

PLANNING REF : 243188
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Crib
: 3 The Shires, Reading, Berkshire
: RG414SZ
SUBMITTED BY : Miss Mari Jones
DATE SUBMITTED : 08/01/2025

COMMENTS:

I'm an ecological consultant not involved with the scheme apart from living locally. My key concern is that the maps and data provided my EPR appear to completely overlook the presence of Floodplain Grazing Marsh, which is a Priority Habitat which local authorities must have due regard for (Section 41 of the NERC Act).

The habitat plan given by EPR acknowledges ditches, the river itself, neutral grasslands (some of which appear damp/waterlogged due to being classified Deschampsia or Holcus-juncus) , and some swamp/fen habitats. However, this mosaic is indicative of Floodplain Grazing Marsh, which is not noted at all. Quite apart from being a priority habitat within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area, it would be incredibly difficult to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain if any of this habitat were to be lost. It quite rightly has a high value in the Statutory metric. It may make the scheme unviable financially if off-site units need to be purchased.

This habitat is shown along the entire Loddon Valley River Corridor (a Biodiversity Opportunity Area) on MAGIC, which is Defra's open-source mapping resource:
<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>
> Habitats > Grassland > Priority Habitat Inventory - Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh (England)

I'm certainly in favour of building more houses, however the proposals must not result in permanent loss of a Priority Habitat, especially not of this scale. The Biodiversity Opportunity Area is very well placed in my opinion, and planners should take these things seriously.