

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

Our ref: WA/2026/132976/01-L01
Your ref: PL/26/0091
Date: 12 March 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

External works to partial areas of all elevations at ground floor level and all areas of each elevation from 1st to 7th floor level, including replacement windows and doors, installation of brickwork following removal of existing glazing, the provision of Juliet balconies on all elevations and protruding balconies on the east and south elevations at 2nd floor level and above, and other associated works

Abbey Gardens, 4-6 Abbey Street, Reading, RG1 3BA

Thank you for consulting us on the development proposed above, on 3 March 2026.

We have reviewed the following documents:

2026/01/26 - A - FRA - Abbey Gardens Cladding.pdf
Planning Statement
Planning, Design and Access Statement, HGH, January 2026
Design and Access Statement, Sada Architecture, February 2026
Site Layout Plan, Drawing No. 8-200, Sada Architecture, October 2024
Existing Floor Plans (Ground - Seventh), Drawing Nos. 8-210 - 8-217, Sada Architecture, January 2026
Existing Roof Plan, Drawing No. 8-218, Sada Architecture, January 2026
Existing Sections, Drawing No. 8-240, Sada Architecture, July 2025
Existing Elevations (East & West, North & South, South & Central), Drawing Nos. 8-250 - 8-252, Sada Architecture, July 2025
Proposed Floor Plans (Ground - Seventh), Drawing Nos. 8-310 - 8-317, Sada Architecture, January 2026
Proposed Roof Plan, Drawing No. 8-318, Sada Architecture, January 2026
Proposed Sections, Drawing No. 8-400, Sada Architecture, July 2025
Detail Sections, Drawing No. 8-450, Sada Architecture, July 2025
Existing Elevations (East & West, North & South, South & Central), Drawing Nos. 8-500 - 8-502, Sada Architecture, July 2025
Proposed Floor Plans Phase 2 (Ground and First Floor), Drawing Nos. 8-310.2, 8-311.2, Sada Architecture, January 2026

We welcome the intention to include bat boxes, swift bricks and sparrow ledges as described in Part 9.0 of the Design and Access Statement. We hope that these ecological enhancements are incorporated via an appropriate mechanism on any planning permission granted.

Environment Agency position

The proposed development will only meet the NPPF's requirements in relation to flood risk if the following planning **condition** is included.

Condition

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment (2026/01/26 - A - FRA - Abbey Gardens Cladding.pdf) and the mitigation measures contained therein.

These mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the scheme's timing/phasing arrangements. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason

To reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development and future occupants. This is supported by Policy EN18 of the Review of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 – March 2023. The river is highly constrained at this location and we wish to secure the storage capacity of the floodplain.

Environmental permit - advice to applicant

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit to be obtained for any activities which will take place:

- on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culverted main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
- involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- in the floodplain of a main river if the activity could affect flood flow or storage and potential impacts are not controlled by a planning permission

For further guidance please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits> or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506. 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.

Final comments

Please note that this response is based on the information provided at this time and if this changes in the future, we would need to consider our position again. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In accordance with the Planning Practice Guidance ([Determining a planning application](#), paragraph 019), please notify us by email within two weeks of a decision being made or

if the application is withdrawn. Please provide us with a URL of the decision notice, or an electronic copy of the decision notice or outcome.

Yours faithfully

Miss Liz Denham
Planning Advisor

Team e-mail: planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk