

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0333 Prior approval Part 3 Class MA: Commercial, business and service uses to dwellinghouses

Address: THE GRANARY, 1A PATRICK ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 8DD

Proposal: Change of use from Class E (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 2 new dwellings. Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.

Applicant: Elegant PPM Ltd

Received date: 12/03/2026

Extension of Time Target Decision date: 31/07/2026

Case Officer: Matt Burns

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application relates to a two-storey semi-detached building with front driveway set behind a brick wall and sliding access gates on the west side of Patrick Road in Caversham. The building is attached at single storey level to no. 85 Gosbrook Road and has historically been referred to as 85a Gosbrook Road.

The site is located within a predominantly residential area and is surrounded by two and three storey terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings. The site is located just outside of both the Reading Central Area and Caversham District Centre.

The building was extended to provide office accommodation in 2014 under planning permission ref. PL/13/0068/FUL. The building is currently occupied by a planning agent and architects company.

The site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, which is land at medium and high risk of flooding, within an area of potentially contaminated land and within an air quality management area.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Prior approval is sought under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) for change of use of both floors of the building to comprise 2 x one-bedroom dwellings.

Plans and Documents Submitted

- (a) Drawing no. 4030/100 – Existing Floor Plans
- (b) Drawing no. 4030/101 – Existing Elevations
- (c) Drawing no. 4030/200 – Site & Location Plan
- (d) Drawing no. 4030/202 – Proposed Elevations
- (e) Drawing no. 1160/2 – Level Survey
- (f) Planning Statement

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 12th March 2026

- (g) Calibro Flood Risk Assessment ref. 26-225-60 Rev 02

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 1st May 2026

- (h) Drawing no. 4030/201 Rev A – Proposed Floor Plans

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 4th June 2026

- (i) Personal Flood Plan for 1A Patrick Road Reading, RG4 8DD

(j) Calibro Flood Emergency Plan ref. 26-225 rev. 00
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 15th July 2026

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/13/0068 – Ground and first floor extension to existing office building – Granted.

PL/13/0488 – Discharge of condition 3 of planning permission ref. PL/13/0066 – Approved.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Environment Agency – Objected on 8th April 2026 because the flood risk assessment (FRA) submitted with the application did not use the most up to date flood risk modelling for the area and therefore did not adequately assess whether the development would increase flood risk. Objection withdrawn on 28th May 2026 following submission by the Applicant of an updated FRA subject to a recommended condition to require the flood mitigation measures set out within the updated FRA to be implemented prior to first occupation of either dwelling and retained thereafter and provision of a suitable flood risk emergency plan

RBC Transport – No objection subject to a condition to secure provision of the 2 proposed on-site vehicle parking spaces prior to occupation first occupation of either dwelling.

RBC Environmental Protection – No objection.

RBC Emergency Planner – No objection, the submitted flood risk emergency plan is suitable for the proposed development

RBC Business Rates – The building has been rated for office use since 1995.

Public Notification

As site notice was displayed at the application site on 27th March 2026.

No letters of representation have been received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The application has been submitted to determine whether prior approval is required in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Class MA involves development consisting of a change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class E (commercial, business and service) of Schedule 2 to the Use Classes Order to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of Schedule 1 to that Order.

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

- (a) transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access;
- (b) contamination risks in relation to the building;
- (c) flooding risks in relation to the building;
- (d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development;
- (e) where—
 - (i) the building is located in a conservation area, and

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

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

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

6. APPRAISAL

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

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

Criteria MA.1.—(1)

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

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

Complies. It can be confirmed that the use of the building fell within Class E (Commercial, Business & Service) for a continuous period of at least 2 years prior to the date of the application for prior approval. The applicant has owned and operated office premises from the building since 2014 and RBC Business Rates advise that the building has been rated for office use since 1995.

There is an outbuilding to the rear garden/yard of the site within the red line application area, but the application and proposed plans do not detail any change of use of this outbuilding with the plans showing the 2 x dwellings that are proposed located within the main building within the application site. No change of use of the outbuilding to a standalone dwelling is permitted by way of any consent granted under this application. The applicant is advised that the outbuilding is expressly excluded from the scope of this prior approval. Dwellings created under Class MA do not enjoy householder permitted development rights under Part 1, Class E of the GPDO. Any future use of this outbuilding for purposes ancillary or incidental to the residential enjoyment of the dwellings, or for continued independent commercial use, will require a separate application for full planning permission.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Complies.

Conditions

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

- (a) transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access;
- (b) contamination risks in relation to the building;
- (c) flooding risks in relation to the building;
- (d) impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development;
- (e) where—

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

Assessment of MA.2.—(1)

1. Transport impacts of the development, particularly to ensure safe site access

Patrick Road is accessed from the B3345 Gosbrook Road and is located in Zone 2, The Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011). 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.

The proposed plans show provision of 2 on-site vehicle parking spaces to be provided on the existing hard standing driveway. The parking spaces would be accessed via the existing vehicle crossing and sliding gate access to the site and access protection markers are also in place on the Patrick Road in front of the access.

The RBC adopted Revised Parking standards and Design SPD (2011) requires proposals within Zone 2 of the Borough to provide 0.5 vehicle parking spaces per 1- or 2-bedroom flat and therefore the proposed provision of 1 parking space per flat would comply with the SPD standards and is acceptable. Provision of the parking spaces prior to occupation of the dwellings is to be secured by condition. The parking space layout shown on the proposed plans is likely to make manoeuvring in and out of the site difficult but is considered there is sufficient space to the front of the building for 2 vehicles to park such that access in and out of the site can be achieved.

Notwithstanding the above the Council's Residential Permit Parking Scheme operates in this area, and the proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area generally. An informative is recommend advising future occupiers of this and that they will not be issued with resident or visitor parking permits in order to ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on-street car parking in the area.

RBC Transport Officers consider use of the existing access to access the parking spaces to be acceptable.

In line with the adopted Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011), each of the 1- and 2-bedroom unit should be provided with 0.5 secure cycle parking spaces. The proposed plans show provision of 1 cycle parking space per dwelling which is acceptable.

Adequate space for refuse storage is proposed within the driveway which along with servicing and deliveries would as per the existing situation take place from Patrick Road.

The proposals are considered to be acceptable from a transport impacts perspective and would accord with Policies TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging).

2. Contamination risks in relation to the building

The site is identified as being within an area of potentially contaminated land owing to a historic joinery use of the site. RBC Environmental Protection Officers recommend that should consent be granted for the change of use then an informative is attached to advise the applicant of this and that they should satisfy themselves that the proposals take the necessary account of possible contaminants. On this basis the proposals are considered to be acceptable from a contamination risk perspective and would accord with Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources).

3. Flooding risks in relation to the building

The site is located within flood zones 2 and 3 which are areas of the Borough at medium and highest risk of flooding. Accordingly, the application is accompanied by a flood risk assessment (FRA) which outlines various flood risk mitigation measures, most notably that floor levels within the building would be set at least 300mm above the 1 in 100-year flood event level for the site including an additional allowance for climate change induced flood level changes. Subject, to floor levels within the development being set no lower than 38.4m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) as detailed within the FRA then the Environment Agency (EA) do not object to the application and are satisfied that this would not increase risk of flooding at the site or elsewhere in accordance with Policy EN18 (Flooding and Drainage). Implementation of all flood risk mitigation measure outlined within the submitted FRA is recommended to be secured by condition with all measures to be implemented prior to occupation of any dwelling.

The NPPG and Policy EN18 also require development to demonstrate safe access and egress arrangements should a flood event occur. The submitted FRA identifies that the pavements and roads surrounding the site would be subject to flooding in a future 1-in-100-year flood event and as such the application is also accompanied by a Flood Emergency Plan which details guidance and advice for future occupiers of the development should such an event occur. The EA advised that the emergency plan should be reviewed by RBC Emergency Planners to ensure it is fit for purpose. Accordingly, the plan has been reviewed, and RBC Emergency Planners have confirmed the plan is suitable and would ensure future occupiers of the flats are in a good position to prepare for flooding events. Occupation of the dwellings in accordance with and provision of the Flood Emergency Plan to future occupiers of the dwellings is to be secured by condition.

Subject to the above recommended conditions the proposals are considered to be acceptable from a flood risk perspective and to accord with Policy EN18.

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

The closest commercial premises to the application site is a barber shop to the ground floor of no. 85 Gosbrook Road which is the attached building to the application site which fronts Gosbrook Road. There are no noise concerns associated with the barber shop. Beyond that there is a fish and chips shop at no. 65 Gosbrook Road and a newsagent at no. 63 Gosbrook Road located around 60m from the application site and there are no noise concerns associated with these uses given the separation distance.

The Fox and Hounds Public House is located further afield around 90m from the application site at the junction of Gosbrook Road and Elliotts Way. Given the separation distance no noise concerns associated with noise from the pub and intended occupiers of the development are identified.

RBC Environmental Protection Officers raise no objection in terms of commercial noise impacts on the intended occupiers of the development and in this respect the proposals are considered to be acceptable and to accord with Policies CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) and EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources).

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

The site is not located within a conservation area.

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

Statutory Instrument 2020:632 introduces the requirement that consideration is given in respect to the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms. This requires examination of the detailed floor plans and a judgement to be exercised as to whether appropriate levels of light can be achieved to rooms used for sleeping or living. This excludes bathrooms, service rooms, corridor, laundry rooms and hallways. All habitable rooms within the development would be served by good sized windows and having visited the site and been inside the building it is considered that each proposed dwelling would be provided with adequate natural light.

The proposals are considered to be acceptable from a provision of adequate natural light perspective and would accord with Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).

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

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

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

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

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

A Fire Statement would be required if the development involves the development of an existing 'relevant building'. These new criteria applies to a building which satisfies the height condition in paragraph (3) of the Procedure Order and contains— (a) two or more dwellings; or (b) educational accommodation. Paragraph (3) states the height condition is that— (a) the building is 18 metres or more in height; or (b) the building contains 7 or more storeys.

The development does not meet the relevant height condition and therefore a Fire Statement is not required as part of the application.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Prior Approval is REQUIRED and GIVEN, subject to conditions as follows:

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

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

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

- (k) Drawing no. 4030/100 – Existing Floor Plans
- (l) Drawing no. 4030/101 – Existing Elevations
- (m) Drawing no. 4030/200 – Site & Location Plan
- (n) Drawing no. 4030/202 – Proposed Elevations
- (o) Drawing no. 1160/2 – Level Survey
- (p) Planning Statement

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 12th March 2026

(q) Calibro Flood Risk Assessment ref. 26-225-60 Rev 02

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 1st May 2026

(r) Drawing no. 4030/201 Rev A – Proposed Floor Plans

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 4th June 2026

(s) Personal Flood Plan for 1A Patrick Road Reading, RG4 8DD

(t) Calibro Flood Emergency Plan ref. 26-225 rev. 00

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 15th July 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. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied until all vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with drawing no. 4030/201 Rev A – Proposed Floor Plans received by the Local Planning Authority on 4th June 2026. The spaces shall be kept available for parking at all times thereafter.

REASON: To ensure that the development is provided with adequate parking facilities to meet the needs of future occupiers and reduce the likelihood of roadside parking which could be a danger to other road users in accordance with Policy TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

4. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the Calibro Flood Risk Assessment ref. 26-225-60 Rev 02 received by the Local Planning Authority on 1st May 2026. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied until all flood mitigation measures detailed within the Flood Risk Assessment have been implemented. The flood mitigation measures shall be retained as approved at all times thereafter.

REASON: In order to comply with good practice building for flood resilience/safety in the flood zone and in accordance with Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

5. No dwelling hereby permitted shall be occupied until the measures detailed within the Personal Flood Plan for 1A Patrick Road Reading, RG4 8DD and Calibro Flood Emergency Plan ref. 26-225 rev. 00 both received by the Local Planning Authority on 15th July 2026 have been implemented in full. No dwelling shall be occupied unless a copy of the Personal Flood Plan and Flood Emergency Plan has been provided to all occupiers of the dwellings.

REASON: In order to comply with good practice building for flood resilience/safety in the flood zone and in accordance with Policy EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

1. The proposal meets the relevant criteria set out in Class MA.
2. The applicant is advised that this decision represents the determination of the Local Planning Authority in respect of Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) as to whether Prior Approval is required in respect of the change of use only. Class MA does NOT afford any permitted development rights for external works which affect the exterior of the building in order to implement the change of use.
3. There is a widespread problem in Reading with rats as the rats are being encouraged by poor waste storage which provides them with a food source. Where developments involve shared bin storage areas e.g. flats and hotels there is a greater risk of rats being able to access the waste due to holes being chewed in the base of the large wheelie bins or due to occupants or passers not putting waste inside bins, or bins being overfilled. Where developments involve a food related business then there is a greater risk of rats being attracted to the waste. It is therefore important for the bin store to be vermin proof to prevent rats accessing the waste and for the correct waste bin capacity to be provided so that waste is not deposited outside of bins.
4. The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic. Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.
5. The occupiers of the residential units will not be automatically entitled to an on-street car parking permit. Current and new occupiers should be informed of this and be advised to find out more about parking permits on the Council's website. There is already a high level of on-street car parking in the area and the site is located close to local facilities, with frequent public transport services on nearby roads.
6. You are advised that the development lies on a potentially contaminated site. Due to the nature of the historic land use there is the potential of contaminated land being present. The developers must be aware that any ground or enabling works may bring receptors into contact with the aforementioned contaminants. You may wish to satisfy yourself that the details of the construction proposals take the necessary account of the possibility of contaminants from that source.
7. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this consent. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any conditions attached to the consent may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.
8. 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.
9. 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.

10. 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.