

Our Ref: 24075-FRA-CO-01 C01
NHDC Ref: 24/01669/PNMA

29 January 2026

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Local Planning Authority
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Dear Sir/Madam,

RADCLIFFE HOUSE, TILEHOUSE STREET, HITCHIN, SG5 2DW
RESPONSE TO ADDRESS PLANNING CONDITION 5 FOR APPROVED APPLICATION REF:
24/01669/PNMA

This letter has been prepared on behalf of Hitchin Priory Development Ltd to to discharge Condition 5 of the conditional Prior Approval given for the proposed development (24/01669/PNMA) dated 15th October 2024.

The wording of the condition is as follows:

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, full details of the surface water management for the site together with flood resilience and mitigation measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the safety of the residents of the development against the risk of flooding. To comply with Policy NE7 of the North Herts Local Plan.

Consideration has been given to the North Herts Council's (NHC) Case Officer report as well as the Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) response, dated 30th August 2024.

It is understood that whilst the planning condition references surface water management, the primary concern related to the risk of flooding from catchment overland surface water flows rather than excess rainfall runoff from the application site.

Catchment Surface Water Flood Risk

The Environment Agency has updated the national Surface Water Flood Risk Maps since the Flood Risk Assessment for Radcliffe House (24075-FRA-TN-01 C01) was completed in June 2024 and submitted to support the Prior Approval application. The latest Risk of Flooding from Surface Water, for the future 2050s climate change epoch, is shown in the enclosed Figure 1. The flooding is broadly the same as provided in the FRA; however, the main change is the flooding shown to extend over the building footprint of Radcliff House. The reason for the change in the displayed flooding is that during the modelling process ground levels below all buildings were lowered to the adjacent existing level, which, because of the lower basement level, results in flooding shown to extend below the building.

As detailed in the FRA, the surface water flooding shown to impact Radcliffe House is inaccurate. There are high brick walls extending across the entire boundary of the site with Old Charlston Road, which would prevent/limit surface water from flowing onto the site and into the lower basement area of the building. These walls are not represented in the model, and therefore, the modelled flooding of Radcliffe House is overestimated.

The overland flood flow routes arriving onto Old Charlston Road is shown in Figure 2. Based on the topographic survey levels, it is considered that surface water flows would predominantly continue to flow southward, along the road kerb and brick wall, until the driveway entrance through the wall, as shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4. LIDAR levels also indicate that the surface water flow route would also proceed further southwards onto the A602 Park Way, which was not accurately represented in the EA modelling.

There is, however, a pedestrian access archway opening through the wall at the eastern corner of the site, which might allow catchment surface water to access the Radcliffe House site. The archway is shown in Figure 3, with recent photographs showing the archway and stairs to the lower exterior basement level shown Figure 5 and Figure 6.

Flood Defence to Protect the Basement from Flooding

The preferred flood defence measure would be for the pedestrian access to be abandoned, the archway bricked up (closed). However, it is assumed that the access would need to be retained. The proposed protection measure is therefore to raise the threshold level of the access, to prevent surface water overtopping from Old Charlston Road.

It would not be possible to raise the entrance ground level at the archway opening; as such, the proposal is to set the raised threshold further back into the site. This is achieved by rearranging the first flight of the external stairs and including a new raised platform, up two stairs, from the entrance level, before going to the lower flight of stairs.

A drawing showing the proposed flood defence works is shown in drawing 24075-FRA-DP-01 C01, dated 28th January 2026, and enclosed with this letter.

The proposed works set the overtopping threshold level of the access at 69.85 m AOD, 0.63 m higher than the level in Old Charlston Road adjacent to the archway and 0.75 m higher than the existing overtopping level of the driveway entrance to the south of the site.

This proposed flood defence measure, in combination with the existing brick walls along the western and southern site boundary of the application site, should prevent any catchment surface water flooding from accessing the lower ground levels surrounding the basement level of Radcliffe House.

Remaining Site Stormwater Drainage

The topographic survey of the site shows gulleys and manholes in the lower exterior area surrounding the basement; however, details of the drainage are not available.

Once the proposed flood defence measure at the archway is completed, the only remaining surface water flood risk to the basement would be from site runoff. The design of the existing drainage would have taken into account the site's runoff surfaces. It is accepted that the drainage would not have been designed with the current requirement to consider the latest climate change allowances; however, no changes to the building or lower external areas are proposed.

The proposed residential changes to the building are to the ground floor and above, not the basement level. By removing the external (catchment) surface water flood risk, there are insufficient runoff areas on site, which could pose a significant local surface water risk to the basement parking area.

The conclusion as set out in the FRA remains valid, that "no additional surface water drainage is considered required to support the proposed change of use".

Summary

The inclusion of the proposed flood defence works to the pedestrian archway access to the site will ensure the safety of the residents of the development against the risk of flooding, complying with Policy NE7 of the North Herts Local Plan.

Yours sincerely,



David Mardon

MSc Eng, BSc Eng (Civil)

CEng, MICE

Associate

Encl.

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Drawings:

24075-FRA-DP-01 P01: Proposed Works to Arch Access to Reduce Surface Water Risk

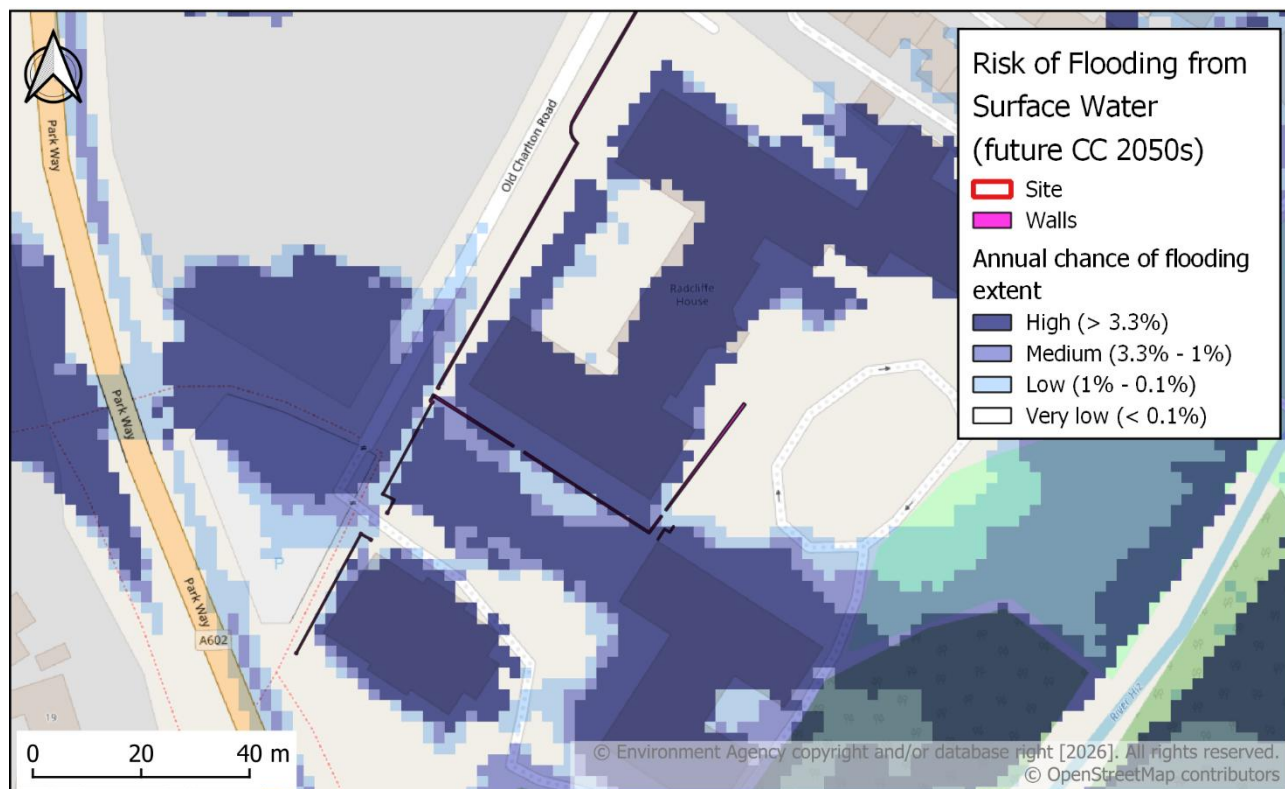


Figure 1: EA Risk of Flooding from Surface Water - 2050s Climate Change (existing walls shown)

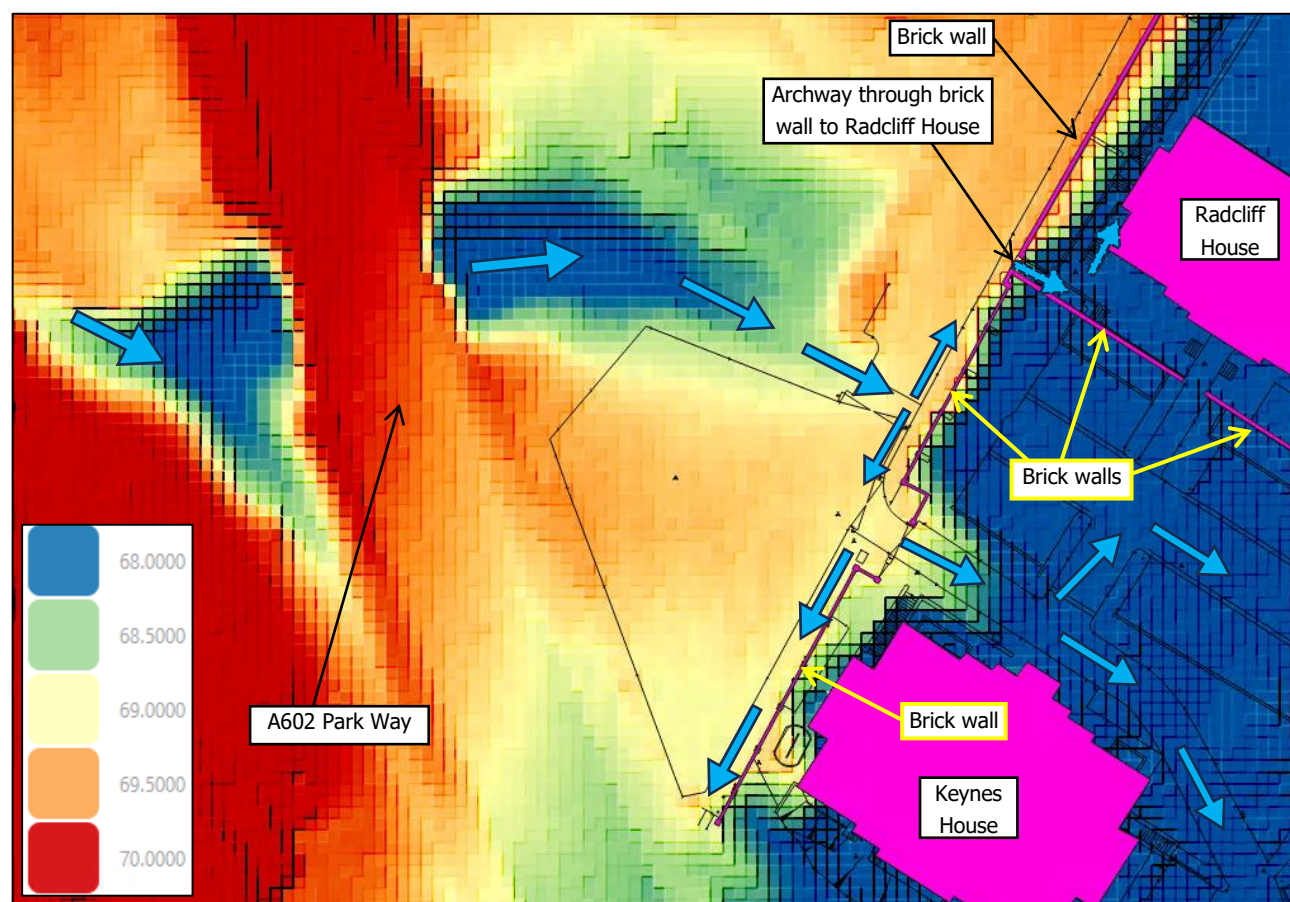


Figure 2: LIDAR DTM assessment of overland surface water flow routes and existing obstructions (walls and buildings)

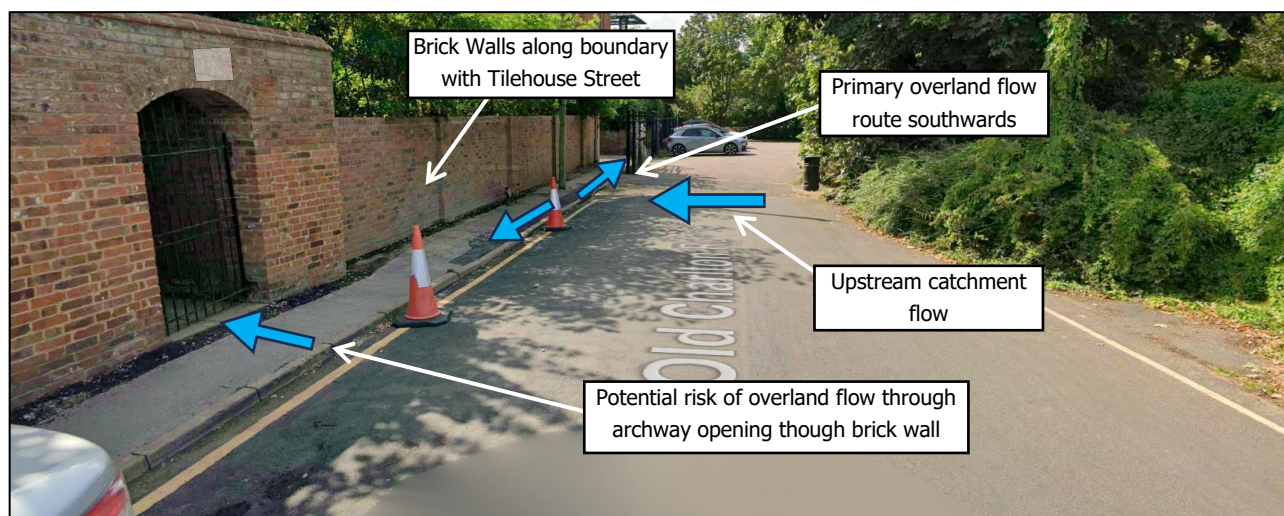


Figure 3: Annotated Google Streetview photographs showing overland flow path vectors and the existing archway entrance through the site boundary brick wall/s along Old Charlton Road

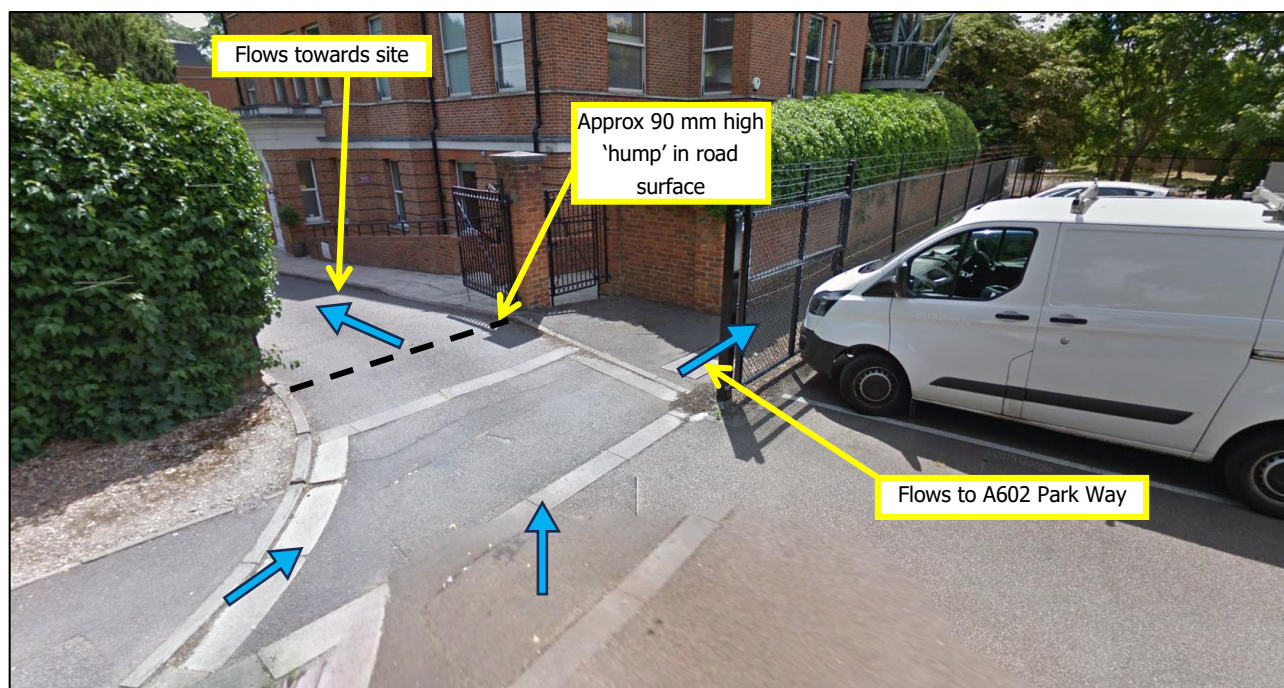


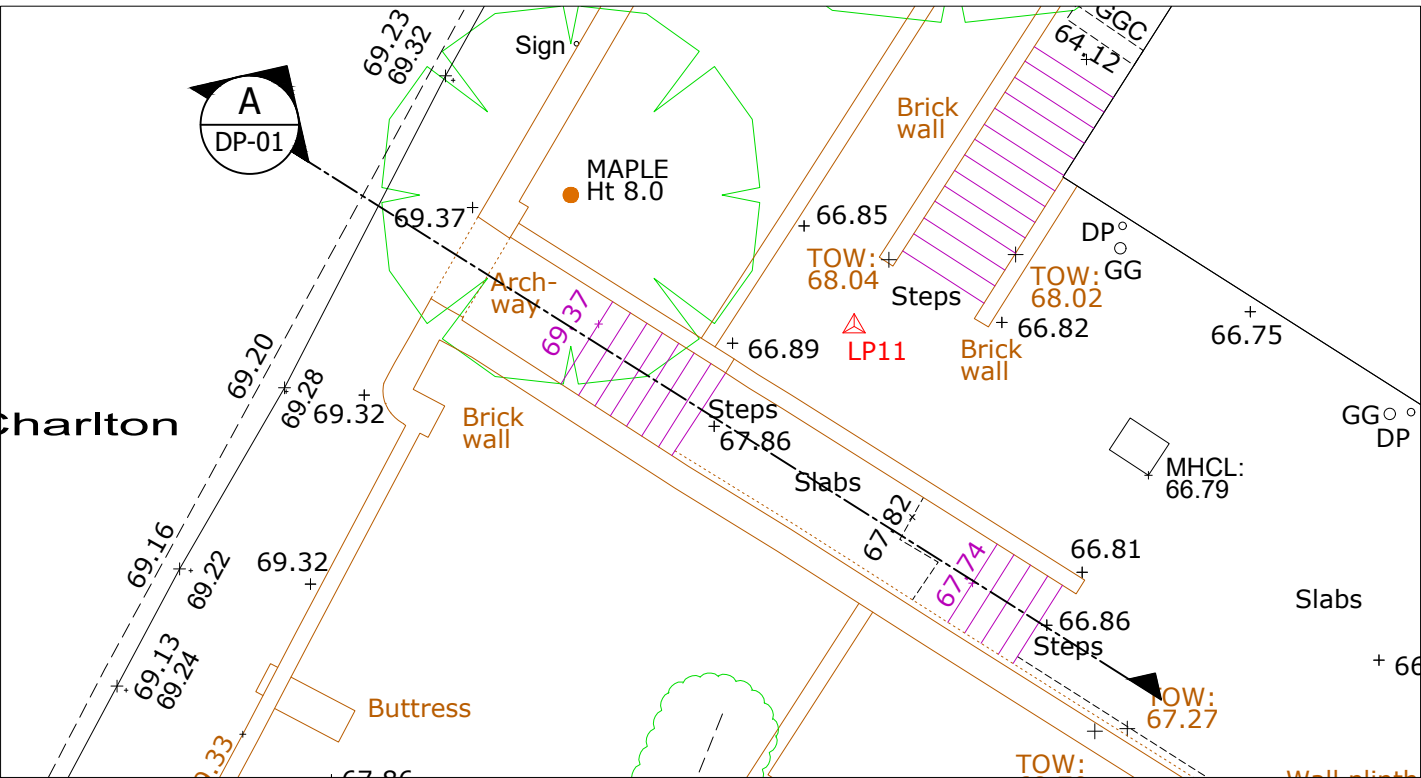
Figure 4: Annotated Google Streetview photographs showing overland flow path vectors flowing down the vehicular entrance off Old Charlton Road (not included within the Radcliff application site boundary)



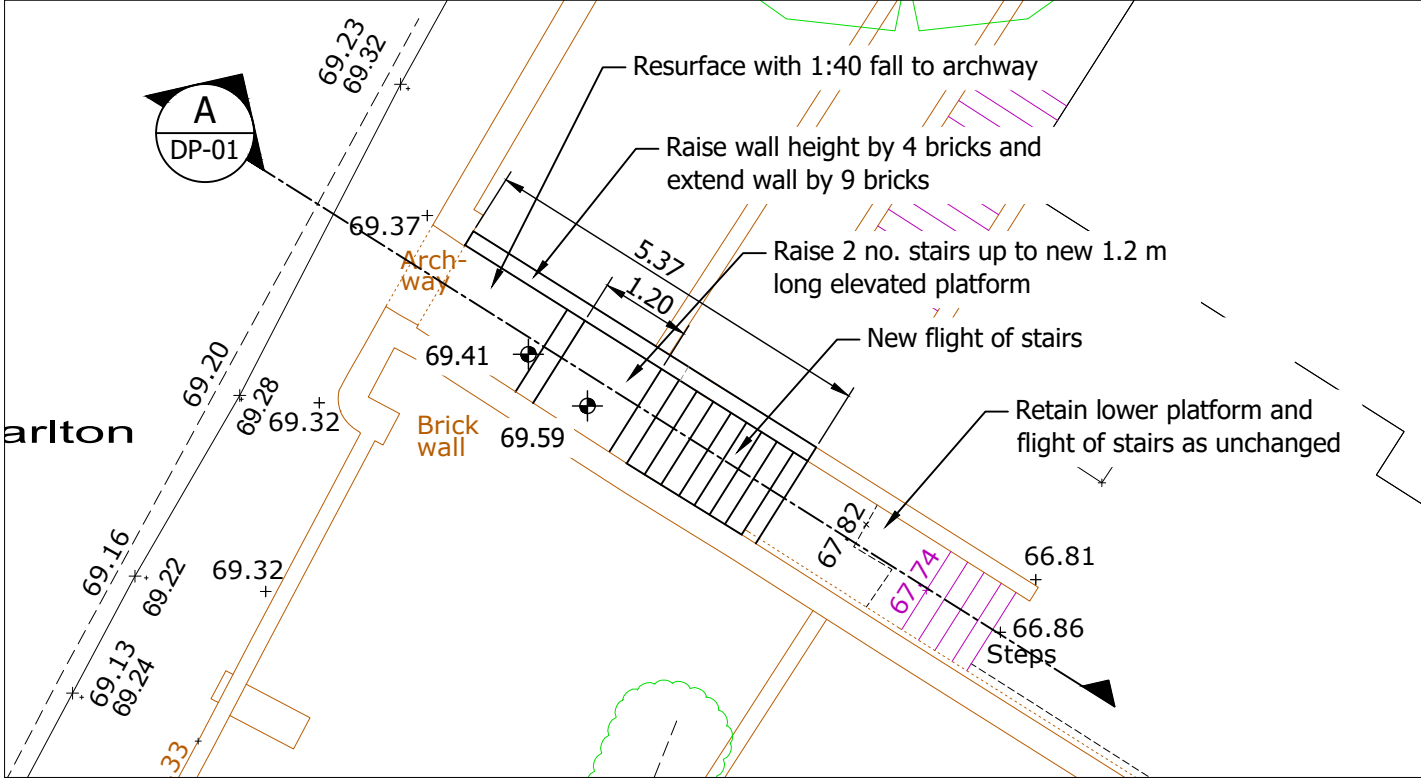
Figure 5: January 2026 photograph showing the current condition of the archway entrance though the site boundary brick wall along Old Charlton Road



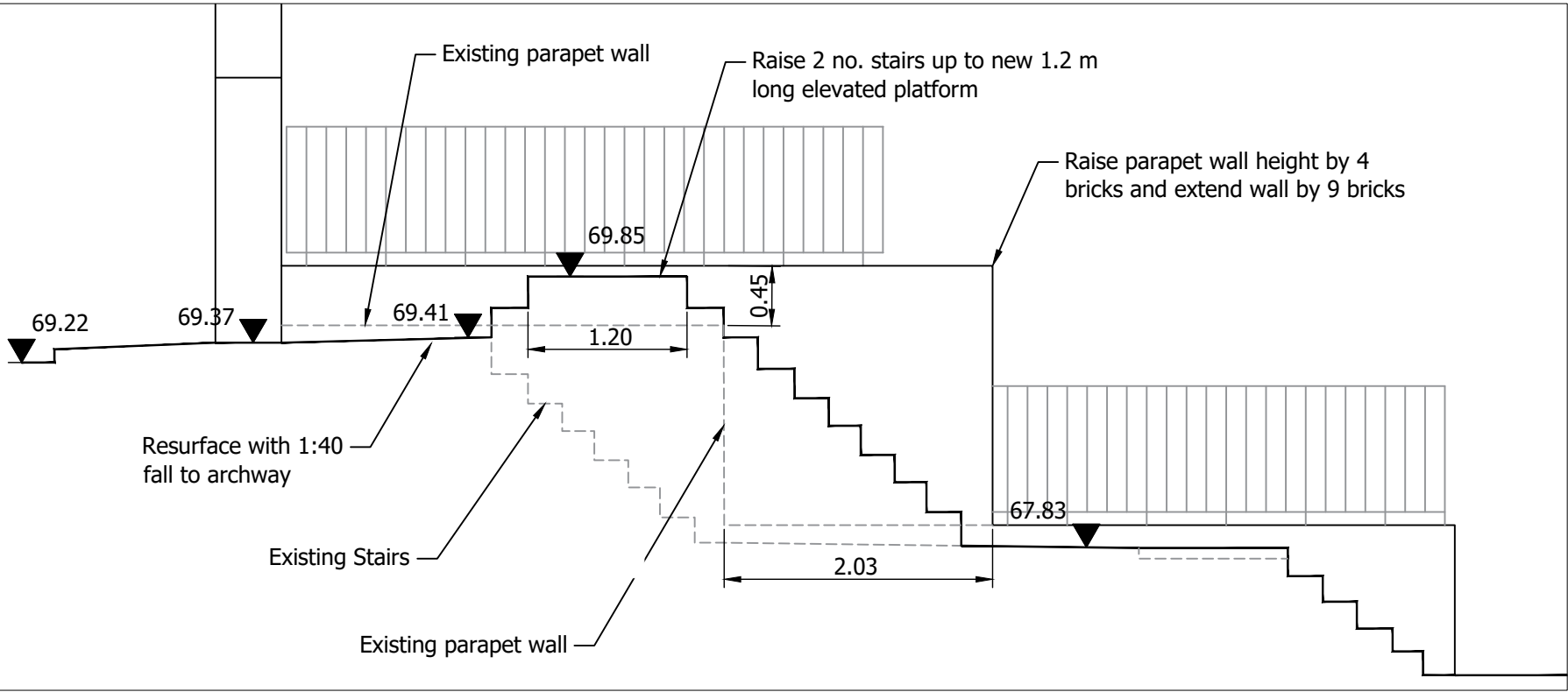
Figure 6: January 2026 photograph showing the stairs from the archway entrance to the lower external area around the basement level of Radcliffe House



Existing [Scale 1:100]



Proposed [Scale 1:100]



Proposed: Section A-A [Scale 1:50]

NOTES

1. Dimensions in metres and levels in m AOD unless otherwise stated.
2. Parapet wall to be designed to withstand water depths to top height of wall, extending between the archway and elevated platform
3. Parapet wall and stairs to be constructed with materials to limit seepage during flooding of the area between the archway and elevated platform

REV	DATE	AMENDMENTS	DR	AP

CLIENT:	Hitchin Priory Development Ltd	SCALE @A3:	As Shown	DATE:	28/01/2026
PROJECT:	Radcliffe House, Hitichin	DRAWN:	DM	CHECKED:	DM
DRAWING:	Proposed Works to Arch Access to Reduce Surface Water Risk	APPROVED:	TC	REVISION:	C01
		DRAWING NO:	24075-FRA-DP-01		