

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Whitley

App Ref: PL/25/0803 Full planning permission

Address: LAND ADJACENT 524 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, READING RG2 8NY

Proposal: Construction of an attached two storey building to create a ground floor retail unit (Use Class E) and a self-contained 2 bedroom dwelling (Use Class C3) above with cycle and bin storage and external communal amenity space (amended).

Applicant: James Fitzgerald

Received date: 30/05/2025

Valid from: 29/7/2025

Target Decision date: 1/5/2026 (Ext)

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposal site is an unfenced vacant grassed plot of land adjacent to 524 Northumberland Avenue along with an area which is forward of the existing front building line to the back edge of the public highway (pavement). The site is degraded with graffiti and ongoing fly tipping. To the rear is overgrown brambles.

The adjacent development comprises an existing pitched roof, two-storey brick-built terrace of commercial premises at ground floor with residential above and car parking to the rear. It comprises traditional tiled roof, with painted rendered gable wall, red brickwork front elevation and uPVC white windows.

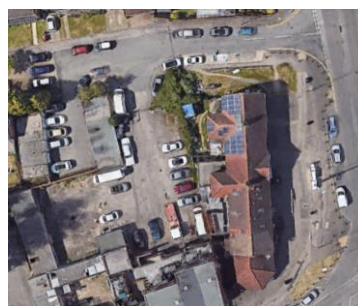
To the north is the residential street of Cooper Close with some on-street parking. There is on-street parking on Northumberland Avenue and Whitley Wood Road. The site is opposite a bus terminus point.

There is an existing access gate from Cooper's Close providing access across the site to the rear of the neighbouring properties, which the applicant also owns, comprising 524 & 530 flats at first floor, and 526 & 528 retail units at ground floor, currently Londis. Bin storage for the neighbouring flats 526 & 528 and the ground floor Londis shop are currently all stored in the rear yard.

The site is within the Northumberland Avenue Local Centre, and the adjacent premises are within the Key Frontage (Policies RL2, RL3). The site is within an Article 4 Area where permitted development rights have been removed for the change of use of commercial to residential.



Existing Block Plan



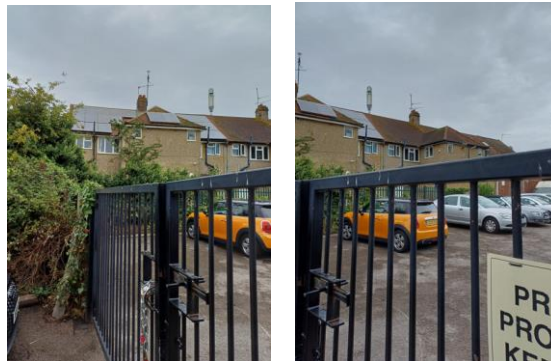
Google Earth Aerial Images

A site visit was undertaken on 2nd September 2025.



Front

Side



Rear

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The amended proposal includes a 2-storey building as a continuation of the existing mixed commercial/ residential terrace, with a proposed Class E (a) (Display/sale of goods other than hot food) commercial space to the ground floor with ca 38sqm tradeable area and a 63.4sqm 2-bedroom flat to the first floor. The refuse store for the ground floor commercial would be accessed from a side door, externally from Coopers Close. The internal layout of the retail unit has been designed to M4(3) standards, with accessible W/C and level access throughout.

To the rear there would be a communal amenity space, which would join with an existing amenity space intended for existing residents (flats 524 and 530) and the proposed flat along with access to a refuse store and external bike store for the proposed flat, all of which would be accessible via a new side gate from Cooper Close.

The proposed access point would, therefore, provide access for the residents in flats 526 and 528 and the new flat and for pulling across bins for the these three flats as well as the ground floor commercial unit (524 and 530).

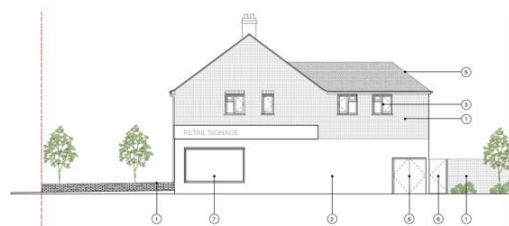
The proposed materials would be to match existing.

Supporting information

Plans and other information considered:

- Drawing no: 913-00-010 Rev B – Existing Location Plan, received 21st October 2025
- Drawing no: 913-00-100 Rev B - Existing - Ground Floor Plan, received 21st October 2025
- Drawing no: 913-00-101 Rev B - Existing - First Floor Plan, received 21st October 2025
- Drawing no: 913-00-102 Rev B - Existing – Roof Floor Plan, received 21st October 2025
- Drawing no: 913-00-300 Rev B - Existing – Front Elevation, received 21st October 2025
- Drawing no: 913-00-301, dated 26/5/25 – Existing – Side Elevation, received 20th May 2025
- Drawing no: 913-00-302 Rev B – Existing – Rear Elevation, received 21st October 2025

- Drawing no: 913-10-011 Rev B - Proposed – Block Plan, received 21st October 2025
- Drawing no: 913-10-100 Rev D - Proposed – Ground Floor Plan, received 24th November 2025
- Drawing no: 913-10-101 Rev D – Proposed – First Floor Plan, received 24th November 2025
- Drawing no: 913-10-102 Rev C – Proposed – Roof Floor Plan, received 24th November 2025
- Drawing no: 913-10-200 Rev A - Proposed – Section, received 24th November 2025
- Drawing no: 913-10-300 Rev C– Proposed – Front Elevation, received 24th November 2025
- Drawing no: 913-10-301 Rev A - Proposed – Side Elevation, received 24th November 2025
- Drawing no: 913-10-302 Rev D - Proposed – Rear Elevation, received 24th November 2025
- Planning Statement, Rev 2 4/7/25, prepared by Studio Mac, received 29th July 2025
- Design and Access Statement, Rev 4 21/11/25 Including Landscape Principles, prepared by Studio Mac, received 24th November 2025
- Affordable Housing Statement, dated 11/7/25, prepared by Studio Mac, received 29th July 2025
- Energy and Sustainability Statement, July 2025 rev A, prepared by EAS Transport Planning Limited, Received 29th July 2025
- Biodiversity Gain Plan, received 29th July 2025
- Biodiversity Plans, received 24th November 2025
- The Small Sites Metric, received 24th November 2025



Existing Front and Side

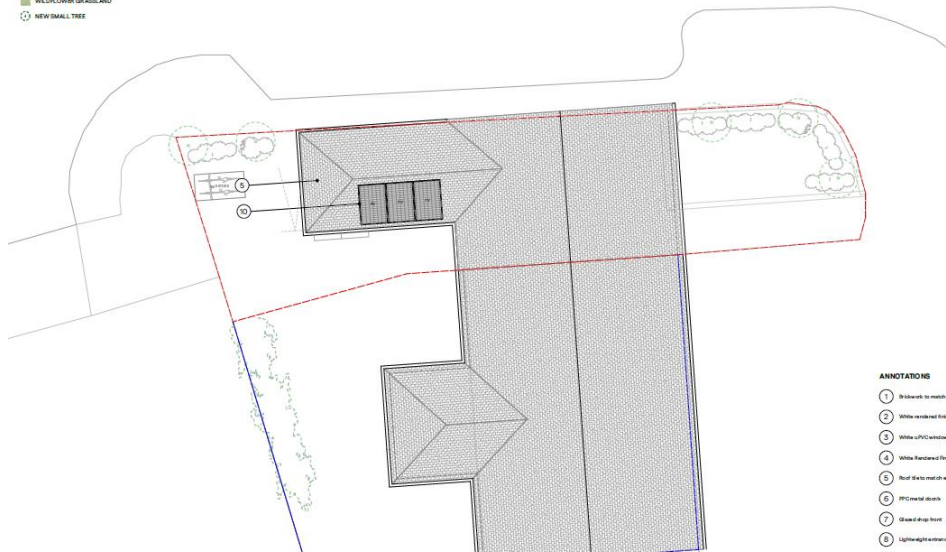
Proposed Front and Side



Proposed Rear Elevation

- LEGEND**
- SITE BOUNDARY
 - OWNED PROPERTY
 - EXISTING BRAMBLES
 - INTRODUCED SHRUB
 - WILDOFLOWER GRASSLAND
 - NEW SMALL TREE

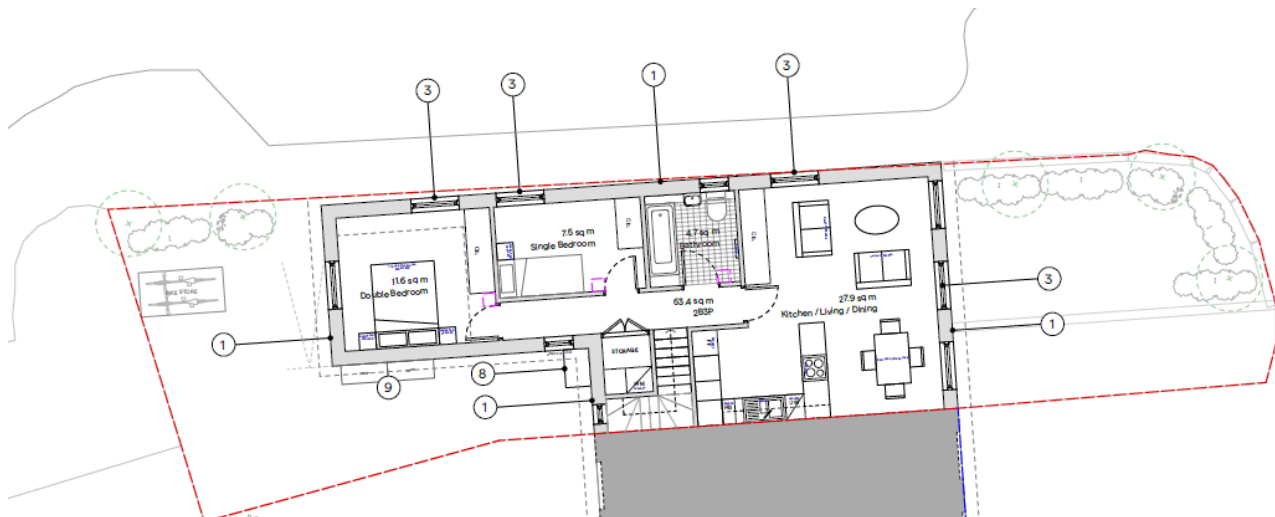
COOPER CLOSE



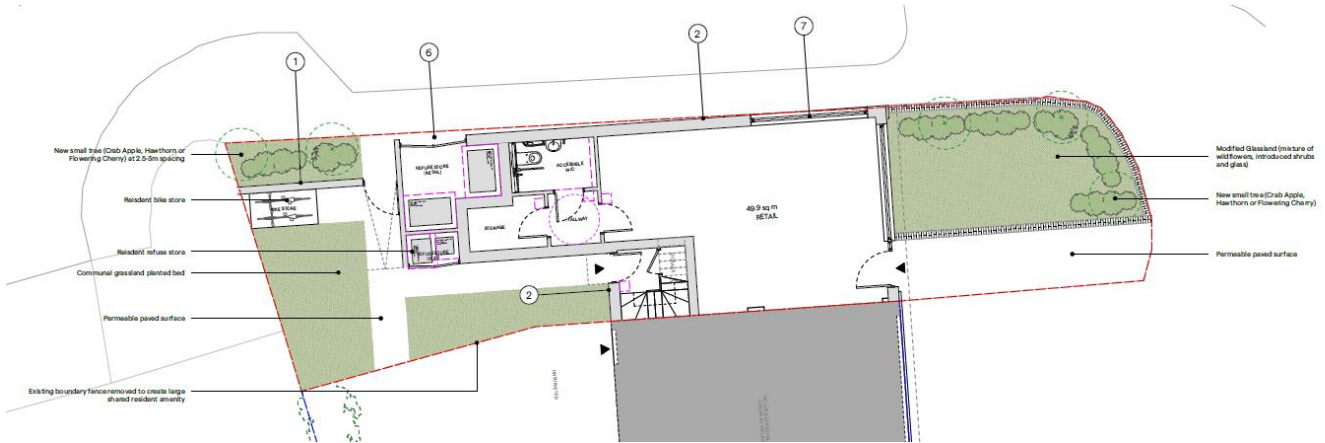
ANNOTATIONS

- ① Brickwork to match existing terrace
- ② White rendered finish
- ③ White uPVC windows to match existing terrace
- ④ White rendered finish
- ⑤ Roof slates to match existing terrace
- ⑥ uPVC metal doors
- ⑦ Ground level
- ⑧ Lightweight entrance porch
- ⑨ uPVC metal door

Proposed Roof Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



Proposed Ground Floor/ Site Plan

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

23574 – Development on land adjoining No. 524 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, by the erection of a shop with flat over. Refused 27/9/1974 for the following reasons:

- That the detailed plans do not conform to the outline consent
- That the proposed external staircase would prejudice the activities of adjoining properties
- That the proposed development would, in Cooper Close, establish an unsatisfactory building line
- That the proposed development would affect the amenities of adjoining properties

89/00043/FUL (New ref: 89/0594) Construction of two storey building to comprise a ground floor retail unit, first floor self-contained flat with ground floor access - Approved 19/5/1989

05/00355/FUL (New ref: PL/05/0507) - Construction of a two-storey building to comprise ground floor retail unit and first floor self-contained flat with access on land adjacent to 524 Northumberland Avenue – Withdrawn 20/6/2005

4. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was erected on 7th August 2025.



No letters of representation have been received.

Transport Development Control - The site is located in Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically, these areas are within 40m 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.

This application seeks to construct a 2 storey building to create a retail unit on the ground floor measuring 51.sqm and 2 bedroom unit on the first floor.

Policy TR5 states that development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport. In accordance with the Council's current parking standards and Design SPD the 2- bedroom residential unit would require 1.5 spaces. Plans do not illustrate any parking provision which, therefore, does not comply with the Council's current standards. The Design and Access statement states that no new parking spaces will be created on site, and residents will be able to utilise the existing on street parking on Cooper Close. Given the adjacent road is currently unrestricted, the non-provision of parking would not be supported as the development would increase on street parking unless the applicant can provide car ownership data justifying a car free development. The latter has not been provided.

It is also noted that the surrounding area is also heavily utilised by residents parking vehicles and, therefore, insufficient space exists for any additional parking.

Bin storage should comply with Manual for Streets and British Standard 5906: 2005 for Waste Management in Buildings and should be located no further than 15m from the access point of the site to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. Extract of the proposed ground floor plan below appear to illustrate doors for the refuse storage area for the retail unit and another door opening out on to the public footway this would be in contravention of the Highways Act 1980, Section 153. A separate refuse area for the residential unit has been illustrated on plans, however this area is accessed via a gate, the refuse team would need to be contacted to agree if this provision is acceptable.

Information has not been provided stating what the Class E commercial use on the ground floor would be. Given that class E covers a variety of uses, confirmation on the proposed use would be required in order to calculate required parking and cycle provision.

It is not clear what the permeable paved surface area identified is to be used for. Clarification is required. It should be noted this area cannot be used for parking as it is adjacent to a times restricted parking layby and the creation of a vehicle access would result in loss of parking within the bay and provide vehicular access onto the wider footway to the detriment of Highway safety.

Cycle storage has been illustrated on plans for the residential unit which complies with the Council's current adopted standards.

The Highway Authority objects to the proposal on the following grounds.

The proposed development does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of vehicle parking. This could result in on-street parking/reversing movements on Cooper Close and/or Northumberland Avenue, adversely affecting road safety and the flow of traffic, and in conflict with Local Plan Policies TR3 and TR5.

Insufficient information has been submitted with the planning application to enable the highways, traffic and transportation implications of the proposed development to be fully assessed in relation to the area to the frontage of the site. From the information submitted, it is considered that the additional traffic likely to be generated by the proposal would adversely affect the safety and flow of users of the existing road network within Reading, contrary to Policy TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

The proposed development does not comply with the Local Planning Authority's standards in respect of secure cycle storage provision for the retail unit. This is in direct conflict with Local Plan Policy TR5.

Planning Officer Note: See Appraisal below.

Natural Environment (Trees) – No objections - The current soft landscape within the site consists of only grass and bramble. There are no trees present within its boundary.

With reference to the Design and Access Statement, 28th May 2025, Project No. 913, Revision 1, I note the following:

The Landscape Principles section of the DAS, and shown on Proposed Ground Floor Plan DRAWING NO. 913-10-100, offers to make improvements to the soft landscaping within the site. It proposes to plant 5no. new trees when there is currently none. It also offers to include '*New Wildflower Grassland planting to both rear communal amenity space and public landscaped area*' as well as '*Introduced pollinating shrubs*'. This is a significant improvement to the current soft landscaping.

We encourage that the tree species chosen are native/naturalised or wildlife friendly, and that a palette of species are chosen to promote diversity. This will aid the proposal to meet with the planting aims of our Tree Strategy. The tree species choice can be secured via a condition, alongside other landscaping.

To conclude, I have no objections to the application as it offers a vast improvement to the soft landscaping and current green space that is available subject to a condition to secure the landscaping and tree planting.

Environmental Protection - No objection subject to conditions regarding noisy working hours; no burning on site and vermin proof bin storage.

Ecology – Objection

Planning Officer Note: Following significant dialogue between Ecology and the applicant, and a number of iterations of the submitted biodiversity information, Ecology maintained their view that the proposed scheme would not meet 10% BNG. Please see appraisal below.

Waste – The single residential dwelling would need to have space for at least 1 x 140L general waste bin, 1 x 240L recycling bin and 1 x 23L food waste bin. However, developers should 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. Note: glass can currently only be recycled at local glass bottle banks or the tip.

The commercial unit would also need to have a separate space for general waste, recycling and food waste receptacles as a minimum. I don't think the bin store is big enough for that currently. By 31 March 2027, all businesses will be required to recycle food waste and glass as well as the standard mixed dry recycling.

Is this development owned by the same person who owns the attached building with shops and flats above? If it is the same owner, it may be better for all the flats above the shops to have shared bins rather than individual. But that usually only works if the building is owned/managed by the same person.

Would it be possible for the bin store to be placed where the bike store is currently and made bigger?

We would collect both the residential bins and commercial bins from the rear/side of the property on Cooper Close.

There would need to be a dropped kerb for the crews to be able to manoeuvre the bins to the back of the vehicle nearby, and the doors must not prohibit access to the store by the crews. There is info the developer should look at on the website here - <https://www.reading.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/waste-management-guidelines-for-property-developers-architects-planners-contractors-managing-agents-and-landlords/> particularly section 3.4 to 3.6.

Please be aware that if 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 would retrieve the residential bins from the bin store as long as the bin pulling distance (measured from the rear of the collection vehicle to the furthest away bin) is less than 14m for the smaller bins and less than 10m for the 1100L bins. It is not possible to tell the distance from the plans provided. If not the bins would need to be presented for collection and retrieved promptly afterwards.

The bin pulling route must also be hard standing with a dropped kerb and no other obstructions such as bike stores or parked cars. If there is parking that impedes access for waste collection vehicles on collection day or makes it unsafe for crews to access, the bins may not then be emptied until the next collection.

Planning Officer Note: Amendments were received during the course of the application, but final details would be secured via condition as at present the final commercial operator is not known.

Discussion with agent

There were amended plans submitted during the course of the application to address the internal layout and size of the first floor flat to meet national space standards, amendments to the cycle storage and bin storage and amendments to the front landscaped scheme and BNG information.

5. EQUALITY ACT 2010

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.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

National Planning Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 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
EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
EN15: Air Quality
EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
H1: Provision of Housing
H2: Density and Mix
H3: Affordable Housing
H5: Standards for New Housing
H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres
RL2: Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development
RL3: Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres
OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines

Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)
Design Guide to Shopfronts SPD (2022)

Emerging Local Plan

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 draft version of the Local Plan Partial Update was submitted for examination on 9th May 2025.

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.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy (aside from Policy H1, which is acknowledged to be out-of-date) and that the objectives of those policies remain 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’ (aside from Policy H1).

7. APPRAISAL

Main considerations:

The main issues to be considered are:

- i) Principle of development
- ii) Biodiversity
- iii) Design
- iv) Housing Standards
- v) Residential Amenity
- vi) Sustainability
- vii) Car/ Cycle Parking
- viii) Bin Storage
- ix) S106 and CIL
- x) Other

(i) Principle of development

The proposed scheme would contribute towards achieving the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development as required under the NPPF, through the provision of a commercial and residential development and enhanced space to the front.

It would support the efficient use of land and would contribute towards housing provision, in accordance with national and local policy, H1.

The application site is alongside the designated Key Frontage of the Whitley Wood Local Centre and within the designated Local Centre. Policy RL1 states that the vitality and availability of existing centres should be maintained and enhanced and sets out that broadening the range of facilities, residential use of upper floors and environmental enhancements, would be acceptable. The proposal would support this through broadening the range of facilities with residential above and would enhance an area of the local centre. Policy RL3 requires all new development within and adjacent to local centres to provide some 'centre uses' at the ground floor with uses including residential at upper floors being acceptable. The proposal would accord with this.

The principle of the proposed use would, therefore, be acceptable, subject to addressing relevant material considerations as set out below.

(ii) Biodiversity

In England, under the Environmental Act 2021, all new relevant, non-exempt development must achieve a measurable 10% increase in Biodiversity, compared with pre-development conditions, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Notwithstanding the national BNG requirements Policy EN12 also requires all developments to not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible.

Policy EN14 requires that new development should make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage.

The site comprises an area of grassland with a patch of bramble scrub at one end with baseline habitat units = 0.0627 Area Habitat Units (AHU). The proposed scheme includes two trees to the rear of the site, outside the boundary of the rear garden, but within the applicant's ownership and three trees in a small space to the front of the site along with wildflower grassland and shrubs. (see landscape principles plan below)

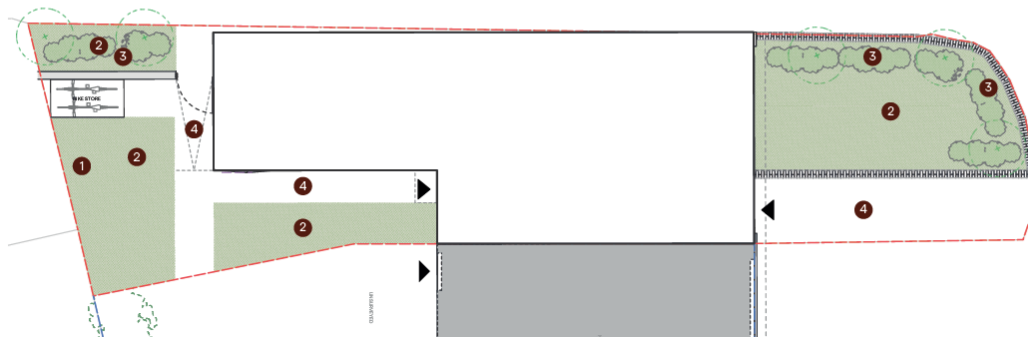
LEGEND

- SITE BOUNDARY
- INTRODUCED SHRUB
- WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND
- NEW SMALL TREE

LANDSCAPE PRINCIPLES

The following plan sets out the landscaping strategy for the site, including publically accessible areas.

- 1 Existing overgrown brambles removed
- 2 New Wildflower Grassland planting
- 3 Introduced pollinating shrubs like lavender
- 4 Hardscaped permeable paving, reducing surface water runoff



The submission included Biodiversity Gain Plan, Small Site's Metric & Baseline and Proposed Site Plans. The applicant considers that in excess of a 10% BNG would be achieved from the proposed scheme. During the course of the application, a number of amendments were made to the submitted information, including the detail of the calculation inputs and the detail of the landscaped areas for inclusion in the post development biodiversity net gain calculation. However, having reviewed all the submitted information, Ecology's view remains that 10% biodiversity net gain would not be achieved on site, because they do not consider that the scheme would be feasible to establish and be maintained for the required 30 year period so could not be included in the BNG calculation. Although the proposed trees would normally be considered "*significant on site enhancements*", because Ecology consider that they could not realistically be delivered for the 30 year period required by BNG, and their view that the applicant has not provided any evidence that these trees could be established or maintained for this period of time, they could not be included in the calculation. Their professional view is also that the calculation submitted is incorrect as well as information being inconsistent with other plans that have been submitted.

Ecology recognises that this does not mean the application could not be determined and confirm that any permission would be subject to the biodiversity gain condition which would require the submission of a biodiversity net gain plan prior to works commencing. However, if the BNG application proposal were submitted, Ecology would be likely to object and seek off-site contributions and this could affect the decision. The applicant does not agree with Ecology's conclusion; the applicant would need to clearly demonstrate 10% BNG, with evidence, when discharging the condition, which in Ecology's view should include corrected post development habitat plans and matching landscaping plans as part of the BGC along with the correct calculation.

However, the proposal does demonstrate an enhancement to tree planting, landscaping and a biodiversity net gain, in line with Policies EN12 and EN14, and the NPPG states "*it would generally be inappropriate for decision makers, when determining a planning application for a development subject to biodiversity net gain, to refuse an application on the grounds that the biodiversity gain objective will not be met.*" Subject to a landscaping condition, the Biodiversity Gain Condition informative, and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan submission and approval, the scheme is considered to meet relevant policy requirements.

(iii) **Design**

Policy CC7 requires all developments to be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.

The proposal would extend the existing mixed-use terrace with the same height and scale of building with a continuation of the roof line and eaves with the rear extension stepping down. There would be consistent window details to the front and rear reflecting the existing patterns of fenestration, maintaining the rhythm and proportion of the front elevation windows and shop frontage.

The proposed materials would match the adjacent terrace with white render to the ground floor with brick to the upper floor.

The windows and doors to the side would provide more visual interest and natural surveillance than the current arrangement. The rear would include a two-storey projection reflecting the existing adjacent pattern of development.

The proposal would include significant landscaped enhancements to the front and some formal planting to the rear, outside of the communal garden space boundary, but within the applicant's ownership. These aspects would improve the overall appearance of the site and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the wider area.

The internal layout of the flat has been designed to provide sufficient daylight levels to habitable rooms and has bedrooms to the side or rear.

It is considered that the overall design would accord with policy CC7.

(iv) **Housing Standards**

Policy H5 requires new residential development to meet nationally described space standards. The proposed one storey 2-bedroom 3 person flat would be 63.4sqm, which would exceed the national requirement of 61sqm.

Additionally Policy H5 requires housing:

- built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36 of the Building Regulations
- achieve at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in the 2013 Building Regulations.
- will be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations

The proposal, subject to conditions would meet these standards.

The proposal would provide a two-bedroom which would meet policy H2 with respect to being of a scale suitable for family occupation.

(v) **Residential Amenity**

Policy CC8 requires development to not cause *"a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of: Privacy and overlooking; Access to sunlight and daylight; Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; Harm to outlook; Noise and disturbance; Artificial lighting; Vibration; Dust and fumes; Smell; Crime and safety; .."*

The proposed flat would be required to be sound insulated to meet Building Regulations and this would minimise disturbance to and from neighbouring residential units and the ground floor commercial use.

There would be adequate daylight and sunlight provision to the proposed unit and the overall size of bedrooms and the overall flat would meet national space standards.

In terms of existing residents of the adjacent flat there would be no detrimental impact on daylight and sunlight to habitable rooms.

The building would have no overbearing effects on nearby residential properties on Cooper Close nor the nearest property at 318 Northumberland Avenue, which is ca14.5m away with a side-to-side relationship. No. 318 has one first floor obscure glazed window so there would be no loss of privacy from the proposed side facing windows.

Policy H10 is with regard to ensuring that dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space. The application includes a shared rear garden (to be shared with nos. 524 and 530), which is considered to provide sufficient space for functional communal space and sitting out. This is considered to be in accordance with Policy H10.

It is not considered that there would be any detrimental impact on the amenity of existing and proposed residents.

vi) Sustainability

Policy CC2 requires all minor-residential developments to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Very Good' standard as a minimum. The Planning Statement sets out that the proposal would comply and exceed the requirements for a new build dwelling. The submitted Energy and Sustainability Statement states that it is proposed to use PV on the roof and air source heat pumps for both the residential and commercial units and that "it is envisaged that, through the combination of the proposed low-carbon energy strategy, and the sustainability measures detailed in this report, BREEAM Very Good certification could be achieved for both the residential and commercial elements." This is identified as having the potential to achieve an on-site CO2 reduction of 54% beyond Building Regulations Part L (2021).

The relevant BREEAM standard will be secured via conditions along with the requirement for further details of the air source heat pumps and PV.

vii) Car/Cycle parking

Policy TR5 states that "*Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.*" The Council's Parking Standards SPD sets out standards for the different zones of accessibility.

The SPD requires a 2-bed dwelling in this location to provide 1.5 car parking spaces (rounded to 2 spaces) The proposal does not include any on-site parking provision. The Transport Officer has objected to the proposal on the basis that the proposal would increase on-street parking and could result in on-street parking/reversing movements on Cooper Close and/or Northumberland Avenue, adversely affecting road safety and the flow of traffic, and in conflict with Local Plan Policies TR3 and TR5.

Census data indicates that within the immediate area ca 23% of households own no car, with some areas as high as 49%. There is some on-street parking available within the immediate area, and it is not considered that one dwelling would have a significant detrimental effect with respect to road safety.

In terms of the commercial premises, as a local centre the majority of trips are likely to be by foot or as part of a combined trip and the overall site is on a high frequency bus route. Deliveries can take place via existing on-street bays to the front of the property.

The minimal harm caused by no provision of parking has been weighed against the positive benefits of the provision of new commercial and residential accommodation and enhancements to the appearance of the site within the public realm.

Cycle storage has been illustrated on plans for the residential unit for 2 spaces, which complies with the Council's current adopted standards. No cycle parking provision is provided for the commercial premises, but there are public cycle parking stands on Whitley Wood Road, and this would be consistent with the arrangement for the remaining shops. It is not considered that this lack of provision would be so significant as to warrant refusal on this basis.

viii Bin Storage

Bin storage should be of an appropriate size, be easily accessible to occupants and refuse collectors and be sympathetically located with regard to their visual impact.

An integral bin store is proposed to the rear for the proposed flat. The submitted plans show capacity for 1x240l recycling and 1x 140l general waste side by side with the potential for a 23L food bin to also be stored within this space or within the bike store. As the use and capacity of the retail unit is not yet finalised then details of waste storage would need to be developed further, as the scale of such would relate directly to how much waste a commercial unit would generate and frequency of waste collection procured. Plans do indicate that an integral waste storage area for the commercial unit could be provided with access from the side. Amended plans were received during the course of the application consideration, which enlarged the bin store and included inward opening doors, following comments from the Waste Team and concerns from Transport regarding doors opening outwards.

The Waste Team advised that residential bins would be retrieved from a bin store as long as the bin pulling distance (measured from the rear of the collection vehicle to the furthest away bin) were less than 14m for smaller bins and less than 10m for the 1100L bins and that there would need to be a dropped kerb and no other obstructions such as bike stores or parked cars. The distance would be 7.3m to the proposed residential store and 1.5m for the commercial store. However, there is no dropped kerb on this side of the road, but this is the existing location for residential and commercial waste collection.

A condition is included requiring details of waste storage/ management to be submitted and approved.

ix) S106 & Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

S106

For one dwelling Policy H3 requires a financial contribution equivalent to 10% (shared 50/50 with Registered provider) of the total GDV to be used towards Affordable Housing provision within the Borough. The applicant has agreed to a policy compliant contribution, which has been secured via a S106 legal agreement.

CIL

The proposal would create new floorspace over 100sqm so CIL liability would be triggered. An informative is included in this regard.

x) **Other**

There is an existing barrier and street sign immediately adjacent to the site, which would need to be removed and re-sited. Such works would need to be undertaken by the Council's Highways and Traffic Services Team. An informative is included to this effect.

On the basis that the final E class use is not known a condition is included regarding the requirements for the submission and approval of a noise assessment and mitigation measures in the case of the use requiring mechanical equipment.

Condition restricting the use of the ground floor commercial to exclude class E (g), removal of permitted development rights for extensions to the shop and hours of operation, have been included to minimise impact on neighbouring amenity.

8. **CONCLUSION**

The proposal has been considered in the context of the NPPF, Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and relevant SPDs.

The principle of a new build to create an additional commercial and residential unit is acceptable as it would meet sustainability objectives including supporting the economic function of the existing local retail centre and the provision of additional housing. The limited harm arising from no on-site car parking nor cycle parking for the commercial unit has been weighed against the significant positive benefits of the proposed enhancement of the site from the proposed landscaping scheme, which would improve the character and appearance of the site within the wider area.

The recommendation is, therefore, to GRANT, subject to the following conditions and informatives.

Conditions

1. Standard 3-year time limit
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials to be submitted
4. Communal Space to be Retained
5. Refuse and Recycling – including pest and vermin control measures, details to be submitted and approve
6. Cycle Storage – details to be submitted and approved
7. Landscaping
8. Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan
9. Construction Method Statement
10. Hours of Construction
11. No Burning of Waste
12. Permitted Development Rights for C4 HMO Removed
13. BREEAM Interim
14. BREEAM Final
15. Air Source Heat Pumps
16. Mechanical Plant Noise Assessment
17. Details of PV Panels
18. Hours of Opening
19. Use Class Restriction
20. Removal of Commercial Extension Permitted Development Rights

Informatives

1. Terms and conditions
2. Building Control



3. Encroachment/ Party Wall
4. Complaints about Construction
5. Insulation
6. CIL
7. S106
8. Adverts require separate consent
9. Biodiversity Gain Condition
10. Pre-Commencement Conditions
11. Positive & Proactive