

# Memo

**To:** (e)Access Officer - Helen Bryant Civic Offices Floor 1 North Front Bridge Street  
Reading RG1 2LU

**From:** Jonathan Markwell Jonathan.Markwell@reading.gov.uk

**Date:** 17 March 2020

**Re:** Consultation on Planning Application

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**Application Number:** 200188

**Application Type:** Full Planning Approval

**Address:** 55 Vastern Road Reading RG1 8BU

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing structures and erection of a series of buildings ranging in height from 1 to 11 storeys, including residential dwellings (C3 use class) and retail floorspace (A3 use class), together with a new north-south pedestrian link, connecting Christchurch Bridge to Vastern Road

This is to advise you that the above application has been submitted to the Planning Department. If you have any comments to make relating to the above development, please provide them by return email or memo by **7 April 2020**

Details of the application can be viewed on the Council's 'Planning Registers' website at <http://planning.reading.gov.uk> or Info@Work. Please allow 1 working day for documents to be viewable.

If you require any further information, or want to view the application, please contact me on the above telephone number or email.

Comments made will be taken into consideration before any decision is made.

If you are not able to meet the deadline above please contact me to explain the delay and to agree an extension of the consultation period.

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You may find the following useful for your response:

- No objections
- No objections subject to conditions attached
- Clarification required - see attached
- Object - see attached

**TO SAVE PAPER PLEASE REPLY BY EMAIL**

1. I appreciate that drainage will be needed, but this must be carefully thought out in terms of colour contrast - the very dark drainage strip could read as a step to someone who is visually impaired, or who has dementia or a similar condition. There are similar problems with paving. I really like the idea of the "railway lines" but these will also need to be considered carefully.
2. Again, with informal play features such as boulders and the like; these must be in a clutter zone to avoid people who are visually impaired or have dementia colliding with them. There was a very nasty accident in town when this happened last year.
3. Bollards must also be thoughtfully placed.
4. As stated before, disabled people do not like shared spaces, even with cycles. People tend to ride them very fast, even where they shouldn't, and if you can't hear them until the last minute (or you are deaf or hard of hearing) and can't get out of the way, it's very dangerous. I am pleased to see that the route is meandering, though, which may serve to slow many down. I will consult my contacts to find out what their views are - 3 metres is a very generous width, but I think that it is still a concern. Maybe there needs to be some form of tactile demarcation. Kerbs are really a necessity for many people. I am pleased to see that cars and the like are not sharing this space.
5. In terms of on-street parking in the central street, will there be spaces that can easily be used by disabled drivers/passengers, especially those driving Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAVs)? WAVs have ramps, either to the rear or the side of the vehicle, and these obviously need to be kept clear, to ensure access.
6. If there are areas where there are steps, then it must be easy to see where the ramps are, so that people who cannot use steps don't feel marooned.
7. I'm pleased to see that the gradients have been kept as gentle as possible.
8. I note that inlay studs are to be used to aid navigation - will these give some form of tactile guide that people will be able to feel underfoot or with white canes?
9. I love the idea of the gateway sculpture, but again, care must be taken with the siting of it, to avoid accidents and trip hazards. Ditto signage posts.
10. Lighting is, of course, very important - especially for those with visual impairments, and in an environment that is near to a river. I understand that lighting must not be obtrusive, but it must be effective for all.
11. I would be interested to know the gradients around the site.
12. Household welcome packs should be offered in different formats if possible, such as large print, or available via email, etc.
13. On looking at the elevations, there are big changes in level, and I can't see how they will be overcome if you're a wheelchair user.
14. I can't easily assess the interiors, as I don't have the necessary equipment. However if Part M Category 3 is used for the any accessible dwellings, then this should suffice.

I know that a lot of this is not what people want to read, but I feel it's necessary to highlight the problems that might occur.