

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames

App Ref: PL/25/1573 Prior approval Part 3 Class MA: Commercial, business and service uses to dwellinghouses

Address: The Beta Building, 121 Kings Road, Reading, RG1 3ES

Proposal: Change of use of ground to fourth floors from Class E (offices) to Class C3 (dwelling houses) to form 44 self-contained residential units. Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).

Applicant: Beta Reading Limited

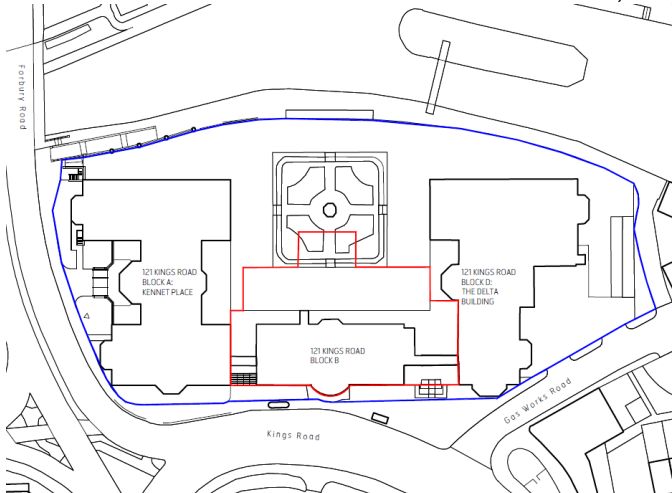
Received date: 03/11/2025

Target Decision date: 29/12/2025

Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

1.1 The application site comprises a basement (car park) and five storey (and rooftop plant) building, known as the Beta Building, on the north side of Kings Road, between the junctions of Forbury Road (to the west) and Gas Works Road (to the east). The red line boundary also includes some external space to the north of the building, with a blue line on the location plan (see below) indicating that the applicant has an interest in linked blocks Kennet Place to the west and The Delta Building to the east. All three buildings were originally constructed following planning permission in 1989 (see relevant history below & later occupied by Prudential), but this proposal solely relates to the Beta Building. Based on the officer site visit on 24/11/2025, the application site building is presently unoccupied.



Above left: Site Location Plan



Above right and below: views of the application site





Above: aerial views of the application site from the south (left) and north (right), from Google Maps.

1.2 The broad area surrounding the site is characterised by a variety of building uses. The buildings along this part of Kings Road are mainly commercial, with the Huntley Wharf residential-led development to the north of the River Kennet / Chocolate Island and Blakes Bridge. To the south, beyond Kings Road is Kings Road Gardens and Kennet and Avon Canal, with the Verto residential building to the south-west. Whilst located within flood zone 1, it is in close proximity to land to the north in flood zones 2 and 3, where the River Kennet is located. The site is also located within an air quality management area and has potential to include contaminated land, owing to the former Biscuit Factory use in and around the site. The application site building is not a listed building, nor is it located within a conservation area.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1 Prior approval is sought under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 for change of use of ground to fourth floors of the building from Class E (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 44 self-contained residential units.

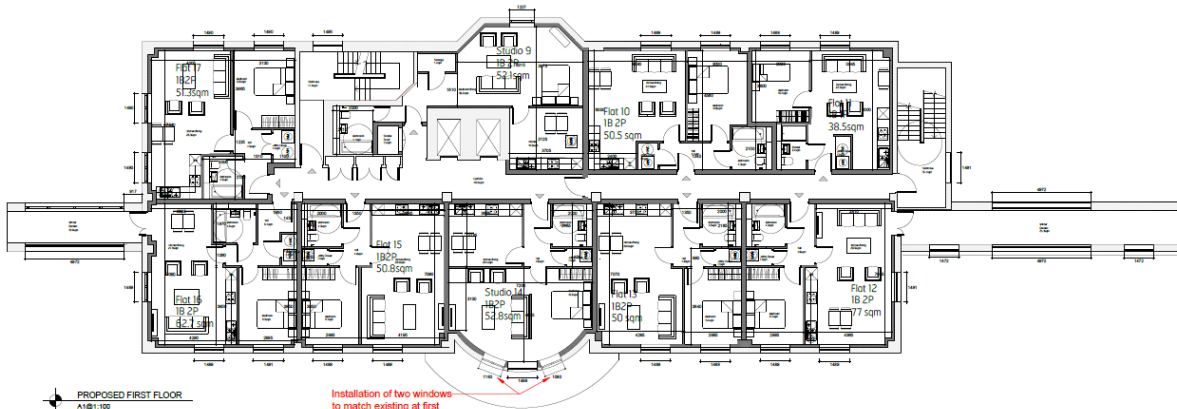
2.2 More specifically, 11 x studio or 1-bedroom, 1-person units are proposed, alongside 31 x 1-bedroom, 2-person units and 2 x 2-bedroom, 3-person units, as per the table and plans below. It is noted that 1 unit at each of the first to fourth floors is referenced on the plans as a studio 1-bedroom, 2-person unit, but by their very nature studio units are considered to be 1-person units. Hence, on the table below they have been referenced as 1-bedroom, 1-person units. If the applicant's interpretation were taken, the mix would be 7 x studio 1B1P, 35 x 1B2P & 2 x 2B3P.

	Studio or 1-bed, 1-person	1-bed, 2-person	2-bed, 3-person	Total
Ground floor	2	5	1	8
First floor	2*	7		9
Second floor	2*	7		9
Third floor	2*	7		9
Fourth floor	3*	5	1	9
Total	11	31	2	44

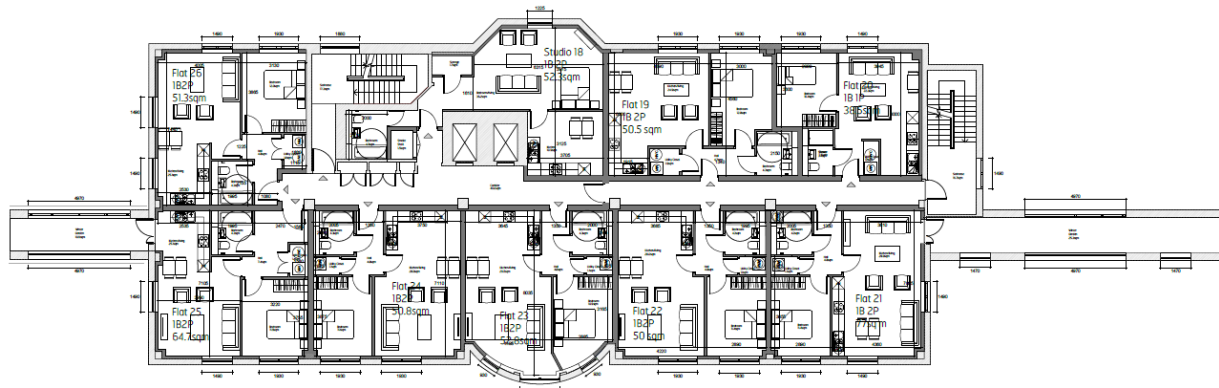
* = 1 of the 1B1P studios is described on the plans as a 1B2P studio, but no such thing is considered to exist, so it is categorised as a 1B1P unit)



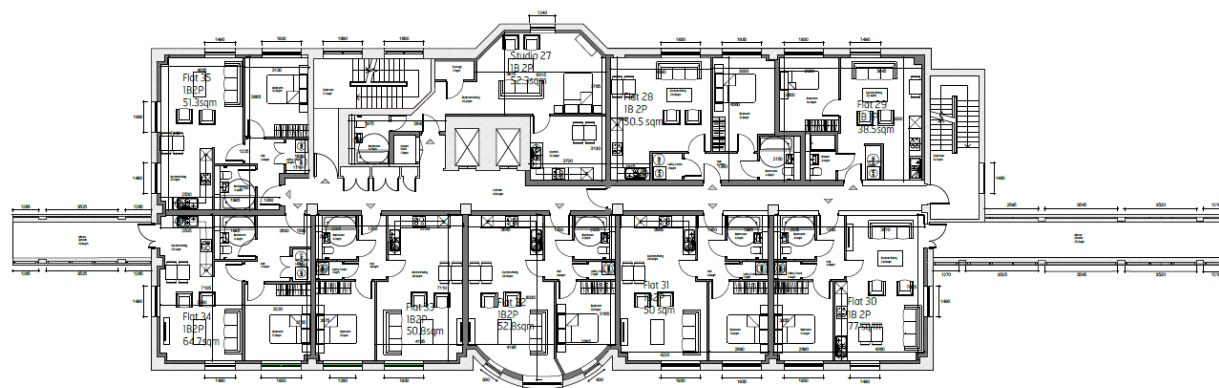
PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR
A1@1:100

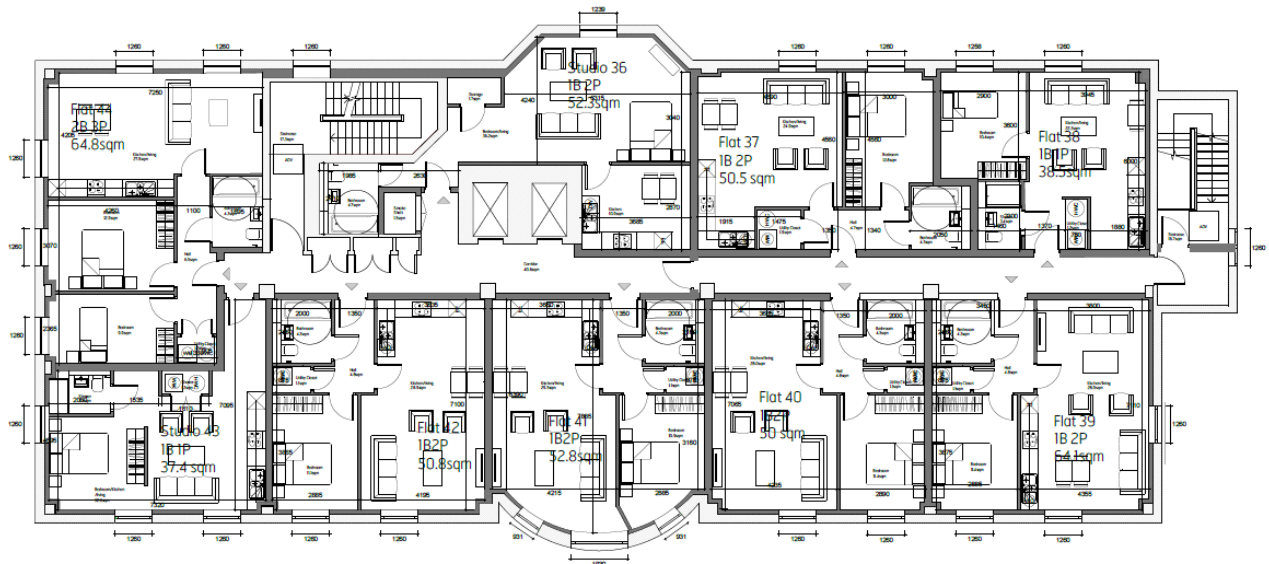


PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR
A1@1:100



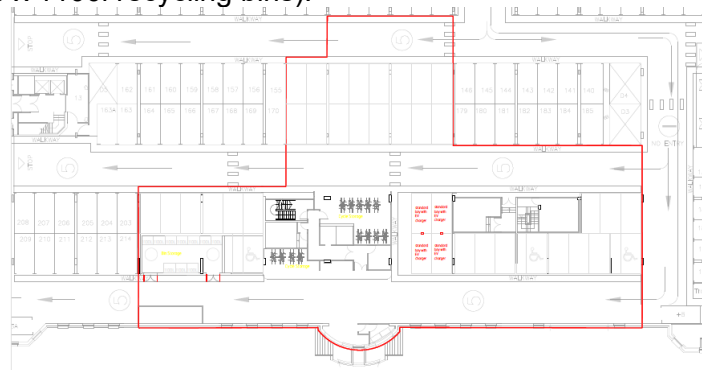
PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR
A1@1:100





PROPOSED FOURTH FLOOR
A1@1:100

- 2.3 In addition, as basement floor level, the red-line boundary covers part of the wider basement area which also serves the neighbouring Kennet Place and Delta Buildings. Here, a total of 38 car parking spaces are proposed, with 31 standard bays, 3 disabled bays and 4 with EV charging capabilities. Cycle parking (26 spaces) and waste storage is also shown on the plans (5 x 1100l refuse bins and 5 x 1100l recycling bins).



2.4 Plans and documents submitted:

- 1364.6-001 Rev A – Site Location Plan
- 1364.6-002 - Existing Block Plan
- 1364.6-010 – Existing Basement Floor Plan
- 1364.6-050 - Proposed Block Plan
- 1364.6-100 - Proposed Basement Floor Plan
- Envirocheck Report Datasheet ref. 364519853_1_1 dated 27/11/2024
- Phase 1 Contamination Assessment by Ashfield Solutions Group ref. 235425-S01, dated 29/09/2025
- Prior Approval Accompanying Statement by Brooks Murray, dated October 2025
- Transport Statement by Firmin Transport Planning Ref FTP/2509/02 dated 15/09/2025
- Internal Daylight Assessment by T16 Design Ref 6643 Issue no. 1, dated 22/09/2025
- Planning Stage Fire Strategy Report Issue 1 by BWC Fire Limited ref. BWC/FS/2344/V1 dated 30/10/2025

As all received on 03/11/2025

- 1364.6-011 - Existing Ground & First Floor Plan
- 1364.6-012 - Existing Second and Third Floor
- 1364.6-013 – Existing Fourth & Roof Floor Plan
- 1364.6-020 - Existing Front Elevation (South)
- 1364.6-021 - Existing West Elevation
- 1364.6-022 – Existing East Elevation
- 1364.6-023 - Existing North Elevation
- 1364.6-101 - Proposed Ground & First Floor Plan
- 1364.6-103 - Proposed Fourth & Roof Floor Plan
- 1364.6-200 – Proposed Front Elevation (South)
- 1364.6-203 - Proposed North Elevation
- Flood Risk Assessment Report for Beta Building, 121 Kings Road, Reading, RG1 3ES by Nimbus Engineering Consultants Ref C-3644-R1-REV-B dated November 2025
- Noise Impact Assessment by Cass Allen Associates Ltd Ref. RP01-25539-R0 dated 13/10/2025

As all received on 12/11/2025

- 1364.6-102 - Proposed Second & Third Floor Plan
- 1364.6-201 - Proposed West Elevation
- 1364.6-202 - Proposed East Elevation
- 1364.6-999 - Existing Building Height Section
- 1364.6-1000 - Proposed Building Height Section

As all received on 13/11/2025

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The application site

PL/25/1572 - Installation of two windows at first floor level on the south elevation, provision of a single door following removal of a canopy and associated revolving door at ground floor level on the north elevation and installation of one projecting smokeshaft and two automatic opening vents at roof level. Granted 17/12/2025.

3.2 The Wider Site

89/1390 - Office development of 180,000sq ft gross: car parking for 250 cars and riverside walk. Granted 14/12/1989.

3.3 The neighbouring site - Kennet Place, 121 Kings Road

PL/24/0997 Change the use of the building at ground to fourth floors from office (E Class) to residential (C3), to accommodate 93 self-contained flats. Prior Notification Granted 02/10/2024.

PL/24/0973 – Application for new window openings to the east elevation to match the existing windows in opening sizes and appearance and addition of rooftop smoke shafts and AOVs. Granted 25/09/2024.

PL/25/0067 - Discharge of conditions 3 (contaminated land assessment), 4 (remediation scheme), 5 (validation report), 8 (foul water network details) & 9 (surface water network details) for prior approval application PL/24/0997, as given on 27/09/2024. Granted 07/03/2025.

PL/25/1023 - Replacement of windows/doors on all elevations at ground floor level; installation of balconies on east, south and west elevations at ground floor, north elevation at 1st to 3rd floors and west elevation at 2nd floor level; installation of projecting smokeshafts and automatic opening vents at roof level; and, various associated alterations. Granted 02/09/2025.

3.4 The neighbouring site - The Delta Building, 121 Kings Road

PL/25/0466 - Application for external works including new windows to match the existing; new AOV and smoke shaft roof openings; demolition of existing canopy; changes to the existing atrium; and new and replacement metal railings and balconies. Granted 20/05/2025.

PL/25/0470 - Change of use of Ground to 4th Floors from Class E (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 77 self-contained flats. Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. Prior Notification Granted 20/05/2025.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 HSE Fire Safety – After seeking and receiving confirmation of the height of the building, it was confirmed that the floor height is less than 18 metres and therefore the proposals are considered outside the scope for Planning Gateway One (whereby HSE would comment).

4.2 RBC Transport – The site is located within the Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs. The Kings Road has parking restrictions preventing on-street parking and forms part of the Red Route 'no stopping' corridor. In NPPF terms, the site is highly sustainable.

The application proposes a change of use from Class E to 44 x 1 and 2 bedroom residential units.

In accordance with the Council's current parking standards each 1 and 2 bedroom flat in this zone would require 1 parking space, this therefore equates to 44 off street parking spaces. In addition to this visitor parking is also required at a ratio of 1 space per 10 dwellings. Total provision required for the development is 48.

The submitted Transport statement states that the development will be provided with a total of 38 parking bays, 4 will have EV charging points and 4 will be disabled bays. It should be noted that the Council's standards state that the disabled bays be additional to the standard bays required and should be provided at a ratio of 3 disabled spaces or 5% of the total capacity, whichever is greater. The proposed provision falls below the Council's current parking standards.

Kings Road has parking restrictions preventing on-street parking and forms part of the Red Route 'no stopping' corridor as well as the operation of the Council's residential parking permit scheme. Given the extensive parking restrictions in place preventing unauthorised on street parking and the sustainable location of the site, the proposed parking provision can be accepted in this instance. No changes are proposed to the existing access arrangements to the basement level parking area.

If this application is approved there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed units will not be issued with resident or visitor parking permits, this will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

Cycle storage should be provided in accordance with the Borough's Parking Standards and Design SPD, however under GPD we would not comment on this, however it is noted that cycle stands are being provided within the basement area.

The applicant should ensure that the refuse storage provisions comply with the Council's Waste Management Guidance which is available to view online. Bins must not be stored on any part of the public footway.

In principle Transport do not have any objections to this application the site is in a highly sustainable location and unauthorised parking can be managed via the extensive restrictions in place.

- [DC1](#) VEHICLE PARKING (AS SPECIFIED)
- [DC3](#) VEHICULAR ACCESS (AS SPECIFIED)
- [DC20](#) PARKING PERMITS 1
- [DC21](#) PARKING PERMITS 2
- IF3 Highways
- I13 Parking Permits

- 4.3 RBC Environmental Protection – The contaminated land desk study concludes that no further assessment is required.

The noise assessment confirms no sources of commercial noise are likely to impact the site. However, I note that the site is likely to be significantly impacted by road noise therefore I would recommend that the applicant considers this and ensures suitable glazing and ventilation are selected to protect the occupants from road noise.

- 4.4 RBC Building Control – No Building Regulations comments to make on this application.

- 4.5 RBC Waste Operations – The Council's standard household waste collection service is for fortnightly recycling collections, fortnightly general waste collections and weekly food waste collections.

A development consisting of 44 residential units with communal bin facilities on the standard household waste collection would need to have space for the below bins –

- 6 x 1100L general waste
- 9 x 1100L recycling
- 3 x 240L food waste bin

Developers must also take into consideration upcoming changes to residential waste collection services as per Simpler Recycling requirements in the future. These requirements will increase the amount of material recycled/collected at the kerbside (i.e. addition of glass & soft plastics) and so additional refuse space should be allocated to allow for this. It is anticipated that 1 x 240ltr glass bin will be required for each 1100ltr general waste bin that is present. Note: glass can currently only be recycled at local glass bottle banks or the tip.

It is not clear on the documents submitted where the bins would be stored, or where it is proposed they be collected from. We would therefore request a formal written refuse strategy confirming where bins would be collected from and who would be presenting them for collection.

Please be aware that if crews require direct access to a bin store and locks are to be fitted to any doors or gates at bin storage areas, these should be either combination or keypad style with a code. Developers and site managers should be aware that the code will be held within our collection records and shared with a number of collection staff to ensure ease of access. Individual patterned, physical keys or security fobs will not be accepted or permitted.

We require at least 6 weeks' notice prior to residents moving in to a development to ensure that bins can be purchased, delivered and collections scheduled in with the crews.

- 4.6 RBC Early Years & RBC Education - No response received.

4.7 Thames Water - Waste Comments: With the information provided, Thames Water has been unable to determine the Foul water infrastructure needs of this application. Thames Water has contacted the developer in an attempt to obtain this information and agree a position for FOUL WATER drainage, but have been unable to do so in the time available and as such, Thames Water request that the following condition be added to any planning permission. "No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:- 1. Foul water Capacity exists off site to serve the development, or 2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed, no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan, or 3. All Foul water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed. Reason - Network reinforcement works may be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid sewage flooding and/or potential pollution incidents. The developer can request information to support the discharge of this condition by visiting the Thames Water website at thameswater.co.uk/preplanning. Should the Local Planning Authority consider the above recommendation inappropriate or are unable to include it in the decision notice, it is important that the Local Planning Authority liaises with Thames Water Development Planning Department (e-mail: devcon.team@thameswater.co.uk) prior to the planning application approval.

With the information provided Thames Water has been unable to determine the waste water infrastructure needs of this application. Thames Water has contacted the developer in an attempt to obtain this information and agree a position for SURFACE WATER drainage, but have been unable to do so in the time available and as such Thames Water request that the following condition be added to any planning permission. "No development shall be occupied until confirmation has been provided that either:- 1. Surface water capacity exists off site to serve the development or 2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water. Where a development and infrastructure phasing plan is agreed, no occupation shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed development and infrastructure phasing plan. Or 3. All Surface water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed. Reason - Network reinforcement works may be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid flooding and/or potential pollution incidents. The developer can request information to support the discharge of this condition by visiting the Thames Water website at thameswater.co.uk/preplanning. Should the Local Planning Authority consider the above recommendation inappropriate or are unable to include it in the decision notice, it is important that the Local Planning Authority liaises with Thames Water Development Planning Department (e-mail: devcon.team@thameswater.co.uk) prior to the planning application approval.

The foul water network in this catchment is impacted by high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. Care must be taken when designing new networks to ensure they don't surcharge and cause flooding. Whilst design and construction guidance for sewers allows for an element of infiltration, we would expect in high risk areas such as this that additional precautions are taken to minimise infiltration; this should be in the form of the installation of leak tight liners within sewers and resin injection to seal chambers. This will help to mitigate the risk of flooding in the vicinity of the development (e.g. reduce property flood risk and travel disruption in the locality) and also help to reduce the risk of pollutions in the wider environment, particularly considering the impact of climate change. In the longer term, Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering public sewer networks.

The surface water network in this catchment is impacted by high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. Care must be taken when designing new networks to ensure they don't surcharge and cause flooding. Whilst design and construction guidance for sewers allows for an element of infiltration, we would expect in high risk areas such as this that additional precautions are taken to minimise infiltration; this should be in the form of the installation of leak tight liners within sewers and resin injection to seal

chambers. This will help to mitigate the risk of flooding in the vicinity of the development (e.g. reduce property flood risk and travel disruption in the locality) and also help to reduce the risk of pollutions in the wider environment, particularly considering the impact of climate change. Developers must liaise with the LLFA to agree an appropriate sustainable surface water strategy following the sequential approach before considering connection to the public sewer network. This must also ensure that the design of any SUDS or surface water management solution conveys exceedance flows away from public sewer networks. In the longer term, Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering public sewer networks.

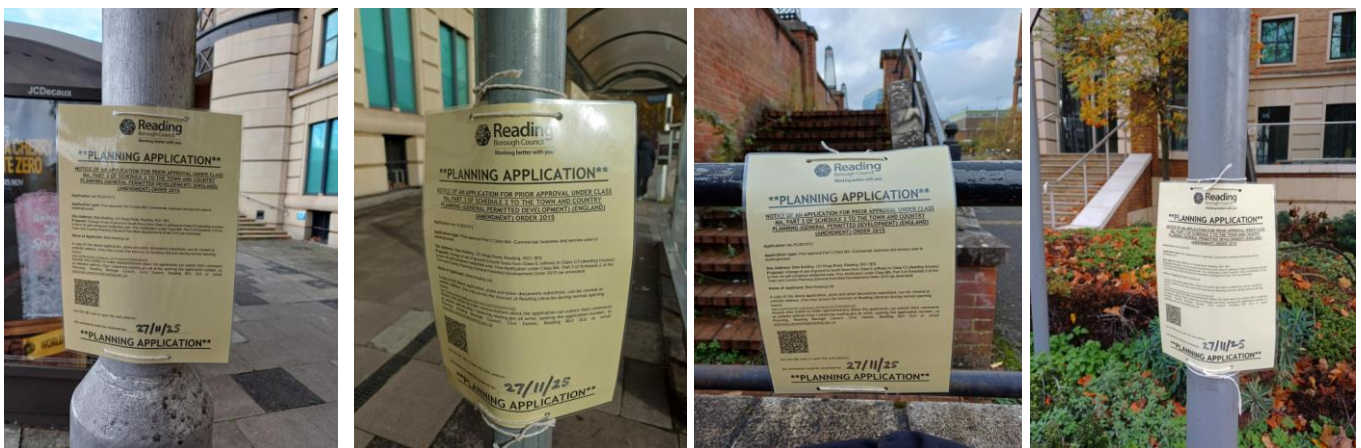
Water Comments: If you are planning on using mains water for construction purposes, it's important you let Thames Water know before you start using it, to avoid potential fines for improper usage. More information and how to apply can be found online at thameswater.co.uk/buildingwater.

On the basis of information provided, Thames Water would advise that with regard to water network and water treatment infrastructure capacity, we would not have any objection to the above planning application. Thames Water recommends the following informative be attached to this planning permission. Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

Supplementary Comments: Thames Water advise that a drainage strategy should contain the points of connection to the public sewerage system as well as the anticipated flows (including flow calculation method) into the proposed connection points. This data can then be used to determine the impact of the proposed development on the existing sewer system. If the drainage strategy is not acceptable Thames Water will request that an impact study be undertaken.

4.8 Public consultation:

Four site notices were display around the application site from 06/11/2025, expiring on 27/11/2025. No responses have been received.



5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 The application has been submitted to determine whether prior approval is required in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Class MA involves development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class E (commercial, business

and service) of Schedule 2 to the Use Classes Order to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to that Order.

5.2 Before development can be carried out under Class MA, the developer must submit a Prior Notification to determine if 'Prior Approval' of the Local Planning Authority is required in respect of the following matters:

- (a) transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access;
- (b) contamination risks in relation to the building;
- (c) flooding risks in relation to the building;
- (d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development;
- (e) where—
 - (i) the building is located in a conservation area, and
 - (ii) the development involves a change of use of the whole or part of the ground floor, the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area;
- (f) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses;
- (g) the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses; and
- (h) where the development involves the loss of services provided by—
 - (i) a registered nursery, or
 - (ii) a health centre maintained under section 2 or 3 of the National Health Service Act the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost.
- (i) where the development meets the fire risk condition, the fire safety impacts on the intended occupants of the building

5.3 Class MA requires development to be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date. Any building permitted to be used as a dwellinghouse by virtue of Class MA is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the use as a dwellinghouse.

5.4 If the Local Planning Authority determine that Prior Approval is required, Paragraph W of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) states that the Local Planning Authority should, when determining an application, have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 'so far as relevant to the subject matter of the prior approval, as if the application were a planning application' (Paragraph W, para 10b).

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The proposal comprises the change of use of the building from Class E (office) to Class C3 (dwellinghouse) with the proposal to be considered against the criteria and conditions contained within Part 3, of Class MA.1. (1) (a)-(g), of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

6.2 In addition, in order to qualify for assessment under Class MA, all applications submitted under this class from 6th April 2021 must comply with Department for Communities and Local Government's Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards, minimum space standards. As the application was received after the 6th April 2021 there is a requirement to comply with these minimum space standards. In this regard, it is confirmed that all the proposed units comply with these minimum space standards, as illustrated in the accompanying plans and the accommodation schedule.

Criteria MA.1.—(1)

6.3 **Parts (a) (three month vacancy) and (c) (Floorspace qualification) were removed from the legislation on 5th March 2024 and so are no longer assessed.**

6.4 **(b) Previous use qualification – development not permitted “*unless the use of the building fell within one or more of the classes specified in subparagraph (2) for a continuous period of at least 2 years prior to the date of the application for prior approval;*”**

Complies. It can be confirmed that the use of the building fell within Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) for a continuous period of at least 2 years prior to the date of the application for prior approval.

6.5 **(d) Land designation criteria – “*If land covered by, or within the curtilage of, the building***

- (i) is or forms part of a site of special scientific interest;***
- (ii) is or forms part of a listed building or land within its curtilage;***
- (iii) is or forms part of a scheduled monument or land within its curtilage;***
- (iv) is or forms part of a safety hazard area; or***
- (v) is or forms part of a military explosives storage area;”***

The site does not form part of a site of special scientific interest, listed building nor land within its curtilage, a Scheduled monument or land within its curtilage, safety hazard area, nor military explosive storage area.

6.6 **(e) Landscape designation criteria – “*if the building is within—***

- (i) an area of outstanding natural beauty;***
- (ii) an area specified by the Secretary of State for the purposes of section 41(3) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;***
- (iii) the Broads;***
- (iv) a National Park; or***
- (v) a World Heritage Site;”***

It can be confirmed the site is not within a landscape designation criteria.

6.7 **(f) Agricultural tenancy criteria – “*If the site is occupied under an agricultural tenancy, unless the express consent of both the landlord and the tenant has been obtained;*”**

It can be confirmed the site is not occupied under an agricultural tenancy.

6.8 **(g) Previous use criteria - “*before 1 August 2022, if—***

- (i) the proposed development is of a description falling within Class O of this Part as that Class had effect immediately before 1st August 2021; and***
- (ii) the development would not have been permitted under Class O immediately before 1st August 2021 by virtue of the operation of a direction under article 4(1) of this Order which has not since been cancelled in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 3.***

Complies.

6.9 Conditions

6.10 MA.2.—(1) Confirms that development under Class MA is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to—

- (a) transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access;
- (b) contamination risks in relation to the building;
- (c) flooding risks in relation to the building;
- (d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development;
- (e) where—
 - (i) the building is located in a conservation area, and
 - (ii) the development involves a change of use of the whole or part of the ground floor, the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area;
- (f) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses;
- (g) the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses; and
- (h) where the development involves the loss of services provided by—
 - (i) a registered nursery, or
 - (ii) a health centre maintained under section 2 or 3 of the National Health Service Act 2006,the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost.
- (i) where the development meets the fire risk condition, the fire safety impacts on the intended occupants of the building and the provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) apply in relation to that application.

6.11 Assessment of MA.2.—(1)

6.12 (a) Transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access

As per the Transport observations at section 4 above, the proposals are considered acceptable from a transport perspective, subject to a series of conditions regarding the provision of parking (as shown), the accesses (as shown), being provided with future address details and these addresses not being automatically entitled to on-street parking permit(s).

6.13 (b) Contamination risks in relation to the building

A contaminated land assessment has been submitted with the application. This has been reviewed by RBC Environmental Protection Officers who are satisfied with the conclusion of the report there the development is at low risk of contamination and that no mitigation is required.

6.14 (c) Flooding risks in relation to the building

A flood risk assessment has been submitted within the application. Given the site is wholly within Flood Zone 1 the Environment Agency has not been consulted (as they are not required to be). The FRA considers various flooding scenarios, with the only possible risk identified being key routes being at risk from fluvial and pluvial flooding. The report states occupiers will be required to sign up to the EA's flood line to receive flood warnings. Officers consider that it is not necessary for this to be formally secured via condition in this instance and are satisfied that information submitted is acceptable, given the evidenced low risk of flooding to future occupiers.

6.15 (d) Impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development

A noise assessment has been submitted with the application. This concludes that the development would not be impacted by unacceptable commercial noise impacts with the closest commercial noise sources not audible at the site. RBC Environmental Protection Officers are satisfied with the results of the noise assessment and that no commercial noise mitigation is required. The noise assessment notes that road noise is the main source of noise at the site, but the prior approval legislation is clear that for this type of application only commercial noise impacts can be taken into account. As such, whilst RBC Environmental Protection recommends applicant ensures suitable glazing and ventilation are selected to protect the occupants from road noise, there is no basis to require this as part of the application. In the circumstances, it is recommended that an informative advising the applicant of the EP advice is stated.

6.16 (e) where— (i) the building is located in a conservation area, and (ii) the development involves a change of use of the whole or part of the ground floor, the impact of that change of use on the character or sustainability of the conservation area;

The site is not located within a conservation area.

6.17 (f) the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the dwellinghouses

Statutory Instrument 2020:632 introduces the requirement that consideration is given in respect to the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms. This requires examination of the detailed floor plans and a judgement to be exercised as to whether appropriate levels of light can be achieved to rooms used for sleeping or living. This excludes bathrooms, service rooms, corridor, laundry rooms and hallways.

The building requires some external alterations, namely provision of additional windows, for appropriate levels of light to be provided to all rooms (specifically this is at first floor level, where internal alterations will facilitate an existing double height space becoming a single storey space and two windows are proposed either side of the existing window (see photographs below) to serve flat 14 at first floor level. The applicant made a separate planning application, ref. PL/25/1572, which was approved on 17/12/2025. The works approved as part of that application, which for completeness are clearly marked on the proposed plans as part of this application too, would ensure that all habitable rooms would receive appropriate levels of daylight, and a condition is proposed to ensure that the works under ref. PL/25/1572 are completed prior to occupation of the units proposed as part of this application. Such an approach has been undertaken elsewhere in the Borough (including at both neighbouring buildings – see relevant history section above) and been allowed in appeal scenarios and at the High Court. It is therefore an established and accepted procedure.

An internal daylight assessment has been submitted with the application and this demonstrates that all rooms would receive adequate levels of natural light following the completion of the works proposed under the separate planning permission. An officer site visit also verified the location and size of the windows have been accurately shown on the plans and within the report submitted.





- 6.18 **(g) the impact on intended occupiers of the development of the introduction of residential use in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses**

The site is not within a core employment area or located in an area the authority considers to be important for general or heavy industry, waste management, storage and distribution, or a mix of such uses.

- 6.19 **(h) where the development involves the loss of services provided by— (i) a registered nursery, or (ii) a health centre maintained under section 2 or 3 of the National Health Service Act 2006, the impact on the local provision of the type of services lost.**

The development does not result in the loss of services provided by a registered nursery, or health centre maintained under the relevant sections.

- 6.20 **(i) where the development meets the fire risk condition, the fire safety impacts on the intended occupants of the building**

Whilst the applicant submitted a Fire Statement, during the course of the application it was demonstrated that the building is below the Gateway One threshold and, as such, the HSE did not comment on the proposal. Given the development does not meet the fire risk condition, this part of the legislation is not engaged.

- 6.21 **3) An application for prior approval for development under Class MA may not be made before 1 August 2021.**

The application was received on 3 November 2025, so complies.

- 6.22 **(4) The provisions of paragraph W (prior approval) of this Part apply in relation to an application under this paragraph as if –**

(a) for paragraph (e) of sub-paragraph (2) there were substituted—

“(e) where—

(i) sub-paragraph (6) requires the Environment Agency to be consulted, a site-specific flood risk assessment;

(ii) sub-paragraph (6A) requires the Health and Safety Executive to be consulted, a statement about the fire safety design principles, concepts and standards that have been applied to the development.”; 32

(b) in the introductory words in sub-paragraph (5), for “and highways impacts of the development” there were substituted “impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access”;

(c) after sub-paragraph (6) there were inserted—

“(6A)Where the application relates to prior approval as to fire safety impacts, on receipt of the application, the local planning authority must consult the Health and Safety Executive.”

Relevant elements complied with by the LPA.

6.23 **(5) Development must be completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date.**

Will be secured via condition.

6.24 **(6) Any building permitted to be used as a dwellinghouse by virtue of Class MA is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the use as a dwellinghouse.]**

Will be secured via condition.

6.25 **Other matters**

It is noted that the RBC Waste Services consultation response sought for a condition to be secured. Planning Officers however are content with the information provided by the applicant and, moreover, it is considered to be beyond the scope of this application to secure such matters via condition.

It is also noted that Thames Water has made a series of comments (see section 4 above), requesting pre-occupation conditions in relation to foul water infrastructure / drainage and surface water infrastructure / drainage. A series of other comments are also made, including an informative in respect of water pressure and public sewerage. Officers consider that the matters raised by Thames Water are beyond the scope of this application, with it not possible to include the conditions proposed by Thames Water. Instead, an informative is recommended to be included to advise the applicant to address these matters as part of the implementation of these proposals.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Prior Approval is REQUIRED and GIVEN, subject to conditions:

1. This development under Class MA is permitted subject to it being completed within a period of 3 years starting with the prior approval date on this decision notice.

REASON: To comply with the requirement of paragraph MA.2.—(5) of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

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

- 1364.6-050 - Proposed Block Plan
- 1364.6-100 - Proposed Basement Floor Plan

As all received on 03/11/2025

- 1364.6-101 - Proposed Ground & First Floor Plan
- 1364.6-103 - Proposed Fourth & Roof Floor Plan
- 1364.6-200 – Proposed Front Elevation (South)
- 1364.6-203 - Proposed North Elevation

As all received on 12/11/2025

- 1364.6-102 - Proposed Second & Third Floor Plan
- 1364.6-201 - Proposed West Elevation
- 1364.6-202 - Proposed East Elevation

As all received on 13/11/2025

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. Any building permitted to be used as a dwellinghouse by virtue of Class MA is to remain in use as a dwellinghouse within the meaning of Class C3 of Schedule 1 to the Use Classes Order and for no other purpose, except to the extent that the other purpose is ancillary to the use as a dwellinghouse.

REASON: To comply with the requirement of paragraph MA.2.—(6) of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

4. The dwellings hereby permitted shall not be occupied until all vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with the plan (ref. 1364.6-100 - Proposed Basement Floor Plan, as received on 03/11/2025) hereby approved. The spaces shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter.

REASON: 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 TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

5. No residential unit hereby approved shall be occupied until the Local Planning Authority has been notified in writing of the full postal address of the units hereby approved. The notification shall be sent to the Local Planning Authority quoting the application reference specified on this Notice.

REASON: In order that the Council can update its records to ensure that parking permits are not automatically issued to the occupiers of the new residential units hereby approved, and thus ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

6. Prior to any agreement being entered into for a new occupation of, or transfer of any interest in, the residential units hereby approved, the prospective occupier/transferee shall be informed that there is no automatic entitlement to a car parking permit for any existing residential parking permit schemes and future schemes on adjacent and surrounding streets. All material used for advertising or marketing the residential units for letting or sale shall make it clear to prospective

tenants and occupiers that they will not be automatically entitled to a parking permit, but any application for a parking permit will be considered on its merits.

REASON: In order that the prospective occupiers are made aware of the fact that while they can submit an application they will not be automatically entitled to an on-street car parking permit. In the interests of the proper management of parking, and to ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

7. No dwelling hereby approved shall be occupied until the works approved under planning permission ref. PL/25/1572 on 17/12/2025, namely *“Installation of two windows at first floor level on the south elevation, provision of a single door following removal of a canopy and associated revolving door at ground floor level on the north elevation and installation of one projecting smokeshaft and two automatic opening vents at roof level.”*, have been completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of that application, including the relevant approved plans: 1364.6-050 - Proposed Block Plan, as received on 03/11/2025, 1364.6-101 - Proposed Ground & First Floor Plan, 1364.6-103 - Proposed Fourth & Roof Floor Plan, 1364.6-200 – Proposed Front Elevation (South), 1364.6-203 - Proposed North Elevation, as all received on 12/11/2025, 1364.6 - 201 - Proposed West Elevation & 1364.6 - 202 - Proposed East Elevation, as both received on 13/11/2025. The separately approved works shall be retained and maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that every habitable room received adequate levels of daylight, in accordance with Local Plan Policy H5 and part (f) of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

Informatives

1. The proposal meets the relevant criteria set out in Class MA.
2. The applicant is advised that this decision represents the determination of the Local Planning Authority in respect of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) as to whether Prior Approval is required in respect of the change of use only. Class MA does NOT afford any permitted development rights for external works which affect the exterior of the building in order to implement the change of use.
3. There is a widespread problem in Reading with rats as the rats are being encouraged by poor waste storage which provides them with a food source. Where developments involve shared bin storage areas e.g. flats and hotels there is a greater risk of rats being able to access the waste due to holes being chewed in the base of the large wheelie bins or due to occupants or passers not putting waste inside bins, or bins being overfilled. Where developments involve a food related business then there is a greater risk of rats being attracted to the waste. It is therefore important for the bin store to be vermin proof to prevent rats accessing the waste and for the correct waste bin capacity to be provided so that waste is not deposited outside of bins.
4. 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. 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.

5. The occupiers of the residential unit(s) will not be automatically entitled to an on-street car parking permit. Current and new occupiers should be informed of this and be advised to find out more about parking permits on the Council's website. There is already a high level of on street car parking in the area and the site is located close to local facilities, with frequent public transport services on nearby roads.
6. It is noted that the Noise Assessment acknowledges that noise levels at the site are dictated by road traffic noise emissions from Kings Road. The Council's Environmental Protection team therefore recommends that the applicant considers this and ensures suitable glazing and ventilation are selected to protect the future occupants from road noise.
7. Thames Water has made a series of comments on these proposals, which you are strongly advised to take into account as soon as possible.

In terms of foul water infrastructure / drainage, it is advised that prior to the occupation of any residential unit that you confirm to Thames Water whether 1. Foul water Capacity exists off site to serve the development, or 2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water, and carried out in full, or 3. All Foul water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed. The reason for this request by Thames Water is as network reinforcement works may be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid sewage flooding and/or potential pollution incidents. Thames Water advise that you can request information to support the above via the Thames Water website at thameswater.co.uk/preplanning.

In terms of waste water infrastructure and surface water drainage, it is advised that prior to the occupation of any residential unit that you confirm to Thames Water whether 1. Surface water capacity exists off site to serve the development or 2. A development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with the Local Authority in consultation with Thames Water, and carried out in full, or 3. All Surface water network upgrades required to accommodate the additional flows from the development have been completed. The reason for this request by Thames Water is as network reinforcement works may be required to accommodate the proposed development. Any reinforcement works identified will be necessary in order to avoid flooding and/or potential pollution incidents. Thames Water advise that you can request information to support the above via the Thames Water website at thameswater.co.uk/preplanning.

Thames Water advise that the foul water network in this catchment is impacted by high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. Care must be taken when designing new networks to ensure they don't surcharge and cause flooding. Whilst design and construction guidance for sewers allows for an element of infiltration, Thames Water would expect in high risk areas such as this that additional precautions are taken to minimise infiltration; this should be in the form of the installation of leak tight liners within sewers and resin injection to seal chambers. This will help to mitigate the risk of flooding in the vicinity of the development (e.g. reduce property flood risk and travel disruption in the locality) and also help to reduce the risk of pollutions in the wider environment, particularly considering the impact of climate change. In the longer term, Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering public sewer networks.

Thames Water advise that the surface water network in this catchment is impacted by high infiltration flows during certain groundwater conditions. Care must be taken when designing new networks to ensure they don't surcharge and cause flooding. Whilst design and construction guidance for sewers allows for an element of infiltration, Thames Water would expect in high risk areas such as this that additional precautions are taken to minimise infiltration; this should be in

the form of the installation of leak tight liners within sewers and resin injection to seal chambers. This will help to mitigate the risk of flooding in the vicinity of the development (e.g. reduce property flood risk and travel disruption in the locality) and also help to reduce the risk of pollutions in the wider environment, particularly considering the impact of climate change. Developers must liaise with the LLFA to agree an appropriate sustainable surface water strategy following the sequential approach before considering connection to the public sewer network. This must also ensure that the design of any SUDS or surface water management solution conveys exceedance flows away from public sewer networks. In the longer term, Thames Water, along with other partners, are working on a strategy to reduce groundwater entering public sewer networks.

Water Comments by Thames Water: If you are planning on using mains water for construction purposes, it's important you let Thames Water know before you start using it, to avoid potential fines for improper usage. More information and how to apply can be found online at thameswater.co.uk/buildingwater. Thames Water advise that they have no objection with regard to water network and water treatment infrastructure capacity matters. Thames Water wishes to advise the developer that Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10m head (approx 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres/minute at the point where it leaves Thames Waters pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

Finally, Thames Water advise that a drainage strategy should contain the points of connection to the public sewerage system as well as the anticipated flows (including flow calculation method) into the proposed connection points. This data can then be used to determine the impact of the proposed development on the existing sewer system. If the drainage strategy is not acceptable Thames Water will request that an impact study be undertaken.