

211021 - 8 Kelmscott Close Reading RG4 7DG

Sent on line – 1 July 2021

The site and its garden is situated on the wooded Caversham escarpment, a major landscape feature, important to and visible from many parts of Reading. The recently adopted Local Plan includes a new policy EN5 Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest. The application site is within the View Cones of at least 2 of the views which merit special protection: View 1, View from Mcilroy Park towards Chazey Barn Farm, The Thames Meadows and the Chilterns escarpment and View 3, View upstream from Caversham Bridge.

The document 'Assessment of significant Views with Heritage Interest' compiled by the Conservation Area Advisory Committee with the advice and support of RBC and Historic England provides further detail and analysis in respect of these views. Para 1.1.11 Sensitivity to change (page 9 of the document) in respect of view 1 notes the potential risk of harm to the escarpment and the view due to cumulative tree loss and piecemeal development.

CADRA believe therefore that all sites that come forward for development on the escarpment should be carefully considered in relation to the above policy in order to maintain and add to the green and wooded nature from a distance, as well as judging any impact in the immediate vicinity of the site. It follows therefore that the siting of the new house, its bulk, height, visibility and any ground levelling etc should be considered by RBC and the applicant in relation to EN5 above. We note that at least one tree on the escarpment side of the site has been felled in advance of any permission.

We therefore request that additional large species tree planting is required as a condition in appropriate parts of the garden if, after analysis, RBC are minded to grant this application. It is disappointing that no reference is made of this important issue which appears not to have been addressed.