

## Mr Damian Bramanis

46 Addison Road, Reading, RG1 8EN

3 February 2021

Mr Jonathan Markwell  
Planning Department  
Reading Borough Council  
Civic Offices  
Bridge Street  
Reading  
RG1 2LU

Dear Mr Markwell,

### **Re: Planning Application 200188 - 55 Vastern Road, Reading**

I wish to lodge my comments regarding the planning application of the above site. Please consider these to supersede my previous comments from 1 February, 2021, as I've now been able to more fully comprehend the application.

While I welcome the development of this site, and believe it can add a lot of benefit to the local area, I do have some specific objections to raise, as well as clarifying other aspects I support.

I have three major objections to the proposed development: daylight, privacy and parking for nearby residents.

#### **Objection 1: A significant drop in daylight for surrounding residents**

The proposal appears to cause a significant reduction in daylight for surrounding residents, particularly for the living areas in even numbered houses along Lynmouth Road. Of these houses, the comprehensive daylight and sunlight report shows there are currently 31 ground-floor rooms facing the site, comprised of living areas, dining rooms, and kitchens. My reading of Appendix 2 of the daylight and sunlight report indicates that that, of those 31 rooms, the vast majority (20, or 65%) will suffer a 20% or greater drop in sunlight (as measured by VSC or NSC). I assume this is largely because of the height of "The Goods Office" building - 4-storeys - and believe this aspect of the development would be far more palatable if it were 2- or 3-storeys.

There is also a risk of further drop in sunlight to residents - whether from the planting of tall trees, or possible construction of new boundary walls. I'd object to any additional structures or planting that comes with further reduction in daylight to the neighbouring residents.

## **Objection 2: Compromising neighbours privacy**

The proposal shows construction of balconies and front rooms overlooking current residential properties. Elevations show that the 4-storey building "The Goods Office" looms over adjacent 2-story residences, with balconies overlooking back gardens, bedrooms and living areas. It appears that in recent amendments some of the balconies on The Goods Office were removed, presumably for this reason, but others remain. I object to these remaining balconies and believe they present the same privacy concerns as the removed ones.

## **Objection 3: Increased traffic and parking load on local streets**

The only site access is via a quiet residential road. This will increase the pressure on Lynmouth Road, not only for traffic, but also for deliveries or visitors who park without a valid permit. I would object to the issuing of new parking permits to the proposed site's workers, residents or visitors, which could be used for parking on surrounding streets (temporary or otherwise).

## **Impact during construction works**

During the construction works, I have two additional major concerns:

- **Noise without respite**

While the government's COVID work-from-home advice remains in place, this could lead to local residents being locked down at home with no escape from construction noise. I'd request that special stricter measures are put in place, to prevent noisy works in the early mornings or on weekends, in the case of COVID restrictions continuing.

- **Disruption to local streets**

I am particularly concerned about impact to parking or access, due to works, truck access, and the fact that the only site access is via Lynmouth Road. Based on recent experience, it's also likely that short-term site visitors will park on adjacent streets (even if they don't have a permit), thereby depriving residents and permit-holders of their ability to park.

## **Support for the proposed development**

Those objections aside, I certainly welcome development of the site, and support many aspects of the proposed development. Of particular note, I support:

- Use of the site to bring together the river and the station, including a cafe, such that it is of benefit to pedestrians, cyclists and the local community

- The bike and pedestrian paths, connecting Caversham to the station
- Landscaping, and the attention given to planting - although I'd certainly welcome more
- A heritage character in keeping with the local area, and the architectural connections to local history
- The growth in fibre optic infrastructure, and increased availability of fibre-to-the-home services. I'd especially highly support the possibility of a community fibre service provider (suggested in superfast broadband strategy section 5.3.7)

Kind Regards,

Damian Bramanis