

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0016 Full planning permission

Address: JOLLY ANGLERS PH, KENNET SIDE, READING, RG1 3EA

Proposal: Retention of pub at ground floor, erection of a rear first floor extension, raising of ridge height and conversion and enlargement of roof space to create a second floor, and change of use of first, and newly formed second floor to an 8 bed 8 person large Sui Generis HMO and, with associated external works to create gardens, bin and cycle storage. (amended)

Applicant: Ahmadi

Received date: 08/01/2026

Target Decision date: 14/8/2026 (Ext)

Case Officer: Alison Amoah

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is a vacant pub with some ancillary residential accommodation above, adjacent to the River Kennet towpath. During the site visit it was evident that there had been some recent refurbishment work at the upper floor, which appeared to be the start of creating some rentable rooms, but for which no permission had been secured.

The site has a significant difference in levels between the ground floor front entrance, accessed from the towpath and the rear of the site (at higher ground), such that when standing at the rear of the site one would be roughly at the height of the first-floor level of the building. The topographical survey indicates that the site is 36.9m AOD at the front and 41.59AOD to the rear, a difference of ca 4.7m

The former pub garden is accessed from a steep set of steps adjacent to the side door of the vacant pub. The agent advises that these steps are within the title plan of the pub, but no. 318 has rights of access over them to access their elevated rear garden, albeit this currently appears to not be in garden use. They also advise that the rear gate is used for access to no. 318's bins beyond the rear boundary, although this has not been explicitly confirmed with the occupier of the neighbouring property

The outside space comprises a swimming pool, outside terrace, covered seating areas, outside bar area and outside room. A large proportion of the rear area has been brought up to the highest level (i.e. level with Avon Place) with the use of decking structures over some voids beneath. The details of the levels of the land below the decking has not been provided, just that of the structures (submitted Existing Drawing no: MS-152-2—16869 – Existing Site Plan [Topographical Plan]).

The application site is part of a two-storey terrace, with adjacent C3 dwellings. The pub is likely to have developed from a very historic conversion and merging of original terraced properties as part of the group (although no historic review has been undertaken). The group of buildings are the same height and retain the same eaves detailing, window proportions and mostly original cills.

Adjoining to the east are flats varying in height from 3-4 storeys as viewed from the towpath and 2-3 storey as viewed from Avon Place. Immediately to the rear of the plot is an area of unkempt land and parking. The wider area mainly comprises residential use of varying eras and designs.

A site visit was undertaken on 28th January 2025, in association with the earlier pre-application enquiry, and the following site photos date from that time.



Existing pub frontage and adjacent terraced houses



Flats to the south-west viewed from rear on Avon Place



Rear of site with adjacent flats in background



Relationship of ground level at flats to application site



Adjacent flats to the west from the towpath



View from steps to east to show level difference



View to the rear of no.318 from pub garden

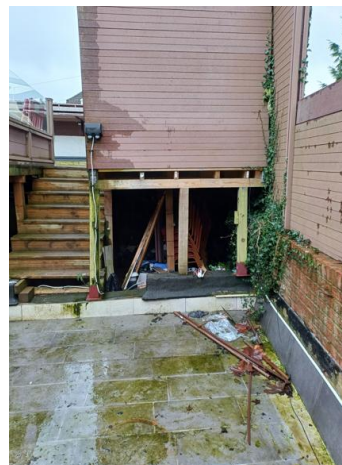


Views of pub garden





Existing raised pub garden and structures

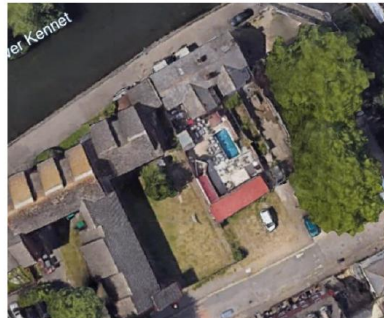


Views from rear of first floor windows towards the void with raised pub garden and structures above.



Proposed Site Plan
Scale: 1/500 @ A3

Site Plan (Proposed)



Google Earth image (6/7/2022)



Extract from Flood Zone Map

The front part of the site is within Flood Zone 2 (light blue on extract above).

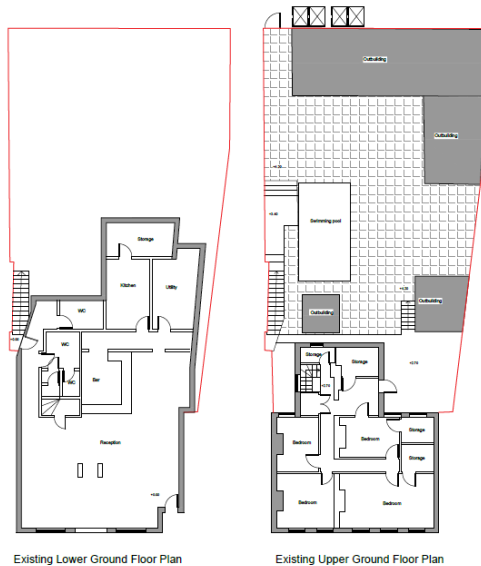
2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal includes:

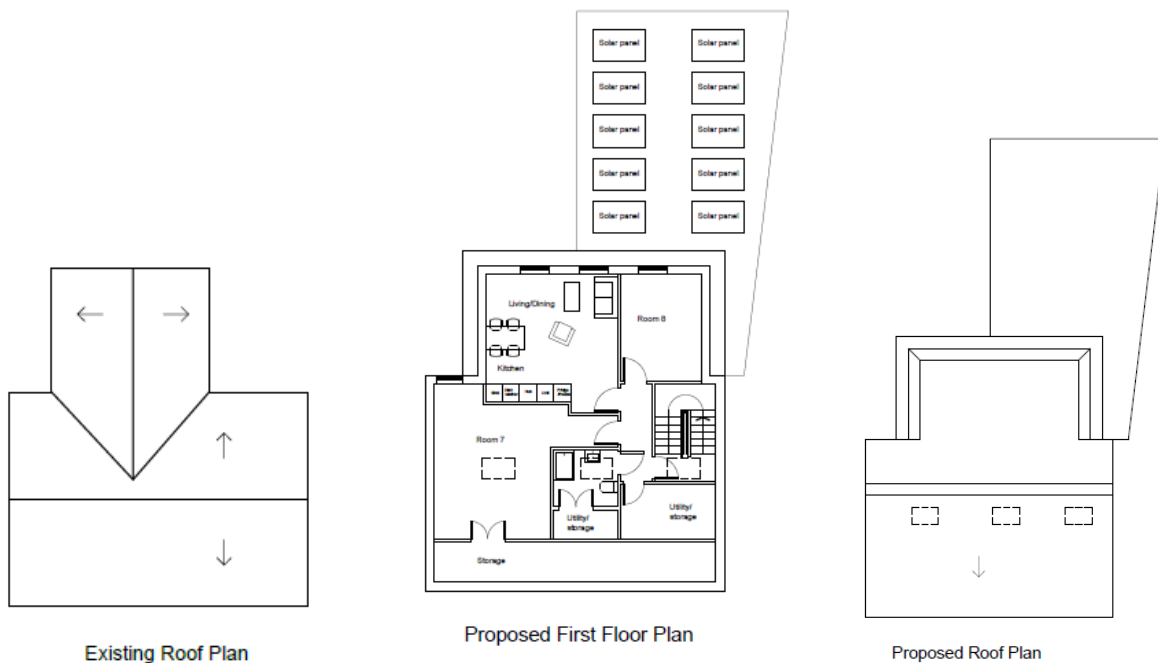
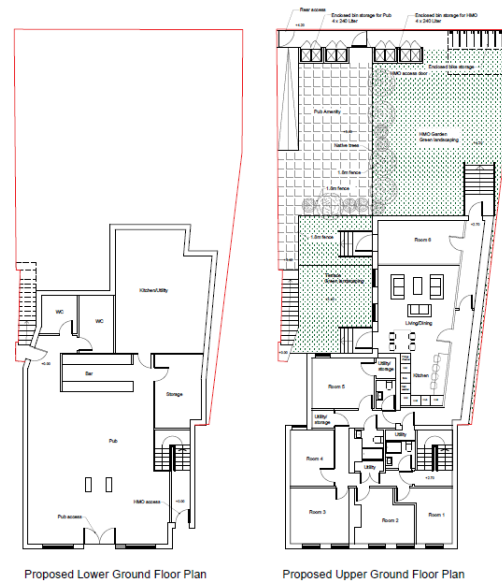
- Retention of the pub at ground floor.
- A flat roofed first floor extension above the ground floor pub and filling in the gap between the existing first floor rear gable projection and the boundary with the flats, The overall depth of the rear extension is ca 0.5 m deeper than the extent of the existing ground floor.
- Raising the roof by ca 0.7m as viewed from the towpath and insertion of roof lights to the front roofscape.
- Conversion of the loft space, removal of gable end roofscape and a mansard type dormer extension to the rear.
- Change of use of the first and newly created second floors to an 8 bedroom Sui Generis HMO.
- Removal of existing raised decking platform and detached buildings and structures.

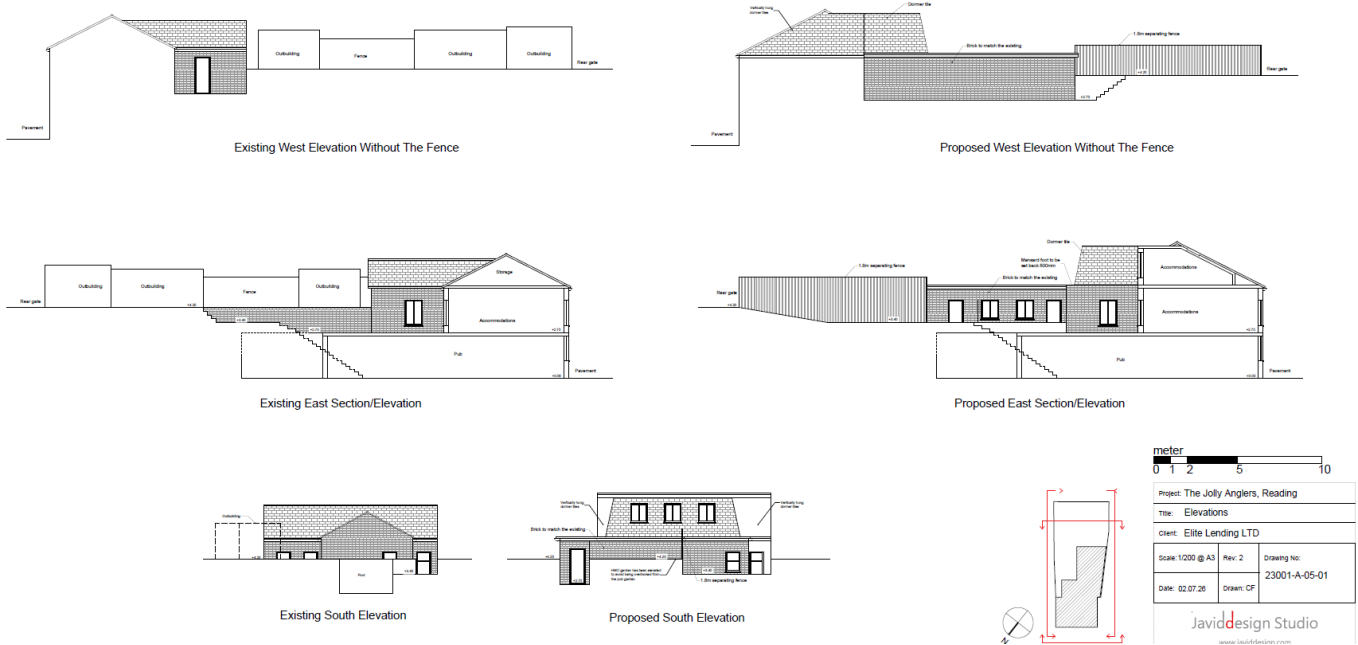
- Engineering works to change the land form to create rear and side amenity spaces for the pub and the HMO, and associated boundaries, retaining structures, access steps, bin and cycle storage.

Existing



Proposed





The following documents were submitted as received 8th January 2026, unless otherwise stated:

- Location Plan
- Drawing no: 23001-A-03-01 Rev 0, dated 6/1/26 - Existing Plans
- Drawing no: 23001-A-03-02 Rev 5, dated 2/7/26 - Proposed Floor Plans, received 15th July 2026
- Drawing no: 23001-A-05-01 Rev 2 dated 2/7/26 – Elevations [Existing and Proposed], received 15th July 2026
- Drawing no: MS-152-2—16869 – Existing Site Plan [Topographical Plan]
- Flood Risk Assessment, dated 17/7/26, Ref: PRE-2025 000027 V.2, prepared by STM Environmental, received 17th July 2026
- BS:5837 Arboricultural Report, ref: AIA/AMS/06700/2026, prepared by Duckworths Arboriculture Ltd, received 23rd March 2026
- Tree Protection Plan, dated March 2026 (updated August 2026), received 3rd August 2026
- Planning, Sustainability and Transport Statement, dated January 2026, prepared by Leader Planning, received 4th February 2026
- Design and Access Statement for Planning Application, dated April 2026, prepared by Javid Design Studios, received 28th April 2026
- Preliminary Ecological Report, Report ref.: R2945_PEA_a, dated July 2025, prepared by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy
- Bat Emergence Survey, Document ref: R2945_BES_a DRAFT, dated Feb 2026, prepared by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy, received 4th February 2026

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/1605/CLP – Use of first floor as bed and breakfast (C1) – Refused 19/3/2021

PL/24/1644/PRE-APP - Pre-application advice for change of use of pub to a house in multiple occupation, raising height of roof and erection of a part single part 2 storey rear extension – Observations sent 27/2/25

PL/25/0513/FUL – Erection of a part single part two storey rear extension and change of use from public house to a large House in Multiple Occupation – Withdrawn 18/11/2025 – *issues raised included loss of pub, scale of proposal and resulting amenity concerns.*

4. CONSULTATIONS

Statutory

Environment Agency – The proposed development falls within Flood Zone 2, which is land defined in the planning practice guidance as being at risk of flooding. We have produced a series of standard comments for LPAs and planning applicants to refer to on 'lower risk' development proposals. These comments replace direct case-by-case consultation with us. This proposed development falls within this category. These standard comments are known as Flood Risk Standing Advice (FRSA).

We recommend that you view our standing advice in full before making a decision on this application

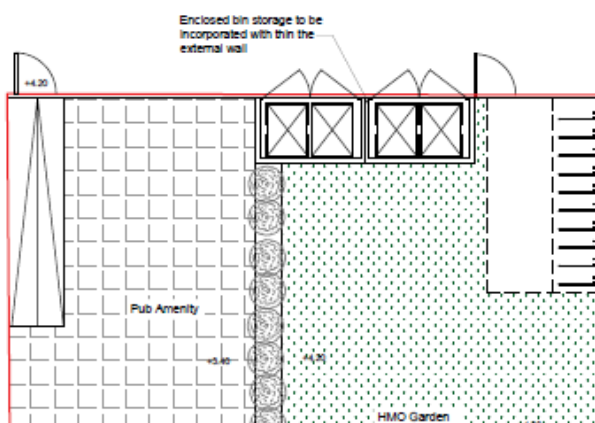
Internal

Transport Development Control – *The original comments, received 12/3/26, were as follows:* 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.

In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the proposed HMO development would be required to provide 0.25 on-site parking spaces per lettable room, however there is no parking currently associated with the development, and it is not feasible to provide any due to the constraint nature of the site.

There are extensive parking restrictions in place in the vicinity of the site. The Council's residential parking permit scheme also operates in the area. Under the Borough's current parking standards, this proposal would generate additional pressure for parking in the area. There should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed HMO will not be issued with resident or visitor parking permits which would be covered by condition and an informative applied. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

It is noted that on the existing submitted plan bin storage has been illustrated located outside of the applicants red line plan on private land, can the applicant confirm that permission has been sought to store bin in this location and clarify as to how bins are currently collected for the public house.



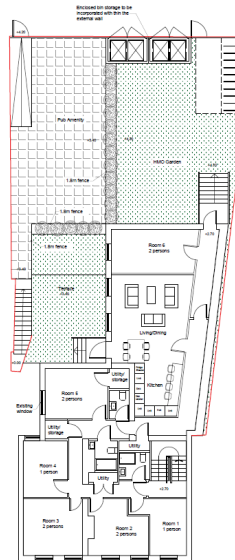
Bin storage should comply with Reading Borough Council's Waste management guidelines for property developers. The proposed ground floor plan indicates that the cycle storage and bin storage areas are located at the rear of the site, with the doors for both opening directly onto grassed land outside the application boundary, this would require occupants exiting the site to access the bin and cycle storage.

The applicant will need to provide a path to the rear connecting with the existing path; they would need to get permission from the landowner who in this case is Reading Borough Council and the planning application would need to be amended to reflect this.

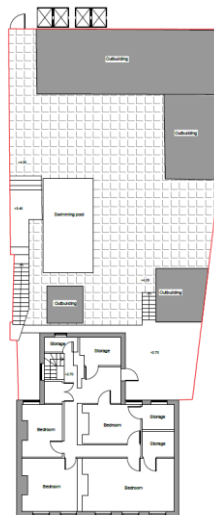
The applicant will also need to ensure the bin storage area can accommodate the additional bins required for the HMO element of the development. Refuse for the public house and HMO should be kept separately and will need to be identified on plans. The Council's refuse team will need to be consulted to ensure the correct capacity and type of bins are provided and collection arrangements confirmed.

There is an existing door that currently opens outwards at the rear of the site, although this would appear to have been an addition made a few years ago, as historical images show a boundary wall extending across the rear. Plans illustrate all proposed doors are to also open outwards, as this is a pedestrian walkway area, in accordance with Section 153 of the Highways Act, the doors should open inwards.

Proposed Layout



Existing Layout



The cycle storage area identified on submitted plans would need to be fully secure and to achieve this it would need to be fully accessed from inside the site, this will need to be illustrated on plans.

To fully determine the application all the points made above will need to be addressed.

A CMS will be required for this development.

Planning Officer Note: Further to the submission of a number of revisions, which altered the number and locations of bins, removed one of the rear gates, changed the rear gate to inward opening, altered the positioning of cycle storage and confirmation of covered, lockable storage, Transport confirmed that all matters had been adequately addressed and that there was no objection subject to conditions.

Natural Environment – Trees – No objection subject to a condition to be in accordance with the approved tree protection plan.

Ecology – In summary the comments were – No objection subject to a condition requiring ecological enhancements.

Environmental Protection – The original comments 24/2/26 were as follows: No details have been submitted regarding how the proposed residents of the HMO will be protected from noise from the pub, in terms of internal noise transfer and noise from the garden. In the absence of such information, I would recommend refusal of the application.

I also request information regarding any proposed bin storage as this location is a high risk in terms of rats.

The site is within a landfill buffer zone, therefore a condition is recommended requiring further detail to be submitted.

Planning Officer Note: No further detail was provided on noise nor details in terms of bin storage type. Pre-commencement conditions are included.

Private Sector Housing Consultations – No objection, but advice regarding the relevant current guidance and legislation, and that from Housing Act/HMO perspective, the maximum number of people allowed will depend on the sleeping, kitchen, bathing and toilet facilities, as one or more are considered limiting factors.

The maximum number of people allowed to occupy this property can only be confirmed after:

- Work has been completed.
- A full inspection of the property has been carried out by a member of the Private Sector Housing team in accordance with our HMO licensing policies and procedures.

Planning Officer Note: Informatives are included and a condition requiring the submission and approval of an HMO Management Plan.

Waste Services – *The original comments were as follows:* The Council's standard household waste collection service is for a fortnightly general waste collection, fortnightly recycling collection and weekly food waste collection. Glass recycling collections are being introduced soon and will be collected fortnightly.

A single HMO dwelling would be provided the below bins as standard –

- 1 x 240L general waste bin
- 1 x 240L recycling bin
- 1 x 23L food waste caddy
- 1 x 55L glass recycling container

If tenants are producing more waste than what can be contained within the above containers, the HMO license holder would need to arrange for additional bins under the conditions of their HMO licence. An 8 person HMO would likely require additional waste storage space and additional disposal arrangement.

I note that there is a bin store in the rear garden with space for 4 bins. Please could you ask for clarification on what size bins these would be and for what waste type? This has not been specified on the plan.

Bin store doors must not open outward over a public footway or road and should not cause an obstruction to other access when in an open position. They should be able to remain or be secured in the open position so that access for collection staff is unimpeded when the bins are being emptied. Doorways must be wide enough to allow the largest Eurobins to be emptied.

The household waste bins would be collected from Avon Place and the store would need to be within the maximum bin pulling distance which is measured from the rear of the collection vehicle to the rear of the furthest away bin. The maximum distances that operatives should be required to wheel containers, measured from the furthest point within the storage/collection area to the loading position at the back of the vehicle are:

15m for any 2 wheeled containers up to 360-litres

10m for any 4 wheeled containers. Please confirm that the bins will be stored within this distance.

The commercial waste generated from the pub must be kept separate from any household waste bins. Under Simpler Recycling legislation, the pub would also be required to separate their waste in to the above 4 separate waste streams and so would need to have space for at least 4 separate bins. The plans do not show any designated space for commercial waste disposal. Please ask that plans be updated to incorporate this.

The above maximum pulling distances will also apply for commercial waste bins.

Please be aware that where crews require access to bin stores, the stores must be secured with a coded lock rather than with a physical key lock. We are not able to distribute keys or fobs between crews.

Please do refer to the Council's waste management guide for further information:

<https://www.reading.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/waste-management-guidelines-for-property-developers-architects-planners-contractors-managing-agents-and-landlords/>

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

Planning Officer Note: Following the submission of an amended plan the Waste officer further commented (27/4/26): It seems that the residential bins are no longer directly accessible by crews from the kerbside. They would need to present the bins for collection on the pavement and then return them to the designated bin store area promptly afterwards. There is a risk with HMOs and communal bins that they would just be left out on the pavement all the time as there is not one single responsible persons.

The household waste bins would need to be presented within the maximum bin pulling distance which is measured from the rear of the collection vehicle to the rear of the furthest away bin. The maximum distances that operatives should be required to wheel containers, measured from the furthest point within the storage/collection area to the loading position at the back of the vehicle are:

- 15m for any 2 wheeled containers up to 360-litres
- 10m for any 4 wheeled containers

It is also not clear on the plan how the trade waste bins for the pub would be accessed and collected from?

Further amended plans were submitted to address the matters raised and conditions for the submission and approval of waste management plans for both the commercial pub and HMO uses are included.

Neighbour consultation

Two site notices were erected on 26th February 2026. One to the front (towpath) and one to the rear at Avon Place.



A summary of the three objections received is as follows:

- Poor proposed mix of uses
- Extra noise and disturbance
- Detrimental effect on parking and congestion
- An increase in household waste in an area with overflowing bins and fly-tipping could make the situation worse.

CAMRA were also consulted, but no comments have been received at the time of writing.

Discussion with the agent

The final amended plans are as a result of pre-application advice, advice during the consideration of the previous application, subsequently withdrawn, and further review and advice of draft proposed plans prior to the submission of this current application. The scale of the extensions has over this period been significantly reduced, the level of amenity space improved internally and externally, and the pub included for retention. It is considered that the applicant has worked positively and proactively with the LPA.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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

National Planning Policy Guidance

Flood Risk and Coastal Change (2025)

National Flood Risk Standing Advice for Local Planning Authorities (2026)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024)

Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 5 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

Section 8 - Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

Section 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport

Section 11 – Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Section 14 – Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

Adopted Reading Borough Local Plan – November 2019

Policy CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change

Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

Policy CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

Policy EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

Policy EN18: Flooding and Drainage

Policy RL6: Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses

Policy H8: Residential Conversions

Policy H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

Policy TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy

Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Policy TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Residential Conversions (2023) - *Together with the relevant adopted local planning policies, the appraisal of this application has been assessed against the adopted Residential Conversions SPD (2023), which provides further guidance on the interpretation of the adopted policies. Section 2 of the SPD deals with 'All Conversions', Section 4 'Sui Generis HMOs'. The SPD sets assessment matters against checklist items (1-27) and the relevant ones have been referred to below.*
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

Other

- Guide to Amenity Standards applicable to Houses in Multiple Occupation that require a Licence, RBC
- Residential Conversions SPD (2023)

Local Plan Partial Update

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 pre-submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of May 2025.

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

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the appraisal below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues to be considered are:

- a) Principle of Use
- b) Flood Risk
- c) Design
- d) Residential Amenity
- e) Access/ Parking
- f) Trees, Landscaping & Ecology
- g) Waste Storage
- h) Sustainability
- i) Community Infrastructure Levy
- j) Other

a) Principle of Use

The overall proposal would retain an existing vacant public house at ground floor and reuse and extend the upper floors to create a Sui Generis HMO with associated external pub space, residential amenity space for the HMO and bin and cycle storage.

The overall use of this previously developed site is supported under NPPF Paragraph 124, which states that *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions...”*

The definition within the NPPF states that brownfield land (previously developed land) is defined as: *“Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.”*

Specifically, the retention of the pub is supported under Policy RL6 and the principle of a part conversion and part extension to a Sui Generis HMO use, as part of a mixed use would be acceptable, subject, in the main, to satisfactorily addressing the requirements of Policy H8, which states:

“Proposals to convert buildings into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area, particularly in terms of intensification of activity, loss of privacy, loss of external amenity space, the provision and location of adequate on-site car parking and the treatment of bin storage areas and other related servicing.

Proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will only be acceptable where:

- *The proposal respects the physical character of the area in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features;*
- *The proposal would not, either individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single family housing;*
- *There are no unacceptable adverse impacts to residents of the scheme or surrounding properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties;*
- *There is no inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;*
- *Bin and cycle storage is of an appropriate size and standard for the units proposed and should be located at ground floor level with easy access; and*
- *The resulting property or properties would provide adequate internal floorspace and headroom for residents....."*

Policy H8 continues:

"Additionally, in the case of sui generis houses in multiple occupation (HMOs):

- *The property to be converted measures more than 120 square metres gross.*
- *There is sufficient communal space."*

The part change of use of the upper floors of the existing public house and extension to create a large HMO would not have an effect on mixed and sustainable communities, as the property is not a single-family dwelling. Although the area for conversion within the existing pub is residential in nature it would have functioned as ancillary to the pub use. The criteria used to assess whether there would be harm from a conversion to an HMO, as set out in Policy H8 and the supporting Residential Conversions SPD, would, therefore, not be applied in this instance.

It would meet the size requirements in that the overall building measures in excess of 120sqm externally and the upper floor has 4 bedrooms.

The principle of the mixed use is considered acceptable in principle subject to addressing and meeting other policy requirements, including amenity considerations, layout and design matters, as set out below. The applicant identifies that a mixed use is required to support the future viability of the pub.

b) Flood Risk

Part of the front of the site is within Flood Zone 2 (medium probability of flooding), and the remainder is in Flood Zone 1.

NPPF paragraph 170 states that *"Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere."*

Policy EN18 requires that developments are directed to the areas at the lowest risk of flooding, and taking account of climate change

"..... Wherever possible, development should be designed to reduce flood risk, both on- and off-site. ...all new developments in areas of flood risk should give priority to SuDS."

The proposed HMO use and the pub would be classed as a 'more vulnerable' development. The flood zone map extract above shows that a small part of the front of the application site is within Flood Zone 2 (pale blue). The proposed entrance at ground floor, to the upper floor HMO, the proposed rear extensions and the proposed rear access would be within Flood Zone 1. The area above the ground floor that could feasibly be deemed to be in Flood Zone 2 is the area for the proposed for change of use. Therefore, a

Flood Risk Assessment is required but a Sequential Test is not, because, this is not required for more-vulnerable developments in Flood Zone 2 which involve a change of use

The EA advised that reference should be made to their Standing Advice in undertaking the assessment of the proposed scheme. This sets out that the key policy requirement is to make sure the development will be safe over its lifetime including safe access and egress.

The proposed scheme includes no change of use of the existing ground floor public house, which is the part within Flood Zone 2, apart from internal reconfiguration and the addition of a front door at ground floor level for access to the proposed HMO at upper floors, but there would be a rear access too.

Existing rear structures would be removed, and the proposal would include limited expansion of built form at ground floor level, which in any case would be in Zone 1, with the majority of additional built form at upper levels. The main change to the rear would be the reprofiling of land to fill in any existing voids and to create level garden spaces for the HMO and the pub. There would be a retaining structure wall with fence above between the pub garden and the HMO garden to the south, as they would vary in their overall finished levels at +4.2m and +3.4m respectively.

The finished floor level of the pub would remain as 36.99m AOD and the first floor residential would be set at 2.7m above the ground floor. There would be no bedrooms on ground floor. The proposal would increase permeable areas compared to the existing and all residents of the HMO would have safe access/and egress from the rear of the building.

The submitted FRA states that during the 1% AEP (1 in 100 year) plus 25% climate change fluvial event and all pluvial flood events, the proposed development would remain dry, but includes a range of recommended measures within the Flood Risk Mitigation Measures section. With these measures in place, the development would be safe from flooding and be compliant with policy.

The 'more vulnerable' residential HMO use is, therefore, not considered to be at significant risk from any source of flooding and the proposed development is considered to be suitable, and accords with national policy and Policy EN18 subject to the mitigation measures, including warning procedures being maintained for the lifetime of the development. A condition is included requiring the measures as set out in the FRA to be implemented and maintained.

c) Design

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that permission should be refused for development with poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving character, the quality of an area and the way it functions.

At the local level Reading Borough Local Plan (RBLP) Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm, requires all development to be of a *"high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located."* Policy H8 reiterates the need to respect the physical character of the area.

At its deepest point the proposed flat roofed first floor rear extension is ca 12.6m extending behind and adjacent to the existing location of the rear gable ended projection. This additional built form would be adjacent to the boundary with the garden of the flats to the west. Due to the difference in ground levels between this site and the adjacent flats, with the latter much higher, a first-floor extension would appear as a single storey and would be of a suitable scale in this context. The appearance of the site from the west would be slightly changed, but would present a more coherent form of development than the existing mix of fencing, and individual detached structures.

The proposed first floor rear extension would be simple in form with a regular rhythm of windows and doors. The proposed materials would be brick with slate roofing. The flat roof and mansard arrangement appears somewhat contrived and awkward in relation to the original building. Surrounding development

mostly comprises pitched roof forms, although it is accepted that the use of a flat roof in this instance assists in ensuring a level of subservience of the structure.

The proposed scheme would remove built form adjacent to the rear boundary, which would be an improvement in design terms.

Although the raised height of the roof would alter the appearance of the terrace it is considered that a small increase would not be so significantly detrimental as to warrant refusal based on the wider context including staggered roof forms, as can be seen in the photo below, and that the site being in commercial use is already different in nature and appearance to the adjacent dwellings.

It is also worth noting that one of the principal issues raised during pre-application, and the previous withdrawn application, was seeking to retain the pub use, but also limiting the overall extent of footprint as well as providing sufficient amenity space for HMO use. In order to support the ongoing viability of the pub, the applicant has presented a mixed use as being required with a specific quantum of HMO use. The limited increase in height of the roof along with a dormer would enable to this to be achieved without overdeveloping the site. The mansard type rear dormer would mean the loss of the rear gable end projection, but the form would be subservient to the overall roof with pitched sides and there would be limited views of this from the public realm and overall, the removal of existing detached structures and simplification of the built form, along with improved amenity space would be seen as an improvement for the site.



Google image (2019) to show staggered roof heights

d) Residential Amenity

Policy CC8 requires development to not cause *“a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties...”* and also states that *“where an otherwise acceptable development could change its character to a use that would have a greater impact on amenity without needing planning permission, conditions will be applied to restrict such changes.”*

Policy H10 is with regard to ensuring that dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space.

Policy EN16 states that *“Development will only be permitted where it would not be damaging to the environment and sensitive receptors through land, noise or light pollution; where it would result in no deterioration in, or ideally enhance, ground and surface water quality; and where adequate water resources, sewerage and wastewater treatment infrastructure will be in place to support the proposed development prior to occupation. Proposals for development that are sensitive to the effects of noise or light pollution will only be permitted in areas where they will not be subject to high levels of such pollution, unless adequate mitigation measures are provided to minimise the impact of such pollution. Development will only be permitted on land affected by contamination where it is demonstrated that the contamination and land gas can be satisfactorily managed or remediated so that it is suitable for the proposed end use and will not impact on the groundwater environment, human health, buildings and the wider environment, during demolition and construction phases as well as during the future use of the site.”*

Future Occupiers

Room Sizes

The SPD refers to the nationally described space standards (Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard', 2015, DCLG) as a useful starting point. It should be noted, however, that Reading Borough Council has a "*Guide to Amenity Standards applicable to Houses in Multiple Occupation that require a Licence*" which references the standards for HMOs as set out in the 'The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Mandatory Conditions of Licences) (England) Regulations 2018'. Regulation 2 refers to national minimum standards for sleeping accommodation as: 6.51 square metres for one person aged 10 years or over; 10.5 square metres for two persons aged 10 years or over. The bedrooms are all proposed for single occupancy, and all exceed the required size. Occupancy of the HMO rooms to single occupancy per room will be restricted by condition.

Communal Space

The SPD identifies that the amount of communal space that is considered appropriate in a large HMO would be dependent on the number and size of bedrooms. The standard set out is for one communal room for every 4-6 bedrooms depending on the size of the bedroom. The scheme has two good sized kitchen/living/ dining areas, as well as separate utility and storage areas. The rooms are of a good size with a couple large enough to be capable of having their own sitting areas. The overall level of communal provision is considered acceptable. A condition is recommended to ensure that the communal areas are retained for communal use only.

External Amenity Space

The proposal includes a garden area for the pub and two garden areas for the HMO to the east and south. Access to the eastern HMO external space would be via the kitchen/living dining area and access to the southern area via rear doors at first floor. Privacy would be created between the different garden spaces through the use of hard and soft landscaping, and the rear HMO garden would be at a higher level than the pub garden separated by a retaining structure and fence 1.8m fence above.

The east facing side HMO garden would be adjacent to the steps access from the pub. There would be a privacy fence included to ensure overlooking into this space would be minimised.

The rear space would also provide access to bin and cycle storage and the rear gate to access Avon Place.

It is considered that these would provide a suitable scale of spaces, sufficient access to sunlight and sufficient levels of privacy and safety. A condition is included requiring further details to be submitted and approved to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of hard and soft landscaping and adequate separation between the functional aspects of the outside space and the use for amenity.

External windows

All habitable rooms would benefit from external windows and in addition room 7 also includes a rooflight. Room 5's window would be adjacent to one of the external amenity spaces, but the relocation of this window from its original side facing position has been balanced against removing direct overlooking at close quarters to the neighbouring 318. Although there is a current side facing window this serves a staircase rather than proposed habitable space.

Layout/Stacking of Rooms

The Council's SPD seeks to avoid layouts which locate living rooms, bathrooms and kitchens, next to, above, or below, proposed or neighbouring bedrooms. The layout largely achieves this. There are some bedrooms adjacent to communal spaces and the upper floors of the HMO would be above a pub use. Therefore, noise conditions will be included and a restriction on hours of pub use to ensure that relevant and suitable mitigation measures are included within the proposed scheme.

Noise and Disturbance

With a mix of uses there would need to be adequate mitigation measures to ensure that the transmission of noise from the pub to the HMO would be minimised. No noise assessment was submitted with the application, and therefore, a pre-commencement condition is included, requiring the submission and approval of a noise assessment and mitigation strategy, which would be based on assumptions about the type of pub, number of uses, opening hours, activities and construction of the building. This would be in order to estimate the noise transfer between floors and to establish suitable mitigation. Conditions would also be included in terms of the hours, no amplified music and the use of the outside pub space.

Neighbouring Residents

Privacy and Overlooking/ Overbearing Impacts

In terms of the adjacent no. 318 the proposed rear extension and additional roof form would introduce some built form with a slightly closer relationship than some of the existing detached structures, but there would be sufficient set off from the shared boundary to not be considered to cause overbearing effects nor significant loss of light compared to the existing position. The rear window and windows in the outrigger of no. 318 are already significantly affected by the pub building.

Although new side facing windows would be introduced within the rear HMO extension these would be set well away from the shared boundary with no. 318 and would face the garden. Boundary treatments and landscaping would assist with limiting the effects. However, the level of overlooking to no. 318 would be relatively comparable to the previous use of the pub's rear garden. The arrangement of the joint access steps up between the pub use and no. 318, which allows access for no. 318 to their private amenity space from a side gate would not change, and the adjacency of proposed garden spaces to no. 318's garden would be the same. The level of usage of the smaller pub outside space and amenity space for 8 residents is unlikely to be significantly different compared to the previous much larger pub garden arrangement.

There would be additional built form adjacent to the boundary with the flats to the west at first floor and roof extension. Due to the difference in ground levels between the two sites the impact would appear as ground and first floor additions. The lower part of the flats nearest to the development, which includes a side facing window, is in association with access to an external access balcony at upper floors rather than habitable space, and the distance between the two would be ca 3.4m, such that any loss of light would be minimal. There would be no side facing windows at the development on that side.

Noise and disturbance

The level of noise and disturbance from the proposed mixed use is unlikely to be significantly different to the existing pub use with ancillary residential accommodation. Indeed, with a reduced capacity of the external space it is likely that there could be a betterment, and the ways in which the outside spaces could be used by the pub patrons and HMO users, and as set out above pub hours would be restricted by conditions, which compares favourably to the more unrestricted use that would have occurred in association with the previous use. In addition, additional noise disturbance or nuisance is controlled by civil enforcement (Police) and statutory nuisance legislation (Environmental Health).

A condition is also included for the submission of an HMO Management Agreement to address how noise within and outside the HMO would be managed.

The mixed use is considered to comply with relevant policies CC8, EN16, H8, and H10 and the Residential Conversions SPD.

e) Access/ Parking

Policy TR5 states that parking standards for all residential conversions should be in accordance with the Council's adopted Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD.

In accordance with the Parking Standards SPD, an HMO property would be required to provide 0.25 car parking spaces per room. However, as a constrained urban site there is no space for on-site car parking. This is a sustainable location and this is acceptable subject to the inclusion of conditions restricting the

automatically entitlement for residents for parking permits for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure. This would ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area. Conditions and an informative are included regarding a restriction on the entitlement to parking permits for existing and future schemes in the area.

In accordance with the SPD, cycle storage for an HMO should be provided at a ratio of 0.5 secure cycle storage spaces for each letting room, in the form of Sheffield type stands within a lockable store. The proposed scheme includes for 8 spaces, which exceeds this requirement. The agent confirmed that the cycle storage would be covered and lockable and this detail is secured through a condition.

In terms of pedestrian access to the site there would be access to the front from the towpath via a dedicated door, separate to the pub use and one stair core providing access to the first and second floors. To the rear, adjacent to Avon Place, there would be a shared access to a rear internal path for pub users and HMO residents, including those with bicycles. The originally submission included two separate access points, but this would have required further pathway to connect to Avon Place on land outside the ownership of the applicant. One singular access point, as existing was, therefore, maintained.

There would be a further access-controlled gate for secure access to the HMO area and the HMO bin and cycle storage to the rear. As the proposed rear level of the HMO amenity space would be higher than the internal floor space, a set of steps would provide access into the building. Notwithstanding what is currently shown on the submitted plans, further detail to include pathways linking the steps to the rear access path and bin and cycle storage will be conditioned.

This arrangement is considered to comply with Policies, CC7, which requires ease of movement and permeability, and CC6, TR3 and TR5 which require that developments provide for accessibility by walking and cycling.

f) Trees, Landscaping & Ecology

Policy EN14 requires trees, hedges and woodlands be protected from damage or removal and that new development should make provision for tree planting to improve the level of coverage within the Borough and to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area.

Policy EN12 requires the Green Network to be maintained, protected, consolidated, extended and enhanced. On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible, including through the provision of new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements wherever practicable.

Trees, Landscaping

There are no existing trees within the site, but there are some very mature trees close to the site to the rear. An AMS and tree protection plan were submitted, and a condition is included to ensure compliance with the measures identified.

The proposed scheme indicates that the final scheme would include tree planting and other landscaping within site. Further details of the proposed hard and soft landscaping which includes the hardstanding for the bin and cycle storage areas, pathways, steps, and internal gates and fences will be secured via condition.

Ecology

The Ecology Officer confirmed that the submitted Ecology report has been undertaken to the appropriate standard and includes results from a bat emergence survey undertaken on 18th August 2025, which concludes that the building is unlikely to host roosting bats.

As the site is located on a Green Link, as per RBLP Policy EN12, adjacent to the River Kennet priority habitat, it is appropriate to seek biodiversity enhancements for the development. This would accord with

this policy and national policy within Paragraph 187 of the NPPF, which states: *“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: [...]*

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;”

A condition is, therefore included, requiring the submission and approval of ecological enhancements to include bird and bat boxes

g) Waste Storage

Policy CC5, H8 and the Residential Conversions SPD require bin storage should be of an appropriate size, be easily accessible to occupants and refuse collectors and be sympathetically located with regard to their visual impact.

The proposed amended scheme includes eight 240 litre bins, four for the pub and four for the HMO inside to the site and adjacent to the proposed rear internal path. There is the retention of a rear access gate, which provides access to a public path, which connects to the pavement adjacent to Avon Place. Transport and Waste Teams have confirmed that the overall quantum and arrangement would be acceptable subject to the bins being presented to street on bin collection day, and returned promptly to site. In addition, the type of waste to be stored, and suitable bin storage facilities which would be vermin proof would need to be provided. The agent has confirmed that there would be a management company for the HMO whose role would include taking out and retrieving bins. Conditions will be included requiring the submission of further detail as part of the submission and approval of Waste Management Plans for each use. This would be considered an improvement on the previous situation whereby bins were stored outside of the site on RBC land.

h) Sustainability

The overarching sustainability policy CC2 requires proposals for new development to be designed and have site layouts which *“use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.” Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.... All minor non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM ‘Very Good’ standard as a minimum;”*

Policy CC3 seeks that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change.

Policy CC5 requires minimisation of waste during construction and the life of the development.

The scheme includes flood resilience measures, planting and solar panels, which would accord with the thrust of the above policies and the DAS states that *“An assessment will be undertaken to demonstrate that passive design and energy efficiency measures will help to reduce energy demand and CO2 emissions substantially, and internal water usage”*, but no further information is included as part of the submission.

However, subject to the inclusion of standard conditions requiring the submission and approval of BREEAM at design and final stages to meet ‘Very Good’ standard, and further details of the proposed PV panels, the proposal is considered acceptable.

i) Other

Land Gas – The development is situated in a land fill 'buffer zone' i.e. within 250 metres of a landfill site. The proposed changes may impact on the level of risk from land gas, therefore, a condition is included requiring the submission of land gas risk assessment.

Ground Stability– Paragraph 196 (ground conditions and pollution) of the NPPF states that “Planning policies and decisions should ensure that: a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.”

As there is such a large difference in site levels between the front and rear of the site and adjoining plots it is imperative that details of the proposed structural elements/ retaining structures at the edges of and within the site are provided. A condition is included requiring such detail to be provided prior to commencement.

j) Community Infrastructure Levy

The proposed use is CIL liable and the **estimated** amount of CIL chargeable from the proposed scheme would be £49,000 (rounded) based on 260sqm (rounded) GIA (excludes public house floor space) at £188.28 (2026 indexed figure) per sqm of Gross Internal Area. An informative is included.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposal to partially convert and extend the property to create a mixed use of pub and Sui Generis large HMO. The HMO use is not considered to unduly dilute or harm the surrounding area and will ensure that this remains a mixed and sustainable community.

The proposal is in a sustainable location and would enable the redevelopment of a brownfield site. Although there would be some limited harm arising from the relationship of the existing pub and the proposed HMO use, it is considered that these can be adequately mitigated through appropriate conditions to include appropriate sound insulation, hours of use and control of activities at the pub. It is accepted that the residential development will support the overall viability of the site and increase the potential for the successful retention of the existing pub which is a valuable community use. This weighs in favour of the proposal.

The effects on the amenity of neighbouring residents would be likely to be similar, or potentially slightly improved compared to the former pub use, as result of reducing the outdoor space and restricting its use. The proposal would provide residential accommodation, which would contribute to towards overall housing needs and would improve the appearance of the site in terms of a more cohesive design and enhanced amenity space, biodiversity and landscaping, bin and cycle storage.

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

Recommended Conditions:

- 1) Standard 3 yr time limit
- 2) Approved Plans
- 3) Cross-sectional Details for All Stability Elements to be submitted and approved (pre-commencement)
- 4) Materials to be submitted (post foundations)
- 5) HMO Refuse and Recycling to be submitted and approved (pre-occupation)
- 6) HMO Cycle Storage to be submitted and approved (pre-occupation)
- 7) Parking Permits - LPA Notification
- 8) Parking Permits - Tenant Notification
- 9) HMO Management Plan (pre-occupation)
- 10) HMO Communal Space to Be Retained
- 11) HMO Occupation
- 12) Hard and Soft Landscaping to be submitted and approved (pre-commencement)
- 13) AMS and Tree Protection
- 14) Biodiversity Enhancements (pre-occupation)
- 15) To be undertaken in accordance with the measures as set out in the FRA (pre-occupation)
- 16) Noise Assessment and Mitigation Scheme for Residential – Outside Noise (pre-commencement)

- 17) Noise Mitigation Scheme for Mixed Use Scheme to be submitted and approved (pre-commencement)
- 18) No Amplified Sound or Music
- 19) Construction Method Statement to be submitted and approved (pre-commencement)
- 20) Construction Hours
- 21) No Burning of Waste
- 22) Land Gas (pre-commencement)
- 23) BREEAM Interim (pre-commencement)
- 24) BREEAM Final
- 25) PV Panels to be submitted and approved (pre-occupation)
- 26) Refuse and Recycling Management Plan (pub use) to be submitted and approved (pre-occupation)
- 27) Servicing and Deliveries Plan (pub use) to be submitted and approved (pre-occupation)
- 28) Hours of Pub Deliveries
- 29) Site Security Strategy (pre-occupation)
- 30) External Lighting
- 31) Restricted Use of Flat Roof
- 32) Hours of Use of the Pub

Informatives:

- 1) Terms and Conditions
- 2) Encroachment
- 3) Pre-Commencement
- 4) CIL
- 5) Noise between residential properties
- 6) Building Control
- 7) HMO Management Plan
- 8) Complaints about Construction
- 9) Housing Act and Licensing
- 10) Parking Permits
- 11) Highways
- 12) Positive & Proactive