

Re: Planning App PL/25/1174

Previously Planning App: PL/23/1084

Land Adjacent to Darlands, The Warren, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7TH

CADRA Objects

Timing of responses:

CADRA notes that RBC website states that consultation deadline is 11/9/2025. It should be noted that notices placed in the vicinity of the leisure plots have a consultation deadline of 26/9/2025.

Location of application:

CADRA notes that the application states the land is adjacent to Darlands. We think that this comment is not helpful and a better description would be; between two other leisure plots which are called Leisure Plot 14 C Gallants and Leisure Plot 14F (which actually has a sign saying '15 F Chenbrook').

The plot(s) included within this application are not next to a residential building. There is a further leisure plot(s) to the West of Leisure Plot 14F, before you would reach Darlands.

To the East there are a number of other leisure plots until you reach the Wychotes Water Activity Centre, home of the 1st Reading (YMCA) Sea Scout Group.

Use of site:

We note that the current application suggests that this is a 'residential garden' to a house on Grass Hill. It is our understanding the land included within this application is a plot(s) that is (or was) a leisure plot(s) that is not intended for residential development. Indeed the plot(s) has the name 14E Barge Moorings and has its own postbox. The plot(s) does not appear to be used as a garden of a house.

Leisure Plots:

These Leisure Plots are thought to have been created in the 1990s and form a group of plots which are called Plot 14 and also Plot 14 A to Plot 14 G. It is typical for the deeds of leisure plots to contain a restrictive covenant stating the the property cannot be used for residential purposes.

The leisure plots are sold from time to time. It should be noted that the estate agent particulars will always state 'this is not a building plot'. Such an example is plot 14B which was recently sold by Walmsley Estate Agents. [Particulars for 14B](#)

River leisure plots are specifically designated for recreational purposes like boating, fishing, or picnicking, and typically include moorings for boats. CADRA welcomes the designation of these plots as leisure plots as they add to the amenity use of the river, typically maintain the natural river bank, maintain the immediate vicinity of the river bank and the flora and fauna that lives on and around the river bank, and also maintains the wider landscape of river. This designation seems to fit nicely with RBC's Tree Strategy, RBC's Biodiversity Plan and the RBC's Major Landscape Feature strategy.

It would seem that the applicant may have to ask for a change of use of the property from a leisure plot to a residential property plot as per the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (assuming that this property is still a leisure plot).

Environment and Bio-diversity:

This plot sits within an RBC bio-diversity corridor and building a major dwelling in that location will impact the bio-diversity corridor EN12.

This plot appears to be in Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy, March 2021 as a vital “green link” between the Escarpment and the River for wildlife. More importantly it is the only “green link” on the river side of The Warren (until after the residential houses at the far end of The Warren over 1 km away). As such this development would appear to be against RBC’s Tree Strategy.

Such a dwelling would increase light pollution along the riverbank. As such the construction of a residential property would be against RBC’s BioDiversity Plan Feb 2021.

Protected view:

The plot sits within the view of the escarpment from the Thames Promenade which forms part of a major landscape feature EN13. As such the construction of a residential property would impact RBC’s major landscape feature.

Tree Report:

CADRA notes the tree report and the date of the tree report.

CADRA notes that prior to this application there were a number of mature trees on this plot that formed the boundary of the plot with The Warren. The Tree Report does not appear to mention that those trees have been felled. There may have been reason to fell those trees, but this is not mentioned in the report. These mature trees can clearly been seen in the image attached in the Appendix which is a Google Maps picture of the boundary wall from 2022 which is the most recent dated view prior to the current September 2024 view.

CADRA notes that the The Reading Tree Plan March 2021 looks to protect and increase the tree canopy and the felling of trees will have an impact the number of trees and the tree canopy which is against RBC’s Tree Plan.

Flood Risk:

The plot forms part of the Flood Plain ie EA Flood Zones 2 and 3. The vast majority of the plots are in Flood Zone 3 which is deemed not appropriate for residential use. The application is therefore contrary to the Nation Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and planning practice guidance (PPG) and planning permission should, therefore, be refused.

As an aside, there does not appear to be any suggested floodplain compensation within the application which we would expect to see in such an application. As such the construction of a residential property in the flood zone would increase flooding risk to other residents in Reading which is unacceptable.

CADRA notes carefully the Environment Agency’s response saying that this application should be refused.

Flood Risk Assessment:

In our opinion, this statement in the FRA is misleading in regards to the flood risk.

5.2.6 Historical flood events:

According to the EA historical fluvial flooding has occurred in the surrounding area in 1947, 1977, 2000, 2002/3, 2007 and 2013-14. These events were caused by channel capacity exceeded (no raised defences).

No other records of flooding at the site are shown in the Reading SFRA.

These plots and the plots immediately adjacent were heavily flooded in 2021 and 2024 and will have been flooded on other dates post 2014.

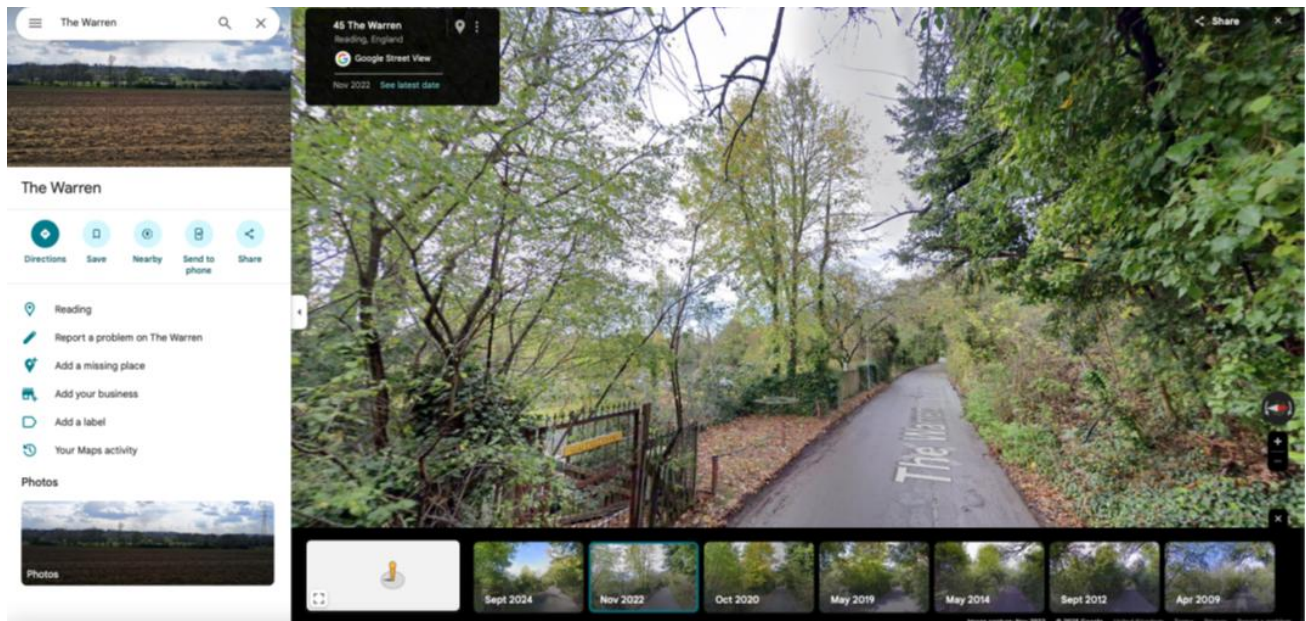
Sequential Test:

CADRA questions the sequential test comments. CADRA notes the recent work that has been undertaken on redeveloping a number of houses in the near vicinity of this leisure plot, including Grass Hill, which were not in a Flood Zone.

Current development on the site:

CADRA notes the comment that there is a 'current development' on site, however, this is simply a shed and a green house. CADRA notes that this is typical for these leisure plots.

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

Figure 17: Map showing treed corridors and other context

