

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Refs: a) PL/25/1498 & b) PL/25/1494

Address: Land to the rear of 55 Baker Street, Reading, RG1 7XX

Proposals: a) Change of use from office (Class E) to 2 residential units (Class C3) and associated works, including replacement of the external stair and windows/doors.

b) Various internal and external works associated with the change of use from office (Class E) to 2 residential units (Class C3), including replacement windows and doors, redecoration of timber fascias, soffits, and sash windows, repair of brickwork, a series of internal layout changes and replacement of the external stair.

Case Officer: Mr Jonathan Markwell

Applicant: Susheela Enterprises Ltd

Agent: The Keen Partnership

Date received (valid from): a) & b) 1 December 2025

Target Decision date: a) & b) Originally 26 January 2026, but extensions of time were agreed with the agent until 7 August 2026

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site relates to a two-storey building to the rear of the existing Grade II listed No. 55 Baker Street. It is a historic extension of the listed building and has previously been considered as being within the curtilage of the listed building and hence required listed building consent for the works, as proposed, too. Based on the officer site visit on 19/12/2025 the building is presently vacant, having most recently been in office use.

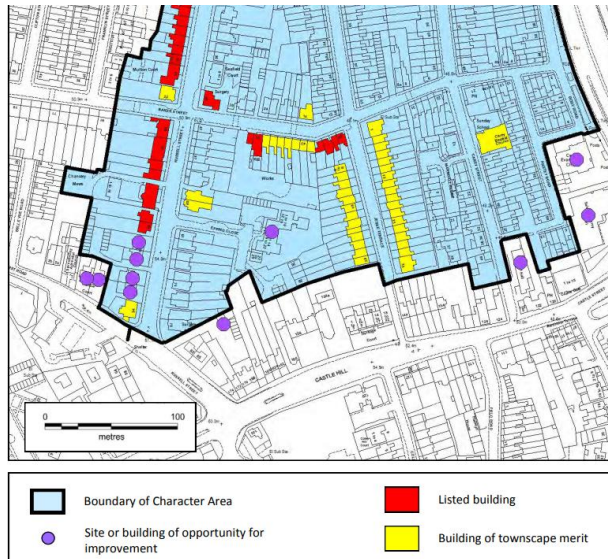


Above left: location plan; Above right: site photo 19/12/2025. Below left: Aerial view via Google maps. Below right: site visit photo 29/08/2018.



- 1.2 The listed No. 55 building is a 3 storey stucco building from circa 1840, now split into flats. A tablet on the wall says that this house was "Fox Talbot's Reading Establishment 1844-45". A pioneer photographer and associate of Fox Talbot's, Nicholas Henneman, also lived there. To the south of the site is Fox Talbot Close, a development of nine dwellings completed after planning permission was granted in 2019 (see relevant history below).

- 1.3 This application site is located within Castle Hill / Russell Street / Oxford Road Conservation Area, although the appraisal does not specifically refer to the application site building. The building is also within an air quality management area. The surrounding area is largely residential in nature, with some non-residential uses predominantly located on street junctions in the local area. There are also some further nearby Grade II listed buildings (such as No's 33-39 (odd) Baker Street to the east and No. 41 Russell Street to the north-west) and a significant number of buildings of townscape merit, as shown below (extract from the conservation area appraisal).



Site visit date: Interior and Exterior at application stage on 19/12/2025.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the change of use of the building from office (Class E) to 2 x 1-bedroom residential units (Class C3), one each at ground and first floor level, with the units being independently accessed. On site waste storage facilities are also shown, with no car parking proposed. There are also a number of associated external works proposed, including:
- Replacement of the external stair and balustrade
 - Replacement front doors on the west elevation at both ground and first floor level;
 - Replacement of the two ground floor windows on the eastern side of the building;
 - Redecoration of the existing fascia boards and soffits.
- 2.2 Given the building is within the curtilage of a Grade II listed building, separate listed building consent is sought for the various internal and external works associated with conversion of existing building to residential units. As well as the external works referenced in the previous paragraph, a series of internal alterations are proposed, including:
- Provision of secondary glazing to the first floor windows on the eastern (2 windows) and western (1 window) sides of the building and windows/doors.
 - Removal of existing timber partitions and internal decoration on the first floor. Removal of existing sanitaryware and kitchen units.
 - New timber stud partitions within ground and first floor.
 - New electrics, plumbing, sanitaryware and kitchens throughout. New floor finishes, plaster, skirting and architraves. Redecoration throughout.
- 2.3 During the course of the application the cycle and waste storage proposals were altered, with the cycle parking omitted following officer feedback. The door serving the ground floor unit was also altered to enable more natural light into this unit. The agent also confirmed various matters, including agreement to the affordable housing contribution. Furthermore,

the application site address was altered from 55a Baker Street (as stated on the application forms and location plan submitted at the outset of the application) to Land to the rear of 55 Baker Street, following discussions in advancing the s106 legal agreement. The extent of the red line boundary did not alter. The changes to the plans and proposals as part of these applications were not considered to be of a nature to warrant formal public re-consultation on the applications.

2.4 Plans considered - List of planning drawings:

- GSG 001-1010 - A0-Standard Balanced Vertical Slider / Subframe (LBC only)
As received 21/11/2025
- 9453 PL-02.01 – Existing Plans
- 9453 PL-02.04 – Existing Elevations
- 9453 PL-02.05 – Existing Section
- 9453 PL-03.01 – Proposed Site Plan
- 9453 PL-03.04 Rev 02 – Proposed Section
As all received on 21/01/2026
- 9453 PL-03.02 Rev 03 – Proposed Plans
- 9453 PL-03.03 Rev 03 – Proposed Elevations
As both received on 30/01/2026
- 9453 PL-01 – Location Plan
As received on 27/05/2026

2.5 Other documents:

- Application for Planning Permission Ref PP-14400086, dated 20/10/2025, as received 27/05/2026
- Application for Listed Building Consent for alterations, extension or demolition of a listed building Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 (as amended), Ref PP-14408758, dated 20/10/2025, as received 27/05/2026
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - Form 1: CIL Additional Information Ref PP-14400086, dated 20/10/2025, as received 27/05/2026
- Planning Statement by The Keen Partnership dated October 2025, Cityscape, dated February 2025, as received 21/10/2025
- Heritage Statement by Heritage Fusion Ref 2199, as received 21/10/2025
- Air Quality Assessment by Aeolus Air Quality Consulting Rev A, dated November 2025, as received 01/12/2025
- Sustainability Statement by The Keen Partnership, as received 21/11/2025
- Email from Northwood 'Re: Property Valuation- Rear of 55, Baker St, RG1 7XX', dated 19/11/2025, as received 21/11/2025
- Email from Haslams 'RE: Property Valuation- Rear of 55, Baker St, RG1 7XX', dated 19/11/2025, as received 21/11/2025
- Email from Keen Partnership 'Re: Rear of 55 Baker Street, Reading - PL/25/1498 / PL/25/1494 - feedback' dated and received 21/01/2026

2.6 CIL - Based on the information specified by the applicant the existing floorspace amounts to 74.4sqm. Given the proposed development seeks to create residential units it will be CIL liable development. The CIL form specifies that no part of the building was occupied for its lawful use for 6 continuous months of the 36 previous months. If this is subsequently confirmed at the date of the future decision being issued, the proposals will be likely to be chargeable, with the 2026 rate of £188.28 per sqm equating to a contribution of £14,008.03 (based on the floorspace figure stated by the applicant). This will be separately considered, subsequent to the final decision notice for the application being issued.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (since 1990)

3.1 No specific applications at solely the red line boundary of this application site. However, in the immediate area the following is considered to be of relevance:

- 3.2 Site known as 57 Baker St (now Fox Talbot Close):
- 3.3 08/01148/OUT (081374) - Outline application for the demolition of workshops and erection of 14 flats and maisonettes (access and scale only). Refused 04/12/2008.
- 3.4 09/01560/LBC (091115) - Demolition of number 57 Baker Street and workshops/garages to the rear of numbers 41-55 Baker Street, including alterations to boundary walls. Granted Listed Building Consent 17/12/2009. Implemented.
- 3.5 141116 - Residential development of 7no 3-bed and 2no 2-bed dwellings with associated external works. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 30/03/2015. Not implemented.
- 3.6 180624 - Erection of two 2/3 storey buildings to provide 9 (2x2-bed and 7x3-bed) residential units (Class C3), 9 parking spaces, landscaping and associated works. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 06/02/2019. Implemented, with various approval of details and non-material amendment applications granted in 2020-2022.
- 3.7 Site known as 55a Baker Street (building immediately to the west of 55 Baker Street):
- 3.8 141120/FUL - Change of use with alterations to convert the existing office into a 1-bed dwelling. Granted following completion of s106 legal agreement 12/01/16. Implemented.
- 3.9 141121/LBC - Works associated with conversion of the existing office into a 1-bed dwelling. Granted 13/01/2016. Implemented.
- 3.10 Site known as 55 Baker Street:
- 3.11 PL/24/0507 - The existing building has been used as 5 separate independent self-contained dwelling houses for more than 4 years. Certificate of Lawfulness Granted 21/06/2024.

4. PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Site notices for applications a) and b) were erected at the site on 05/12/2025, expiring on 26/12/2025. A press notice for applications a) and b) was published on 11/12/2025, expiring on 01/01/2026.
- 4.2 Reading CAAC was formally consulted on 03/12/25, commenting that repairs are taking place to No. 55 Baker Street, with this revealing ghost signs next to the front door and window. The CAAC ask for these signs to be preserved, perhaps under Perspex.



- 4.3 Officer note: the planning agent responded via email on 21/01/2026, advising “*my client has agreed to perspex the ghost signs as requested*”. This is a separate matter to the application site and proposals under consideration as part of this application.
- 4.4 One public consultation response has received on behalf of the management company for Fox Talbot Close, stating:

We are a private gated road of nine houses. The proposed flats have their entrance on to Fox Talbot Close. Our understanding is that the owners of 55A have very limited pedestrian rights of way to the doors at the rear of the building - we also understand that these rights were ostensibly fire escape routes only. There is no vehicular right of access, nor space, either for occupants of the building or for renovation work. Owners of houses in Fox Talbot Close pay an annual service charges for costs of the communal areas such as insurance, lighting, gate maintenance. If owners have a right of way they would be required to pay a share of these costs.

- 4.5 This is a private / non-planning consideration between separate landowners regarding rights of access and related matters. Separately, it is simply noted that the planning agent responded via email on 21/01/2026, advising that the client “*will also enter an agreement to pay annual charges regarding the maintenance of the area*”.

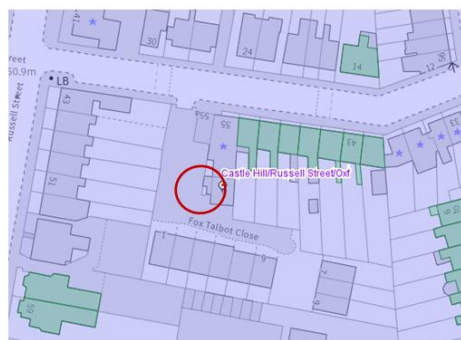
5. INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

5.1 RBC Conservation Officer

- 5.1.1 Summary *No objection subject to conditions* – It is considered that the proposed change of use and associated works would result in no additional harm to the host building, listed fabric and significance of the conservation area and therefore are acceptable. However, there is a need for some confirmation and details on the proposed repairs to the brickwork, including mortar, new ground floor insulation, materials and appearance of proposed ground floor windows and first floor external door, proposed final finishes for the walls, floors and ceilings. Any detail about the proposed services, with regard to their external appearance, such as the installation of a new boiler or new kitchen and bathroom extractors, should also be submitted to the local authority. The proposal appears to meet Policies EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and Chapter 16 of the NPPF, subject to the conditions suggested (at the end of the comments).
- 5.1.2 `Relevant policies and legislation - From the point of view of the historic environment, the main statutory tests are set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16(2) and 66 require that *special regard* be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their settings or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also requires the Council to pay *special attention* to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of designated Conservation Areas.
- 5.1.3 *National Planning Policy and Guidance* - The NPPF outlines government policy, including its policy in respect of the historic environment. Chapter 16 of the NPPF (December 2024) 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' sets out the Government's high-level policies concerning heritage and sustainable development.
- 5.1.4 Paragraph 207 states, “*In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.*” Paragraph 208 says, “*Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or*

minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."

- 5.1.5 Paragraph 212 of the NPPF requires that *'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation....'* And paragraph 213 says, *'any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification'.*
- 5.1.6 Paragraph 215 requires that *'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighted against the public benefits of the proposal...'*
- 5.1.7 National Planning Practice Guidance on Historic Environment provides context to the NPPF.
- 5.1.8 **Local Planning Policy and Guidance** - Policy EN1 'Protection and enhancement of the historic environment' of the Reading Borough Local Plan sets out the Council's aspirations for the historic environment. The policy requires that all proposals to protect and, where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and *their settings*, historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. It echoes the NPPF by stating, *"Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits"*.
- 5.1.9 Applications which affect *Listed Buildings* are expected not to have an adverse impact on the elements that contribute to their special architectural or historic interest, including their settings. Policy EN3 'Enhancement of conservation areas' of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires that development proposals within Conservation Areas contribute positively to local character and distinctiveness. This policy further states *"Positive consideration will be given to proposals which take opportunities to enhance the character of conservation areas."*
- 5.1.10 Policy EN6 'New development in a historic context' also requires *"New development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development."*
- 5.1.11 Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area Appraisal is also a material consideration in determining applications for development.
- 5.1.12 **Other Guidance** - Historic England Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets illustrates the application of policies set out in the NPPF in determining applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent. English Heritage's "Conservation Principles" provides policy and guidance for the "sustainable management of the historic environment".
- 5.1.13 Relevant heritage assets - The application site relates to the historic extension of Grade II listed townhouse, 55 Baker Street located to the rear of it, to the south of Baker Street in the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation area, as illustrated below.



The Application site (circled in red), listed building with stars & the conservation area (light purple)

5.1.14 Significance of heritage assets - The NPPF defines significance as the “*value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest.*” The interest may be architectural or historic, as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 1. “*Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.*” (NPPF, 2024). Historic England assesses significance in a similar manner, referring to evidential, historic, aesthetic and communal values of a place. Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area Appraisal lists the following among the significance and key positive features of the conservation area (on page 7)

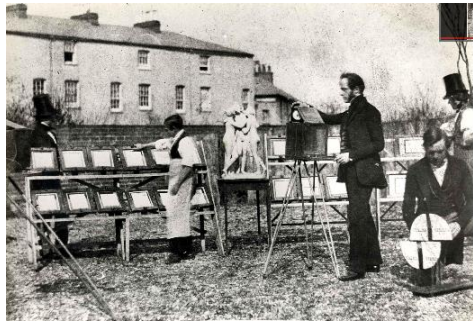
- “*The Conservation Area is a microcosm of Reading’s residential building styles in a concentrated area. Within its boundaries, housing spans both wealthy and more modest examples from the 18th century to the 20th century. It encompasses a range of Georgian villas, terraces and artisan housing. The long Victorian era is evident in the development of substantial Victorian single-family terraces and the later polychrome patterned two-up, two- down terraces. Arts and Crafts influences appear in the area’s large Victorian and Edwardian villas.*”
- **55 Baker Street was the site of “The Reading Establishment” studio of William Fox Talbot, an early photography pioneer. It was there that “The Pencil of Nature,” the first mass-produced book with photographs was manufactured.**

5.1.15 Similarly, ‘Issues and Vulnerabilities’ of the area include;

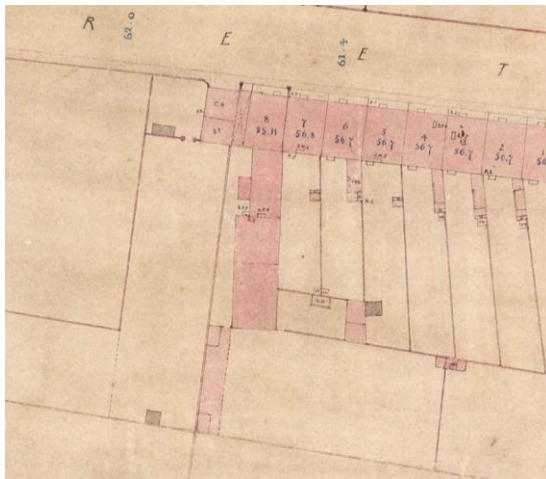
- “*While there are many sections of the conservation area which are well maintained and easily appreciated, there are several more challenged sections that have led to the area’s inclusion on Historic England’s “Heritage at Risk” list. Nonetheless, the area’s historical interest as a microcosm of Reading’s 19th century building styles still provides clear evidence of its past.*”
- **The on-going degradation of property façades with the loss of historic features and detailing such as traditional doors and windows, roofing materials, and frontage treatments.** This is most noticeable along the Oxford Road, Prospect Street, Russell Street and in streets to the east with Waylen Street, Zinzan Street, Howard Street, Anstey Street, Body Road, Carey Street and **Baker Street**.
- **HMO and flat conversions over many decades has threatened and altered the traditional societal and community structure of the area.** On many streets, HMOs far outnumber single-family homes, which was the intent of the original development in the area.”

5.1.16 Specific to the Character Area 6.3 - Russell Street and streets east where the subject building lies, the appraisal also states “*The stuccoed, late-Georgian terrace at 37- 55 Baker Street built prior to 1833, are the oldest houses on the eastern part of that street originally named Russell Terrace in this section. Their poor condition belies their historical importance. A significant pioneer of early photography, Henry Fox Talbot had his “Reading Establishment” studio at 55 Baker Street. The site is worthy of enhanced designation.*” (page 81).

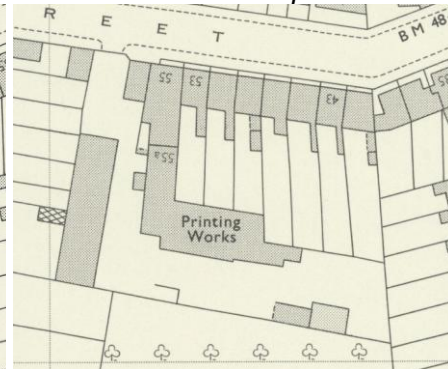
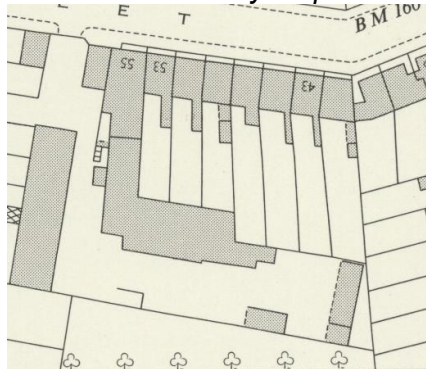
5.1.17 Therefore, the subject building, being the historic extension of the listed building, although altered, has some historic associations and architectural significance mostly driven from its external features of original forms, materials and elements.



The photographic establishment of William Henry Fox Talbot, at Russell Terrace, Reading, c. 1845. The building was later known as 55 Baker Street. In the garden, there are racks of photographs being subjected to daylight, and a man with a camera on a tripod is photographing a statue of The Three Graces. 1840-1849: a composite photograph showing the building to the left of this image is at #1307840 – From the online archive of Reading Library



Left: The subject building, as a footprint, appears on the Reading Board of Health Map dated 1853. Right: The Ordnance Survey Map of 1887 shows the relationship of the main building



The Ordnance Survey Maps of 1958 left and 1971 right, confirming the historic relationship with the grade II listed building, with little change in the footprint of the historic extensions



- Listed building
- Building of townscape merit

Location of the application site/subject building surrounded by listed buildings and buildings of townscape merit, from the conservation area appraisal

5.1.18 The official listing description of 55, BAKER STREET reads as follows:

"Details

BAKER STREET 1. 5128 No 55 SU 7073 12/14 II GV 2. Circa 1840 and altered. 3 storeys, Stucco, band over ground floor, small cornice and parapet with shallow central pediment. Slate roof. Glazing bar sash windows, 1st floor with marginal glazing; 2 windows including flat segmental bay window on 1st floor which has casements. Moulded architrave 1st floor left with cornice, ground floor windows with raised surrounds, architraves and cornices. Small arched door and a panel with 2 arched openings with radiating and wreathed fanlights on ground floor. A tablet on the wall says that this house was "Fox Talbot's Reading Establishment 1844-45". A pioneer photographer and associate of Fox Talbot's, Nicholas Henneman, lived here. Listing NGR: SU7082373155"

5.1.19 Impact of proposal upon heritage asset(s) - This application is for the change of use of the existing historic extension of the listed building from commercial to residential use, along with refurbishment works. Since the building's significance or contribution to the listed curtilage of 55 Baker Street only derives from its retained footprint, traditional construction system and surviving original elements and materials such as roof form, tiles and timber sash windows, I have no objection in principle to the change of use. As I also noted, there are already some services within the interior of the building; additional ones would not create harm to the historic fabric of the building.

5.1.20 From the submitted application form, Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement, the following works are proposed and commented upon below:

- Replacement of poor-quality modern windows and doors – Application form states double glazing, proposed elevation drawings show vertical sash design, which is ok. However, the Council needs to know the proposed material for the new ground-floor windows; it is assumed they will be timber? Confirmation is needed.
- Retention and redecoration of traditional timber fascias, soffits, and sash windows – This is supported. During the officer's site visit, it was noticed that there are problems with gutters and downpipes. These should be included within this application.
- Repair of existing brickwork using matching mortar – further information is needed about the matching mortar. Again, it is assumed this would be lime-based? There is already a new render and/or paint applied on the side elevation of the building. This should be included as well. Furthermore, during the site visit, it was noted that the gutter & downpipe problems cause some moss and vegetation growth on the brickwork. Some cleaning / removal of vegetation should be considered among the proposed works. The methodology for this should be confirmed to be non-destructive.
- Rebuilding of the external staircase like-for-like – No impact. Although using natural materials would be preferable, this is acceptable. The officers noted that there are some corrugated plastic roof coverings on the ground floor, which are recommended to be replaced with a sympathetic material, as this is not included within the proposed works.
- No proposed extension – noted
- Refurbishment and redecoration of the traditional first-floor windows. New secondary glazing – This is supported. There is information about the details of the proposed glazing. It is understood that the proposed secondary glazing would be aluminium, vertical sliding with some profile. However, the written confirmation about the measurements of frames, according to the existing opening dimensions, is required.
- New first-floor external door - Details in terms of material and appearance is required.
- New insulated ground floor – Details of the insulation is required. The proposed section drawing annotates 'upgraded floor'.

- Removal of existing timber partitions and internal decoration on the first floor. Removal of existing sanitaryware and kitchen units – satisfactory.
- New timber stud partitions within ground and first floor. – Details are required.
- New electrics, plumbing, sanitaryware and kitchens throughout. New floor finishes, plaster, skirting and architraves. Redecoration throughout – Details are required.

5.1.21 It is considered that the proposed change of use and associated works would result in no additional harm to the host building, listed fabric and significance of the conservation area and therefore are acceptable. However, there is a need for some confirmation and details on the proposed repairs to the brickwork, including mortar, new ground floor insulation, materials and appearance of proposed ground floor windows and first floor external door, proposed final finishes for the walls, floors and ceilings. Any detail about the proposed services, with regard to their external appearance, such as the installation of a new boiler or new kitchen and bathroom extractors, should also be submitted to the local authority. The proposal appears to meet Policies EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan and Chapter 16 of the NPPF. Approval with the following conditions is suggested:

All external and internal works of making good to the retained fabric shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile. All such works and finishes shall be maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Prior to commencement of the repair works, details, including the methodology for the brickwork and timber sash windows, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The works shall not be carried out other than in full accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Prior to commencement of the relevant part of the works, details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council:

- proposed internal partition walls, including details of the method of construction;
- new ground floor insulation;
- external joinery details for the proposed door and windows;
- internal joinery details for the proposed doors, architraves, and skirting boards;
- full schedule of internal finishes to floors, ceilings and walls;
- details of proposed heating and extractor system(s).

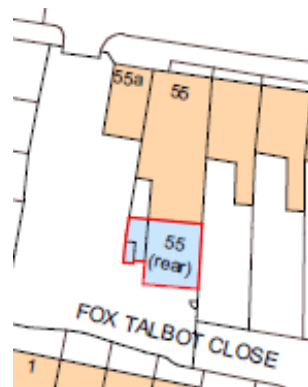
The works shall not be carried out other than in full accordance with the approved details.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5.1.22 Officer note: This feedback was provided to the planning agent during the course of the application, with an option of providing more information at application stage. The planning agent advised that the relevant information will be provided via discharge of conditions applications following the issuing of the decision notices.

5.2 RBC Transport

- 5.2.1 Original comments: The application seeks a change of use from a unused Class E Building to 2 x 1 bedroom C3 units. The is within close proximity to the town centre area, and is therefore accessible to good public transport links, town centre services and employment areas.
- 5.2.2 The property lies within the Russell Street/Castle Hill/Oxford Road Conservation Area and is physically connected to 55 Baker Street, a Grade II listed building. The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. Typically this zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone. Access to both flats will remain via the existing gated courtyard from Baker Street.
- 5.2.3 In accordance with the Council's adopted parking standards, each would require 1no. parking space. No 55A Baker Street is accessed via a private access road off Baker Street. No parking is proposed for the 2 x 1 bedroom units, it should be noted the red line area does not extend to the public highway.



- 5.2.4 As the granting of planning consent does not confer any rights of access, the applicant should establish such rights to ensure the proposed parking area can be accessed.
- 5.2.5 Given that the proposal will not increase the demand for on-site parking over and above the existing use, there are no transport objections on parking grounds for the proposed change of use; However, the site is located within an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Area. Therefore, there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed units will not automatically be issued with resident or visitor parking permits which should be secured through conditions and informative.
- 5.2.6 Cycle and bin storage can be housed together, as shown, but there should be something separating the two. However, the proposed layout does not allow for access to the cycles without removal of the bins which does not make this a practical option. The Council's Refuse and Recycling Team should be consulted to ensure the correct number and types of bins are provided.
- 5.2.7 In principle there are no Transport objections to this application, however confirmation is required re red line plan and details of cycle / refuse collection.
- 5.2.8 Updated comments following the submission of revised plans showing a new door on the west elevation: The proposed door on the west elevation serving the refuse area will be obstructed by cars parked in the parking bays and therefore unacceptable; revised plans are required illustrating access to the bin storage area that is unobstructed. The loss of any already established vehicular parking will not be supported by Transport.
- 5.2.9 Following discussions between officers, it was confirmed that Transport can accept a bin store within the building and in this instance Highway authority will accept the non-provision of cycle storage on the basis that the existing use has no cycle parking. The site could

provide storage for a cycle within the unit or purchase a foldable bike that could be stored within the property.

5.2.10 A waste management plan of how the bins will be presented for collection and returned to their storage location will be required and revised plans illustrating the bin store and removal of the door opening up on to the parking space will be required.

5.2.11 Further comments following the submission of further revised plans on 30/01/2026: The proposals are now acceptable, subject to conditions.

5.3 RBC Assets Management team

5.3.1 A review of the valuations (market appraisals) carried out by local agents has been undertaken, and compared this against similar units available for sale, and recently completed disposals.

5.3.2 The agents state the following values would be achievable:

	If parking	If no parking
Haslams	£165,000-£170,000	£160,000-£165,000
Northwood	£150,000 - £160,000	

5.3.3 When looking at comparable properties, I have reviewed both 1 bed properties and Studio flats, owing to the size and layout of the units. I feel the values provided by the agents are satisfactory, as at 37sqm, they are extremely small. A Gross Development Valuation of £320,000 is therefore accepted, which equates to a policy compliant contribution of £16,000.

5.3.4 This is based on a desktop appraisal, and these figures will most likely change if the applicant subsequently withdraws their commitment to provide policy compliant contributions, and if the Council need to instruct Viability Consultants, as they will use their own research to inform their own opinion of value.

5.4 RBC Environmental Protection

5.4.1 RBC Environmental Protection advises that the site is located on potentially contaminated land (former paintworks). Therefore, a contaminated land risk assessment is required, demonstrating that the site is suitable for the proposed use, or identifying mitigation that may be required. Officers are content for this matter to be secured via planning condition on this occasion.

5.4.2 The air quality assessment submitted is satisfactory and no further input is required in this regard.

5.5 RBC Waste Services

5.5.1 The Council's standard household waste collection service is for fortnightly general waste collections, fortnightly recycling collections and weekly food waste collections. In the near future the Council will also be introducing glass recycling collections and it will be collected fortnightly. A development containing 2 residential units would need to have space for the below bins –

2 x 140L general waste
2 x 240L recycling
2 x 23L food waste
2 x 55L glass

6. Equality Act 2010:

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

7. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

- 7.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

- 7.3 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

7.4 National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as amended)

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

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

7.5 Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

- CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3 Adaption to Climate Change
- CC5 Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7 Design and the Public Realm
- CC8 Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9 Securing Infrastructure
- EN1 Protection and enhancement of the historic environment
- EN3 Enhancement of Conservation Areas
- EN6 New Development in a historic context
- EN9 Provision of Open Space
- EN12 Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN15 Air quality
- EN16 Pollution and Water Resources
- EM3 Loss of Employment Land
- H1 Provision of Housing* (* this policy is acknowledged to be out-of-date)

H2 Density and Mix
H3 Affordable Housing
H8 Residential Conversions
H10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space
TR1 Achieving the Transport Strategy
TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-related matters
TR4 Cycle Routes and Facilities
TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

7.6 **SPG/SPD**

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011
Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)
Affordable Housing SPD (2021)
Planning Obligations under Section 106 SPD (2015)

7.7 **Other relevant documentation**

Castle Hill / Russell Street / Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal 2020
Reading Borough Local Plan (Partial Update) Submission Draft, May 2025
Historic England Good Practice Guide Note Number 2: managing significance in decision-taking.
Principles of Conservation (Historic England, 2008)
Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015)

7.8 **Local Plan Update**

7.9 The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A consultation version of the draft updated version of the Local Plan was published on 6th November 2024. Subsequent to this consultation a submission draft was sent to the Secretary of State on 9th May 2025. At the time of writing, the examination-in-public of the partial update to the local plan is in the process of taking place. Stage 1 hearings were held virtually on 11th and 12th November 2025. Stage 2 hearings took place in February 2026.

7.10 Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

7.11 Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application is that they remain in accordance with national policy (aside from Policy H1, which is acknowledged to be out-of-date) and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the submission draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the determination of this planning application and are not considered to be ‘out of date’ (aside from Policy H1).

8. APPRAISAL

8.1 The main considerations relevant to the determination of these applications are considered to be:

1. Land use matters
2. Affordable Housing
3. Design, including impact on heritage assets

4. Quality of accommodation
5. Amenity for nearby occupiers
6. Trees, landscaping, ecology and biodiversity
7. Transport
8. Sustainability
9. Planning Balance & Conclusions

8.1.1 Land use

8.1.2 *Removal of Class E office use*

- 8.1.3 In pure land use terms the proposal will result in the removal of Class E floorspace at the site. Consideration is made of Policy EM3 (Loss of Employment Land), with there being six criteria where employment land would be lost. In this instance, based on information provided by the applicant and as witnessed during the officer site visit on 19/12/2025, the building has been vacant for a number of years and is in a state of disrepair. The prospects of a continued office use being viable in the long-term is considered limited and, given the prevailing context in the immediate area (particularly noting the permissions for residential surrounding the site) the need for the proposed residential use is stronger than the need for the retention of the employment land. Furthermore, a residential use arguably being more compatible with the amenity and character of the immediate area in this present context. As such, the loss of the existing use is accepted in land use terms.



Site visit photos 19/12/2025 – ground floor (left), external stair (centre) & east elevation (right).

8.1.4 *Introduction of residential at the site, density and mix*

- 8.1.5 The provision of two residential units is welcomed in purely land use terms, assisting in contributing towards meeting the Council's Housing targets, as per Policy H1 (albeit this policy is now out of date). This is readily acknowledged to be a planning benefit of the proposed development. It is noted that the Council is not currently meeting its annual housing targets for general housing as calculated using the standard method in Planning Practice Guidance (as required now policy H1 is out of date) or for the provision of Affordable Housing.
- 8.1.6 In terms of density, the application form specifies the site is 0.0054ha in size, meaning that the 2 residential units created equate to a density of 370 residential units per hectare. Within the context of Policy H2 and the factors informing an appropriate density, the increasingly residential character of the immediate surroundings (see planning history), the highly accessible location and this maximising the efficiency of the land all count in favour of this density being considered appropriate in this specific instance.
- 8.1.7 Related to this, in terms of the residential mix of units proposed, Policy H2 also states residential development, wherever possible, should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing in figure 4.6 of the Local Plan. For market housing, as proposed, the greatest need is for 3-bed, 2-bed, 4-bed and then 1-bedroom units. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal only provides 2x1-bed units, for which there is the smallest need, this is a product of the site characteristics. The small size of the site and floorspace

available, together with the listed building constraints and inability to extend the building, mean in practice only a 2x1-bed or 1x2 or 3-bed unit is possible. Set within this context, the absence of any mix of unit size is therefore accepted in this specific instance. The proposed mix will be secured via planning condition.

8.2 Affordable Housing

8.2.1 Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) seeks to ensure that development proposals of 1-4 dwellings should provide a financial contribution the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough. This is in order to meet identified housing needs and to contribute towards sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. There is a significant shortfall in provision of Affordable Housing compared with identified need.

8.2.2 The supporting text to the policy, at paragraph 4.4.19 provides some background to the policy and summarises the large amount of evidence that the Council has in respect of the critical need for Affordable Housing that exists within the Borough:

“The Berkshire (with South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, 2016) has once again emphasised the critical need for affordable housing within Reading as well as the remainder of Berkshire. The SHMA identified a need for 406 new affordable homes per year in Reading, which represents the majority of the overall housing required. The consequences of not providing much-needed affordable homes would be severe, and would include homelessness, households in temporary or unsuitable accommodation, overcrowding and younger people having to remain living with parents for increasing periods. Insufficient affordable housing will also act as an impediment to economic growth, as firms will face increasing problems with accommodation for their workforce. Meeting even a substantial proportion of the identified housing need presents significant challenges, and it is therefore critical that new residential development of all sizes makes whatever contribution it can.”

8.2.3 The supporting text continues at paragraph 4.4.23 to state:

“The target set in the policy has been determined as the result of an assessment of the viability of development of sites of various sizes in the Borough in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF. This will be the expected level of affordable housing provision.”

8.2.4 An up-to-date assessment of the need for Affordable Housing that exists in the Borough is within the supporting text to Policy H3 (para 4.4.21) of the Reading Borough Local Plan Partial Update Submission Draft, dated May 2025, which states the following:

“The Reading Housing Needs Assessment (HNA, 2024) has once again emphasised the critical need for affordable housing within Reading as well as the remainder of Berkshire. The HNA identified a need for 406 additional affordable homes per year in Reading, which represents the majority of the overall housing required. The consequences of not providing much-needed affordable homes would be severe, and would include homelessness, households in temporary or unsuitable accommodation, overcrowding and younger people having to remain living with parents for increasing periods. Insufficient affordable housing will also act as an impediment to economic growth, as firms will face increasing problems with accommodation for their workforce. Meeting even a substantial proportion of the identified housing need presents significant challenges, and it is therefore critical that new residential development of all sizes makes whatever contribution it can”.

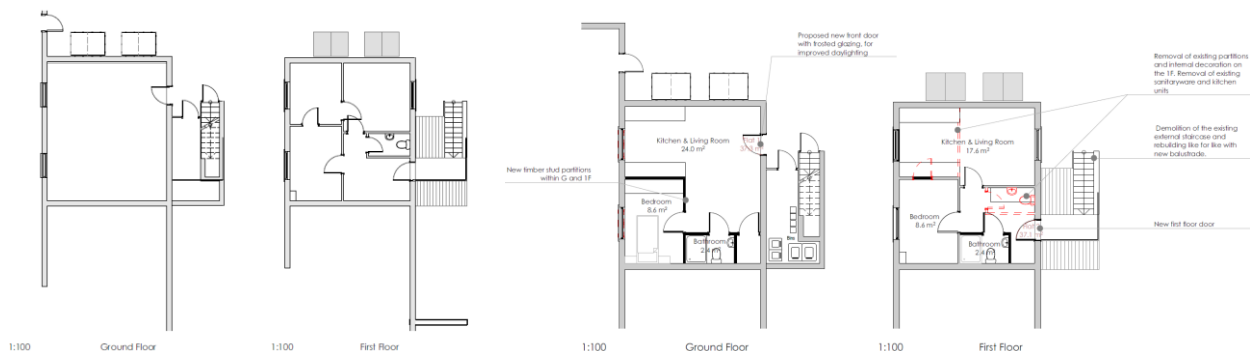
8.2.4 In this instance, in line with the Affordable Housing SPD, the applicant has submitted two valuations of future sales values of the units. This has been reviewed by the Council's

Assets Management team, as per section 5.3 above. A Gross Development Valuation of £320,000 has been accepted, which equates to a policy compliant contribution of £16,000 (5% of GDV). The planning agent has agreed for this to be secured as part of the development, with a s106 legal agreement required to secure this financial contribution towards affordable housing.

- 8.2.5 With the above obligation being secured via legal agreement, the proposals are policy compliant, making an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading. The affordable housing obligation is considered to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that it would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

8.3 Design, including impact on heritage assets

- 8.3.1 Based on the officer site visit and the Conservation Officer's observations, as per section 5.1 above, the proposals only involve fairly minimal interventions to the building both internally and externally. Where works are proposed, these would result in no additional harm to the host building, listed fabric and significance of the conservation area. It is acknowledged that there are several areas, both internally and externally, where more detailed information is still required to be provided to demonstrate the above in full, but officers are content that such information can be secured via condition. With those details secured via condition and the benefit of bringing the building back into an active use, the proposals are policy compliant in design and heritage terms at both the local and national level.



Existing floor plans above & elevations below. Proposed floor plans above & elevations below



8.4 Quality of accommodation

8.4.1 The proposed residential units will be on the ground and first floors of the building and be separately accessed, utilising existing openings and a re-constructed external stairwell. Both will be 1-bed units, which at 37.4sqm and 37.1sqm respectively are marginally above the nationally described space standards (albeit these do not strictly apply in this change of use proposal – so not providing new build housing as Policy H5 references). Both units provide functional layouts for the size of unit proposed. A shortfall for future occupiers is that the east elevation is facing straight onto a shared amenity space for occupiers of No. 53&55 Baker Street. This will compromise the quality of accommodation for ground floor occupiers in particular, with potential overlooking/loss of privacy at close quarters. As such, it could be the case that future occupiers will need to utilise curtains or blinds to prevent a loss of privacy, given the applicant has specifically proposed clear glazing (providing obscure glazing would have compromised the quality of accommodation). The knock-on impact is that curtains/blinds inevitably reduces outlook (creating a sense of enclosure) and access to day/sunlight at the same time. It is clear that there are competing demands in this area and officers consider in this specific instance that the provision of clear glazing is accepted, when balancing up the competing demands of providing residential accommodation versus the quality of the accommodation and impact on neighbours. As such, to increase natural light into the ground floor flat as much as possible, the door on the west elevation will be glazed (as shown on revised plans submitted following officer feedback at the site visit), albeit frosted glass to retain privacy from Fox Talbot Close. This will optimise light possible for the living/dining/kitchen room of the ground floor unit. At first floor level the same impacts will be experienced, albeit at lower levels of harm owing to the upper floor location. Officers conclude on this matter that this is a shortcoming of the accommodation being created, but in overall terms it would still provide an adequate standard of accommodation at this point.



8.4.2 Another shortfall of the proposal is the lack of any private or shared amenity space within the red line boundary of the application site. However, this is a consequence of the red line boundary, which has a 100% built footprint as existing and as proposed. Given that 1-bed units are proposed (so unlikely to be family accommodation), the expectations of those choosing to reside here, close to the centre of the town centre, are such that private amenity space is not considered to be essential in this specific instance, as referenced in the supporting text of Policy H10. Accordingly, the lack of external amenity space is accepted, on balance, in this instance. In terms of level access, this will be possible for the ground floor unit proposed, but will not be provided for the first floor unit. This is an inevitable result of the constraints of the site and the nature of the proposals. As such, whilst not ideal, the proposals are not resisted on this basis.

8.4.3 It is a benefit of the proposal that dedicated on-site waste storage facilities are provided, which are of a level / nature which is supported by specialist officers (see section 5 above). These provisions will be secured via planning condition, with a waste management plan secured to detail precisely how the bins will be presented for collection and returned to their storage location (given the distance to the highway and the extent of the red line boundary). This strategy also extends to servicing and deliveries, for similar reasons in ensuring the

amenity of nearby occupiers is maintained, whilst also being of benefit to future occupiers too. The development will be car-free, which in this location close to the centre of the town, is welcomed and considered appropriate. Standard planning conditions will prevent future occupiers being automatically entitled to on-street parking permits, with it extremely unlikely that these will be able to be obtained in practice.

- 8.4.4 In terms of air quality, the submitted report indicates that the proposals are appropriate, with this confirmed by specialist Environmental Protection colleagues (see section 5.4 above). Environmental Protection do however consider it necessary to secure a contaminated land risk assessment, as the site is located on potentially contaminated land (former paintworks). This is recommended to be secured via condition. As per Section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) the two pre-commencement conditions in this regard have been formally agreed with the planning agent (email received on 21/01/2026).
- 8.4.5 With regard to crime and safety matters, the submission is considered to be lacking in information concerning the measures to be implemented to ensure the safety of future occupiers. To some extent, the secure access point outside the red line boundary, serving Fox Talbot Close, will be likely to be utilised by future occupiers, which provides a degree of comfort. This is weighed up against the lack of a boundary treatment between the east side elevation windows and the shared amenity space of No's 53&55 Baker Street. On balance, this is not considered a basis for resisting the proposals against.
- 8.4.6 For clarity purposes, only the first paragraph of Policy H8 (Residential Conversions) is considered to apply in this case (the other parts of the policy relates to specific type of conversions, which are not applicable in this instance). The proposals are considered to comply with the general thrust of this part of the Policy, adhering to the majority of considerations and therefore appropriate in overall terms. and the Residential Conversions SPD (2023). As the proposal relates to the conversion of an office building to residential use, rather than residential-residential concerns which the Residential Conversions SPD covers, the conversions checklist is not engaged.
- 8.4.7 In overall terms it has been demonstrated, subject to conditions, that an adequate standard of accommodation will be created for future occupiers.

8.5 **Amenity for nearby occupiers**

- 8.5.1 Following on from the quality of accommodation section above, it is readily acknowledged that the proposed residential use of the application site building would have potential adverse impacts for nearby occupiers. The issues raised in section 8.4 in relation to the shared amenity space for No 53&55 Baker Street means that the presence of residential windows on the boundary could make the use of the space less attractive for occupiers. However, the neighbouring buildings being in use as separate flats (meaning the space is already shared, rather than being a private space for a single unit, and clear windows already exist here (albeit for an office use, not residential) lessens the impact to an acceptable extent. No loss of amenity is anticipated from within the building at the neighbouring site, with the officer site visit demonstrating that the nearest windows which could be most potentially impacted are already obscure glazed. In terms of the impact for occupiers of the recently completed units at Fox Talbot Close, the orientation and distances involved means no harmful loss of amenity is envisaged from internal areas within these units.
- 8.5.3 Given the proposals involve largely change of use matters, and where new elements are proposed these replace existing elements on the same footprint (e.g. the external stair) no additional daylight and sunlight impacts to any nearby occupiers would occur, and existing nearby occupiers would not be visually dominated by the existing building any more than is possible at present. The waste/servicing/delivery management plan condition will ensure that a strategy for bins being presented for collection and returned to their storage location

without significantly harming existing nearby amenity. In respect of all other Policy CC8 factors not referenced above, no harmful detrimental impacts are envisaged to existing nearby occupiers from the proposed development. In summary, whilst there are some harmful impacts for nearby occupiers, the level of harm is not considered so great for this to result in a sustainable reason for refusal of the application. In overall terms the proposals are considered to adequately comply with the general thrust of amenity Policy CC8.

8.6 Trees, landscaping, ecology and biodiversity

- 8.6.1 Given the nature of the proposals lacking any substantive 'new' external works and not including any existing on-site existing landscaping (or scope for proposed on-site landscaping), together with the listed nature of the building, there is considered to be limited scope to introduce greening or biodiversity elements into the proposals. While it is recognised that the site is within the air quality management area and one of the two lowest canopy cover wards, hence any incorporation of greening is encouraged, practically providing this is constrained. As such, in this specific instance, it is not considered to be practically possible, or therefore appropriate to seek to secure either landscape provision or biodiversity enhancements.
- 8.6.2 In terms of biodiversity net gain (BNG), the applicant contends that the development is subject to the de minimis exemption (development below the threshold), given the site is an existing building (100% built form footprint), with there being no existing biodiversity on site. Officers can confirm that these specific proposals would not engage BNG requirements.

8.7 Transport

- 8.7.1 As per the above transport comments at section 5.2, the proposals would be considered appropriate from this perspective, subject to a number of conditions (relating to parking permits and a waste/servicing/delivery management plan, as already discussed), which would all be duly secured in the event of permission being granted.

8.8 Sustainability

- 8.8.1 The submission has been accompanied by a Sustainability Statement produced by the Planning Agent. This indicates that a series of measures will be incorporated (e.g. energy efficient measures such as insulation and low energy lighting, mechanisms to reduce water consumption) into the proposed scheme, which is welcomed in principle and indicates that the proposals are certainly seeking to comply with Policy CC2 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. However, no BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Pre-Assessment Estimator has been submitted, as per the SPD requirements.
- 8.8.2 In the circumstances, two planning conditions are considered to be required to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards. More specifically, it will require the development to meet the BREEAM Very Good rating, in accordance with Policy CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. The first condition relates to securing an Interim BREEAM Very Good rating Certificate at the pre-commencement stage. As per Section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) this pre-commencement condition has been formally agreed with the planning agent (email sent on 28/01/2026 and no reference to this in the response received on 30/01/2026). The second condition would secure a Final BREEAM Very Good rating Certificate prior to the first occupation of the development.
- 8.8.3 Officers are mindful that in reality, owing to the listed nature of the application site building, there may be inherent challenges in meeting the required BREEAM standard. This is fully recognised at paragraph 3.5 of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (shown in full below). Officers anticipate that when the applicant is preparing to submit details to adhere to the recommended conditions, should difficulties be encountered, providing these are

evidenced to be justified, officers would then apply a flexible approach to the standard required to be achieved, as per the commentary within the SPD.

- 3.5 Applications affecting some heritage assets may have difficulty achieving the required standard. For this reason, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and buildings in a conservation area are exempt from the provisions of Part L of the Building Regulations where compliance would unacceptably alter their character and appearance. Where this is the case, requiring compliance with standards over and above Part L would clearly conflict with heritage policies in the Local Plan, in particular EN1, and would not be appropriate. Where there are proposals for conversions and refurbishments of listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments or buildings in conservation areas where compliance with sustainability policies would unacceptably alter their character and appearance, appropriate measures that are sensitive to the heritage asset should be taken to achieve improvements to the performance of the building insofar as is possible. Current environmental performance of an asset to be converted or refurbished should be

analysed in the first instance in order to support proposals using a 'whole house' approach. The first priority for listed buildings should be for non-invasive measures. Measures will depend on the significance of individual listed buildings. Historic England has published guidance on the application of Part L to historic buildings which will be of use in informing the approach.¹⁴

- 8.8.4 In overall terms, with these conditions secured, the development will adhere to both Policy CC2 and the guidance within the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.
- 8.9 **Planning Balance and Conclusions of both planning and listed building consent applications**
- 8.9.1 Planning Application PL/25/1498 - The planning application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The application has therefore been carefully considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 (barring out of date Policy H1, as referenced above) and the NPPF 2024.
- 8.9.2 In terms of the planning balance, the benefits of the proposals are considered to outweigh any shortfalls of the scheme. In particular, the provision of residential units and bringing the building back into active use, helping to sustain and enhance the significance of the asset, are amongst the benefits. The benefits outweigh the identified shortcomings, including the overlooking/privacy, outlook/sense of enclosure and day/sunlight matters, the lack of any private or shared amenity space within the red line boundary of the application site and the adverse impact on the functionality of the shared amenity space for 53/55 Baker Street.
- 8.9.3 Therefore, in conclusion, the proposed development has been assessed and the proposed works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and planning permission can be granted, subject to conditions and the completion of a legal agreement to secure the following:
- A financial contribution towards affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough of £16,000

- 8.9.4 Listed building consent application PL/25/1494 – Listed Building Consent is separately considered to be acceptable, with there being no policy conflicts for the works proposed. Accordingly, listed building consent can be granted subject to conditions.

9 RECOMMENDATION

- a) Grant Planning Permission subject to conditions and the completion of a s106 legal agreement to secure a financial contribution of £16,000 towards affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough.
- b) Grant Listed Building Consent subject to conditions

PL/25/1498 conditions:

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

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

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

- 9453 PL-03.01 – Proposed Site Plan
- 9453 PL-03.04 Rev 02 – Proposed Section
As both received on 21/01/2026
- 9453 PL-03.02 Rev 03 – Proposed Plans
- 9453 PL-03.03 Rev 03 – Proposed Elevations
As both received on 30/01/2026

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. Prior to the first occupation of any of the residential units hereby approved, details of how refuse and recycling collections, servicing and deliveries associated with the units hereby approved shall take place and be managed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, refuse collection, servicing and deliveries will be carried out fully in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of general amenity, to ensure convenience of arrangements for refuse and recycling storage and collection and to ensure that no obstruction is caused on the adjoining highway, in the interest of highway safety and in accordance with Policies CC7 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. 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 unit(s) 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 Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. Prior to any agreement being entered into for a new occupation of, or transfer of any interest in, the residential unit(s) 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 unit(s) 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, in accordance with Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

6. No change to the unit mix – 2 x 1-bedroom units - shall be made to the development hereby permitted without written approval from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure that the proposed development provides an appropriate range of housing opportunities / dwelling types to meeting requirements for different groups, in accordance with Policy H2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. * No development shall commence on site until a copy of an Interim BREEAM Certificate in accordance with the BREEAM Sustainability Standard demonstrating compliance with a minimum standard of BREEAM Very Good rating has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards in accordance with Policy CC2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

8. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, a copy of a Final BREEAM Certificate in accordance with the BREEAM Sustainability Standard following a post-construction stage review carried out by a licensed assessor has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, demonstrating that the development has attained as a minimum the standard set out in the Interim BREEAM Certificate referred to in condition 15.

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

9. * No development shall commence on site including demolition and any preparatory works until an assessment of the nature and extent of contamination has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This assessment must be undertaken by a competent person, and shall assess any contamination on the site, whether or not it originates on the site. Moreover, it must include:

- (i) a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination;
- (ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:
 - human health,

- property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes,
- adjoining land,
- groundwaters and surface waters,
- ecological systems,
- archaeological sites and ancient monuments;

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and to ensure the development is suitable for its end use and the wider environment and does not create undue risks to occupiers of the site or surrounding areas in accordance with Policy EN16 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

10. * No development shall commence on site including demolition and any preparatory works until a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historical environment has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, an appraisal of remedial options, and proposal of the preferred option(s), and a timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and to ensure the development is suitable for its end use and the wider environment and does not create undue risks to occupiers of the site or surrounding areas in accordance with Policy EN16 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

11. The approved remediation scheme under Condition 10 shall be implemented in accordance with the approved timetable of works. A validation report (that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out) shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority before construction above foundation level.

REASON: To ensure the development is suitable for its end use and the wider environment and does not create undue risks to occupiers of the site or surrounding areas in accordance with Policy EN16 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

12. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development not previously identified, development shall be halted on that part of the site the contamination reported in writing to the Local Planning Authority.

An assessment of the nature and extent of contamination shall be undertaken and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme, together with a timetable for its implementation, shall be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority for its written approval.

The measures in the approved remediation scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved timetable. Halted works shall not be re-commenced until the measures identified in the approved remediation scheme have been completed and a validation report has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure the development is suitable for its end use and the wider environment and does not create undue risks to occupiers of the site or surrounding areas in accordance with Policy EN16 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

1. The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow permission to be granted within the agreed extended timescale for the decision to be issued.
2. In accordance with Article 35 (DMPO 2015) some conditions have been highlighted (with a *) to make clear that they require approval from the Local Planning Authority before any development begins. This is because the details need to be designed or works implemented before any other works start on the site or are of a nature that it would be impractical to consider after work has started.
3. i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.
ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.
4. A section 106 Agreement has been completed for this development. A copy of the S106 Legal Agreement is available on the Council's Public Register of Planning.
5. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.
6. A Building Regulations application may be required for the proposed development. Please go to our website for more advice.
<https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/building-control/apply-for-building-control/>
You can also find advice and submit an application using the Planning Portal.
7. Complaints are commonly received about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and smoke from bonfires associated with the burning of waste on site. The developer is reminded that construction and demolition associated with the approved development will be subject to environmental health law.
8. During the course of construction, the developer should take care to ensure that no part of this development (foundations, eaves, guttering, etc.) would encroach on, under or across the boundary line with the adjoining property, as the requisite Notice has not been served on the owner of that property. This permission does not confer any right of access onto land that is not under the developer's control. The developer should also be mindful of the obligations and requirements of the Party Wall Act (1996) details of which can be found at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/partywall
9. To minimise the disturbance by noise of future residential occupiers of the flats and its effect on neighbouring residents, residential accommodation must be designed and constructed or converted so as to achieve the insulation requirements set out in Building Regulations Approved Document E.
10. The Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1st April 2015. CIL is a way of securing financial contributions towards infrastructure from new development, and partially replaces the Section 106 planning obligation regime. It is a set charge per sq m of

floorspace for different uses, and, unlike Section 106, it is non-negotiable. It applies to developments which result in at least one dwelling; where the space has not been in lawful use for 6 months within the last 3 years or 100 sq m of new floorspace. For this approved development the CIL status is CHARGEABLE. If chargeable you will be sent a CIL Liability Notice with the calculated amount soon. CIL becomes payable on commencement of the development or by instalments.

For more information go to:

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

11. 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.
12. Noisy construction, demolition and associated activities should be restricted to between the hours of 08:00hrs to 18:00hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 09:00hrs to 13:00hrs on Saturdays, with no noisy works taking place at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays.
13. There should be no burning of waste on the site.

PL/25/1494 conditions and informatives

1. The works hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The works to the Listed Building hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans or specifications:

- GSG 001-1010 - A0-Standard Balanced Vertical Slider / Subframe
As received 21/11/2025
- 9453 PL-03.01 – Proposed Site Plan
- 9453 PL-03.04 Rev 02 – Proposed Section
As both received on 21/01/2026
- 9453 PL-03.02 Rev 03 – Proposed Plans
- 9453 PL-03.03 Rev 03 – Proposed Elevations
As both received on 30/01/2026

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the Listed Building Consent hereby approved and in order to protect the special historic and architectural character of the listed building, in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

3. All external and internal works of making good to the retained fabric shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile. All such works and finishes shall be maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. Prior to commencement of the repair works, details, including the methodology for the brickwork and timber sash windows, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The works shall not be carried out other than in full accordance with the approved details and shall be carried out prior to the first occupation of any residential unit and retained and maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. Prior to commencement of the relevant part of the works, details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council:
 - a) proposed internal partition walls, including details of the method of construction;
 - b) new ground floor insulation;
 - c) external joinery details for the proposed door and windows;
 - d) internal joinery details for the proposed doors, architraves, and skirting boards;
 - e) full schedule of internal finishes to floors, ceilings and walls;
 - f) details of proposed heating and extractor system(s);
 - g) details of proposed rainwater goods.

The works shall not be carried out other than in full accordance with the approved details, prior to the first occupation of any residential unit and retained and maintained as such thereafter.

REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives:

1. Officers have worked positively and proactively with the applicant to determine the application within the agreed extended timeframes in conjunction with the associated application for full planning permission.
2. For the avoidance of doubt, no other works are approved except those as authorised by this Consent. Any other works required to the Listed Building may require a separate application for Listed Building Consent and/or an application for Permitted Works to a Listed Building.