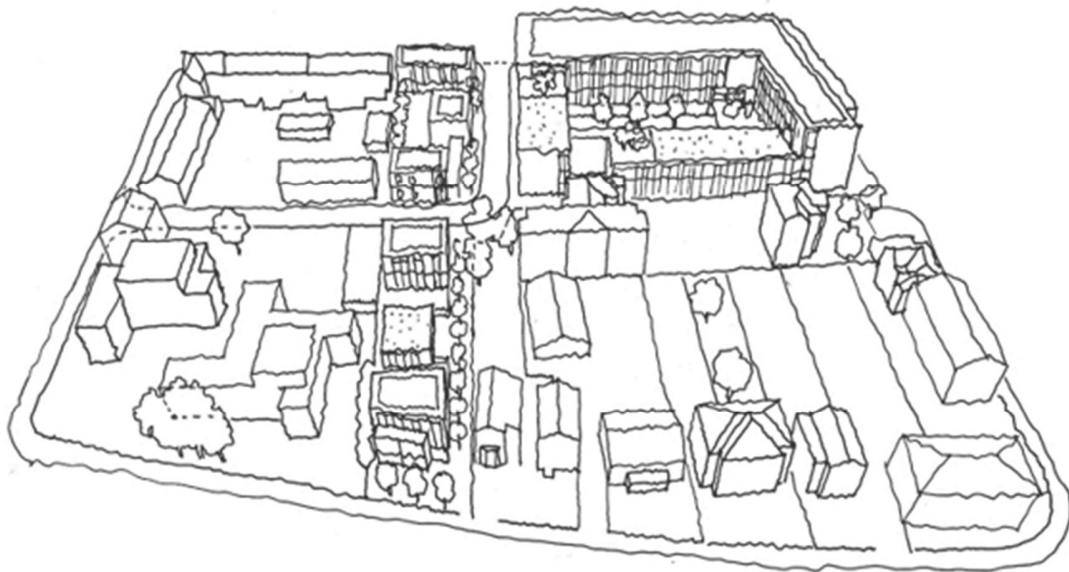


Land at Battle Street, Reading, RG1 7NU

Planning statement

September 2022



Land at Battle Street, Reading, RG1 7NU
Planning Statement

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Hampshire County Council (HCC) Property Services, on behalf of Reading Borough Council (RBC) as landowner, to support a detailed planning application for the redevelopment of 'the site' (Central Swimming Pool, Battle Street, Reading, RG1 7NU).
- 1.1.2 The redevelopment of the site will result in the clearance and taking up of existing hardstanding and structures from the site; erection of seven buildings, up to four storeys in height, containing 49 affordable dwellings (Class C3 use), 13 supported living flats (Class C2 residential institution use), and older persons day centre (Class E(f)); and associated roadways, car parking, open space and other infrastructure.
- 1.1.1 The application site is in central Reading on the corner of Battle Street and Bedford Road. The site is brownfield land, following the demolition of the former Central Swimming Pool buildings. Only the existing car park hard standing is remaining, along with four or five small trees. Reading Central Swimming Pool was constructed on the site in 1966, closing in 2018 as it was deemed that the pool had reached the end of its design life. A demountable, temporary replacement pool was constructed at Rivermead and opened in January 2018. Central Pool was subsequently demolished. Part of the site has been used for public car parking and was briefly occupied by a Covid-19 temporary walk-in vaccination centre until 2022.
- 1.1.2 RBC is currently investing £40 million in modern new leisure facilities - including a new flagship leisure centre and two brand new swimming pools, at Palmer Park (due to open late 2022) and Rivermead (due to open Spring 2023). The pool has therefore been re-provided at Rivermead, with further provision being provided elsewhere by RBC.
- 1.1.3 To date, the client team has liaised with Adult Services Care Managers at RBC and sought planning advice under 201753/PREAPP and most recently 211802/PREAPP and maintained dialogue with RBC as Local Planning Authority, as well as presented evolving development designs at the Reading Design Review Panel (DRP). Engagement with the local community was undertaken in Spring 2022, with the engagement process and public comments set out and analysed in the Central Swimming Pool, Battle Street, Design and Access Statement (DAS).

1.2 Purpose

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to assess the redevelopment of the site for an older person's day centre with 35 places, 29 x sheltered housing flats for over 55's, 13 x supported living flats with support spaces and 20 x general needs affordable housing and flats, against the provisions of Reading Borough Council's Local Plan and other material considerations relevant to the determination of the planning application.

- 1.2.2 This Planning Statement should be read alongside the submitted Central Swimming Pool, Design and Access Statement (DAS) and other supporting documentation.

1.3 Structure

- 1.3.1 The remainder of this Planning Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 assesses the site context;
 - Section 3 provides an overview of the site's planning history and sets out the planning policy context that the development will be considered against;
 - Section 4 outlines the development;
 - Section 5 demonstrates how the development complies with relevant planning policies; and
 - Section 6 concludes the report.

2 The application and its surrounding context

2.1 Purpose

- 2.1.1 The purpose of this section is to explain the site's physical context and constraints, which then informs the development potential of the site.

2.2 The application site

- 2.2.1 The application site is an irregular shape, approximately 0.55 hectares in area and located on Battle Street and Bedford Road junction, within the Borough of Reading. RBC owns the site (see figure 1). A small part of the site also fronts onto Oxford Road. This southern portion of the site is located within the Russell Street and Castle Hill Conservation Area, which also comprises a number of listed buildings in the vicinity.
- 2.2.2 The landholding comprises a brownfield plot of land. Located on the site is also a substation which is in operation and will require access.

2.3 The surrounding context

- 2.3.1 Beyond the site, the surrounding area is predominantly residential use consisting of two and three storey Victorian / Edwardian terraced houses fronting onto Battle Street and James Street. Also present are semi-detached and terraced dwellings and apartment buildings lining Oxford Road. Contemporary four storey blocks of flats are present along Bedford Road. A mix of architectural styles bounds the site.
- 2.3.2 The site sits within the Central Area Boundary of Reading as defined by the adopted Borough Local Plan 2019 and is influenced by the following:
- Allocated site under Policy CR14(a);
 - Southern part of the site is within the Russell Street / Castle Hill / Oxford Road Conservation Area;
 - Within an Air Quality Management Area;
 - Bounded by Classified Highway Network;
 - Bounded to the south by Cycle Route 50.

Land at Battle Street, Reading, RG1 7NU
Planning Statement



Figure 1: Site Plan

3 Planning context

3.1 Purpose

- 3.1.1 The purpose of this section is to review the relevant planning policies that will inform the development.

3.2 Previous applications

- 3.2.1 The planning history of the site is as follows:
- (031246) 03/00826/OUT-Proposed redevelopment to include demolition of existing swimming pool complex and erection of residential development of 89 units comprising 67 private dwellings and 22 affordable dwellings. Permitted subject to Legal Agreement, on 12.10.2004. Now lapsed.
 - 181606/DEM-Application for prior notification of proposed demolition of Central Swimming Pool down to ground level. Prior Approval Notification – Approval 11.10.2018. Demolition completed.
 - 181900/PREAPP-Redevelopment of the Central Pool Site bounded by Battle Street, Bedford Road and Oxford Road (site area 0.55 hectare) for a total of 94 units comprising of 1, 2 and 3 bed units (from 2-5 storeys) with access, amenity space and parking (total spaces 86). The proposal consists of a mix of private residential and affordable housing with a mixture of 2, 3, 4 and 5 storey buildings in the form of 4 blocks.
 - 201753/PREAPP - New Day Centre for older persons, adults' mental health accommodation and affordable flats.

3.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

- 3.3.1 In 2021, a revised National Planning Policy Framework was published, which maintains a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF emphasises that there are three overarching objectives of the planning system. These are interdependent of one another and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways in order to achieve sustainable development: Economic Objective, Social Objective and Environmental Objective. Below details national planning policy topics, which the development has considered:
- Chapter 2 – Achieving sustainable development
 - Chapter 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
 - Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
 - Chapter 11 – Making effective use of land
 - Chapter 12 – Achieving well designed places
 - Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

3.4 Reading Borough Council (RBC) Local Plan

- 3.4.1 The site lies within the Local Planning Authority (LPA) area of Reading Borough Council where the Local Plan (adopted November 2019) comprises planning policies that inform the type of development that will be permitted in Reading, in addition to national planning guidance and other material considerations. The site is subject to a site-specific policy CR14(a), which sets out the following:

CR14: OTHER SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL READING

The following sites will be developed according with the principles set out in this policy:

CR14a CENTRAL SWIMMING POOL, BATTLE STREET

Development for residential use once replacement swimming provision has been addressed.

Development should:

- *Conserve and where possible enhance the setting of the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings;*
- *Take account of nearby scale of development, including higher density development to the east;*
- *Address noise impacts on residential use;*
- *Address air quality impacts on residential use;*
- *Avoid overlooking of the rear of existing residential properties; and*
- *Take account of the potential impact on water infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrades where required.*

Site size: 0.55 ha 80-120 dwellings

3.5 Summary of key planning policies

- 3.5.1 The following bullet points list the key Local Plan policies that are most relevant to the development.

Figure 2: Summary of key planning policies	
Principle of development	Development implications
Policy CR14a: Central Swimming Pool - allocated for residential use once replacement swimming provision has been addressed. Requires proposals to: (1) conserve and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings; (2) take account of nearby scale of development, including higher density development to the east; (3) address noise impacts on residential use; (4) address air quality impacts on residential use; (5) avoid overlooking of the rear of existing residential properties; and (6) take account of the potential impact on water infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrades where required. The site size is 0.55ha with allocation capacity for 80- 120 dwellings. The fact that a site is allocated in CR14 does not preclude the need to comply with all other policies in the Local Plan, including, for residential developments, the need to provide affordable housing. Policy CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development - a positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. Policy OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities - accepts proposals for new, extended/ improved community facilities, particularly co-location of facilities on a single site. Proposals for on-site intensification of important facilities, such as schools and healthcare uses, will be supported, subject to other policies in the plan. Locate new community facilities where there is a choice of travel (including walking/ cycling). Proposals involving the redevelopment of existing community facilities for non-community uses will not be permitted, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a need to retain that facility. Policy RL6: Protection of leisure facilities and public houses - permits developments resulting in a loss of a leisure facility if (1) there is no need for this type of facility in this area; or the function of the facility can be fulfilled by an existing facility, or a facility proposed as part of the development, where that facility would be at least as accessible to the same catchment.	The site falls within the Borough of Reading. Co-location of community uses is considered acceptable. Policy OU1 encourages the provision of a mix of compatible services on a single site. Any development should confirm the re-provision or the replacement swimming pool to ensure no loss in community facility in line with Policy CR14a and Policy RL6.
Housing mix, type and affordability	Development implications
Policy H1: Provision of housing - an additional 15,847 homes in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036. Policy H2: Density and mix - density ranges stated are: The site is 'urban'; a density of 60-120dph is therefore considered appropriate. Appropriate density of residential development will be informed by: (1) the character and mix of uses of the area in which it is located, including the housing mix, and consideration of any nearby heritage assets or important landscape or townscape areas; (2) its current and future level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport; (3) the need to achieve high quality design; (4) the need to maximise the efficiency of land use; and (5) minimising	The site is located within an urban area and could accommodate a density of 60-120dph in line with Policy H2, plus an appropriate mix of homes. Any development should seek to deliver at least 30% affordable housing in line with Policy H3. Provide provision for ambulance access as well as incorporate

environmental impacts, including detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers. In addition, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing set out in figure 4.6 (see Local Plan). Policy H3: Affordable Housing - on sites of 10+ dwellings, 30% of the total dwellings will be in the form of affordable housing. Priority needs are currently for housing with two+ bedrooms that can house families. New development should include a range and mix of tenures, sizes and types. Current split is 70% social rent/ affordable rent, 30% intermediate/shared ownership housing. Policy H6: Accommodation for Vulnerable People - specialist accommodation for vulnerable people should be located close to or accommodate relevant community facilities, include ambulance access, should incorporate areas of green space which are particularly important for many groups of vulnerable people and should respect the character of their surroundings. Development catering for people with limited mobility will (1) be located within 400m of an identified local centre and a bus stop on a strategic bus route; and (2) include secure storage for mobility scooters.	green space as set out in Policy H6.
High quality design	Development implications
Policy CR2: Design in central Reading - development should (1) build on/ respect the existing grid layout, providing continuity and enclosure through appropriate relationships between buildings and spaces, and street frontages, and contribute towards enhanced ease of movement; (2) provide well designed public spaces (squares, open spaces, streetscape) utilising high quality and well-maintained hard/ soft landscaped areas, and public art to provide interest, sense of place and safe/ convenient linkages; (3) provide green infrastructure (roof gardens, green walls and green roofs); use high quality architectural details/ materials, which respect existing local form and quality; (4) respond to diversity of the central area, be capable of easy adaptation and enhance community safety; (5) be designed with consideration of adjacent development sites. Policy CR6: Living in central Reading - requires development within the central area to demonstrate how noise disturbance from neighbouring land uses and air quality implications of residential development, have been considered and mitigated. Policy CC6: Accessibility and the intensity of development - proposals must be at a scale, density and intensity appropriate to its level of accessibility (walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services/ facilities) i.e. the densest scale development in the most accessible locations. Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm - requires development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area within which it is located in terms of layout, landscape, density, scale, massing, architectural details and materials. Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity - seeks that development should not adversely impact on existing and future surrounding occupiers (privacy and overlooking; access to sunlight/ daylight; visual dominance/ overbearing effects of a development; harm to outlook; noise/ disturbance; artificial lighting; vibration; dust and fumes; smell, crime and safety). Back-to-back distances of 20m between dwellings is appropriate. Policy H10: Private and communal outdoor space - requires functional private or communal open space, including green space, that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green	Any proposed built form and its siting should be appropriate in its scale and massing in relation to the adjoining buildings to comply with Policy CR2. Any development should be of high design quality (Policy CC7), seek to provide evidence of noise and air quality mitigation (Policy CR6), as well as ensure private / communal open space is provided which considers the relationship to surrounding properties and respects existing residential built form in order to respect the quality of living environment and comply with Policy CC7, CC8 and H10.

waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. Houses to be provided with private outdoor space. Flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens.	
Heritage	Development implications
Policy EN1 Protection and enhancement of the historic environment - historic features, areas of historic importance and their settings will be protected / enhanced, including: (1) Listed Buildings; (2) Conservation Areas; (3) Scheduled Monuments; (4) Historic parks and gardens; and (5) Other features with local or national significance, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and assets on the Local List. Expects proposals to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm / loss of a heritage asset should require justification, usually in the form of public benefits. Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural/ historic interest including their settings. Heritage Statements should accompany applications which affect / have the potential to affect, the significant features of heritage assets. Policy EN3 Enhancement of conservation areas - proposals within Conservation Areas should positively contribute to local character/ distinctiveness. Positive consideration will be given to proposals which enhance the character of conservation areas. Policy EN6: New development in a historic context - requires proposals to respect/ enhance architectural and visual qualities and consider how heritage considerations can influence the design of proposals. The LPA will consider: (1) the positive contribution of the development to the existing historic townscape (scale, height, mass, proportion, plot size, street form, materials, significant vistas and views, and open space); (2) sensitivity to historic context; (3) reflection of borough-wide major heritage themes that contribute to local distinctiveness (patterned brickwork, former worker terraced housing); (4) whether development promotes and/or improves access to previously undiscovered or neglected historic significance.	The southern part of the site is located within the Conservation Area and should seek to enhance the historic character and local distinctiveness, ensure that buildings have an appropriate scale and massing as well as include a heritage statement to comply with Policy EN1, EN3 and EN6.
Green infrastructure	Development implications
Policy EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space - no loss of open space or erosion of quality through insensitive adjacent development. Policy EN9: Provision of Open Space - requires open space in residential developments of 50+ dwellings. There are also a variety of policies that ensure that all new residential development makes some form of contribution to green infrastructure, through: (1) Private and communal green space in accordance with Policy H10; (2) Landscaping, in accordance with Policy CC7, and linked into a wider Green Network in accordance with Policy EN12; (3) Innovative solutions in the high density town centre such as green roofs, green walls and roof gardens in accordance with policies CR2 and CR10; and (4) Tree planting in accordance with policies CC3 and EN14. Policy EN10: Access to open space - contribute to road improvements and crossings to improve access to green space and / or facilitate the creation / linking of safe off-road routes to parks (see Open Space Strategy). Policy EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network - provide a net gain for biodiversity and protect / enhance features of biodiversity interest on / adjacent to the application site as well as provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements (wildlife ponds, bird and	New residential development should contribute to green infrastructure through on-site provision as well as on-site biodiversity by seeking to retain or replace trees. Proposals could also provide trees / landscaping within the street scene and along the boundaries of the site in order to fulfil Policy EN12 and Policy EN14. Any development may be required to contribute towards improvements and connections to local green space in order to comply with Policy EN9 and Policy EN10.

bat boxes). If development need outweighs protecting the value of the site, and it is demonstrated that the impacts cannot be: 1) avoided; 2) mitigated or; 3) compensated for on-site; then off-site compensation should be provided to ensure that there is "no net loss" of biodiversity. Policy EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland - requires proposals to provide tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area and to provide for biodiversity.	
Drainage	Development implications
Policy EN18: Flooding and sustainable drainage systems - major developments must incorporate SuDS. Runoff rates should reflect greenfield conditions and must be no greater than the existing conditions of the site. Schemes should ensure that the movement of water through vertical infiltration as well as horizontal run-off does not worsen contamination effects. SuDS provision should maximise ecological benefits, link into the Green Network, incorporate tree planting and landscaping and avoid damage to existing significant trees, including through changes to the site hydrology.	Any development should provide details on how SuDS will be incorporated into the site in order to fulfil Policy EN18.
Transport, access, parking and cycle	Development implications
Policy TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy - contribute to meeting the objectives of the Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) or any successor document. Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway - permits proposals whereby: access/ works to highway comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority; no material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network; not detrimental to user safety, including pedestrians/ cyclists; and for non-residential uses/ new dwellings on classified roads, provides off-street servicing. Policy TR4: Cycle routes and facilities - make use of opportunities to improve access for cyclists to, from and within the development. Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging - requires provision of car parking and cycle parking appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport. Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point. Policy CC6: Accessibility and the intensity of development - proposals must be a scale, density and intensity appropriate to its level of accessibility (walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services/ facilities) i.e. the densest / largest scale development in the most accessible locations. Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (Oct 2011) - the site is located in Zone 2 Primary Core Area. These are areas directly surrounding the core area, well served by public transport and located on a high frequency bus route. Should a developer require fewer spaces, proposals would need to be demonstrate no detriment to highway safety to the Highway Authority.	The site is located within central Reading and highly accessible by all modes of transport. Any development should look to encourage sustainable travel choices and in line with Policy TR1 and TR4. Any development should ensure the site access, local highway and parking / cycle provision is sufficient to accommodate the needs of the development and be supported by a transport assessment to fulfil Policy TR2. Any construction of a new site access should show that it will not compromise the safe movement and free flow of traffic on the network or the safe use of the road.

Sustainability	Development implications
Policy CC2: Sustainable design and construction - accepts proposals for new development where the design of buildings/ site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials etc appropriately, efficiently and take account of the effects of climate change. Policy CC3 Adaptation to Climate Change - proposals should incorporate measures to adapt to climate change i.e.: (1) new buildings orientated to maximise opportunities for natural heating, ventilation and reducing exposure to wind; (2) maximise resistance and resilience to climate change (by including measures such as solar shading, thermal mass, heating and ventilation of the building and appropriately coloured materials in areas exposed to direct sunlight, green and brown roofs, green walls); (3) use trees etc to provide shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets and to connect habitat, designed with native plants that are carefully selected, managed and adaptable to meet the predicted changed climatic conditions; and (4) minimise impact of surface water runoff in the design of the drainage system and incorporate mitigation/ resilience measures for any increases in river flooding levels as a result of climate change. Policy CC4: Decentralised energy - more than 20 dwellings or non-residential developments 100sqm+ should consider the inclusion of decentralised energy provision within the site unless demonstrated otherwise. Policy CC5: Waste minimisation and storage - minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings and promote sustainable approaches to waste management (reuse/ recycling of construction waste, promotion of designs that provide well-designed space for waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting). Policy H5: Standards for New Housing - housing should be built to standards set in a-f, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable: a) new housing outside the Central Area to comply with the nationally-described space standard, b) new housing built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations79, c) major new residential development achieve zero carbon homes, d) all other new housing achieve a minimum 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in the 2013 Building Regulations, e) new housing to be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations, unless it is built in line with M4(3), f) 20+ new build dwellings – at least 5% of dwellings to be wheelchair user dwellings in line with M4(3) of the Building Regulations. Market homes provided to meet this requirement will be ‘wheelchair adaptable’ as defined in part M, whilst homes where the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating an individual may be ‘wheelchair accessible’. Policy EN15: Air Quality - development should have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality. Policy EN16: Pollution and Water Resources - seeks to ensure that future occupiers of developments are not adversely impacted by pollution including noise and air quality. Policy EN17: Noise Generating Equipment - requires that new plant equipment within development does not result in adverse noise impacts.	Any development should produce sound sustainable design in line with requirements set out in Policy CC2 and adapt to climate change to fulfil Policy CC3. See Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (adopted Dec 2019) for further details. In line with Policy CC4 any development should consider decentralised energy (renewable technologies and more efficient energy generation such as Combined Heat Power (CHP)). Any new housing should be built in line with national space standards as well as fulfil requirements a-f to comply with Policy H5.

3.5.2 Other key documents which are referenced where necessary and should be read in conjunction include:

- Reading Housing Strategy (2020-2050) – seeks to deliver a sustainable supply of accommodation; improve the condition of current stock; and review the services needs to support people to live confidently in properties.
- Affordable Housing (March 2021) – provides further information to supplement policies in the Local Plan in achieving affordable housing.
- Employment, Skills and Training (April 2013) – provides detailed guidance on how developers should contribute to employment initiatives.
- Revised Parking Standards and Design (October 2011) – provides guidance on the levels of parking required as part of new developments.
- Planning Obligations under Section 106 (April 2015) – sets out how planning obligations under Section 106 for new development will be secured, in the context of the Community Infrastructure Levy.
- Sustainable Design and Construction (December 2019) – sets out the Borough's commitment to producing sustainable buildings and interprets existing policy on climate change, energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- Reading Tree Strategy (2020) – provides further information and context to supplement policies in the Local Plan.
- Reading Borough Biodiversity Action Plan (2021) – sets out aims to ensure Reading will be richer in wildlife, better connected to the wider landscape and reverse biodiversity loss.

4. The development

4.1. Description of development

4.1.1. Clearance and taking up of existing hardstanding and structures from the site; erection of seven buildings, up to four storeys in height, containing 49 affordable dwellings (Class C3 use), supported living accommodation (Class C2 residential institution use), and older persons day centre (Class E(f)); and associated roadways, car parking, open space and other infrastructure.

4.1.2. The following table set out the proposed uses in greater detail.

Building	Height	Use	Amount
A	Up to 4 storeys	Class C3 dwellings	29 x 1-bed sheltered apartments
		Class C3 dwellings	12 x 2&3 bed General Needs apartments
		Class E(f) day centre of older persons	-
		Class C2 residential institution	9 x 1-bed units and communal/shared facilities
B	3 storey	Class C3 dwellings	3 x 1-bed
C	1 storey	Class C3 dwellings	1 x 1-bed
D	2 storey	Class C3 dwellings	2 x 1-bed
E1	2 storey	Class C2 residential institution	2 x 1-bed
E2	2 storey	Class C2 residential institution	2 x 1-bed
F	2 storey	Class C3 dwellings	2 x 3-bed

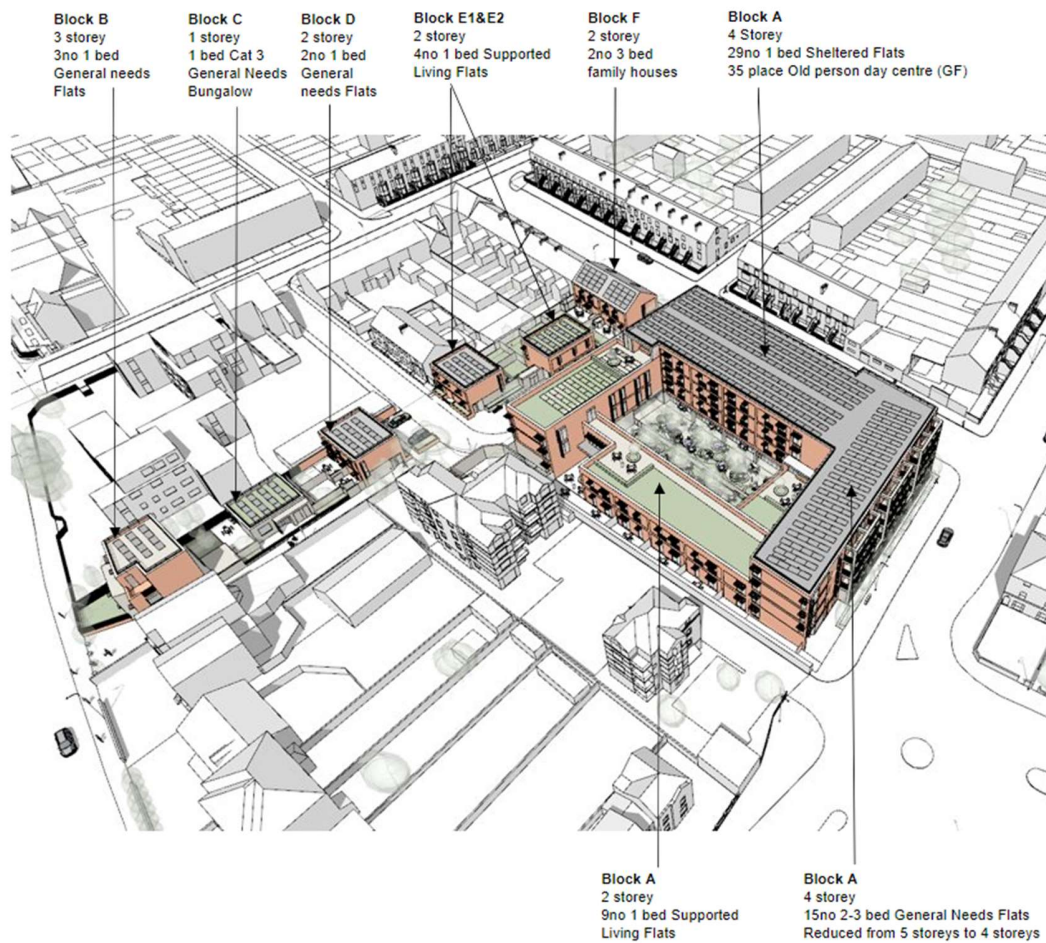


Figure 2: Block Plan

4.1.3. To inform the development, the site has been subject to a wide range of technical studies, submitted separately as part of this application. The following technical surveys provide greater detail in terms of the description and the wider context of the site. These surveys include:

- Affordable Housing Statement
- Air Quality Statement
- Archaeological Heritage Statement
- Access Statement
- CIL form
- Contaminated Land Study -Phase 1 desk study
- Daylight / Sunlight Assessment
- Design and Access Statement
- Ecological Survey and Report
- Energy Efficiency Statement
- External Lighting Details
- Heritage Statement
- Landscape Principles

- Materials Details
 - New Build Housing Standards
 - Noise and Vibration Assessment
 - Open Space Statement
 - Planning Statement, including Section 106 heads of terms
 - Plans and Drawings - proposed floor plans, elevations, roof plan, block plan, location plan, site plan and sections, schedule of room sizes
 - Sustainability Statement
 - SUDs Strategy
 - Superfast Broadband Statement
 - Vehicle Tracking
 - Transport Statement
 - Tree Survey and AIA
 - Vehicle Parking and Waste Storage Details.
- 4.1.4 Where appropriate, the findings from the technical studies are included below in the summary of the development. Please refer to the studies should greater detail be required.

4.2. Elements of the development

Access and movement

- 4.2.1. Primary vehicular movement: Existing movement corridors are retained along Bedford Road, Oxford Road, Battle Street and George Street. One-way vehicular access is proposed through the site along a new mews street that connects Battle Street to James Street. The mews street also caters for deliveries, emergency vehicles and refuse collection.
- 4.2.2. Parking and cycle provision: Nine car parking spaces are proposed on site, all with Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points. Existing on-street spaces are rationalised to provide a drop off space for the day centre, 2 x car club spaces and replacement permit parking. 32 cycle parking spaces are provided, to meet existing standards. Car parking provision is in line with a sustainable transport strategy for the site and Section 5 of this statement sets out more detail.
- 4.2.3. Pedestrian movement: Pedestrian access to the day centre is from the mews street at the Battle Street entrance and the housing from via separate entrances. The development proposes a new tree lined pedestrian link through from Battle Street to Oxford Road, along with an enhanced lighting scheme to increase walkability and pedestrian safety. Other public routes are well-defined and overlooked.

Built form and layout

- 4.2.4. Use: The site is within proximity of central Reading and located in an urban area with a mix of residential character, commercial and education uses. The proposed residential uses and day centre are compatible with this character.

- 4.2.5. Density: A density of 113 units per hectare is achieved, taking into account the supported living accommodation, which is within the local plan indicative density range of '60-120 dwellings per hectare' for urban areas.
- 4.2.6. Scale and massing: The site is an irregular shape and three distinct blocks of built form are proposed. The largest block (Block A) is a courtyard building at the junction of Bedford Road and Battle Street and has a scale of 2-4 storeys, also containing the day centre. The lowest part of the block is adjacent to existing flats on Bedford Road. Four storeys are proposed on the main frontages of Bedford Road and Battle Street.
- 4.2.7. The other parts of the site are lower in scale (1-3 storeys) and provide general needs flats and houses and supported living accommodation. Battle Street Mews (Blocks E and F) continues the building line fronting Battle Street and James Street. Oxford Road Mews (Blocks B-D) fronts onto Oxford Road and James Street, with a lower storey height to respond sensitively to the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area, which are predominantly villa typologies with front gardens and terraced groups, as outlined in the Heritage Statement. The scale and massing across the site has been arranged to minimise overlooking of existing dwellings and amenity space.
- 4.2.8. Materials: The development aims to deliver a contemporary material palette and architectural design, which is sympathetic to the surrounding area and having its own character as a community and residential development. The development proposes high quality red and grey brick - as the dominant materials in the area - with complementary tiles and terracotta. Fibre cement cladding is used for the top storey of the largest block to lighten the massing of this element. Windows are powder-coated aluminium with a timber core. Roofs are a single ply membrane with solar PV cells or green roofs, and artificial slates are proposed for a limited number of buildings with pitched roofs to match the existing street scene.
- 4.2.9. Amenity: The development has been designed to maximise solar orientation, with dwellings having access to external communal terraces, private balconies or, as a minimum, living spaces for flats face South, East or West to ensure adequate amounts of light to dwellings. An internal courtyard also provides communal space for the day centre, which maximises natural light by reducing built form along the southern boundary to a maximum height of two storeys. This design consideration is evidenced in the Right to Light report produced by Daylight Sunlight Consulting, with drawings set out in Appendix 1 of that report.
- 4.2.10. The development has carefully considered the relationship to neighbouring properties and the scale and massing of the development has evolved during pre-application discussions.
- 4.2.11. Sustainability: The development is designed to be net zero carbon in use. This is primarily achieved using Passivhaus principles, which reduces energy demand via high levels of insulation, air-tight construction and triple glazed windows. There is also a focus on renewable technologies including photovoltaic cells on flat roofs, EV charging points and air source heat pumps for heating, cooling ventilation and hot water. Residual energy requirements are proposed to be met from renewable sources. For further details, see the supporting sustainability report.

Green infrastructure

- 4.2.12. Landscape character: The site has an urban context and the site is previously developed. Abbey Ward is a low tree canopy ward where planting is of greater importance to help bring the canopy cover of the ward up to 12% by 2030. Building set backs and building lines reflect the street character and the development creates space for raised beds and trees, particularly along Battle Street and Bedford Road as the main frontages for the development. Elsewhere, private gardens and the mews street offer planting opportunities as set out in the landscape plans and strategy.
- 4.2.13. Biodiversity net gain: The site is almost wholly bare tarmac and crushed building waste, with minimal vegetation, except for several trees, which the arboricultural report deems the majority of these as low quality. It is proposed to replace the existing trees with a more robust landscape and planting strategy to enhance the areas of public realm and private spaces in the development. The development will deliver a net gain in biodiversity.
- 4.2.14. Ecology: There are no nationally designated sites of nature conservation interest close to the site. The preliminary Ecology Appraisal identified that the site supports habitats of low ecological value, with no evidence of badgers, bats, hazel dormice, amphibians, reptiles, or notable invertebrates and low potential for the site to support common nesting birds. The development includes enhancements such as planting to allow the establishment of structurally diverse vegetation including ground cover (with a high proportion of flowering plants), shrubs, and several street trees, green roofs or green walls, in-wall bird nest bricks, invertebrate 'bee bricks', and integrated bat roost units and swift nest boxes at high level around the roof / top of walls.
- 4.2.15. Open space: The development provides different types of amenity open space relevant to the proposed mix of uses and the central location within Reading. The development ensures that all accommodation has access to private gardens, balconies or shared roof terraces and there is also a sheltered, shared community courtyard for the day centre. Public realm is provided in the form of a mews street, upgrades to Bedford Road, a pedestrian walkway connecting to Oxford Road and an incidental open space at the heart of the development.

Technical considerations

- 4.2.16. Ground conditions: Ground conditions comprise of variable Made Ground deposits comprising either crushed concrete or asphalt / sub-base underlain by varying proportions of Gravel, Sand and/ or Clay with anthropogenic inclusions. The intrusive investigations established the Made Ground was underlain by the Taplow Gravel Member, which was further underlain by Seaford and Newhaven Chalk Formation typically comprising structureless chalk recovered as slightly gravelly silt.
- 4.2.17. Ground water: Environment Agency mapping indicates that the northern part of the site lies within a groundwater source protection zone. On site investigations encountered ground water between 4.90m and 6.00m bgl. Post investigation monitoring confirmed groundwater levels between 3.90m and 4.33m bgl. The study concludes that shallow soakaways are unlikely to be viable and instead

deep bore soakaways into the underlying chalk offer potential for discharging storm waters from the development.

- 4.2.18. Flooding and drainage: The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and therefore at minimal risk of flooding. There is a high to medium risk of pluvial flooding, which is resolved in a sustainable way by discharging runoff to a system designed to cater for the 1% AEP (1:100 year) storm with 40% additional storage to allow for climate change. The new surface water drainage system is located within the central courtyard of Block A to store water underground and release in a controlled rate into the sewer system. It is designed to Building Regulations and SUDS manual standards. It is capable of draining the site, without flooding, during a 1 in 30-year storm whilst retaining the 1 in 100-year storm flow plus 40% allowance for climate change within the site boundary without putting existing buildings, the proposed development and any third party land at risk from flooding. See 'below ground drainage layout' with drawing number E05077-ECH-XX-XX-DR-C-7500 for further details.
- 4.2.19. Foul water: Foul water drainage is discharged to the existing foul water sewer network using an existing on-site connection. Thames Water have confirmed that there is capacity within the sewer network.
- 4.2.20. Noise: Noise sources are primarily from traffic along the Oxford Road and Bedford Road corridors. Survey findings indicate that triple glazing and mechanical ventilation is required for affected facades.
- 4.2.21. Lighting: A proposed external lighting plan has been included as part of the planning submission. All external lighting is designed in accordance with lighting standards and achieves the following:
- External lighting illuminates areas around buildings, such as external doors, amenity, car parking and footpaths leading to buildings.
 - Amenity lighting (bollards) and external security lighting illuminate communal areas, footpaths, signage, storage areas and parking areas.
 - External lighting design for road, footpaths and public amenity areas are in accordance with BS 5489-1:2013.
 - Lighting designed to the standards set by BS 5489-1:2013 is also recommended in ILP guidance to act as a measure to reduce crime within developments.
 - 5m high street columns and a series of LED external lighting throughout the site ensures a safe approach for all residents to their front door.
 - 24 hours lighting to communal areas provided both internally and externally. External lighting located at all the front doors, including the communal entrance doors to the apartment building. Other areas will have day light time clock operation, where required.
 - PIR controlled lighting will be operated in specific areas.
 - A series of hoods and cowls will be provided to avoid glare/light spill.
 - Also planting will be used as a measure to mitigate effects impact on nearby dwellings and surrounding roads. Calculations show where the 1lux isoline is located.
- 4.2.22. Utilities: The development provides a new metered potable water and fire-fighting connection from the existing / upgraded mains Thames Water infrastructure to supply new stand alone and multi-storey development. There is no damage to

existing mains water pipework and the new service route had been coordinated with the landscape strategy (see Utilities Statement 24.3.2 Combined M&E External Services E05077-HCC -00-00-DR.

- 4.2.23. The development is designed to be fully electric and therefore there is no requirement for a new gas supply.
- 4.2.24. The site will have its own dedicated new substation at the designated area, to feed the residential accommodation as well as the OPDC areas and the landlord areas. New HV cables will be installed to feed the new substation, adjacent to the existing one. Existing HV cables will be diverted and the existing LV cables serving the properties around the site from the existing old substation, will be diverted, in order to distance from the building footprint and meet the easement requirements of the regulations for the installation of underground LV cables. The existing distribution feeder pillar will be relocated to allow for the reconstruction of the fence/walls of the old and new substations together inside a unique space.
- 4.2.25. The development provides new infrastructure for fast broadband internet and telecommunication services. The new fibre cables run inside the services trench. The infrastructure, which is likely to be done by Openreach, which is one of the main installers of fibre cables, includes all the necessary services, starting from the dedicated comms room until the lastpoint in the dwellings. However, the infrastructure will be suitable for any provider of broadband internet and telecommunication services to provide their service to the dwellings. Virgin Media fibre will be provided to the OPDC area for internet and data services. Telecommunication will be provided by Openreach/BT.

5. Planning appraisal

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1. The following section provides an explanation and justification to support the development with reference to relevant planning policies, both in the Reading Borough Council Local Plan, National Policy as well as other material considerations. This will include cross-reference to supporting technical evidence reports that accompany the application submission.

5.2. Achieving Sustainable Development

- 5.2.1. At paragraph 8, the NPPF identifies three overarching objectives of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – which are interdependent and should be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
- 5.2.2. Local planning authorities should consider development proposals in a positive and creative way, and work proactively with applicants to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area by approving sustainable development wherever possible (Framework paragraph 38).
- 5.2.3. As set out in this Planning Statement and other reports accompanying the planning application, the Proposed Development is wholly sustainable, delivering the following economic, social and environmental benefits:

Economic Role:

- Direct local employment in connection with the supported living accommodation and older person's day centre
- A significant capital investment
- Construction job opportunities and construction economic output to the economy
- Spending by residents in the local economy
- Council tax and new home bonus revenue.

Social Role:

- 49 much needed affordable homes to meet a very acute shortage and need in Reading Borough
- Day care for older persons, helping fulfil a better quality of life for residents of Reading Borough
- Provision of social care accommodation where there is a substantial need for such provision
- Public realm and amenity open space provision, to enhance health and wellbeing
- An attractive physical environment, designed to reduce the risk of crime and antisocial behaviour
- An accessible location that encourages walking and cycling modes of travel, with good connectivity to the local and wider area.

Environmental Role

- A positive sense of place and identity in the built environment
 - A net gain in biodiversity
 - Opportunities to utilise public transport and other sustainable modes of transport as a feasible alternative to the private car
 - Use of fabric efficient and low carbon technologies to reduce carbon emissions.
- 5.2.4. The development will fulfil the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainability.
- 5.2.5. Making an assessment below of the impacts of the development, this planning statement will conclude that it accords with the development plan, taking account of other relevant material considerations including the Framework which weigh heavily in its favour.
- 5.2.6. In addition, Policy CC1 notes that the Council will work with applications jointly to find solutions so that proposals can be approved wherever possible. The principle of affordable housing and day centre on the site at Central Pool is established through its allocation in the adopted Local Plan and was confirmed in the Borough Council's pre-application response under reference 211802/PREAPP. Prior to this, outline permission was granted for redevelopment comprising of C3 uses as per permission 03/00826/OUT, which has since lapsed. The development set out in this detailed application has been prepared in consultation with the Borough Council to ensure that it addresses relevant Local Plan policies, and thus is in accordance with the aims of Local Plan Policy CC1 (presumption in favour of sustainable development).

5.3. CR14a Central Swimming Pool

- 5.3.1. Criteria under the site-specific Policy CR14a are met as follows.
- 5.3.2. *'Development for residential use, once replacement swimming provision has been addressed.'*
- 5.3.3. The site was previously occupied by a swimming pool complex. Following the demolition and reprovision of the swimming pool at Rivermead approximately 2km north of the site, it is considered that the alternative provision meets this policy test.
- 5.3.4. *'Conserve and where possible enhance the setting of the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings.'*
- 5.3.5. The southern portion of the development is located within the Conservation Area and forms part of the setting of nearby listed buildings. The development responds positively to the heritage context and achieves an overall net gain in townscape benefits and is supported by the Heritage Statement submitted as part of this application.
- 5.3.6. The massing and form of the development successfully fills the gap within the urban grain. It restores the active frontage along this section of Oxford Road. Tree planting is integrated into the frontage of the plot to further enhance the street

scene in the Conservation Area. This is a positive transformation of the existing derelict hard standing car park.

- 5.3.7. The development also draws upon the surrounding villa and Georgian terraced typologies, which feature bay windows as well as parapets. The development carefully combines the use of these distinctive features to achieve multiple townscape benefits. The bay windows increase passive surveillance and rhythm in the street scene, whilst the parapet reduces the sense of scale of building onto Oxford Road. High quality materiality is achieved by using red and grey brick along with subtle brick bond changes that reference nearby historic terraces. These design features create a quiet aesthetic, that allows key historic landmark buildings such as the Church of Holy Trinity to remain prominent along the streetscape.
- 5.3.8. The Heritage Statement accompanying the application concludes that the development positively conserves and enhances the Conservation Area and nearby Listed Buildings and has minimal impact, which is outweighed by the wealth of townscape benefits that the development achieves along Oxford Road.
- 5.3.9. *'Take account of nearby scale of development, including higher density development to the east.'*
- 5.3.10. The development responds sensitively to the surrounding context. Its scale and density responds well to the existing surrounding context, creating a natural transition between predominantly taller development of the city centre to the East and the low-rise residential development to the West. The largest block on Battle Street and Bedford Road is consistent with its civic prominence whilst two storey development sensitively responds to the terraced houses on Battle Street and James Street. The Oxford Road frontage has been informed by detailed analysis of the roofscape, scale, setbacks and massing of buildings along the Oxford Road corridor.
- 5.3.11. *'Address noise and air quality impacts on residential use.'*
- 5.3.12. Supporting noise and air quality studies show that residential use will largely not be impacted. Parts of the development such as along the frontage of Bedford Road may experience higher noise and air quality impacts and have been subject to mitigation methods to ensure quality of living. Mitigation methods implemented include triple glazing and mechanical ventilation on affected facades.
- 5.3.13. *'Avoid overlooking of the rear of existing residential properties.'*
- 5.3.14. Policy CR14a also requires development to avoid overlooking of the rear of existing properties. The development does not negatively impact on the existing residents living in the surrounding area. The distance between the development and the existing buildings as well as the scale and locations of windows have been carefully considered to prevent overlooking into any existing property.
- 5.3.15. Frontages of new buildings mostly face onto existing streets or onto the internal mews street. Exceptions are the single storey building fronting onto the pedestrian link, and the southern wing of the courtyard Block A which faces

amenity and car parking areas of Allison Court; in both cases, the distance to neighbouring properties ensures that overlooking is minimised.

- 5.3.16. Some of the rear elevations of new buildings have oblique views of the rear gardens of existing properties; this is a common relationship in built-up areas and the reduced scale of buildings in these locations helps to avoid direct overlooking and overbearing effects.
- 5.3.17. *'Take account of the potential impact on water infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrade where required.'*
- 5.3.18. To accord with Policy CR14a, the development has considered the potential impact on water infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water. The supporting FRA and drainage strategy notes that Thames Water has confirmed there is adequate capacity within the foul sewer network for development. Furthermore, Appendix B is supportive of a surface water connection into the public sewerage network, which notes it is subject to written approval from the LLFA that the sequential approach to the disposal of surface water has been followed and that the flows are restricted to a total of 2.5l/s. On that basis, Thames Water state they would not have any objections to the development.
- 5.3.19. *'Site size: 0.55 ha and 80-120 dwellings.'*
- 5.3.20. The development provides 49 x C3 dwellings and a total of 62 units, taking into account the supported living accommodation. The day centre and common areas for supported living - together with reductions of scale during the design evolution - reduce the overall number of dwellings achievable on the site. The day centre and supported living uses offer important benefits to the local community and, combined with the residential elements, represent a sustainable and effective use of brownfield land, consistent with the intent of national and local policies.

5.4. Policy CC2 Sustainable design and construction

- 5.4.1. Policy CC2 requires BREEAM 'excellent' standards to be achieved and applies to non-residential uses. Passivhaus principles have been applied across the scheme as a whole and offer an equivalence to BREEAM. This would be on the basis that residential elements achieve a minimum 35% improvement in the dwelling emission rate compared to 2013 regulations.
- 5.4.2. The submitted Sustainability Statement states that the development enables net zero carbon in operation through Passivhaus principles such as high levels of insulation, minimal thermal bridge, high levels of air tightness, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MVHR) and protection from overheating risk. Overall, 80% of predicted energy use will be met by on-site renewable energy generation in the form of photovoltaic panels on the roofs of buildings and air source heat pumps.
- 5.4.3. The Passivhaus principles are a positive contribution to sustainable development and will bring the following benefits: lower space heating bills; good internal air quality and a healthy internal environment; comfortable internal temperatures all year round; protection against fuel poverty and cold homes; meeting zero carbon targets; reduce the requirements for renewable energy; and durable homes with

longer lasting components. The Passivhaus principles approach is considered to achieve an improved outcome in terms of sustainability relative to the policy requirement.

- 5.4.4. For the bungalow only, the Passivhaus Low Energy Building standard has been used because the shape and style of the building means it will not realistically meet the Passivhaus principles.
- 5.4.5. The submitted Sustainability Statement confirms that the development uses energy, water, minerals and materials appropriately, efficiently and with care and takes account the effects of climate change. In line with the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (adopted December 2019), the application acknowledges that necessary safeguards are required in order to ensure the correct standards are secured and delivered.

5.5. Policy CC3 Adaptation to climate change

- 5.5.1. As shown in the submission layout, the orientation of the built form maximises opportunities for natural heating, ventilation and reduces exposure to wind. The built form is compact and creates microclimates such as a sheltered courtyard within Block A. Furthermore, the position of the courtyard allows for roof-top photovoltaic panels and maximises solar gain. Green roofs are also appropriately located in areas exposed to direct sunlight.
- 5.5.2. The landscape design submitted as part of this application uses street trees to provide adequate shade in amenity areas, buildings and the street scenes. Deciduous species, which allow sunlight to reach built form during cooler months have been integrated into the development. They have also been carefully selected so that they are also adaptable to meet changing climatic conditions, particularly higher temperatures and drought conditions in summer as noted in the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (adopted December 2019). See drawing number E05077-HCC-XX-DR-L-7301-P01, Tree and specimen shrub planting plan for further details.
- 5.5.3. The submitted flood risk assessment and drainage strategy, sets out how the development successfully minimises the impact of surface water runoff. There is a high to medium risk of pluvial flooding, which is resolved in a sustainable way. Surface water runoff is attenuated within the site using tree pits and permeable paving and discharged below ground into a system designed to cater for the 1% AEP (1:100 year) storm with 40% additional storage to allow for climate change.
- 5.5.4. The application demonstrates how it has been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change and therefore satisfies Policy CC3.

5.6. Policy CC4 Decentralised energy

- 5.6.1. In accordance with Policy CC4 the development includes decentralised energy within the site. The energy statement demonstrates that PV panels and air source heat pumps (ASHP) are the most feasible and can be used extensively to help achieve net zero carbon in operation.

- 5.6.2. The strategy is based on the individual electrically driven high efficiency exhaust heat pumps which will provide heating and hot water to each flat. These will be supplemented via dedicated PV panels and battery storage to provide zero carbon electricity and heat with the aim of meeting all operational energy on-site. The proposed solution will provide a net zero carbon strategy for each individual flat, in order to limit residual carbon emissions. The development will generate decentralised, renewable energy in line with Policy CC4.

5.7. Policy CC5 Waste minimisation and storage

- 5.7.1. The development incorporates measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of the proposed built form and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management. For instance, the layout and design of the development has carefully factored in storage for recycling waste in centralised bin stores as well as bin chutes in order to promote sustainable waste management. A site waste management plan (SWMP) will be submitted and provided by the selected contractor, using a suitably worded planning condition. The development therefore accords with Policy CC5 (Waste minimisation and storage).

5.8. Policy CC6 Accessibility and the intensity of development

- 5.8.1. Land at Battle Street is in a highly sustainable location within central Reading and accessible by all modes of transport. It lies within 400 metres of a defined centre with a range of facilities, within 400 metres of pedestrian routes and bus stops and is served by more than one bus every 20 minutes in each direction. Given that the level of accessibility is high, the intensity of the development is considered appropriate and in accordance with Policy CC6.

5.9. Policy CC7 Design and the public realm

- 5.9.1. The NPPF (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.
- 5.9.2. The development has been informed by a thorough analysis of local context and built character, as evidenced in the Design & Access Statement and seeks to provide exemplary, sustainable placemaking.
- 5.9.3. The submitted Design & Access Statement sets out in detail the following components of the development: layout, landscape, density and mix, scale and architectural details and materials. Together these components make a positive contribution to the principles of urban design set out in Policy CC7 as well as reflect the current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code.
- Character – the development utilises traditional brick terrace typologies, identified throughout Reading, resulting in a high-quality Passivhaus principles design with a carefully considered materials palette. This establishes the development's identity as a sustainable and innovative place, which is sympathetic to the surrounding character. Red brick is the dominant facing material, with grey bricks

for the prominent ground floor elements and entrances. These colours reflect the geology of the area. Fibre cement cladding is proposed to the top floor of the supported living elements on the Battle Street elevation, to lighten the mass to this elevation. Fibre cement slates will be used on the pitched roofs to the Battle Street homes, to match the adjacent slates on the terraced housing.

- Continuity and enclosure – the development creates a series of perimeter blocks, with public fronts and private backs, stitching together new development into the network of existing streets. The enclosure of built form aids natural surveillance, wayfinding and legibility, particularly along the mews street from Oxford Road. Front doors and windows also maximise active frontages to create a greater sense of safety throughout the development for new and existing residents.
- Quality of the public realm and provision of green infrastructure and landscaping – streetscape enhancements are made with the re-introduction of frontage development onto Battle Street, Bedford Road, Oxford Road and the new mews street, with a coordinated landscape strategy consisting of high quality planting, materials and street furniture. The central portion of the development introduces a new mews street with an incidental space at the junction with a new pedestrian connection to Oxford Road. New street trees within planters and the street scene help to provide greenery, visual interest, shade, improved air quality and biodiversity.
- Ease of movement and permeability – the development reinstates a block structure within and around the site, aiding ease of movement. This improves permeability through the site by removing the cul-de-sac on James Street and providing a new one-way vehicular mews access between Battle Street and James Street for access, deliveries, maintenance and refuse collection. The development also improves pedestrian links through the site providing access from Battle Street, James Street through to Oxford Road for both residents on the development and the wider community. All entrances to front doors, the older person's day centre and supported living accommodation in the mews provide access directly from a level footpath to cater for all users. No external ramps or steps are present in the development.
- Legibility - pedestrian routes through the development have been enhanced to retain legibility within the neighbourhood. The courtyard block is a key building, responsive to its mix of uses, which provides a landmark on the north-eastern portion of the site. The Oxford Road frontage introduces a contemporary building into the streetscene and waymarks the entrance to the pedestrian link.
- Adaptability – the development is fit for purpose for the intended users and provides accessible and adaptable accommodation for everyone, as set out in the Design & Access Statement. The enhanced floor-ceiling heights within the scheme can adapt to a variety of uses and climatic conditions.
- Diversity – the development is mixed use and caters for a wide range of social and economic needs. These include the provision of 100% affordable housing, social care services and support.

5.10. Policy CC8 Safeguarding amenity

- 5.10.1. The submitted Design & Access Statement sets out how the development does not cause detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living condition for new residential properties, particularly in terms of:
- 5.10.2. Privacy and overlooking – the submitted Design & Access Statement demonstrates that back-to-back distances between 17- 20 metres between dwellings is achieved. Some flank-to-back distances are closer, however have no detrimental effects on privacy.
- 5.10.3. Access to sunlight and daylight – the submitted daylight, sunlight and overshadowing assessment demonstrates that the development provides future occupants with adequate daylight and sunlight levels throughout the year, aided by the generous floor to ceiling heights of the buildings. Attention is made to not impact on the existing daylight received by the neighbouring buildings. The impact of the development on the existing properties is deemed to be negligible.
- 5.10.4. Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development – Block A utilises the previous development footprint, scale and massing of its former use as Central Swimming Pool and earlier consent for residential use. It positively contributes to the Battle Street and Bedford Road street scene by incorporating approximately a three-metre setback from the frontage, providing sufficient space for tree and shrub planting.
- 5.10.5. Following detailed discussions with the local planning authority and Design Review Panel, the scale and massing of the block has been further considered. The subtle height variation breaks up scale and adds visual interest to the mixed use block, whilst the presence of corner windows provides articulation in the massing. The integration of balconies also adds greater depth to the development.
- 5.10.6. In terms of its materiality, the proposed façade is simple and repetitive in detailing and composition. These elements reduce the perceived height of the building, successfully making the proposed four storey building form sympathetic to its surroundings.
- 5.10.7. Additionally, it responds sensitively to Allison Court in order to protect amenity and privacy; a maximum height of two storeys is proposed along this edge. This is considered sufficient given that the proposed built form is largely opposite the parking and landscaped areas of Allison Court. Where windows are present on the north elevation of the existing flats, the development has taken this into consideration and set back the proposed built form in this location to achieve a distance of 14.5 metres by incorporating a garden courtyard into the scheme. The new building is set on lower ground, set behind an existing boundary wall. Soft landscape elements are proposed to the southern boundary of Block A to provide a green edge and minimise any loss of privacy as demonstrated in E05077-HCC-XX-DR-L-7302-P01 Planting Plan
- 5.10.8. To the west of the site, the development locates pitched roof terraced dwellings adjacent to existing terraced dwellings along Battle Street, which are also

traditional in form. The new buildings in this location also utilise the existing building lines, creating a continuous frontage.

- 5.10.9. The Oxford Road Mews carefully considers scale and massing in relation to its surrounding context comprising of the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and High Street Heritage Action Zone. The proposed built form is a maximum of three storeys, with a parapet to reflect the other building architectural detailing in the vicinity. This also minimises the height of the proposed built form whilst maintaining an efficient use of land.
- 5.10.10. Harm to outlook – the development sensitively responds to existing residents' outlook by meeting privacy distance and daylight requirements set out by the Borough. Moreover, the regeneration of the site results in improved placemaking and visual character compared to the previous swimming pool and cleared site.
- 5.10.11. Noise and disturbance - a noise and air quality assessment has been undertaken (which also includes the electricity substation) and demonstrates the development is achievable and sets out appropriate mitigation. In addition, the day centre opening hours are 7.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday, which are within normal business hours and therefore the traffic movements are not considered to impact the amenity of new and existing residents.
- 5.10.12. Artificial lighting - street lighting throughout the site will ensure a safe approach for all residents to their front door, whilst protecting amenity by providing low energy lighting with carefully selected luminaires to the entrances and rear gardens. A proposed external lighting plan has been included as part of the planning submission in the external lighting report.
- 5.10.13. Vibration – the adjacent routes Bedford Road and Oxford Road have been assessed as part of the noise assessment and it is envisaged that these routes would also be potential sources of vibration from heavy vehicles. The setbacks of new buildings on these routes are consistent with existing development and would result in comparable living conditions to existing residents.
- 5.10.14. Dust and fumes – the site is in an air quality management area and the development provides reduced car parking (in line the Borough's low carbon sustainability policy), encouraging use of public transport links and walking. Furthermore, to reduce dust and fumes, EV charging points are provided for each car parking space. Suitably worded planning conditions can address construction impacts, for example to prepare a construction management plan.
- 5.10.15. Smell – to reduce smell, communal bin stores are provided within Block A and chute system are provided to enable residents from upper floor flats to dispose of their rubbish from each floor.
- 5.10.16. Crime and safety – safety and security are of great importance and the submitted design and access statement has incorporated the principles of 'Secured by Design' into the development (see the Design & Access Statement for further detail). There is clear definition between public and private spaces, secure entrances, natural surveillance of the public realm from buildings, clear sightlines along streets and appropriate boundary treatments.

5.10.17. The above demonstrates that the development does not reduce the quality of the environment for others, in particular existing residential properties and therefore is in line with Policy CC8 (safeguarding amenity).

5.11. Policy CC9 Securing infrastructure

5.11.1. As a major regeneration project on previously developed land, the development makes effective use of existing infrastructure. The project creates 49 affordable homes, 13 supported living units and ancillary space and an older persons' day centre, making an important contribution to the borough's infrastructure. The development will also deliver direct enhancements to the public realm, street care and tree planting, which will improve biodiversity and air quality for the immediate area.

5.11.2. Where upgrades to infrastructure are necessary, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is chargeable in respect of the Class C3 residential uses. Site-specific items will be provided through financial contributions in accordance with the criteria and rate of contribution and/or levy as set out in relevant documentation. Overall contributions need to be balanced against the provision of 100% affordable housing which is a major benefit of the development.

5.11.3. Proposed heads of terms to include within a Section 106 agreement include:

- Affordable Housing – 49 dwellings and 13 supported living units to be secured as affordable housing in perpetuity;
- Public Realm – financial contribution for planting or public realm improvement required outside of the application boundary, for example tree planting or connections to existing open spaces;
- Carbon Offsetting – financial contribution to offset residual carbon emissions;
- Employment, Skills and Training Plans – financial contribution towards an Employment, Training & Skills Plan, to include construction and operational phases, in accordance with the Employment, Skills & Training SPD (2013);
- Transport – travel plan, car club, Traffic Regulation Order and requirement to enter into legal agreements for highways infrastructure (Section 278 / Section 38).

5.11.4. The development is therefore in line with Policy CC9 (securing infrastructure).

5.12. Policy EN1 Protection and enhancement of the historic environment / Policy EN3 Enhancement of Conservation Areas

5.12.1. The southern part of land at Battle Street is located within a Conservation Area. A comprehensive Heritage Statement has been submitted as part of the application, which undertakes a thorough review of the development and its setting.

5.12.2. The development ensures that the design of the proposed built form fronting Oxford Road is appropriate within the context of the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings as well as its location within the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ). The development addresses the HSHAZ objectives; improving the

physical condition and viability of the high streets; improving the public realm; and creating a positive sense of place.

- 5.12.3. The current vacant plot is derelict and uninviting, which has a negative impact on the setting of the conservation area. The proposed built form improves the physical condition of Oxford Road, revitalising the public realm, by reactivating frontages and creating more activity and footfall.
- 5.12.4. The development takes inspiration from Bond House (a recent application for flatted development along Oxford Road), for instance, the proposed building is a maximum of three storeys with recessed balconies to create depth to the elevation and amenity for residents. The scheme opts for a contemporary building, with a roof parapet and with brick as the facing material, which will sit comfortably alongside the mix of building ages, styles and character of this part of Oxford Road.
- 5.12.5. Set back of the building is consistent with the prevailing building line, creating space for soft landscape that is visible from the public realm. The new pedestrian link to the side of the building also enhances the public realm and provides a safe and attractive connection with high quality landscape elements. Appropriate paving and a boundary treatment of railings / walls along the frontage of Oxford Road reinforces the quality of public realm.
- 5.12.6. The development creates a positive sense of place and aligns with the objectives set out in Historic England's heritage-led initiative. Overall, the Heritage Statement summarises that the development has a positive impact on the townscape and character of the area and is considered to cause no harm to the conservation area and the neighbouring listed buildings within it. The development therefore complies with Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) and Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas).

5.13. Policy EN9 Provision of open space

- 5.13.1 The development delivers 49 affordable dwellings (Class C3 use) and therefore falls below the 50-dwelling threshold in Policy EN9 for providing on-site public open space. Given the specialist housing and support services, the provision of 100% affordable housing and major regeneration benefits of the scheme, it is not proposed to make an off-site contribution towards open space. On-site public realm including tree planting and place-making is enhanced by the development and day centre users will have access to a high-quality courtyard. It is considered that the amenity space and private space provided is usable and a generous provision for such a central location. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding can also be used for off-site enhancements to existing open spaces.

5.14. Policy EN10 Access to open space

- 5.14.1. The development increases pedestrian permeability of the urban grain and in turn benefits access to the wider green infrastructure network by restoring the derelict site that has resulted in community severance. The landscape principles report demonstrates the improved access to green spaces for new and existing residents, such as Victoria Park, consistent with the aims of Policy EN10.

5.15. Policy EN12 Biodiversity and the green network

- 5.15.1. The ecological appraisal supporting this planning application provides a thorough assessment of the impact of the development upon the site's ecology and surrounding area. It concludes that small areas of scattered scrub and ephemeral / short perennial plants around an open area of hard standing and a small number of urban street trees are likely to be directly impacted but are of low ecological value.
- 5.15.2. The assessment also identifies that the site has a low potential to support populations of common nesting birds. Mitigation methods to be implemented include incorporating in-wall bat box units, in-wall general bird nest units, external swift boxes and bee bricks.
- 5.15.3. The development also offers to significantly enhance biodiversity, through several landscape and ecological enhancements, contributing towards climate change adaptations and also biodiversity net gain. These include:
- Extensive new tree planting within shared space, including the main courtyard area and street frontages;
 - Amenity grassland areas;
 - Formal planting areas in shared spaces incorporating a range of plant species beneficial to pollinating invertebrates;
 - Extensive use of sedum green roofing.
- 5.15.4 The development demonstrates that it has no adverse impacts on biodiversity and will deliver biodiversity gains in accordance with Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the green network).

5.16. Policy EN14 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

- 5.16.1. The site is located within Abbey Ward which is identified within the adopted Reading Borough Tree Strategy (2020) as one of the wards within the lowest tree cover in the Borough with a target to increase canopy cover of the ward up to 12% by 2030 to mitigate the effects of air quality, being within the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), and to respond positively in terms of measures to adapt to climate change (Policy CC3). The development has factored this into the design of the scheme by setting back built form to ensure that the site's character and existing links within the surrounding green infrastructure network are maintained. In particular a significant planting scheme is proposed along Bedford Road to create a meaningful, attractive frontage, which delivers a continuous line of tree planting. This contributes towards improving Abbey Ward's vegetation cover, as set out in the landscape principles. The development therefore complies with Policy EN14 Trees Hedges and Woodland as well as the Tree Strategy.

5.17. Policy EN15 Air quality

- 5.17.1. The submitted air quality impact assessment assesses both construction and operational impacts of the development.

- 5.17.2. During the construction phase, the development results in limited releases of dust and particulate matter from on-site activities. Impacts are considered to be negligible, following the implementation of good site practice and mitigation measures.
- 5.17.3. The air quality assessment indicates that predicted concentrations of relevant pollutants (NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) concentrations are below the relevant objectives within the development. Future occupants would not be exposed to pollutant concentrations above the relevant objective levels. The impact of the development with regards to new exposure to air quality is considered negligible and that air quality does not pose a constraint to development, either during construction or once the development is operational, consistent with the objectives of Policy EN15.

5.18. Policy EN16 Pollution and water resources

- 5.18.1. The development is not considered to be damaging to the environment in terms of noise or light pollution.
- 5.18.2. Regarding noise pollution, the development's floorplans reduce the need for additional noise mitigation measures, for example, internal layout and specification is designed to minimise disturbance between adjacent units, whilst externally mitigation methods implemented include triple glazing and mechanical ventilation on Bedford Road and Oxford Road facades. Any future occupiers are therefore not adversely impacted by noise or pollution and the development.
- 5.18.3. In terms of light pollution, the submitted light report, shows that the layout meets the requirements of BSEN 12464 -Part 2 -Exterior lighting.
- 5.18.4. The development will avoid deterioration in ground and surface water quality. Adequate water resources, sewerage and wastewater treatment infrastructure will be in place to support the development prior to occupation and is demonstrated in the submitted utilities statement, meeting the criteria of Policy EN16.

5.19. Policy EN18 Flooding and sustainable drainage systems

- 5.19.1. A drainage strategy statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application. In summary, the site is not within a Flood Zone 2 or 3 or over 1ha in size therefore a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment is not required. The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and therefore at minimal risk of flooding. There is a high to medium risk of pluvial flooding.
- 5.19.2. The submitted drainage strategy identifies that deep bore soakaways into the underlying chalk offer potential for discharging storm waters from the development. Furthermore, the drainage strategy provides a sustainable solution to potential pluvial flooding by discharging runoff to a surface water system designed to cater for the 1% AEP (1:100 year) storm with 40% additional storage to allow for climate change.
- 5.19.3. It stores water underground and releases it in a controlled rate into the sewer system. It is designed to Building Regulations and SUDS manual standards. It is capable of draining the site, without flooding, during a 1 in 30-year storm whilst

retaining the 1 in 100-year storm flow plus 40% allowance for climate change within the site boundary without putting existing buildings, the proposed development and any third-party land at risk from flooding. See 'below ground drainage layout' with drawing number E05077-ECH-XX-XX-DR-C-7500 for further details.

- 5.19.4. The drainage strategy is combined with a well-considered landscape strategy, whereby green roofs, planting and permeable paving are also proposed to reduce surface water run-off.
- 5.19.5. Foul water drainage is discharged to the existing foul water sewer network using an existing on-site connection. Thames Water have confirmed that there is capacity within the sewer network.
- 5.19.6. The development minimises surface water runoff in line with the Environment Agency SuDS Hierarchy for SuDS systems and accords with Policy EN18 Flooding and Drainage.

5.20. Policy H1 Provision of housing

- 5.20.1. The scheme is a key regeneration site in central Reading, which is 100% affordable housing and meets specialist and general housing needs as defined in the Housing Strategy for Reading 2020-2025.
- 5.20.2. The SHMA (2016) identifies a need for 16,077 new homes, equating to 699 a year between 2013 and 2036, of which 406 a year required to be affordable to meet the needs of the Borough. The development contributes to this housing need and significantly contributes to the affordable need, since the development will deliver 100% affordable housing. The provision of much needed affordable housing and supported living accommodation is a significant public benefit to the project, is consistent with achieving the objectives of Policy H1, and should carry significant weight in decision making.

5.21. Policy H2 Density and mix

- 5.21.1. The development delivers a density of 113 units per hectare, taking into account the supported living and affordable dwellings. This is equivalent to the urban density range of 60-120 dwellings per hectare as specified in Figure 4.5 of the local plan. The scheme has also taken into account the criteria of Policy H2 in terms of determining site capacity alongside the character of the local area and context, a high-quality design and minimising environmental impacts. As demonstrated in the Design & Access Statement, the layout has been well organised in order to deliver this density whilst still delivering a range of high-quality amenity spaces and non-residential use such as the day centre.
- 5.21.2. The housing mix has been developed in pre-application discussions with Reading Borough Council. The borough supported the need for affordable family homes, apartments and general needs flats and confirmed that the proposed unit mix is appropriate and consistent with Policy H2 Density and Mix.

5.22. Policy H3 Affordable housing

- 5.22.1. As outlined in the Affordable Housing SPD, over the period of the Local Plan (2013-2020), 648 new affordable homes have been delivered, which equates to an annual average of 93 homes. The Borough notes it is essential that all sources of affordable housing are maximized, given that current supply is falling much shorter of the assessed need of 406 per year. The Borough therefore have identified a significant need for affordable housing provision and views this as a high priority.
- 5.22.2. Furthermore, the Local Plan recognises the severe consequences of an under provision of affordable homes, particularly homelessness, households in temporary or unsuitable accommodation and overcrowding.
- 5.22.3. The development provides 49 affordable Class C3 dwellings, plus 13 x affordable Class C2 supported living units. This is a significant contribution to the affordable housing supply into the Borough. 100% affordable housing far exceeds Policy H3, which requires 30% of the total dwellings to be in the form of affordable housing. The development therefore accords with Policy H3 Affordable housing.

5.23. Policy H5 Standards for new housing

- 5.23.1. *'All new build housing outside the Central Area as defined on the Proposals Map will comply with the nationally-described space standard.'*
- 5.23.2. The design and access statement supporting the application sets out how the development meets the minimum requirements of the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). The dwellings have been designed to provide well-proportioned living spaces with natural daylight and generous private amenity space, meeting both National Described Space Standards and policy requirements.
- 5.23.3. *'All new build housing will be built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations - 110 litres per person per day.'*
- 5.23.4. The submitted sustainability statement, notes that low flush fittings and fixtures will be selected to meet the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day.
- 5.23.5. *'All major new-build residential development should be designed to achieve zero carbon homes.'*
- 5.23.6. The development has opted to design the whole development in line with the Council's zero carbon homes standards using Passivhaus principles (for both the day centre and residential uses) with at least a 35% improvement in the dwelling emission rate compared to 2013 Building Regulations. Combined with use of photovoltaic panels and renewable energy suppliers, SAP calculations indicate that the development will be at or close to zero carbon in operation.
- 5.23.7. Passivhaus principles will reduce energy demand via high levels of insulation, air-tight construction, triple glazed windows and air source heat pumps for heating,

cooling ventilation and hot water. The Sustainability and Energy Statements set out the strategy in more detail.

5.23.8. *'On developments of 20 or more new build dwellings, at least 5% of dwellings will be wheelchair user dwellings in line with M4(3) of the Building Regulations. Any market homes provided to meet this requirement will be 'wheelchair adaptable' as defined in part M, whilst homes where the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating an individual may be 'wheelchair accessible'.'*

5.23.9. The development is built in line with M4(3). All wheelchair accessible dwellings are accessed at ground floor and have been designed to be part M4, category 3 of the Building Regulations and exceed NDSS. The accessibility statement included as part of the application sets out further details along with the Design & Access Statement.

5.23.10. The development therefore complies with Policy H5.

5.24. Policy H6 Accommodation for vulnerable people

5.24.1. The Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA 2016) notes that the amount of people in Reading aged over 65 is expected to increase by more than 60% to 2036. The SHMA identifies that accommodation which supports more independent living is required. It may include extra-care housing, supported living and sheltered housing and may fall into either the C2 or C3 use classes depending on care provision.

5.24.2. The development delivers a total of 29 x sheltered housing apartments for over 55's, 13 x supported living units with support spaces, 18 x general needs affordable housing and apartments and 2 x three bed houses. It is considered that this contributes towards the Borough's identified need for these specialist types of accommodation under Policy H6 Accommodation for vulnerable people.

5.24.3. In line with Policy H6, the development is located close to relevant community facilities, and also provides a new day centre, which meets the evolving needs of the community. The development also provides adequate ambulance access.

5.24.4. It incorporates a variety of green spaces; a grassed central courtyard, terraces and private balconies, which are particularly important for vulnerable people and respects the character and their surroundings.

5.24.5. The development ensures ease of access and future adaptability to meet the changing needs and mobility requirements of residents. A secure mobility scooter store for scooters is provided for sheltered residents and the day centre. Furthermore, the development is located within 400m of a local centre. A bus stop is located approximately 100 metres from the site, along Oxford Road, accommodating high frequency services. This fulfils the criteria set out in Policy H6.

5.25. Policy H10 Private and communal outdoor space

- 5.25.1. The development provides private and communal open space, which has been developed and refined to ensure it maximises functionality, whilst minimising impact on existing residents living in the surrounding area.
- 5.25.2. The development's open space strategy achieves a variety of open space typologies, as set out in the submitted landscape principles statement - see the amenity space schedule - and on drawing E05077-HCC-XX-DR-L-7501-P01.
- 5.25.3. For instance, the proposed terraced houses, such as, those fronting onto Battle Street, have similar sized gardens as the adjacent existing terraces. Whilst the amenity space for the apartments comprises a mix of communal gardens, courtyard, balconies, and roof top amenity, similar to surrounding apartment buildings notably Allison Court and flats along Bedford Road.
- 5.25.4. The distance between the proposed and the existing buildings as well as the locations of windows has been carefully considered to prevent overlooking into any existing property and its amenity space. Careful consideration to massing also means that there is no increased overshadowing to existing homes and flats and their amenity space.
- 5.25.5. The Design & Access Statement provides a thorough site analysis and sets out a detailed strategy to address overlooking. It is further supported by the submitted landscape principles report, which includes an amenity space schedule as well as the submitted daylight and sunlight assessment.
- 5.25.6. The development therefore complies with Policy H10.

5.26. Policy TR1 Achieving the transport strategy

- 5.26.1. A transport statement has been prepared to accompany the application and it fulfils the Borough's relevant objectives for transport in the Local Transport Plan (2011-2026), as demonstrated below.
- 5.26.2. The development does not impact on local highway safety. It provides reduced levels of car parking, makes adequate provision for servicing and provides cycle parking provision in accordance with guidelines, which are sustainable from a transport and highways perspective.
- 5.26.3. The site is well connected in terms of its proximity to local facilities and amenities and promotes walking and cycling, which facilitates more physically active travel choices and promotes healthier living. It also aids in reducing carbon emissions from transport, improving air quality and creating a transport network which supports a mobile, affordable low-carbon future.
- 5.26.4. The development provides a safe and convenient access to the nearest bus stop located approximately 100 metres along Oxford Road, which enables further sustainable travel choices and preserves the natural environment.

- 5.26.5. The proposed vehicle access arrangements are appropriate to meet the needs of the development and ensures that the transport network operates safely and efficiently to meet the needs of all users.
- 5.26.6. The development will not generate significant new trips and as such would not impact on the operation of the local highway network.

5.27. Policy TR3 Access, traffic and highway-related matters

- 5.27.1. *'Accesses and works to the highway comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority.'*
- 5.27.2. The provision of a one-way principal access point into the site from Battle Street and exiting from James Street is proposed and named 'The Mews'. This road provides access to the day centre and supported living accommodation and is designed to adoptable standard with carriageway widths and 1.2 metre footway provision. Materials are proposed to emphasise its function as part of the public realm and designed for low traffic speeds.
- 5.27.3. Providing a one-way access route for this site increases efficiency of vehicular movement and maximises ambulance/ emergency vehicle movement by requiring no reversing. This approach is supported by Manual for Streets (Department for Transport, 2007), since reversing causes a disproportionately large number of accidents (paragraph 6.8.8), particularly for service and refuse vehicles.
- 5.27.4. *'The development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network.'*
- 5.27.5. The development access will not interfere with the functioning of the transport network. Reduced levels of parking provision are proposed which are appropriate to the needs of new residents and users of the day centre and the site's highly accessible location. Drop off and emergency access for the day centre is provided to avoid vehicular routes being blocked.
- 5.27.6. *'The proposals would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists.'*
- 5.27.7. The development has been designed to meet access standards, with a safety first approach. A zebra crossing is present on Bedford Road approximately 25m south of its junction with Battle Street - this facilitates movement across Bedford Road and towards the controlled pedestrian crossings on Oxford Road A329. The development delivers a new footway, which links directly to Oxford Road, close to the existing bus stops. This new pedestrian link allows direct access to the local facilities and is 3m wide, overlooked by new properties and street lit. The new vehicular access facilitates a one-way movement through the site, reducing the potential for reversing on the highway.
- 5.27.8. *'The proposal would not generate regular movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on unsuitable roads, or on roads without easy access to the Classified Highway Network.'*

5.27.9. No regular movement of HGVs is proposed, although the site benefits from good access from Oxford Road and Bedford Road for deliveries and other large vehicles. Oxford Road and Bedford Road form part of the Classified Highway Network.

5.27.10. *'For non-residential uses, or new dwellings on classified roads, off-street servicing would be provided.'*

5.27.11. Vehicle tracking demonstrates that the internal street can also support access for fire, refuse, sub-station and car parking for residents, (see drawings E05077-XX-XX-VS-C-7101-P02_REFUSE TRACKING and E)5077-XX-XX-VS-C-7102_P02_FIRE TRACKING). The refuse strategy is set out in the design and access statement and ensures efficient collection in line with the Council's Standards and Design SPD.

5.28. Policy TR4 Cycle routes and facilities

5.28.1. The site benefits from close proximity to cycle routes to Reading town centre, as illustrated in the Design & Access Statement. The development provides linkages to these existing cycle routes identified in the Cycling Strategy 2014 to support active lifestyles. Cycle stores are also integrated within the back gardens of each of the mews flats and accessed via a secure private access route. Within the main block, there is a central cycle store. The Design & Access Statement illustrates the cycle store locations. The development complies with national and local policy objectives, in that they provide appropriate cycle parking provision, which fulfils the requirement to integrate new facilities for cycling set out in Policy TR4.

5.29. Policy TR5 Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging

5.29.1. The Transport Statement demonstrates that the site is in the central area, within Zone 2 (Primary Core Area) of Reading borough. This zone is well served by public transport, within acceptable walking distance of either the main railway station and Reading West railway station and has wide, safe footways, with some dedicated or shared cycle ways.

5.29.2. From the recommended parking guidelines (RBC's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011), the total parking requirement for the accommodation would be 68 spaces, plus 5 visitor spaces; 73 spaces overall. However, the development provides a lower level of car parking in the context of the following points:

- A climate emergency has been declared by the Borough;
- RBC's low carbon policy within the Local Plan (and its location within an Air Quality Management Area);
- RBC's Supplementary Planning Policy for Sustainability;
- The site's location close to the centre of Reading, with accessible and rapid public transport links adjacent to the site, help to discourage private car travel;
- The site is within accessible walking distances of local shops, schools, and other amenities (e.g. doctor's surgery, dentist);

- RBC have stated that no visitor permits to be issued, though discretionary ones can be issued, and instead most visitors are encouraged to use the nearby public Chatham Place multi storey pay and display car park, 250m east of the site.

5.29.3. Car parking provision on-site of nine spaces is as follows:

- 2 x dwellings = 2 allocated spaces (1 space each)
- Wheelchair Accessible flat = 1 allocated accessible space
- Older Person Day Centre = 3 allocated spaces
- Supported Living Mental Health Flats = 3 allocated spaces.

5.29.4. For on-street provision, the allocation is as follows:

Battle Street:

- 1 x drop off zone for day centre minibuses
- 2 x car club spaces, replacing 2 x parking spaces with a two-hour limit
- 4 x existing permit parking spaces to be relocated to Battle Street (x 3) and James Street (x 1) in order to accommodate the new vehicular access and drop off zone.

5.29.5. For staff, the development generates a total of 13 full time equivalent (FTE) staff, with five staff associated with the supported living accommodation and eight staff at the older persons day care facility. Cycle parking, public transport and a limited amount of on-site spaces are provided in accordance with a sustainable transport strategy for the site.

5.29.6. Exceeding the local plan requirement, the development provides all parking spaces with electric vehicle charging points.

5.29.7. It is considered the parking strategy complies with Policy TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging and the Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

5.30. Policy RL6 Protection of leisure facilities and public houses

5.30.1. The development regenerates land at Battle Steet. The site is brownfield land, following the demolition of the former Central Swimming Pool buildings. Only the existing car park hard standing remains, along with four or five small trees. Reading Central Swimming Pool was constructed on the site in 1966, closing in 2018 as it was deemed that the pool had reached the end of its design life. A demountable, temporary replacement pool was constructed at Rivermead and opened in January 2018. Central Pool was subsequently demolished. Part of the site has been used for public car parking and was briefly occupied by a Covid-19 temporary walk-in vaccination centre until 2022.

5.30.2. RBC is currently investing £40 million in modern new leisure facilities - including a new flagship leisure centre and two brand new swimming pools, at Palmer Park (due to open late 2022) and Rivermead (due to open Spring 2023). The pool has therefore been re-provided at Rivermead, with further provision being provided elsewhere by RBC.

5.30.3. These alternative facilities fulfil a similar role, with sufficient capacity to adequately serve the existing catchment, and are accessible by public transport, foot and cycle to the majority of the catchment.

5.30.4. It is therefore considered that the development fulfils Policy RL6, given that the function of the facility is being reprovided in an accessible location.

5.31. Policy OU1 New and existing community facilities

5.31.1. Policy OU1 is supportive of new community facilities and the development will provide a new day centre in an accessible location, compatible with the adjacent affordable homes and supported living accommodation that will benefit from co-location and coordinated management.

Central Reading

5.32. Policy CR2 Design in central Reading

5.32.1. The site sits within the edge of Central Reading, as defined in Figure 5.1 in the Local Plan. The development delivers the following, which aligns with Policy CR2:

- The development builds on and respects the existing grid layout structure of the surrounding central area. It utilises perimeter block forms which maximise active frontages, provides continuity and enclosure through appropriate relationships between buildings and spaces, and contributes towards enhanced ease of movement by creating a new pedestrian link;
- The development provides appropriate, well designed public realm space, by using high quality hard landscape elements, easy to maintain soft landscape and good street lighting to create a welcoming streetscape, with a vibrant sense of place that provides safe and convenient linkages to adjoining areas;
- The development includes provision of green infrastructure designed into the development, via amenity space and green roofs, to enhance the otherwise very urban environment;
- The architectural details and high-quality materials used in development respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in the surrounding central area and conservation area, whilst offering a contemporary character;
- The development and its associated public realm is capable of easy adaptation over time to meet changing circumstances, and is designed to enhance community safety, for instance, it maximises active frontages and provides well-lit pedestrian links.

5.33. Policy CR3 Public realm in central Reading

5.33.1. The development makes a positive contribution towards the quality of the public realm of the central area and significantly contributes to the criteria set out in policy CR3.

- 5.33.2. The site is 0.55 hectares and therefore is not required to provide new public open space or civic squares integrated with surrounding development. As a smaller development it contributes significantly towards improvements to the public realm, for example by providing a high-quality pedestrian link from Oxford Road to Battle Street.
- 5.33.3. The development provides street trees and low-level planting, as well as hard landscaping, to create high-quality spaces.
- 5.33.4. The development regenerates the current derelict site, creating a welcome, high-quality addition to the surrounding public realm. It conserves and enhances the historic environment of the centre and the significance of heritage assets along Oxford Road, by carefully designing a layout that rebuilds the fine urban grain and through use of high-quality materials, hard and soft landscaping.

5.34. Policy CR6 Living in central Reading

- 5.34.1. The development provides residential development in line with the criteria set out in policy CR6:
- It contributes towards a mix of different sized units by providing, a mixture of one-, two- and three-bedroom units which are appropriate to the specialist uses and affordable need;
 - The development demonstrates how the issue of potential noise disturbance from neighbouring land uses and the development have been considered, with mitigation methods integrated where necessary to provide an acceptable level of amenity. Land uses are proposed that are complementary to and compatible with a residential setting;
 - The development provides much-needed affordable housing in the central area, meeting a significant borough-wide need.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1.1. This planning statement demonstrates how the development is in accordance with the Council's statutory development plan, as well as deriving further support from the Framework, which carries significant weight as a material consideration. There are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should not be granted.
- 6.1.2. The development will deliver a range of economic, social and environmental benefits, which include:
- the major provision of affordable housing and specialist social care accommodation, carrying very significant weight, which will make an important contribution towards an unmet need in the area;
 - the effective use of previously developed land in a highly accessible location, to which substantial weight must be given;
 - a high level of sustainability and carbon reduction; and
 - a range of job creation and other economic measures, which carry significant weight.
- 6.1.3. The development is sustainable development; it must benefit from the presumption in paragraph 11 of the Framework, such that planning permission should be granted by the Council without delay.