



Eaton Court, Reading
Design & Access Statement for BMR Property
Group



103-225

27/11/25 Rev B - EAB RTM

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

- 1.1.1 This document has been prepared by rg+p to support BMR Property Group's planning application for the site of Eaton Court, 104-112 Oxford Road, Reading.
- 1.1.2 This document walks through the design process; describing the site context and how the proposed scheme has been derived in response. To conclude, a summary of the key features of the proposed development are outlined.
- 1.1.3 The proposed development site lies approximately 1.5 miles west of Reading town centre.
- 1.1.4 The site comprises of 4,484m² or 1.1 acres of land. It accommodates a two to three-storey vacant office building, and car parking block. Constructed in the 1980s, the building was previously occupied by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) as a Centre for Health and Disability Assessments but is currently vacant.
- 1.1.5 The site is enclosed by residential and commercial mixed-uses to the East, South and West. To the North, includes a live music venue, commercial units and a large multi-storey car park. Just outside of the site boundary is a Grade II listed building, home to the Royal Meteorological Society.



Fig. 01 Site Location

2 CONTEXT

2.1 LOCAL HERITAGE

- 2.1.1 The site itself does not lie within the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area, but is adjacent to the boundary. This conservation area is noted for its historic 19th- and early 20th-century architecture.
- 2.1.2 The Grade II listed building housing The Royal Meteorological Society is situated immediately adjacent to Eaton Court, as shown in figure 02.
- 2.1.3 Grade II listed buildings nearby include:
- ① The Royal Meteorological Society
 - ② Church of the Holy Trinity
 - ③ 139-141 Oxford Road
 - ④ 118 Oxford Road
 - ⑤ Butler's Wine Vaults
 - ⑥ 122 & 124 Chatham Street



Fig. 02 The Royal Meteorological Society - Grade II Listed



Fig. 03 Local Heritage

2.2 SITE ACCESS

- 2.2.1 Figure 06 highlights the two distinct access points to the building/car park. One is solely for pedestrians, and the other serving both pedestrians and vehicles. The rear entrance is currently gated to prevent access outside of office hours.
- 2.2.2 The site is located on Oxford Road, close to Chatham Street, both busy thoroughfares leading into the town centre.
- 2.2.3 It benefits from a highly accessible location, being a short walk from Reading town centre and both Reading and Reading West railway stations.



Fig. 04 Front (Pedestrian) Entrance



Fig. 05 Rear (Vehicular) Entrance



Fig. 06 Site Access

2.3 EXISTING LAND USE

- 2.3.1 The site is situated within a highly mixed urban context, with a wide variety of land uses in close proximity.
- 2.3.2 Oxford Road features retail, food outlets, and services at ground level, with residential uses above.
- 2.3.3 This area has also seen recent residential development, with new apartment blocks contributing to increased density and a more vibrant urban character.



Fig. 07 Existing Land Use

2.4 BUILDING HEIGHTS

- 2.4.1 Figure 08 illustrates the significant variation in building heights surrounding the site.
- 2.4.2 Along Oxford Road, buildings are typically two to four storeys tall.
- 2.4.3 Moving eastwards towards the town centre, building heights increase, with several mid-rise residential blocks ranging from five to nine storeys.
- 2.4.4 This variation reflects the area's gradual transition from lower-rise traditional buildings to more contemporary, higher-density developments.



Fig. 08 Existing Building Heights

2.5 NOISE POLLUTION

- 2.5.1 The site is located along busy routes such as Oxford Road and near Chatham Street, which experience high levels of traffic throughout the day, contributing to noise pollution.
- 2.5.2 In addition, nearby entertainment venues including The Face Bar (1) and The Butler (2) may contribute to elevated noise levels, particularly during evenings and weekends.



Fig. 09 Noise Pollution

2.6 FLOOD RISK & DRAINAGE

- 2.6.1 The site is located within an area classified as having a low risk of flooding.
- 2.6.2 According to the Environment Agency's flood risk maps, the site is outside of designated flood zones 2 and 3 and is not situated on a floodplain.

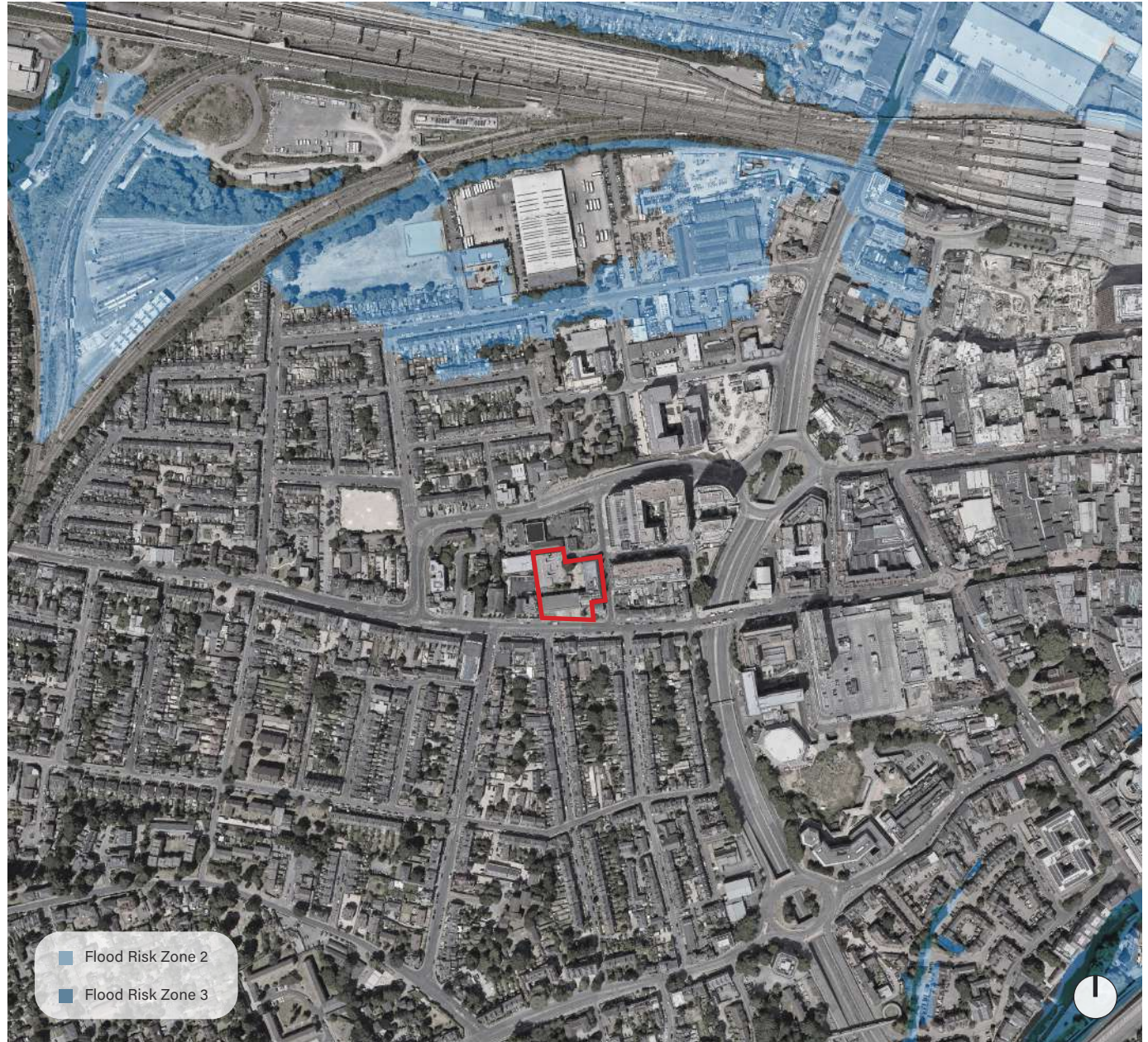


Fig. 10 Flood Risk



2.7 SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

- 2.7.1 The following photographs illustrate the current conditions of the site and its immediate surroundings.
- 2.7.2 They provide a visual context for the existing buildings, access points, and adjacent land uses, helping to inform the design approach and demonstrate the site's relationship with the surrounding urban environment.
- 2.7.3 Image 3 shows the seven-storey residential block adjacent to the site, which rises prominently above the existing buildings on Eaton Place.



Fig. 11 Site Photographs

Fig. 12 Approach & Views

3 EVALUATION

3.1 CONSTRAINTS & OPPORTUNITIES

3.1.1 Building upon the site appraisal, the following site constraints and opportunities are outlined in figure 13 to inform design thinking and initial massing.

3.1.2 Constraints

- ❶ The site is adjacent to the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area and Grade II listed building housing The Royal Meteorological Society.
- ❷ Its close proximity to The Face Bar and The Butler raises potential concerns regarding noise for future residents.
- ❸ The western boundary is adjacent to existing residential apartments.

3.1.3 Opportunities

- ❹ This application builds upon the previously approved Class MA and submitted Class AA applications, delivering additional housing provisions.
- ❺ The substantial on-site parking provision allows for the introduction of enhanced landscaping.
- ❻ Close proximity to nearby train stations, bus stops, range of amenities and the town centre supports low-car residential development.
- ❼ The presence of other high-rise developments in the vicinity establishes a precedent for increased building heights in the area.
- ❽ Existing landscaping and mature trees on site offer an opportunity to retain and enhance green infrastructure, contributing to biodiversity.



Fig. 13 Constraints & Opportunities

3.2 SITE STRATEGY

3.2.1 Considering the site's constraints and opportunities, the scheme's site strategy looks to:

- ❶ Add two-storey extension to match the levels of the proposed Class AA extension on the other wing of the building.
- ❷ Set back from existing residential properties on western boundary.
- ❸ Step back front and rear elevations to reduce visual impact and unit depth, eliminating north facing single-aspect units.
- ❹ Incorporate acoustic design strategies to mitigate noise from nearby venues.
- ❺ Retain and enhance existing mature trees and landscaping to strengthen green infrastructure and support biodiversity.
- ❻ Provide sufficient and secure cycle and refuse storage.



Fig. 14 Site Strategy

3.3 PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION - CLASS MA

- 3.3.1 The existing buildings have been submitted for change of use from office to residential, under permitted development Class MA (application number PL/25/1025). This application was approved on 23.09.2025.
- 3.3.2 The proposal includes the conversion of the two- and three-storey wings to residential use, while retaining all external elevations and incorporating car parking, cycle storage, and refuse facilities.
- 3.3.3 The scheme proposes a total of 52 units, comprising a mix of one and two bedroom apartments.



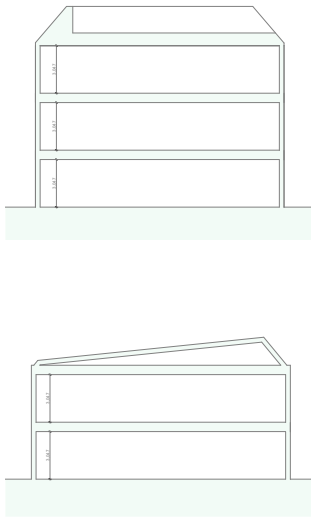
Ground Floor Plan - Class MA



First Floor Plan - Class MA



Second Floor Plan - Class MA



Typical Sections - Class MA

Level	Storey Height (m)	1B1P		1B2P		2B2P		2B4P		Refuse & Cycle	Total Units	Total Beds	GIA (m ²)	NSA (m ²)	NSA/GIA
		40m ²	NSA	50m ²	NSA	60m ²	NSA	70m ²	NSA						
GF		14	605m ²	2	100m ²	4	253m ²	1	71m ²	64m ²	21	26	1,460m ²	1,029m ²	70%
01		14	605m ²	2	100m ²	2	125m ²	3	217m ²	0	21	26	1,393m ²	1,047m ²	75%
02		6	257m ²	2	100m ²	1	62m ²	1	71m ²	0	10	12	697m ²	489m ²	70%
Total		34	1,467m ²	6	300m ²	7	441m ²	5	358m ²	64m ²	52	64	3,550m ²	2,566m ²	72%
Mix	0.00		65.4%		11.5%		13.5%		9.6%						

Total Units	52
Total Cycle Spaces	40
Total Car Parking Spaces	92 (existing spaces reduced due to bin/cycle stores)

Fig. 15 Class MA Permitted Development Drawings