant are specified on the plans, which will be secured via condition too.*

- compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area; *The majority of the dwellings along The Warren are set on higher land closer to the road and there is a varied building height between different properties. Despite being raised to mitigate flooding issues, the eave height of the proposed dwelling is 44.56m AOD, compared to 44.45m AOD of the neighbouring dwelling to the east. This demonstrates that the proposed dwelling will be compatible with the general building height within the surrounding area. The proposal would present a significant increase in building height at the plot, when compared with the existing*

arrangements. The existing building, at single storey and set on the riverbank, does not represent the predominant building form, which is instead considered to be two-storey dwellings. The proposals would align with that general characteristic, albeit built on stilts and including an extensive roof profile too. Assisted by the proposed section shown below, the intended height is considered to be generally compatible with those in the area and thus appropriate.



- the materials and elevational detail. These should be high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary; The elevation detail has been designed to be a high quality and modern whilst retaining some traditional feel. The below comments and image are designed to provide some clarity around the quality of build, the attention to detail and the choice of materials.

- Build method – A timber framed building with a brick outer skin tied back to the timber
- Brick - The intention is to use a brick that has probably been tumbled or hand made to give a look with softer edges.
- Roof – A natural slate roof with leaded hips.
- Windows – Slimline aluminium flush casement windows and doors.
- See below a recently approved and built Georgian style dwelling within the Caversham Heights area for reference.



- *We request that material selection is conditioned at this stage*

As specified within the detailed design section below, this has not been demonstrated in full as part of the application, but can suitably be secured via planning condition. The comments from the applicant provide a degree of comfort in this regard too.

- the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and their rhythm between buildings. *Beyond houses being family sized and set back from the river, there is little rhythm to follow. There is no additional relationship of windows, doors or architectural features between the neighbouring buildings. The proposed building has a hipped roof, a chimney and sits on stilts in order to ensure safety to life and provide the proposal with traditional architectural features. The primary windows have been placed on the south elevation to benefit from the maximum advantage of solar gain and to maximise natural light to the primary living. The garage roof has now been restyled to be a hip roof, following the style of the main house. It is firstly noted that the garage was omitted from the proposals during the course of the application. In principle, the proposals seek to provide standard windows, openings and architectural features, which generally align with the prevailing context, so no inherent issues are raised in this regard.*

2) The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking; *The dwelling has been designed to sit comfortably within its setting given the size of the existing plot. The central part of the site is the widest part of the plot and the new dwelling is shown in this area. Ample space is provided around the building and the plot benefits from a large amount of amenity space running down to the river. It is considered that although the proposed building is expansive in nature, this corresponds with the overwhelming majority of existing dwellings in the locality, as does the accompanying access, parking and amenity space, meaning the proposal is considered to comply in this regard.*

3) The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards; *The existing access serving the site is not proposed to change. As per the observations provided at section 4.3 above, RBC Transport is content in this regard.*

4) The proposal does not lead to tandem development; *The proposal is for a replacement dwelling and therefore does not lead to tandem development Subject to a condition which prevents the existing dwelling being retained (as discussed in more detail in the design / demolition section below), the proposal would not lead to tandem development.*

5) The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures; *As discussed above, the setting back of the proposed house will minimize the exposure of the dwelling house to the public area along the river. There is no requirement for additional security measures. It is considered that the proposal is appropriate in this regard.*

6) The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants; *The site is screened from neighbouring dwellings by mature vegetation. The proposed house is 42.5m away from its nearest neighbour. The single storey garage is 10.57m away from the nearest part of Creek House. Neither will cause detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent or nearby occupants. Subject to a series of conditions, as detailed within the separate amenity section below, the proposals are considered to comply in these regards.*

7) The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing. *The proposal is seeking to demolish a 2-bed property and replace it with a 4-bedroom family home. It therefore accords with the Council's emphasis on the need for more family-sized housing. It is considered that the proposal is appropriate in this regard.*

8) The development provides biodiversity net gain wherever possible, and would not have an adverse impact on biodiversity in terms of the fragmentation of blocks of gardens, which as a unit or in association with adjacent green space are deemed to make an important contribution to biodiversity and contribute to the green network; *The proposed development sits on the edge of an area of identified biodiversity interest but not within it. Accordingly, the designs allow for the provision of compliant biodiversity net gain through the use of trees, hedges, bat boxes, hedgehog domes and other habitat creation. The significant removal of concrete hard standing will also contribute to green space within the site. In conclusion, this proposal needs to achieve a minimum of no net loss of habitat, as this is a self build project. However in this instance it can be seen as there are benefits in all three areas. Total net % change : Habitat units 3.75%✓ / Hedgerow units 188.77% ✓ / Watercourse units 7.52% ✓ As per the GS Ecology observations at section 4.2 above and further commentary in the assessment below, the proposals are considered appropriate subject to conditions.*

9) The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area *There is no wider area to develop so this policy is not relevant to this proposal. This proposal is not considered to unduly compromise the ability of either neighbouring or nearby occupiers from potentially extending, altering or redeveloping their own dwellings.*

8.5 Accordingly, in all respects, the proposals are considered to comply with Policy H11.

Flood Risk

8.6 A further initial matter of core, principle consideration revolves around flood risk. As per paragraph 1.3 above, the application site is within Flood Zone 3b (the functional flood plain), as confirmed in the Environment Agency response.

Sequential Test

8.7 One of the reasons for refusal of previous application PL/23/1270 at the site was owing to a failure to provide a suitable Sequential Test Assessment to justify that there are no reasonable, available and suitable alternative sites at a lower risk of flooding from any source. In response, as part of this application, the applicant has submitted a Sequential Test document (by Nimbus Ref C3007-R3-REV-C dated November 2024). In summary, this has considered allocated sites, windfall sites and commented that there are no suitable sites on the brownfield register either. Officers have considered the information submitted by the applicant, and moreover, undertaken an officer assessment too. There are some shortcomings with the applicant's assessment (for example, it considering sites within Flood Zone 1, whereas those in Flood Zone 2 should also have been considered in light of the application site being within Flood Zone 3) and the level of justification provided by the applicant in some instances is sub-optimal.

8.8 The applicant has also submitted a supporting letter (By Woolf Bond Planning), which references and comments on an appeal decision (later provided in full – Appeal Ref: APP/X1545/W/23/3332515 - Bickleigh Mead, Loamy Hill Road, Tolleshunt Major, CM9 8LS) where in summary a replacement dwelling scheme was allowed on appeal with the Inspector considering that the actual consequences for future occupiers should be examined in addition to the application of the sequential test. The applicant's submission continues:

Paragraphs 13 and 14 of the decision proceed to note and reference that there is already a legitimate residential use on the land and that the proposal would lead to a lessening in the risk from flooding because of its superior construction compared to the existing dwelling, the raising of the floor level above existing and the ability to put in place emergency plans. In conclusion, the existing risks to residential development would be significantly reduced and this benefit outweighs the absence of a sequential test as may be required by a strict application of national and local policy:

And quotes the appeal decision as follows:

In conclusion, the Inspector proceeds to determine as follows:

20. Because of the lack of a sequential test, the proposal would not accord with the development plan. However, this conflict is outweighed by the fact that the safety of residential occupiers at the site would be greater than it is at present. Future residents would not be at risk of flooding. Material considerations therefore indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with the development plan. So, for the reasons given, the proposed replacement dwelling is acceptable and the appeal should succeed.

8.9 The supporting information now submitted by the applicant, as summarised above, is noted and acknowledged by officers. While the application is considered on its own merits, the context of the appeal decision and the sequential test information does assist in the assessment of the proposals. It is also referenced that the PPG on Flood Risk and Coastal Change recognises that a proportionate approach and a pragmatic approach should be taken, with the context that the proposal involves the demolition of one dwelling and replacement with another dwelling important in this regard.

8.10 Based on an officer's own separate assessment too, it is also important to recognise that this proposal will provide a family-sized, 4-bedroom dwelling at the site (replacing a non-family sized 2-bedroom unit as existing). Given the critical need for family sized housing in the Borough, as evidenced through both the Berkshire & South Bucks Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2016 and Local Plan 2019 (for example Policy H2 and Figure

4.6), and the Borough is not presently (or likely in the future) to meet its needs for family housing, given the proposal seeks to introduce family housing it is in overall terms considered by officers that this assists in reaching an overriding conclusion, when taking all factors and information provided into account, that the proposal is considered to have passed the sequential test.

Exception Test

8.11 Turning to comment on the Exception Test, this is engaged given the Sequential Test has been confirmed to have been passed, as referenced above.

8.12 The proposed use constitutes a 'more vulnerable' use (building used for dwelling house) as per [Annex 3 \(Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification\)](#) of the NPPF. In addition, as per Table 2 (Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone 'incompatibility' – shown below in full and [online](#) within the PPG), normally proposals within sites such as this within Flood Zone 3b (the functional floodplain) would constitute a "*development [which] should not be permitted*", therefore automatically meaning the development would not engage the Exception Test and should instead simply not be permitted on this basis.

Table 2: Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone 'incompatibility'

Flood Zones	Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification				
	Essential infrastructure	Highly vulnerable	More vulnerable	Less vulnerable	Water compatible
Zone 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 2	✓	Exception Test required	✓	✓	✓
Zone 3a †	Exception Test required †	X	Exception Test required	✓	✓
Zone 3b *	Exception Test required *	X	X	X	✓ *

Key:

✓ Exception test is not required

X Development should not be permitted

Notes to table 2:

- This table does not show the application of the [Sequential Test](#) which should be applied first to guide development to the lowest flood risk areas; nor does it reflect the need to avoid flood risk from sources other than rivers and the sea;
- The Sequential and [Exception Tests](#) do not need to be applied to those developments set out in [National Planning Policy Framework footnote 56](#). The Sequential and Exception Tests should be applied to 'major' and 'non major' development;
- Some developments may contain different elements of vulnerability and the highest vulnerability category should be used, unless the development is considered in its component parts.

"†" In Flood Zone 3a essential infrastructure should be designed and constructed to remain operational and safe in times of flood.

"*" In Flood Zone 3b (functional floodplain) essential infrastructure that has passed the Exception Test, and water-compatible uses, should be designed and constructed to:

- remain operational and safe for users in times of flood;
- result in no net loss of floodplain storage;
- not impede water flows and not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 7-079-20220825

8.13 However, consideration is given to the [Reading Borough Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (SFRA) by PBA Ref 27560/4002 (June 2017), whereby more detailed guidance in respect of Flood Zone 3b within Reading Borough is given. The relevant extract from section 10.1 is shown below, with this confirming that Flood Zone 3b is delineated into Flood Zone 3b 'Developed' (areas of previously developed land) and Flood Zone 3b 'Functional Floodplain' (areas of existing open space that are subject to flooding). Set within this context, the application site is considered to be 'previously developed land', given the existing dwelling and ancillary structures at the site, within the definition extracted from the NPPF within the SFRA. It is noted that the SFRA dates from 2017 and the NPPF has been updated on a number of occasions subsequent to that. It is confirmed that the definition of 'previously developed land' has not significantly altered in the intervening time. As such, as paragraph 10.1.7 of the SFRA notes, the 'Developed' Flood Zone 3b "are considered equivalent to Flood Zone 3a for planning purposes".

10.1.5 As the definitions in **Table 10.1** confirm, Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a are strictly defined by an assessment of probability. The definition of Flood Zone 3b is more subjective; this Zone is identified by Local Authorities, in consultation with the EA, taking account of local circumstances rather than being defined solely on rigid probability parameters.

10.1.6 The starting point for considering and identifying Flood Zone 3b is as follows:

- Land which would naturally flood with an annual probability of 1 in 20 (5%) or greater; or
- Land which is designed to flood (such as a flood attenuation scheme) in an extreme 1 in 1000 (0.1%) annual probability flood.

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SFRA\wp\Report\27560_4001_Reading SFRA_rmf_June17.docx

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Reading Borough Council
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment



10.1.7 The consideration of Flood Zone 3b should take into account the effects of defences, natural topography and other flood risk management infrastructure which may prevent regular flooding. Areas which are prevented from doing so by existing defences, infrastructure or solid buildings, will not normally be considered as Functional Floodplain. The 'starting point' for considering the extent of Flood Zone 3b based on the 1 in 20 annual probability flood extent is detailed on the modelled flood extents in **Appendix C** and areas subject to flooding in a 1 in 20 (5%) annual probability fluvial flood event have been delineated into two sub-categories:

- **Flood Zone 3b 'Developed'** – areas of 'previously developed land', which are considered equivalent to Flood Zone 3a for planning purposes, and;
- **Flood Zone 3b 'Functional Floodplain'** – areas of existing open space that are subject to flooding.

10.1.8 The NPPF defines 'previously developed land' as follows (**emphasis added**):

"Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time".

10.1.9 Final consideration of whether a site is Flood Zone 3b should be made by the Council on a site-specific basis and according to local circumstances.

8.14 Hence, whilst the site is in Flood Zone 3b, for planning purposes as per the SFRA, the site can be considered as equivalent to Flood Zone 3a. When returning to Table 2 (Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone 'incompatibility'), this shifts the proposals from 'development [which] should not be permitted' to 'Exception Test Required'. Therefore, the Exception Test is considered accordingly. As per the NPPF, the exception test requires it to be demonstrated that:

- development that has to be in a flood risk area will provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk; and
- the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.

8.15 In this regard, it is pertinent to note that the applicant's submission states the following in terms of the exception test:

Finally, the requirements of the exception test are addressed. The FRA evidences that the development will be safe for its lifetime by virtue of a finished floor levels proposed above the 1 in 100 year plus an allows for climate change event. Further, the development offers a clear sustainability benefit through an overall reduction in the risk of flooding to residential property for the reasons detailed above. It also offers an improved quality of design, biodiversity enhancement and improved green landscape. It follows that the scheme comfortably offers wider sustainability benefits to the community and both parts of the exception test are therefore passed.

8.16 It is also considered pertinent that at the time of the previous application, the following was submitted in relation to the exception test:

Considering the Exception Test, The National Planning Policy Framework December 2023 Section 170 says 2 criteria must be met...

- "sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk", in this case through better flow, a larger floodplain, easy walking and cycling distance to Caversham centre, easy walking distance to Reading station and all required infrastructure services already in place
- "development [that] will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall" in this case through build levels, increased floodplain and improved emergency exit.

From the data above, both of these can be demonstrated.

Furthermore, the main reason for this re-development at the site for a new dwelling to replace the existing dwelling, is that the clients are aware that obtaining buildings and contents insurance for their current dwelling is problematic, in fact just recently Nationwide Building Society have declared that they will stop granting mortgages for dwellings in high flood risk areas, and some building societies have stated that they will only provide mortgages for homes where home insurance is in place. Therefore, this coupled with the major concerns over the safety of the occupants of the existing dwelling, are the main reasons why the client is applying for planning permission to build this new dwelling. The new dwelling will be raised on stilts with the accommodation above the modelled flood level, including an allowance for climate change, therefore requiring no evacuation during an extreme flooding event, and providing safe access and no need for the occupants to leave their homes for long periods of time whilst flood damage is repaired.

We appreciate the stance on new developments in flood risk areas. However when an existing home does not provide flood safety for the occupants and would require complex and risky evacuation of the residents in times of flooding, it genuinely makes no sense for this permission not to be granted on the grounds of flood risk.



January 2024 where the water reached 80cms up the house (20cms higher than shown in this picture)

8.17 With this context in mid, officer's own assessment of the exception test concurs with the applicant that the exception test is passed. With regards to the wider sustainability benefits, the proposals would provide a dwelling which would be of a modern construction (unlike the existing one at the site) and set at a higher level and further away from the riverbank of the River Thames. Furthermore, a more robust emergency plan is possible than existing, with wider components of the proposals, such as the sustainability and energy efficiency credentials, improved landscaping and biodiversity enhancements being other wider sustainability benefits (as discussed elsewhere within this assessment). In respect of the development being safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall, this is discussed further in the section below. In summary, subject to a series of conditions being satisfied, this will be ensured. Consequently, the proposals are considered to have passed the exception test.

Flood Risk Assessment

- 8.18 Turning to consider the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted, the Environment Agency (EA) has been a Statutory Consultee for this application given the nature and location of the site. It is relevant to first note that the previous application at the site was partly refused owing to a failure to adequately assess the flood risks posed. As part of this application a FRA which seeks to address the previous shortcomings has been submitted, with the EA's first response in February 2025 (see section 4.6 above) raising a series of continued concerns. The applicant was provided with an opportunity to respond to the matters raised by the EA, with the EA providing further responses in April, May and June 2025 narrowing the areas of concern (see section 4.6 above for details of each response).
- 8.19 Following the fourth EA response a meeting between the EA, the LPA and the applicant / representatives of the applicant took place in July 2025. This was facilitated in order to establish whether there was a way forward on the proposals which would enable the EA to remove their objection to the proposals. Various matters were discussed, with this facilitating a further submission by the applicant in August. The EA responded later in August (5th response), continuing to raise issues with the proposals (see section 4.6 above for details). At this juncture the applicant suggested for a further meeting to take place, to enable further in-person discussions, but the EA advised that a meeting would not be beneficial at that point in time. The applicant was provided with a further opportunity to provide any final comments, at which point the LPA carefully considered all information provided.
- 8.20 The substantive concerns of the EA at this time (already detailed in full at section 4.6 above) revolved around flood storage compensation and safe access and escape routes. More specifically, disagreements regarding whether existing structures could be counted in the floodplain storage calculation (e.g. various existing structures and an extant permitted development extension to the existing house), concerns that insufficient justification for the non-provision of floodplain compensation being provided and the height of the mesh bridge used in flood events were raised.
- 8.21 The applicant's viewpoint, in an email received on 29th September, was a confirmation that nothing further would be submitted, but a number of previous matters raised were reiterated. In particular, the realities of the context should be noted that all existing structures "*act as appalling the floodplain*", that the permitted development scheme would be followed if this proposal and a subsequent appeal were to fail (Officer note: Officer's viewpoint is the permitted development scheme could be implemented, not would be implemented), that the existing void under the existing house does not allow water, whereas the proposed void would do so many times better and, ultimately, the proposal addresses very real danger to life (in the context of the existing dwelling).
- 8.22 The applicant also referenced an appeal decision (Ref APP/Z3635/W/24/3353029 4 Sandhills Meadow, Shepperton, Surrey TW17 9HY, dated 11/06/2025), whereby "*3 specific criteria (A proposal on a floodplain, a proposal to rebuild/repurpose a plot where people currently reside and a proposal where there is a quantifiable existing safety to life risk for the inhabitants that would be improved) were met, the application was considered 'not normal' under section paragraph 49 of the Planning Practice Guidance and therefore considered floodplain*" and that, going back to the floodplain storage calculation point, that "*Where it was clear the permitted development would proceed if the application was rejected and there was safety to life risk, it was included in the 'current situation' calculations*", leading the applicant to conclude that "*Regardless of policy, the proposal will deliver real world environmental and safety to life improvements*".

8.23 Having considered the consultee comments from the EA and those in support of the proposal from the applicant, it is evident that this is a finely balanced matter. Going back to first principles and considering the proposals on a very simplistic basis, it weighs in favour of the proposal that the scheme would replace living accommodation that is evidently (based on recent flood events at the site) vulnerable, with the existing accommodation presently located adjacent to the riverbank on a single level. In comparison, the accommodation proposed would be at a raised level than the existing and set further away from the River Thames. The proposal will also be of modern construction, unlike the existing accommodation, and will therefore inherently be of a design which is more resilient to the risk of flooding events. Furthermore, a more robust than existing emergency plan is provided for occupants than is currently possible. These matters all weigh in favour of the proposed development.

8.24 In terms of the specifics of the inclusion of floodable voids not normally being used as a way to compensate for the loss of flood storage (as per paragraph 049 of the PPG, with the relevant extract stating “Whilst the use of stilts and voids below buildings may be an appropriate approach to mitigating flood risk to the buildings themselves, such techniques should not normally be relied upon for compensating for any loss of floodplain storage. This is because voids do not allow water to freely flow through them, trash screens get blocked, voids get silted up, they have limited capacity, and it is difficult to stop them being used for storing belongings or other materials. Paragraph: 049 Reference ID: 7-049-20220825 Revision date: 25 08 2022), it is considered by officers that in this particular case there is sufficient circumstances (as referenced in preceding paragraphs and as presented by the applicant) to warrant the circumstances not to be normal and enable flexibility in this regard.

8.25 Officers subsequently advised the EA that that in this specific instance officers are, on balance, minded to approve the application contrary to the EA objection. This is as when considering all material considerations and applying a critical planning balance, the benefits of the proposals are considered by officers to outweigh the harmful impacts (as specifically referenced at the end of this appraisal). Given the EA’s responses advise that the local planning authority should advise the EA of the above prior to making a decision, providing an explanation and allowing the EA to make further representations and recommend conditions, this was duly undertaken.

8.26 The EA’s final response in October 2025 (detailed in full in section 4.6 above) maintained their objection to the development and providing a series of information regarding concerns about voids, whilst acknowledging the proposals would construct a modern property, that is further from the river bank and designed to be resilient to the risk of flooding. The EA’s response also recommended a series of planning conditions to reduce the flood risk impact. These conditions related to:

1. more details of mitigation measures (compensatory flood storage provision, void design details, prevention of ground level raising on site and void blockage scenario analysis)
2. compliance condition for the void to retained as open and unobstructed
3. schedule for the removal of existing structures to be submitted/approved prior to commencement
4. strategy for the maintenance of voids to be submitted/approved
5. prevention of any structure being erected within the curtilage of the property.

8.27 The applicant was asked for comment on these conditions, with conditions 1-4 being agreed, but condition 5 being questioned. Officers have duly considered the recommended

conditions by the EA and are minded to include conditions will follow the thrust of the suggested conditions. These conditions will assist in ensuring in practice that the proposal will not increase flood risk. In a number of instances, the exact wording has been tweaked (without substantially diluting the original intention by the EA) in order to ensure that the conditions pass each of the 'tests' of any planning conditions. For example, with regard to the prevention of any structure being erected within the curtilage of the property, the wording has been altered so as to not necessarily prevent any structure being erected, but instead require an application to be submitted and assessed accordingly. This is facilitated through the removal of specific parts of the permitted development regime. This strikes an appropriate balance between not placing a blanket ban on any application, but ensures that the local planning authority can duly assess and manage any such future proposal, mindful of the potential flooding impacts of any future proposal.

8.28 For the purposes of safety, the FRA also includes an emergency plan, which sets out a series of procedures in the event of when water is forecast to breach the banks, when water is anticipated to remain above the river bank but below the level of the mesh walkway provided as part of the development and, in the most extreme circumstance, when water rises above the mesh walkway. There are additionally annual requirements and procedures to follow if/when the dwelling changes ownership. This has been provided within the context of the dwelling being designed to keep occupants safe throughout any flooding event over the next 100 years, meaning the FRA anticipates that evacuation is not anticipated to be necessary. However, the measures put forward are generally welcomed in demonstrating that in the event of emergency, established processes are in place to mitigate the impacts.

8.29 It is considered necessary by officers (with this not referenced in the EA's final response) for a compliance-worded planning condition to be secured, for the measures within the emergency plan (within the flood action plan section of the FRA) to be adhered to and maintained throughout the lifetime of the development. This is to ensure that not only is the development safe for occupiers at the time of construction, but also in later years to ensure the development remains safe for future occupiers too.

8.30 Ultimately, officers are sufficiently satisfied that a combination of the information provided and the recommended conditions will ensure that the proposed development will be safe throughout its lifetime and not lead to increased flood risk elsewhere. Accordingly, taking all factors into account, it is considered that the corresponding reason for refusal of the previous application on flood risk grounds has been suitably addressed in this submission.

8.31 It is noted that whilst the EA does maintain its objection, there is no requirement for the LPA to refer the recommended decision to the Secretary of State, given this is not a major development. As per the PPG guidance, the EA will however be notified of the decision and will also be engaged at the time of the approval of details applications in relation to conditions recommended by the EA.

Affordable Housing

8.32 Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) seeks for residential development to make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading. The policy clarifies that the following types of residential development will be exempt from the requirement to provide affordable housing:

- Replacement of a single dwelling with another single dwelling

8.33 This is the type of development proposed in this instance, with a condition ensuring that the current dwelling is demolished rather than retained alongside the proposed dwelling. Accordingly, it is confirmed that the development is exempt from requiring to provide affordable housing.

Design and related matters

Demolition

8.34 The existing dwelling and the associated structures proposed to be demolished are not considered to be of any special architectural or historical value, to an extent which warrants retention on these grounds. Accordingly, on the proviso of the replacement dwelling and associated structures being suitable in design terms, there are no in-principle issues associated with the loss of the existing structures.

8.35 Linked to this, it is considered necessary, in the event that permission is granted, for conditions to secure both the demolition of the existing dwelling and the provision of soft landscaping (as shown). This is required to prevent the partial implementation of any permission (for example, the construction of the proposed dwelling, but the existing not being demolished) resulting in two dwellings being in place at the site, rather than one (as referenced in the affordable housing section above). This is required, as if the existing building were to remain, it is considered that the proposals would be contrary to a host of policies and this is not the basis on which this application has been considered.

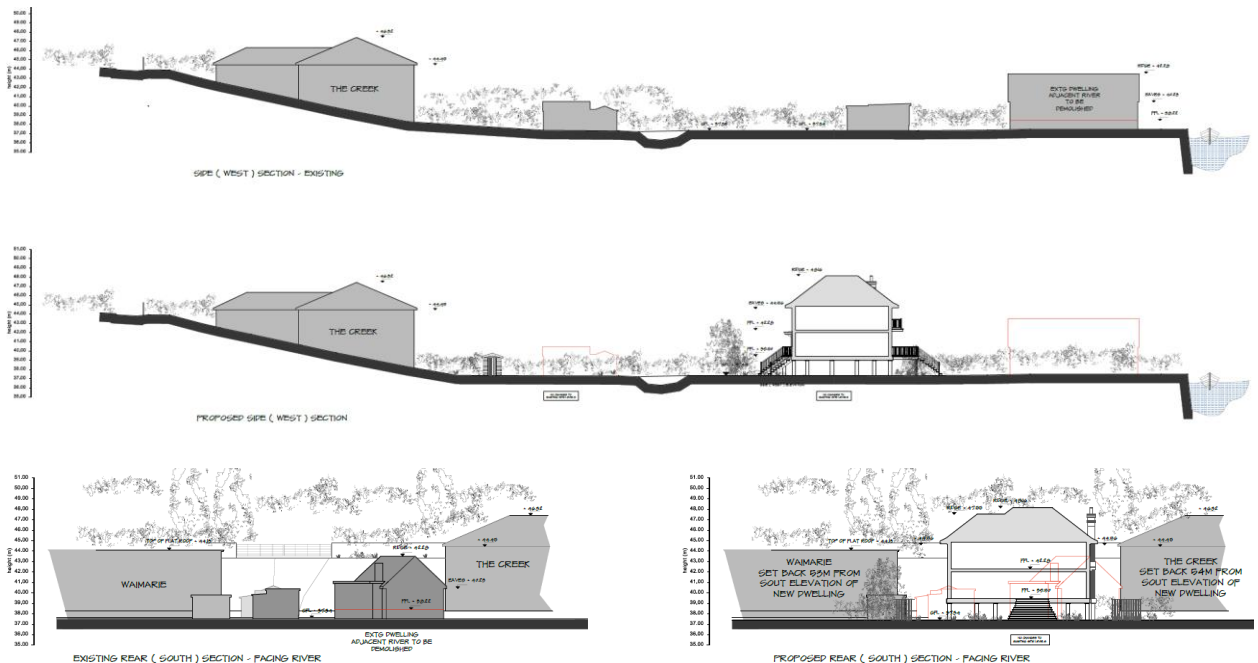
Layout, scale and massing

8.36 Considering the layout and positioning of the proposed dwelling first, as alluded to in respect of comments at paragraph 9.4 above in terms of Policy H11 1), whilst the siting of the proposed dwelling does not align with the predominant building line, in the context of the existing dwelling not doing so either, this is considered to be adequate. Given the overall size of the plot, the footprint of the proposed dwelling is considered appropriate in this locality.

8.37 Turning to scale and massing elements of the proposals, it is readily acknowledged that the proposals represent a significant increase in comparison with the existing site conditions. However, in light of the recent prevailing context along this part of The Warren, the scale and massing is not considered out of keeping with the surrounding area. With the stilts at effective ground floor level, the property consequently amounts to a three-storey dwelling with accommodation on two floors. No accommodation is shown in the roofspace, which is significant in its form, thereby suggesting that there may be future pressures to include roof dormers at this point. It is considered that the scale and massing as proposed, mindful of the Major Landscape Feature, the Green Network and Waterspace context referenced separately below, is the maximum suitable at the site.

8.38 Given this context and the conclusion on this matter reached, planning conditions are on this occasion considered to be reasonable and necessary to secure the removal of various permitted development rights. More specifically, this will be in terms of Class A (enlargement, improvement or other alteration), Class B (enlargement of a dwellinghouse consisting of an addition or alteration to its roof), Class D (erection or construction of a porch

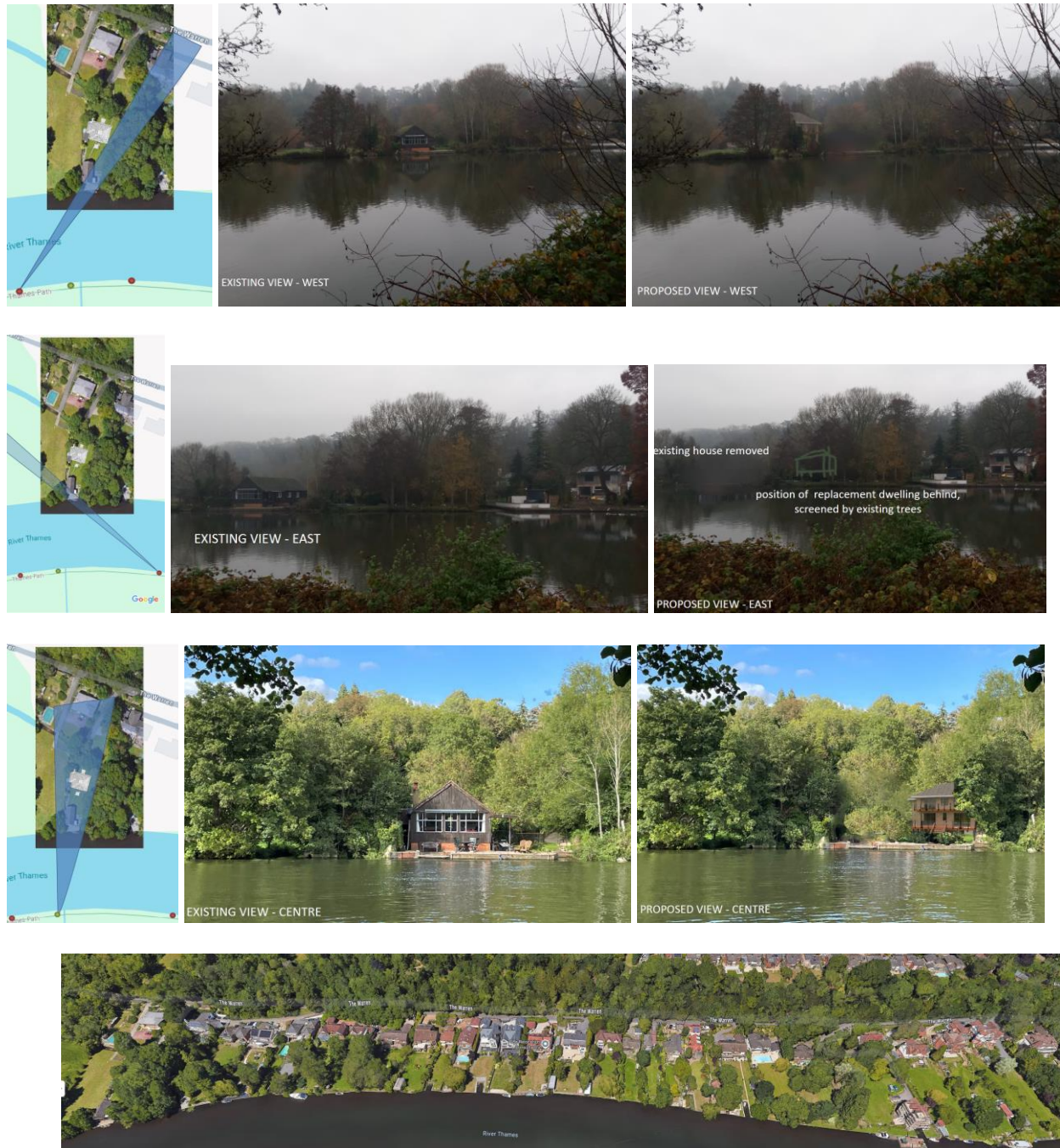
outside any external door), Class E (building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse) or Class F (hard surfaces incidental to the enjoyment of a dwellinghouse). In each of these instances it would not necessary preclude future development, but instead provide the local planning authority a means to assess future proposals, through the submission of a planning application to the Local Planning Authority. This is very much owing to the constrained nature of the site and the various site characteristics, which means that unrestricted development (significant additions could be achieved) could harm the appearance of the dwelling and wider general area, whilst also increasing flood risk too.



Impact on Major Landscape Feature, the Green Network and Waterspaces

8.39 Intrinsically linked to the layout, scale and massing considerations, the impact of the proposals on the Major Landscape Feature, the Green Network and Waterspaces are all important considerations. These are considered on the basis of the proposals as standalone entities and within the context of the existing structures at the site.

8.40 In line with Policy EN13, the proposed development is required to demonstrate that it will not detract from the character and appearance of the Thames Valley Major Landscape Feature the site is located within. In this regard it is noted that the major landscape feature is experienced from neighbouring/nearby gardens, as well as the river and Thames Path. As per Policy EN12, permission will not be granted for development that negatively affects the site sites with identified (green network) value or fragments the overall network, with the green network maintained, protected, extended and enhanced. Policy EN11: Waterspaces requires Reading's waterspaces to be protected and enhanced, with a range of criteria referenced. The applicant has submitted commentary against the various component parts of Policy EN12 and also provided visual material from three vantage points on the south side of the river to demonstrate the potential impacts of the proposals at these points, set in the context of the existing position (see below).



Map via Google images of The Warren

8.41 Officers consider that in the context of the existing situation at the site, whilst the proposal is a far more significant structure than existing, the significant set back of the proposal is considered to mitigate this impact on the Major Landscape Feature, the Green Network and the Waterspace, to such an extent that the proposal is considered acceptable in this context. In terms of the proposals being considered on their own basis, again the significant setback and the prevailing verdant context help to reduce the proposed impact to such an extent that it is considered to assimilate adequately into its setting. Had the proposed building been positioned on the footprint of the existing dwelling, on the riverbank, it is considered that significant concerns would have arisen in respect of these policies.

However, the significant set back of the footprint of the proposed dwelling, together with the removal of the existing structures (and replacement with soft landscaping, as secured via conditions – as referenced elsewhere) means the delicate balance between the policy context and the applicant's aspirations for the site are achieved in scale and massing terms. As mentioned previously though, the removal of various permitted development rights is reasonable and necessary in this case, particularly due to the sensitive Major Landscape Feature, Green Network and Waterspace policy context in this instance.

Detailed design

8.42 Turning to consider detailed design matters, as per Policies CC7 and H11 in particular, a high design quality is required to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of this part of the Borough. In this regard, the applicant has submitted some initial commentary, referenced above in relation to the Policy H11 assessment whilst acknowledging that materials can be secured via planning condition. Officers consider that the level of information provided at application stage is adequate, with it necessary for full details to be secured via condition to ensure a suitable high quality finish is achieved in practice. More specifically, the principles of a predominantly brick based dwelling, with natural slate roof and slimline aluminium windows, very broadly indicate that the proposals would suitably assimilate into the existing character of the area, where there are acknowledged to be a wide variety of styles and finished appearances, from different times and differing in overall quality.

Impacts on Heritage Assets, including significant views with heritage interest

8.43 Finally, in terms of the impact of the proposals on nearby heritage assets, these have been carefully considered, mindful of the considerable policy context such as Policy EN1 requiring historic features and areas of historic importance, including their settings to be protected and where possible enhanced. In this instance, the closest heritage assets comprise:

- the Grade II listed Four Corners property on Upper Warren Avenue (the building is a minimum 105m from the site, but the grounds are on the opposite side of the Warren highway adjacent to the site)
- the Grade II listed Shanty building 175m to the east,
- the Grade II Fishery building (360m to the west)
- Grade I & II* at Chazey Farmhouse (minimum 395m to the west)
- The St. Peter's Conservation Area (minimum 1.2km to the east of the site)

8.44 In all instances, a combination of the considerable distances involved and the positioning of the proposed dwelling back from the river edge means that none of the heritage assets, nor their settings, or the conservation area, are considered to be harmed. By consequence, the assets are therefore considered to be protected.

8.45 With specific reference to Policy EN5, the site is located within two viewing corridors within the Borough which merit special protection from harmful new development (see Local Plan Policy EN5). These relate to view 1 (view from McIlroy Park towards Chazey Barn Farm, the Thames Meadow and the Chilterns escarpment) and view 3 (view upstream from Caversham Bridge). In this regard the applicant has submitted visual information (extracts below) demonstrating that the proposals are either not visible or screened by vegetation, thereby complying with this policy.

View from Macclroy Park - Application site is screened by mature vegetation



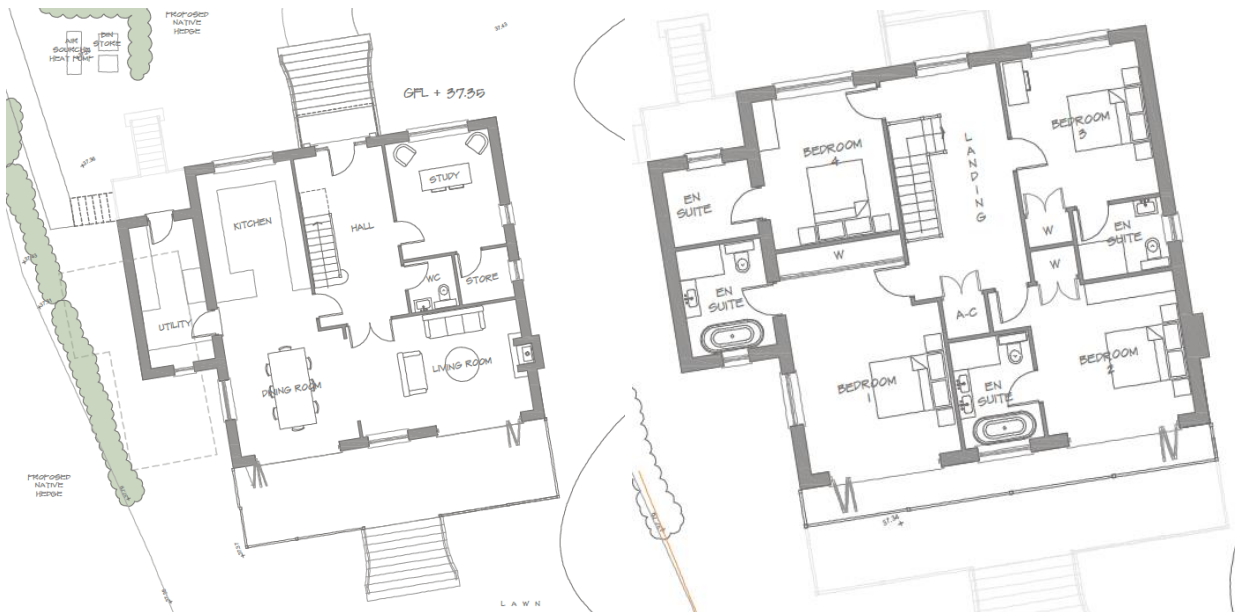
View from Caversham Bridge - Application site cannot be seen as the river meanders upstream



Amenity

Impact on nearby occupiers

8.46 First, taking into account the impact on existing nearby occupiers, the proposed footprint of the dwelling would be too distant from either neighbouring property to cause significantly harmful overlooking or loss of privacy between separate habitable rooms. However, the proposals, owing to the stilt design and proposed mass (in comparison with the existing arrangements, with a single storey structure on the riverbank) is acknowledged to provide new and expanded opportunities for overlooking (and resultant loss of privacy) to both neighbouring properties from the east and west facing side windows and openings proposed on both floors of the proposed dwelling. Close to the eastern boundary with Creek House the proposal includes two windows at raised ground floor level (one a secondary window in a dual aspect study and the other within a store room) and one en-suite bathroom window at first floor level. Owing to the land levels and there being no alterations proposed to the boundary treatment, whilst acknowledging there would continue to be vegetation at this point, to protect the amenity of Creek House occupiers in their rear amenity space, it is recommended that a condition be included for these windows to be obscure glazed and not be openable below a height of 1.7 metres when measured from the floor level of the room within which they are located.



- 8.47 Close to the western boundary, the proposals include a single window at both raised ground floor level and first floor level. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site plan specifies a new hedge on this boundary (but landscaping is not necessarily a permanent addition and may change through the seasons), the same condition securing these windows to include obscure glazing will be necessary, to protect the amenity space of neighbouring Waimarie from harmful overlooking and loss of privacy. It is also acknowledged that the proposals include steps on the north elevations (as part of the entrances). The overlooking possible from these entrance points are not considered so significant to warrant any measures to protect nearby amenity. On the south elevation however, it is shown that full width terraces are proposed at both raised ground floor and first floor level. It is considered necessary to secure details, via condition, of measures to reduce loss of privacy to the amenity spaces of neighbouring properties, from these external terraces. It is likely that some form of screening will be required at these points.
- 8.48 With regard to visual dominance, the overbearing effects of the development and outlook, it is readily acknowledged that the proposals would represent a significant change in context for neighbours in comparison with the current arrangements. There would evidently be a harmful impact in terms of visual dominance, overbearingness and a reduction in outlook, but this is mitigated to an extent by the proposals being set away from the immediately side boundaries in both instances. Furthermore, the intended removal of permitted development rights, preventing further later additions without the specific grant of permission by the local planning authority, will also ensure to nearby occupiers that any future increases would be managed. Therefore, on balance, whilst acknowledging that the proposals would represent a harmful impact in these regards, the level and nature of harm is not considered detrimental enough to warrant this being a reason for refusal of the application in itself.
- 8.49 In respect of noise and disturbance matters, the proposed standalone ASHP, located close to the western boundary of the site, has the potential to cause harmful impacts for neighbours. The Environmental Protection officer, as per section 4.4 above, have not been provided with sufficient information to satisfactorily demonstrate that the proposals are appropriate in this regard, so full details of this externally located plant will instead be required to be secured via planning condition.
- 8.50 With regard to external lighting, as well as for reasons associated with the River Thames and nature in the area (as commented on by GS Ecology), it is considered that details are also required to protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Given insufficient details are proposed to satisfy GS Ecology concerns, a condition is securing further lighting details. With this secured, it will also protect the amenity of future occupiers.
- 8.51 In terms of noise and disturbance during the demolition and construction phases of the development, it is considered necessary for full details to be secured via condition. This will again help protect the amenity of nearby occupiers.
- 8.52 In terms of daylight/sunlight, dust and fumes, smells, crime and safety matters, the proposals are not considered to result in any significantly detrimental impacts on the existing nearby occupiers.

Amenity for future occupiers

8.53 Turning to consider the quality of accommodation for future occupiers of the proposed dwelling, the applicant has included commentary in respect of each of the Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) requirements, as follows:

Appendix A – Room Sizes

The Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard - 27 March 2015 have been referenced to validate that the house meets the Gross Internal Floor Area requirements of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height.

Schedule of rooms in the proposed development...

Room	Location	Gross internal floor area (m2)	Built-in storage	Ceiling height (m)
Bedroom 1	South West Corner	22.99	2.7	2.58
Bath for bedroom 1	n/a	6.59		2.58
Bedroom 2	South East Corner	17.72	2.5	2.58
Bath for bedroom 2	n/a	6.18		2.58
Bedroom 3	North West Corner	16.26	1.2	2.58
Bath for bedroom 3	n/a	4.52		2.58
Bedroom 4	North East Corner	13.51	1.2	2.58
Bath for bedroom 4	n/a	4.70		2.58
Landing	n/a	15.1	1.5	2.58
Kitchen dining	n/a	37.3		2.58
Living room	n/a	23.98		2.58
Study	n/a	15.15	3.4	2.58
Cloakroom	n/a	3.10		2.58
Hallway	n/a	18.93	2.6	2.58
Utility room	n/a	11.50		2.58
TOTALS		217.53	15.10	

Following Technical housing standards nationally described space standard table 1, the proposal with 2 double bedrooms and 2 single bedrooms is classified as a 4b / 6p.

For a 2 storey dwelling, the gross internal floor area should therefore be a minimum of 106 sq m, including a minimum of 3sq m of built in storage.

It should be noted that all bedrooms are in excess of 2.75m wide, no ceiling heights are below 1.5m, there is no eaves storage, the under stairs space has not been contributed towards storage and balconies are not included within sizes.

From the schedule above, it can be ascertained that the proposal exceeds the minimum gross internal floor area of 106 Sq m by 205% and exceeds the minimum built in storage of 3 sq m by 503%.

Appendix B – Alignment to policy H5

H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING

- From a space perspective, as demonstrated in the room size analysis the proposal is far in excess of the Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard minimum of 106sq m for a 4 b / 6p (4 bed house for 6 people) home and therefore complies with H5a
- The proposed new dwelling will be constructed with floodable voids beneath, while the finished floor level will be situated at 39.17m AOD. This is above the 1% AEP flood level plus the allowance for climate change and therefore complies with H5b
- As a single dwelling, the proposal isn't subject to H5c, but the build aims to achieve a zero carbon status
- Against the requirement of a minimum 19% improvement between the Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) and the Target Emission Rate (TER), the Energy Statement submitted with this application shows a 93.68% improvement. The proposal therefore complies with policies CC2 and H5d.
- Considering accessibility and adaptability in section H5e. To comply with flood regulations there is a need to have the house raised and accessed by steps. In line with the planning preferences from the previous planning application, a raised metal grid walkway has been included to the westerly perimeter of the plot. This will include a minimal handrail on one side to minimize it's visibility but provide safety guidance when in use. This walkway terminates on the drive slope up to the road. If a walkway isn't acceptable, there remains the detailed "Flood Action Plan" embedded in the FRA that includes occupants being signed up to receive the Environment Agency's flood warnings on their phones and much more.
- This proposal is a single dwelling and not subject to H5f which addresses developments of over 20 dwellings.

8.54 It is evident from the floor plans (see above) that the proposals would include expansive accommodation for future occupiers (comfortably exceeding the nationally described space standards), with each bedroom including an en-suite. All rooms would be regularly shaped, providing suitable levels of outlook and ample access to natural daylight and sunlight.

8.55 Owing to the location and nature of the proposals, it is acknowledged that the proposals will not provide step-free accessible accommodation. This is explained by the applicant above, as per Policy H5e. It is however recognised that there is a clear instance of inherent competing demands between the scheme seeking to adhere to flood risk requirements, whilst also being required to be accessible and adaptable in line with Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations. It is considered that the shortfall in the accessibility requirements is regrettable, but owing to the referenced context it is considered that the needs of protecting the dwelling from flood risk are ultimately greater in this specific instance. Furthermore, as the applicant notes, a metal grid walkway to the west is also shown in a flood event.

8.56 In general amenity terms (as per Policy CC8) and broadly in respect of Policy H5 requirements (with the exception of Policy H5e), the proposals would create a good standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

Trees and landscaping

8.57 As per the consultee comments detailed above at section 4.1 of this report, RBC Natural Environment officers are largely content with the proposals subject to conditions to secure the exact final details of the proposed landscaping (noting an instance of inconsistency in the plans which was not corrected during the application) and Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.

Ecology

8.58 The Council's specialist Ecology consultants, GS Ecology, has provided consultee comments on the application, as stated at section 4.2 above. In summary, following the submission of revised details during the application, most of the original concerns raised were addressed, with remaining matters able to be secured via condition. It is noted that in terms of BNG the proposals were then subsequently further amended, but planning officers consider that such changes will not alter the overriding conclusion of the assessment provided (and conclusion by GS Ecology) that the proposals are sufficiently shown to be acceptable in terms of BNG / Policy EN12. This is within the context of the applicant stating at the outset that the proposals are exempt from mandatory BNG owing to being a self-build and custom build development. However, the development is still subject to local planning policy, EN12, with this being demonstrated in the information submitted with the application. Conditions in relation to lighting and a CEMP (Biodiversity) will be secured, as recommended by GS Ecology. The proposals include a series of ecological enhancements, such as the provision of bird/bat boxes at roof level of the building. The information submitted includes a level of detail which negates the need for a condition to secure details. Given these features are shown on a plan included in the 'approved plans' condition, there is no requirement for a compliance condition to specifically reference these details.

8.59 It is noted that the previous application was refused on the basis of failing to demonstrate that it did not result in a net loss of biodiversity, thereby failing to protect the existing biodiversity value of the site. This is not the case in terms of the current proposal, with this reason for refusal therefore being overcome.

Transport

8.60 As per the RBC Transport observations at section 4.3 of this report, the specialist Transport officers have no objection to the proposals, subject to a series of conditions being secured. These have been agreed with the applicant at an early stage of the determination period, although the wording of some of the conditions were altered following the omission of the garage during the course of the application. For example, the cycle store will be secured via condition, not only for the provision of cycle parking, but also ensuring it remains available for cycle parking in the future, to prevent the space being used for other purposes. Each of the proposed transport-based conditions are considered reasonable and necessary to ensure the development is acceptable.

Archaeology

8.61 Berkshire Archaeology, as per the consultee comments at section 4.7 above, detail the archaeological potential of the site. As such, a Written Scheme of Investigation, together with a potential site investigation and post investigation assessment is considered necessary to be secured via condition.

Sustainable Urban Drainage

8.62 The Lead Local Flood Authority, as per consultee comments at section 4.5 above, are satisfied that sufficient initial information has been provided to demonstrate that the proposals are appropriate at this juncture, subject to a full and complete strategy being secured via condition.

Sustainability and energy

8.63 In line with the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD checklist, the proposal is supported by a sustainability statement. This generally demonstrates in a satisfactory manner that the various component parts have all been given suitable consideration in advancing the proposals. This element of the proposals is therefore broadly welcomed and supported, as per overarching Policies CC2 and CC3.

8.64 In terms of energy matters, a standalone Energy Statement has been included within the submission, which indicates that the proposal is seeking to become a zero carbon home. This is a laudable target for a single dwelling, bearing in mind the RBC Policy requirement for zero carbon is only required on major developments, not single dwellings such as this proposal. The succinct statement included within the submission indicates that there is estimated to be a 93.68% reduction in carbon emissions (with this being backed up by a full design stage SAP calculation), with this being suitably impressive and far exceeding the Policy H5d requirement of achieving a minimum 19% reduction. This is achieved through the usual combination of measures, through the energy hierarchy of be lean, be clean and be green. In particular, in this instance the proposal includes the on-site renewables in the form of an expansive array of photovoltaics on the southern roofslope and ASHPs. It is evident that energy reductions and embracing renewable technologies is a key component of the proposed development, with this being a benefit of the scheme. Usually, a two-stage condition is included for such developments. In this instance, the design-stage SAP assessment means the first of the two conditions has been satisfied at application stage. Accordingly, only the 'as-built' SAP assessment will be secured via condition, to evidence that Policies CC2 and H5 are being adhered to. On the basis of the design stage assessment, it is anticipated that the proposals will significantly exceed the requirements of policy, but this still needs to be demonstrated in practice prior to the first occupation of the proposed residential unit.

Planning Balance

8.65 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.

8.66 In this case the harmful impacts of the proposals need to be weighed against the benefits. On the basis of the assessment above it is fully recognised that there is a maintained objection from the EA, on the basis of the proposal not adequately assessing the flood risks posed by the development. In terms of the impact of the proposals on the Major Landscape Feature, the Green Network and Waterspaces it is also acknowledged that the proposal is a far more significant structure than existing. However, ultimately, the significant setback from the river and the prevailing verdant context help to reduce the proposed visual impact to such an extent that it is considered to assimilate adequately into its setting.

8.67 There are a number of benefits associated with the proposals. These range from providing family-sized accommodation at the site, to a design which is considered suitable against the backdrop of the sensitivities of the Major Landscape Feature, the Green Network and Waterspaces location. The landscaping and biodiversity enhancements, together with the sustainability and energy credentials of the proposals are other benefits too. In relation

to flood risk matters, it is pertinent that the proposals would replace living accommodation that is evidently (based on recent flood events at the site) vulnerable, with the existing accommodation presently located adjacent to the riverbank on a single level. In comparison, the accommodation proposed would be at a raised level than the existing and set further away from the River Thames. The proposal will also be of modern construction, unlike the existing accommodation, and will therefore inherently be of a design which is more resilient to the risk of flooding events. Furthermore, a more robust than existing emergency plan is provided for occupants than is currently possible. Consequently, whilst fully acknowledging the concerns raised by the EA, these matters (both flood-based and wider matters) all weigh in favour of the proposed development.

8.68 As such, when applying an overriding critical planning balance of all material considerations, the merits of the proposals are such that in overall terms these benefits override the shortfalls, on balance and in this specific instance. Accordingly, within the context of national and local planning policies and other material considerations, as detailed in the appraisal above, full planning permission is recommended to be granted, subject to a series of conditions, as set out below.

9. Recommendation

9.1 Grant Planning Permission subject to conditions.

CONDITIONS

1. TIME LIMIT (STANDARD)

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

2. APPROVED PLANS

The development hereby permitted shall ONLY be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- 3863/241 Rev B – Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- 3863/242 Rev B – Proposed First Floor Plan
As received 04/12/2024
- 3863/101 Rev A – Existing Dwelling
- 3863/102 – Existing Outbuildings
As received 18/12/2024
- 3863/243 Rev C – Proposed Roof Plan
As received 24/12/2024
- 3863/260 – Proposed Cycle Store
As received 11/03/2025

- 3863/235 Rev D – Permeability Plan
- 3863/246 Rev E – Walls above extg grd supporting raised ground floor slab
- 3863/247 Rev J – Proposed Biodiversity Site Plan
- 3863/229 Rev E – Sections – Existing and Proposed
As received 09/06/2025

- 3863/240 Rev J – Existing Location Plan and Proposed Block Plan
- 3863/234 Rev E – Profile Comparison Drawing
As received 19/06/2025

- 3863/244 Rev D – Proposed Elevations
- 3863/245 Rev D – Proposed Elevations
As received on 06/08/2025

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. MATERIALS

No development shall commence until a schedule of all materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include manufacturer's specification details of all external facing materials. The development shall be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the details approved.

Reason: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character, including the River Thames and Major Landscape Feature, in accordance with Policies CC7, EN12 and EN13 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. FLOOD RISK MITIGATION

No development shall commence on site, barring any demolition works down to existing ground levels only, until a scheme to mitigate flood risk impact has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:

- a) Detailed proposals of the compensatory flood storage being provided.
- b) Details of the void design, including the height of the openings from ground level to above design flood level.
- c) Details to ensure there will be no ground level raising on site.
- d) Void blockage scenario analysis for multiple flood events up to and including the design flood, including a reasonable worst case scenario.

The scheme shall be fully implemented prior to the first occupation of the dwelling hereby approved and subsequently maintained throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants and to reduce the risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere, in accordance with section 14 of the

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as amended) and Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. OPEN VOIDS

The void space beneath the building hereby approved shall be retained as open and unobstructed at all times. No development, storage, or use of this space shall take place that would impede the free flow of flood water. This area shall not be enclosed, filled, or otherwise altered.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants and to reduce the risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere, in accordance with section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as amended) and Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

6. SCHEDULE FOR REMOVAL OF EXISTING STRUCTURES

* The existing structures as shown on drawing ref. C3429-04 Rev E (Flood Storage Areas Lost & Gained on Proposed Plan) in Flood Risk Assessment and SuDS Report by Nimbus Ref C3429-R1-REV-F dated July 2025 as received on 06/08/2025, shall be removed in accordance with a schedule that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, prior to any development commencing. The subsequent removal of every existing structures will be completed in accordance with the approved schedule.

Reason: The sensitive location of the site within a Major Landscape Feature, a Green Network and adjacent to a Waterspace means the retention of the existing structures would harm the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area, detract from the character and appearance of the Major Landscape Feature, negatively affect the Green Network, harm the Waterspace and would increase flood risk on-site and elsewhere. In addition, the retention of the existing dwelling would mean the development would not be making an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading Borough. Such impacts should therefore be mitigated against and managed, as appropriate, in accordance with sections 5, 14 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as amended) and Policies CC7, EN11, EN12, EN13, EN18 and H3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. VOID MAINTENANCE

No development shall commence on site, barring any demolition works down to existing ground levels only, until details of the proposed maintenance of the flood voids have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved voids and openings shall be maintained a) in accordance with these approved details and b) for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants and to reduce the risk of increasing flood risk elsewhere, in accordance with section 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as amended) and Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

8. REMOVAL OF PD RIGHTS

Notwithstanding the provisions of Part 1, Schedule 2, Article 3, of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development within Class A (enlargement, improvement or other alteration), Class B (enlargement of a dwellinghouse consisting of an addition or alteration to its roof), Class D (erection or construction of a porch outside any external door), Class E (building or enclosure, swimming or other pool required for a purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse) or Class F (hard surfaces incidental to the enjoyment of a dwellinghouse) shall be carried out within the curtilage of the dwelling without express planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: The sensitive location of the site within a Major Landscape Feature, a Green Network and adjacent to a Waterspace resulting in a risk of flooding, means unrestricted development could detract from the character and appearance of the Major Landscape Feature, negatively affect the Green Network, harm the Waterspace and possibly increase flood risk elsewhere. Such impacts should therefore be managed, in accordance with sections 14 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as amended) and Policies EN11, EN12, EN13 and EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

9. SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE

No development, barring any demolition works down to existing ground levels only, shall commence on site until a Sustainable Drainage Strategy and associated detailed design, management and maintenance plan of surface water drainage for the site using SuDS methods has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include:

- a) a timetable for its implementation, and
- b) a management and annual maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

Prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the sustainable drainage scheme for the site has been completed in accordance with the approved details. The sustainable drainage scheme shall be managed and maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed management and maintenance plan.

Reason: To reduce the risk of flooding onsite or elsewhere in accordance with Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

10. EMERGENCY PLAN MEASURES - COMPLIANCE

The emergency plan measures, as referenced within the Flood Action Plan section of the Flood Risk Assessment and SuDS Report (by Nimbus Ref C3429-R1-REV-F dated July 2025, as received on 06/08/2025), shall be adhered to and maintained throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To mitigate the risk of flooding for the safety and general amenity of future occupiers of the proposed dwelling, throughout the lifetime of the development, in accordance with Policies CC8 and EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

11. DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION METHOD STATEMENT

* No development shall commence on site, including any works of demolition, until a site specific Demolition and Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Statement shall provide for WHERE REQUIRED:

- a) Space on site where vehicles of site operatives and visitors can be parked with details of how site operatives and visitors will be required to make use of the parking area provided;
- b) Location on site for storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- c) The erection and maintenance (including removal of any graffiti or fly posters) of any proposed security hoarding around the site;
- d) Identification of any footpath closures or road closures needed during construction;
- e) Required wheel washing facilities on site;
- f) A scheme for recycling waste resulting from the construction works.
- g) Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes;
- h) Required measures to control the emission of dust, dirt and other airborne pollutants during demolition and construction;
- i) Provisions to be made for the control of noise coming from the site during demolition and construction;
- j) Full details of pest control measures following any demolition required. Where necessary, capping of drains/sewers and baiting arrangements.

The measures within the approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period.

Reason: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of protecting the amenity of local land uses or neighbouring residents, the character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Policies CC8 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

12. VEHICULAR ACCESS

The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the vehicle access and permeable driveway serving it has been constructed in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The vehicle access and permeable driveway shall be kept available for access and vehicle parking at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and to ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users, in accordance with Policies TR1 and TR3 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

13. CYCLE PARKING

The dwelling hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the bicycle parking facility has been provided in accordance with the plans hereby approved. The facility shall be kept available for bicycle parking at all times thereafter.

Reason: To encourage travel by sustainable alternatives to driving a motorcar in accordance with Policies TR1 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

14. REFUSE AND RECYCLING

Prior to the first occupation of the dwelling hereby approved, the refuse and recycling storage facilities shall be implemented fully in accordance with those details shown on the approved plans and thereafter retained for use by occupiers of the dwelling at all times.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to ensure that bins can be easily accessed when required in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

15. EV CHARGING POINT

Prior to the first occupation of the dwelling hereby approved, details of a EV charging point, comprising a layout plan and detailed specification, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details will be provided in full prior to the first occupation of the dwelling and the EV charging point shall thereafter be retained for use by occupier(s) of the dwelling at all times.

Reason: In the interests of environmentally sustainable transport, in accordance with Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

16. ARCHAEOLOGY

A) No development, barring any demolition works down to existing ground levels only, shall take place/commence until a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved by, the Local Planning Authority in writing. The WSI shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation
5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the WSI.

B) The Development shall take place in accordance with the WSI approved under condition (A).

The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI approved under condition (A) and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

Reason: The site lies in an area of archaeological potential, particularly for, but not limited to, Prehistoric Roman remains. The potential impacts of the development can be mitigated through

a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as amended) and Policies EN1 and EN2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

17. LANDSCAPING DETAILS

No development shall commence on site, barring any demolition works down to existing ground levels only, until a comprehensive scheme of hard and soft landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:

- a) Proposed finished ground and floor levels or contours, means of enclosure (including mammal gaps where appropriate), car parking layouts, other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulation areas;
- b) Hard surfacing materials and minor artefacts and other ancillary structures (e.g. furniture, play equipment, refuse or other storage units, signs, lighting, external services, etc);
- c) Soft landscaping details shall include planting plan, specification (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), tree pit specifications, schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate, and implementation timetable;
- d) A maintenance programme detailing all operations to be carried out in order to allow successful establishment of planting;
- e) Routes and details of proposed and existing functional services above and below ground including foul and surface water drainage, soakaways and SUDs details, power, communications cables and water and gas supply pipelines, including access points;

The approved hard and soft landscaping scheme shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the dwelling hereby approved.

Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting, die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: These details are required prior to commencement of development, barring demolition works to ground level, because of insufficient information contained within this submission and in the interest of ensuring that the landscaping of the development enhances the visual local environment, including the Major Landscape Feature, the Green Network and the Waterspace, in accordance with Policies CC7, EN11, EN12, EN13 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

18. ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT

No development shall commence on site, barring any demolition works down to existing ground levels only, until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan in accordance with the relevant recommendations of appropriate British Standards or other recognised Codes of Good Practice for all existing trees that are not shown as being removed on the approved drawings, both within and adjacent to the site, has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan.

Reason: In order to ensure that appropriate protection is given to trees of amenity value within and adjacent to the site in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

19. CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN (CEMP: Biodiversity)

* No development shall take place (including demolition, ground works, vegetation clearance) until a construction environmental management plan (CEMP: Biodiversity) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The CEMP (Biodiversity) shall include the following.

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of “biodiversity protection zones”.
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.

The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To minimise impacts on biodiversity in accordance with Paragraphs 187 and 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

20. EXTERNAL LIGHTING

No development, barring demolition, shall commence on site until a report detailing the external lighting scheme and how this will not a) adversely impact upon wildlife and b) for the protection of amenity of occupiers and neighbours, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

In relation to a) the report shall include the following figures and appendices:

- A layout plan with beam orientation
- A schedule of equipment
- Measures to avoid glare
- An isolux contour map showing light spillage to 0.5 lux demonstrating that the River Thames to the southern boundary remains unlit

In relation to b) the report shall include a plan indicating the locations of the lights, specifications, height, luminance; lens shape/beam pattern and orientation, any hoods/shades, and an isolux contour map to show light spill levels (down to 2 lux if operating between 23:00 and 07:00, or down to 10 lux if operating only between 07:00 and 23:00) and showing neighbouring buildings. The details shall demonstrate that light levels will not exceed the relevant guidance lux levels specified in the Institute of Lighting Professionals : Guidance Notes

for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011 and shall also demonstrate how glare will be controlled.

The approved scheme in relation to a) and b) shall thereafter be installed before first occupation of the dwellinghouse hereby approved and the external lighting shall thereafter be maintained and operated in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on nature conservation and to protect the privacy and amenity of adjoining and future occupiers and enhance the appearance of the development, in accordance with paragraph 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and Policies CC7, CC8, EN12, EN13, EN16 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

21. MECHANICAL PLANT ASSESSMENT

No externally located mechanical plant shall be installed until a noise assessment of the proposed mechanical plant has been submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall be carried out in accordance with BS4142:2014 methodology. The predicted specific sound level (LAeq,TR) (with reference to BS:4142) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive facade shall be at least 10dB below the pre-existing background sound level, LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation. The predicted rating level, LAr,Tr (specific sound level plus any adjustment for the characteristic features of the sound) as measured at a point 1 metre external to the nearest noise-sensitive facade (habitable window of a dwelling) shall not exceed the pre-existing background sound level, LA90,T when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation. The plant shall thereafter only be installed in accordance with the assessment and shall thereafter be maintained so that it operates to the same standard.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises and the area generally, in accordance with Policy CC8 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

22. PRIVACY MEASURES

Prior to the first occupation of the residential unit hereby approved, details of measures to protect the privacy of neighbouring occupiers from the raised ground floor and first floor external terrace areas on the south elevation of the dwelling shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Should privacy screens be proposed, details shall include the location and position of the screens, their dimensions, design and manufacturer's specification, and ongoing maintenance arrangements. The approved measures will be installed before the first occupation of the residential unit hereby approved and shall be permanently maintained as such at all times thereafter.

Reason: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within the application, to safeguard the amenities of the adjoining residential units from overlooking and loss of privacy in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

23. OBSCURE GLAZING AND NO FURTHER OPENINGS

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and/or re-enacting that Order) the proposed raised ground floor east and west facing windows and the proposed first floor east

and west facing windows shall not be openable below a height of 1.7 metres when measured from the floor level of the room within which it is located. These windows shall also be glazed with obscure glass before first occupation of the development hereby approved and shall be maintained as such at all times thereafter. In addition, no windows/openings, other than those shown on the approved plans shall at any time be placed in the east or west side elevation of the building hereby permitted without the grant of a separate planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining premises from overlooking and loss of privacy in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

24. SAP ASSESSMENT MINOR - AS BUILT (TO BE APPROVED)

The residential unit hereby permitted shall not be occupied until written verification has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority demonstrating that the dwelling hereby permitted has achieved a minimum of a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate as defined in The Building Regulations for England Approved Document L1a: Conservation of Fuel and Power in New Dwellings (2013 edition), and built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3). Such evidence shall be in the form of an 'As Built' Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP), produced by an accredited energy assessor.

Reason: To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards in accordance with Policy CC2 and H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

INFORMATIVES

1. The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the agreed extended timescale for the decision to be issued.
2. In accordance with Article 35 (DMPO 2015) some conditions have been highlighted (with a *) to make clear that they require approval from the Local Planning Authority before any development begins. This is because the details need to be designed or works implemented before any other works start on the site or are of a nature that it would be impractical to consider after work has started.
3. i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.

ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.
4. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the

permission may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.

5. A Building Regulations application may be required for the proposed development. Please go to our website for more advice.
<https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/building-control/apply-for-building-control/>
You can also find advice and submit an application using the Planning Portal.
6. Complaints are commonly received about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and smoke from bonfires associated with the burning of waste on site. The developer is reminded that construction and demolition associated with the approved development will be subject to environmental health law.
7. During the course of construction, the developer should take care to ensure that no part of this development (foundations, eaves, guttering, etc.) would encroach on, under or across the boundary line with the adjoining property, as the requisite Notice has not been served on the owner of that property. This permission does not confer any right of access onto land that is not under the developer's control. The developer should also be mindful of the obligations and requirements of the Party Wall Act (1996) details of which can be found at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/partywall
8. The Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1st April 2015. CIL is a way of securing financial contributions towards infrastructure from new development, and partially replaces the Section 106 planning obligation regime. It is a set charge per sq m of floorspace for different uses, and, unlike Section 106, it is non-negotiable. It applies to developments which result in at least one dwelling; where the space has not been in lawful use for 6 months within the last 3 years or 100 sq m of new floorspace. For this approved development the CIL status is CHARGEABLE. If chargeable you will be sent a CIL Liability Notice with the calculated amount soon. CIL becomes payable on commencement of the development or by instalments.

For more information go to:

https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/CIL_Advice_to_Applicants.pdf

9. All birds, their nests and eggs, are protected by law. It is a criminal offence (with certain exemptions) to deliberately or recklessly take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built. The buildings and vegetation on the site are likely to be used by nesting birds and any works to buildings with bird nests or vegetation clearance should take place outside the bird nesting season (March - August inclusive). If this is not practicable areas to be cleared should first be checked for bird nests by an appropriately qualified person. If bird nests are found works that could disturb it must stop until any young have fledged the nest.
10. The Environment Agency advise that in terms of Environmental permits and Flood risk activities, 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 or contact the Environment Agency's 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 the Environment Agency advises the applicant to consult with them at the earliest opportunity.