



Planning

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Client:

Prospect Developments (London) Ltd

106 - 116 Westfield Road

Caversham, Reading, RG4 8HJ

Single-storey rear extension. New parking layout, landscaping, and internal alterations to facilitate conversion from 9 residential units (Class C3) to 8 residential units (Class C3)

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CIL | Enforcement | Land Promotion | Planning | Sequential Tests | Viability

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for a single storey rear extension, additional parking and garden space and internal alterations to achieve 8 apartments at 106 – 116 Westfield Road, Caversham, Reading. This is an alternative scheme to the one that was previously approved for the site (ref: 190846).
- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following plans:
- 1:1250 Site Location Plan
 - Existing Floorplans and Elevations
 - Proposed Floorplans and Elevations
 - Proposed Plans GIA
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The application site comprises 106 – 116b Westfield Road. 106 – 112 is a terrace comprising of 6 apartments, connected to 114 – 116b by way of a flying freehold above the vehicular access to the parking area at the rear. Three apartments are contained within 114 116b. The properties are located on the western side of the Westfield Road in Caversham. The existing residential units are located on the ground floor and first floor with one apartment contained within the basement.
- 2.2 The current basement apartment includes a rear conservatory which acts as both additional living accommodation and a lightwell, with steps descending from the rear to the primary living accommodation. The property also benefits from a front lightwell which provides additional natural light and ventilation for the basement unit; this would remain as existing.
- 2.3 The site includes a parking area and bin storage facilities at the rear, in addition to communal amenity space.
- 2.4 The site is not located within a Conservation Area, and there no further planning constraints applicable for the site.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Application Ref: 201101 – Change of use of existing 3 apartments to 5 x 1-bedroom flats, with two-storey rear extension and roof extension incorporating replacement front and rear dormers. Withdrawn 29 September 2020
- 3.2 Application Ref: 190846 – Two storey rear extension, and conversion of existing 6 flats (4 x 1-bed, 2 x 2-bed) to 9 flats (8 x 1-bed, 1 x 2-bed), including 2 dwellings in the loft, and associated bicycle parking, and bin storage to the rear. Approved 24 July 2020
- 3.3 Application Ref: 060627 – Internal alterations and rear extension to existing residential dwellings. Approved 20 July 2006.
- 3.4 Application Ref: 040564 – Demolition of garage, erection of two storey side extension and conversion of dwelling to three flats. Approved January 2004
- 3.5 Application Ref: 030919 – Change of use from one dwelling to three flats with extensions to sides and rear. Approved January 2003
- 3.6 Application Ref: 991760 – Basement and ground floor rear extensions. Approved July 1999

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use and Amount:** The proposed use is for 8 apartments following a single storey rear extension and a slight re-configuration of the internal layout. As a result, there will be three one beds, four two beds and one three beds units as follows:
- 106: Two-bedroom semi-detached house
 - 108: One bedroom ground floor apartment
 - 110: One bedroom ground floor apartment
 - 110a: Two-bedroom first floor apartment
 - 112: Two-bedroom terraced house
- 4.4 The units that will stay as existing are as follows:
- 116b: One bedroom basement apartment
 - 116a: Two-bedroom ground floor apartment
 - 114: Three-bedroom first floor apartment

- 4.5 **Layout and Scale:** Units 116b (basement apartment) and 116a and 114 will remain as is and no changes to this part of the building are proposed.
- 4.6 The proposed single storey extension to the rear of units 106 – 112 will allow for a greater area of living accommodation. Nos. 106 and 112 will continue to be laid over two floors as per the existing arrangement.
- 4.7 Internally, the accommodation has been laid out to maximise the internal space and light afforded, with primary habitable rooms benefitting from natural light and ventilation to the front and rear.
- 4.8 **Landscaping:** New planting can be accommodated within the site is required and is proposed for control via condition at the LPA's discretion.
- 4.9 **Appearance:** The proposed rear extension would be single storey and would bring the building more in line with the existing residential development adjacent to the site.
- 4.10 The proposed materials would seek to match the existing residential apartment block.
- 4.11 **Access & Parking:** The proposed development would utilise the existing access to the site. Car parking will be provided to the rear of the site with three spaces provided at the front. One car parking space will be provided for each proposed apartment with an additional two car parking spaces for visitors located to the rear.

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that *“Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way”* and *“at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”*. Paragraph 119 of the NPPF comments that planning should *“make effective use of land”* in *“meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”*.
- 5.3 Paragraph 60 confirms the Government’s objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.4 Paragraph 126 identifies that *“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”*, whilst paragraph 134 states that significant weight should be given to *“outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”*
- 5.5 **Principle of Development:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be

determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 5.6 The application site currently comprises 9 residential apartments across the site, laid over three floors as one apartment is within the basement. The proposed development seeks to extend the terrace of 106-112 Westfield Road with a single storey extension to the rear. Units 116b (basement apartment) and 116a and 114 will remain as is and no changes to this part of the building are proposed.
- 5.7 Policy H7 of the Local Plan states that, *“Planning permission will not be granted for any loss of residential accommodation or land unless there are exceptional circumstances. Planning permission will not be granted for a net loss in the number of residential units or gross floor area”*.
- 5.8 It is acknowledged that the reconfiguration of the existing properties will result in an overall loss of one dwelling. However, it must be noted that the current residential units are considerably below nationally described space standards and are in need of refurbishment to bring them up to modern standards and to be more energy efficient. The proposed development therefore allows for their refurbishment and the reconfiguration of the building to allow for a higher standard of living in terms of space and residential amenity. There is an increase in gross floor area of residential accommodation.
- 5.9 The loss of one unit that is much smaller than the nationally described space standards should be balanced against the provision of an overall improvement in residential accommodation at the site as well as an increase in the gross floor area of residential accommodation.

- 5.10 The proposed development is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle, and therefore compliant in particular with Policies H1 and H7 of the Local Plan.
- 5.11 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** Policy CC7 and Policy H9 of the Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the area, and appearance of the original building associated with a development.
- 5.12 The proposed rear extension is considered to be minimal in the context of the existing property and would be reflective of surrounding development,
- 5.13 The proposed rear extension would not appear incongruous, over dominant or overly prominent within the context of the area and would bring the terrace to be a similar depth as 104 and 116 Westfield Road. The proposed extension avoids being overbearing on the adjoining properties and would result in a high-quality design. It is not visible from the streetscene, as such it will not have a significant impact on the character of the area.
- 5.14 The development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of design and complies with Policy CC7 of the Local Plan.
- 5.15 **Residential Amenity:** Policy CC8 of the Local Plan seeks to protect the amenity of surrounding occupiers whilst Policy EN16 seeks to ensure development is not harmful in terms of pollution.
- 5.16 The proposed development, facilitated by the rear extension, would not materially impact the amenities of adjacent residential properties by way of overdominance, loss of light, overshadowing or overlooking.
- 5.17 Private gardens will be provided for all the apartments, as shown on the submitted plans. No. 110a will benefit from a roof terrace above

the one storey extension that is proposed. It is not considered that this terrace will result in any overlooking due to the distance to any other properties backing on to the site.

- 5.18 The proposed development is therefore considered to not result in any harm to either existing or proposed residents in term of amenity. Private amenity space will be provided for all residents.
- 5.19 Policy H5 includes a number of standards for new development (including conversions). This includes nationally described space standards. The majority of the proposed apartments would meet the adopted standards set out in H5, however a couple are slightly short of these standards. It is considered however that each proposed flat maximises its internal layout through rational layout and is an improvement on the existing layout.
- 5.20 As the existing apartments do not meet the nationally described space standards, it is considered that the proposals are an enhancement on the current layout, and this should therefore be recognised.
- 5.21 **Trees and Landscaping:** One tree will be required to be removed to accommodate the additional parking within the rear of the site. However additional landscaping measures can be incorporated within the site curtilage if required and is proposed for control via condition at the Local Planning Authority's discretion.
- 5.22 **Transport and Parking:** Parking provision at the site would be amended to include one car parking space per apartment and two visitor car parking spaces. Spaces will be provided at both the front and rear of the site. Providing 1 space per apartment is in full accordance with the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD which requires 1 space for 1-2 bed flats in Zone 2. The provision of 2

visitor spaces does exceed the requirements however this helps to ensure there is no additional parking on the road.

- 5.23 No change to the site access from Westfield Road is proposed, the additional parking at the rear of the site is not considered to materially impact the capacity, safety or convenience of the local highway network.
- 5.24 **Cycle and Refuse Provision:** Cycle parking can be fully accommodated within the private gardens for each apartment as indicated on the plans.
- 5.25 Bin storage is provided to the front of 106 – 112 Westfield Road as well as the rear of the site, as shown on the submitted plans.
- 5.26 **Sustainability and Energy:** Paragraph 8 of the NPPF supports the transition of development to a low carbon future. The national Code for Sustainable Homes has now been abolished, however it is proposed that the development would conform to Part L of the Building Regulations which as of 2010 requires a 25% reduction in carbon emissions over the 2006 standards. This is equivalent to Code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. By way of contributing to the reduction in carbon, the proposal would also achieve current building construction standards with added sustainability measures through;
- A. The limitation of the amount of inherent material, structure and embodied energy through the employment of good building standards to create an excellent SAP rating;
 - B. Use of locally sourced, recycled materials and labour where practicable;
 - C. Reduced internal water consumption of 110 litres per person per day through the incorporation of water efficient sanitary

fittings, including low flow toilets and water efficient taps for wash basins;

D. Refuse, recycling and composting facilities to be provided to work with the Council's existing waste and recycling collection service;

E. Secure cycle provision to encourage sustainable modes of transport;

F. 'A' rated electrical appliances and energy saving light fittings;

G. 'A' rated double glazed windows with natural cross ventilation provision;

H. Recycling of waste construction materials where practicable.

5.27 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with sustainability objectives in this respect.

5.28 **Affordable Housing:** As the proposed development does not increase the number of residential units at the site, Policy H3 which requires affordable housing, is not deemed to be applicable to this site.

5.29 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The relevant CIL forms have been completed and submitted with this application.

6. Conclusion

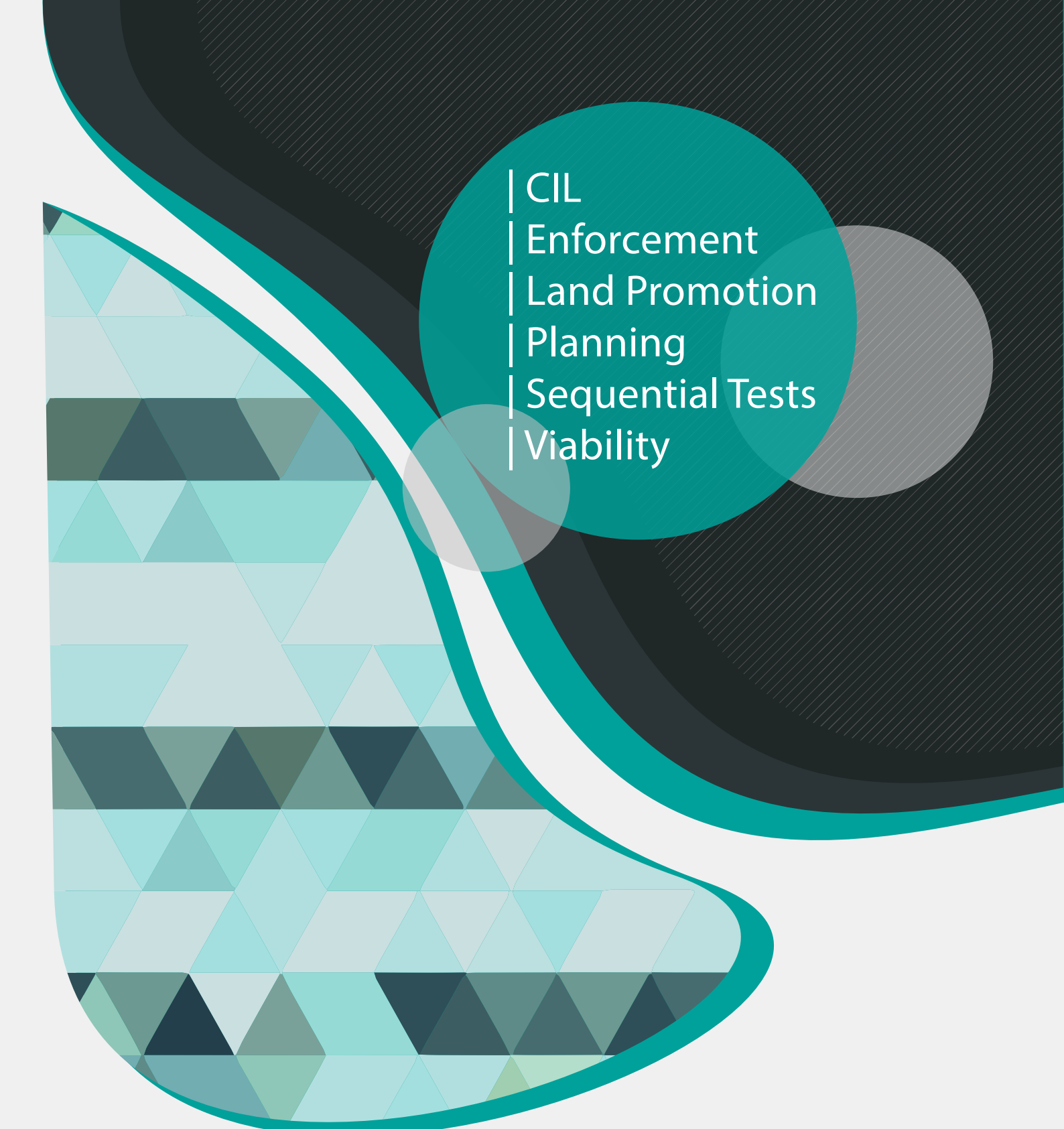
- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would improve the housing stock without adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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