

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
TO ACCOMPANY AN OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR THE
ERECTION OF 2 X 2 BED TERRACED HOUSES
ON LAND ADJACENT TO
5 STONEHAM CLOSE
READING
BERKSHIRE
RG30 4HB

FOR SARWAR DEVELOPMENTS LTD
(DOC NO3336.DA.3)



FDF ARCHITECTURE
JANUARY 2023

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APPENDIX

1. ASSESSMENT OF THE PHYSICAL SITE AND ITS CONTEXT.

- .01 The development site is to the West of the main urban town centre of Reading and to the West of Prospect Park within a well established mixed density residential area. The site comprises the South part of the garden and existing garage of 5 Stoneham Close. The site area is outlined in red on the accompanying submission and is . 0245 ha in total.
- .02 The site is prominently located on the corner of Stoneham Close which was developed in the early 1960s. The close is a quiet through route and features a mixture of single storey and two storey brick properties some with rooms in the roof and further side or rear extensions.



Fig i. Aerial view of site.

- .03 The site has an SSE sub station to the South in a fenced enclosure and this is a local transformer station for the close.
- .04 The site comprising the garage and south garden with a crossover access from the North facing approach road to the close.

- .05 The site rises from a low point to the south and slopes up to the main close circulation road. It is stepped midway up the garden and is subdivided from the existing house by a low retaining wall around the single storey concrete garage.



Fig ii. View from within the site of the single storey existing garage and outbuilding

- .05 The site has a number of small bushes and shrubs to the rear which would be replaced in accordance with the arboriculture impact statement that has been written and accompanies the submission.
- .07 The surrounding houses were developed at the same time and are of typical post war design using scarce materials as efficiently as possible.

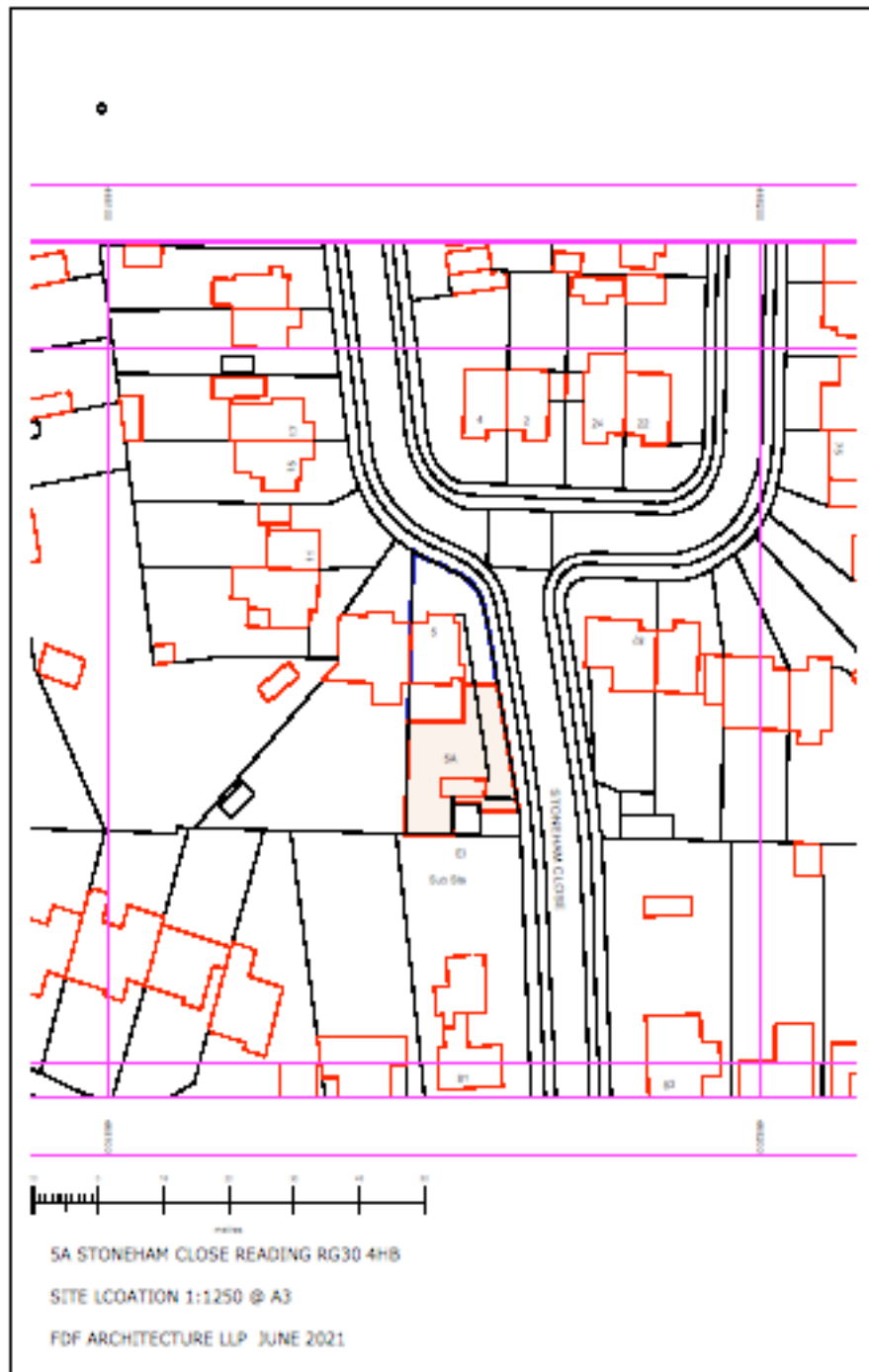


Fig iii. Site location



Fig iv View from the North of the site of no 5 Stoneham Close

- .08 The rear garden is small but the surrounding houses are arranged with their gardens facing the property so good distance is kept to reduce overlooking. Many of the boundaries of the nearby gardens have mature trees included and this creates a green rear amenity space for all owners with privacy.



Fig v. East boundary view of the site showing the existing garage and recessed sub station site.

- .09 It is not known when the garage was added to the property. Many of the house types in the close rely on driveways for off street parking as few were originally provided with covered vehicle storage.
- .10 The close has not had large extensions built over the years primarily because the houses are close side to side. There have been a number of rear garden rooms and roof extensions within the broad footprint of individual houses in the area.
- .11 The materials used vary from local red brick to render, pebble dash and half timbering.
- .12 The local area contains many amenities which serve the well established local community.
- .13 The site is shown in its context by the photographs above

Shopping:

- .14 To the East of the Close there is a neighbourhood shopping precinct containing a supermarket a newsagent and general stores which provides essential goods within easy walking distance
- .15 Within a short distance of the site West towards the M4 along the Bath Road is a large retail park containing food and household goods.

Take away food is widely available up and down the Bath Road and the side streets.

Medical facilities:

- .16 Medical facilities are close by in the form of 4 dental and at least 8 GP surgeries within 2 km together with a Pharmacy within the local centre . The public transport network also gives access to the main town centre hospital facilities at the sites of the Royal Berkshire Hospital Trust.

Recreation and leisure facilities:

- .17 There are a number of open spaces in the immediate area - Prospect Park is the largest and provides a children's play area along with its well known sports pitches changing facilities and pub / restaurant. To the West is Calcot Park golf club.
- .18 Meadway Sports and Leisure Centre is close to the application site and contains a swimming pool, badminton courts and an artificial surface for football and hockey.

Schools

- .19 The area is well served by schools and colleges all within walking distance.

Public Transport:

- .20 There is a very good supply of public transport links both into and out of Reading near the site which all provide links to national and international transport facilities. The Reading Bus company have stops local to the site for routes 2, 15 and 33 and one - the 33 - runs past Prospect Park and into and out of the town centre. The national rail station in the town centre provides fast links to Heathrow and most of the national rail network as well as the soon to open Cross Rail link to London.

2. THE BRIEF AND DEFINING LOCAL FACTORS FOR DEVELOPING A SCHEME DESIGN

DEVELOP RENTAL HOUSING FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

- .01 The applicants were refused two previous applications for consent for 3 flats on the site and have now asked the Architects to re explore the potential for increasing the accommodation on the site of 5 Stoneham Close by replacing the garage with a modest development of 2 single storey and mansard roof houses to let.

The house at no 5 itself has been refurbished.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS - DEMAND AND LOCATION

- .02 The rear, Southerly, part of the site will provide sufficient additional space to serve the much needed lettings market in the area.
- .03 Reading is now a destination for local employers and industries particularly in the services and technology sector and there is good demand for economic high quality dwellings. The delivery of large scale apartment blocks has been stalled recently with the fallout from high profile safety concerns over high rise and there is fresh impetus to integrate the provision of economical dwellings into the suburban environment and existing local communities on a smaller scale.
- .04 There are also a wide range of key worker employers in the town and the market for private rental at reasonable cost means the West side of Reading is popular as a location.

- .05 Some additional parking may be required to replace the existing garage but the availability of public transport and the ease of local unrestricted on street parking suggests that parking allocation may not be needed. There are however 2 spaces shown on the front of the houses with a third disabled space to the South. This equates to provision of 1.5 spaces per dwelling in accordance with policy. The loss of the single space for No 5 is replaced with 2 spaces on the North side of No 5 with access via the neighbours drive being agreed.

GENERAL DESIGN AND LAYOUT:

- .05 The site is not in a conservation area nor are the existing houses in the Close listed nationally or locally. The scheme has been designed to reflect local sub urban design and to retain more traditional detailing of roofs and brick facing.

The revised height of the terrace building exploits the natural slope to the land and is fully in keeping with other local housing types both in The Close and surrounding streets. The configuration of the rear windows prevents overlooking of the gardens of No and there are no windows in the South or North side upper mansard floor.

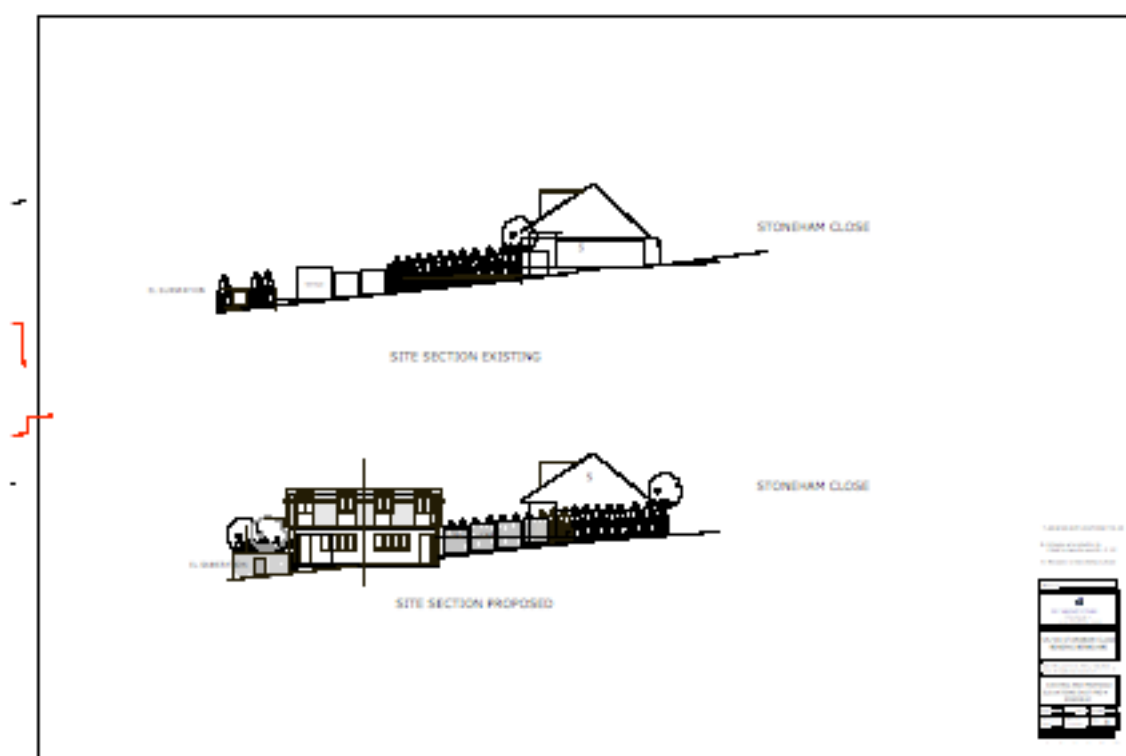


Fig vi. Existing and proposed elevations on the road up to Stoneham Close

- .06 The layout of the houses provides compact two bedroom accommodation to the national space standards and kitchen and bathroom facilities inline with market expectations.
- .07 Construction in brick and tile is robust and materials attractive, traditional and low maintenance.
- .08 The houses have principal windows to the East facing bedrooms overlooking the roadway.
- .09 There is a small garden area to the West which will be allocated between the two dwellings.

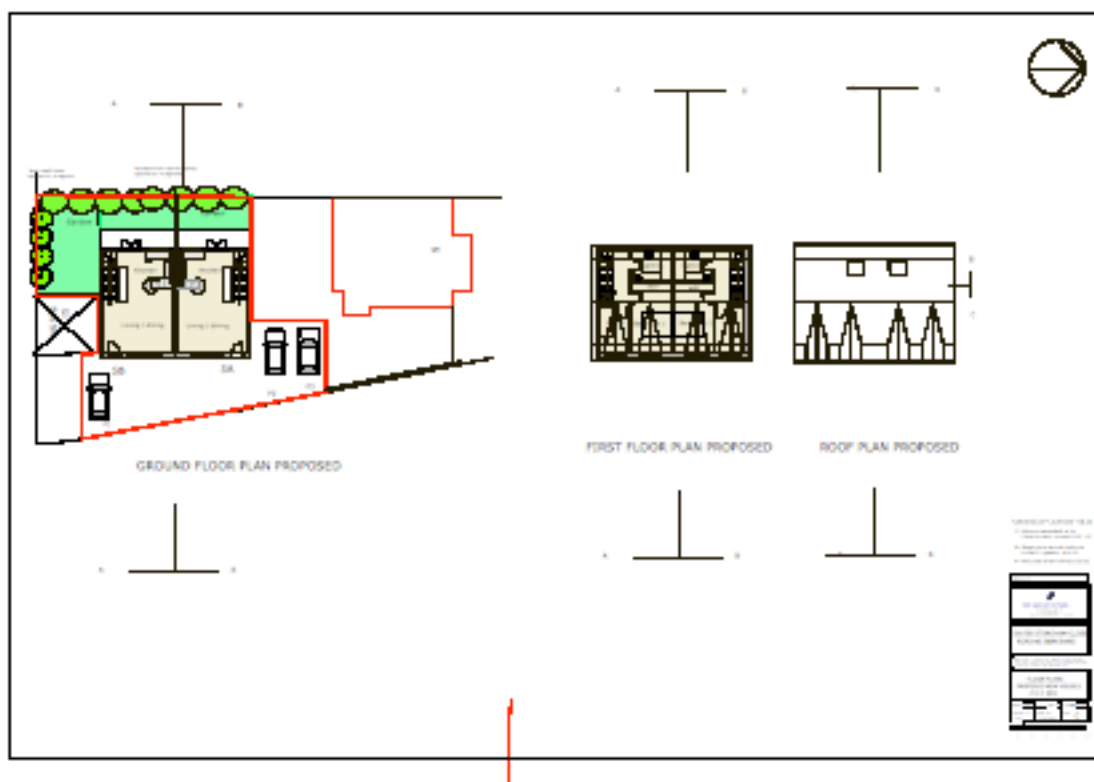


Fig vii. General layout plans for the pair of houses each of 74m²

- 10 Access to the substation site is maintained and the enclosure screened by evergreen shrubs.

RELATION OF THE NEW HOUSES TO NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

- .11 The orientation of the principal rooms of new houses is to the East to maximise the daylight without generating solar heat gain and creating avoiding overlooking any habitable rooms in neighbouring properties or gardens. The mansard form is designed to control the height and bulk of the new building in relation to the other suburban buildings in the Close

PROVISION OF AMENITY SPACE

- .12 The outdoor amenity space is a policy requirement for all dwellings and the design incorporates two garden or terrace spaces for the use of the residents in each house.

PROVISION OF REFUSE AREAS.

- .13 The brief calls for a small refuse area to contain the required bin storage and recycling. This is shown within the car parking spaces with easy access to set the bins out on the highway edge for LA collection services. The capacity for two sets of two bin units is in accordance with the Borough standard.

MEANS OF ACCESS

- .14 The two houses are accessed at ground floor from the front driveways and there is an internal staircases serving the upper floors of each house.

CAR PARKING PROVISION

- .15 The proposals provide for a single disabled parking space on the front driveway of the property and 2 further general spaces are created on the land adjacent to the pavement edge. This is 1.5 spaces per dwelling in accordance with the Borough policy. There are no restricted parking bays in Stoneham Close at pavement edge.

TREE SURVEY.

- .16 The applicant has had an arboriculture impact assessment carried out and that is attached to the submission. The surveyors recommend the planting of 4 small trees and the replacement of an existing hedge with native species to be agreed.

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

- .17 The applicant has had an ecology and endangered species survey carried out by Pro Vision and this is attached to the submission.

SUNLIGHT AND DAYLIGHT ORIENTATION

- .18 The orientation of the development gives opportunity to install solar heating panels either PVP or passive solar tube type.
- .19 Arranging the dwellings East West allows all the flats to benefit from direct sunlight at the start and end of the day.

LANDSCAPING AND PLANTING

- .20 The ecology statement proposes further planting in support of biodiversity. The existing site is dilapidated and has been used for storage. The enhancement proposed will be the formation of a sheltered urban garden with planting of 4 small trees to the Southern boundary and the replacement of the Western hedge with native species. The rear area to the two houses will be grassed. The applicant would accept a condition relating to the detailed design of this urban garden area.
- .21 There is noted in the report an invasive species of bush within the existing garden and this is to be removed as part of the general proposals.

3.0 **PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND**

- .01 This part of the outline submission describes the context of the development in terms of the NPPF and the local plan

Establishing the need for housing.

- .03 Examining the Local Plan, para 3.2 gives:

"...The Structure Plan indicates that Reading will have one of the highest levels of growth in the County in terms of employment generating development over the Plan period. This continued growth will further increase the pressure on the local housing stock as new employees come into the local area."

The Applicant is certain that the demand for dwellings in the West Reading area will be sustained over the time taken for the scheme to be built out and that the site location is attractive to those looking for market rental dwellings of the type proposed.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The National Planning Policy Framework March 2012.

- .06 The general guidance from the Government to Local Authorities in fulfilling the growing need for housing to suit local people is contained in the recent NPPF in the following general headings:

"Presumption in favour of sustainable development"

"Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes"

We set out below in a commentary how the application seeks to fulfil the aims of the NPPF and is in accordance with the Council's retained and developing LDF.

- .07 Within the overarching context set by the Plan for Growth, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was issued in March 2012. At its heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development for both plan-making and decision-taking (NPPF para 14).
- .08 For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, the NPPF requires the granting of permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF policies as a whole.

- .09 The NPPF also expects local planning authorities to work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
- .10 Local planning authorities are required to significantly boost the supply of housing by using their evidence base to ensure that the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market are met (NPPF, para 47).

Market housing

- .11 One of the Government's key objectives is to provide a variety of high quality market housing. This includes addressing any shortfalls in the supply of market housing and encouraging the managed replacement of housing, where appropriate.
- .12 Local Planning Authorities should plan for the full range of market housing. In particular, they should take account of the need to deliver low-cost market housing as part of the housing mix.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

- .13 The Reading Borough Local Plan was modified and was adopted in November 2019.

It seeks to update the concerns of the central Government guidelines and seeks to support the provision of new housing in 'sustainable locations'. In this section we address the specifics of the LDF that are closest to the NPPF of March 2012 and might be relevant to the application site, **Provision of housing, Density and mix, Standards, use of private residential gardens, conversion of garages and general design** principles.

Housing Land supply.

- .14 The application site is not shown any of the land availability document and would be considered 'windfall'. Windfall or opportunity sites make up a significant proportion of the RBC expectations for fulfilling the land supply targets and this site being small does not appear in the current housing land supply document. It should therefore be welcomed as a contribution to the required housing land in the urban part of the Borough.
- .15 The site being urban and previously developed is in any case outside of the calculations of land supply shortfall locally.

- .16 The relevant housing policies of the Plan are summarised in Chapter 4.4 of the Local Plan as:

H1 Provision of Housing

The council have identified the target provision of homes in the Borough over the lifetime of the plan to 2036. This equates to an average of 689 homes annually.

The local plan acknowledges that Reading being a tightly defined urban area has limited new sites. It also suggests that some of the shortfall can be fulfilled by building outside of the immediate Borough boundaries.

The proposal though small makes a contribution to the need by utilising an urban space in an existing established residential area to provide much needed private rental accommodation.

H2 Density and Mix

The appropriate density of residential development will be informed by:

- . The character and mix of uses of the area in which it is located, including the housing mix, and including consideration of any nearby heritage assets or important landscape or townscape areas;

The proposal provides smaller accommodation suitable for market rental starter and family dwellings which will prevent houses in the area being subdivided to fulfil the demand for 2 bedroom compact dwellings.

- . Its current and future level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;

The site is close to established amenities, green space and shopping and is well served by public transport for easy connection to the city centre.

- . The need to achieve high quality design;

The proposal is designed to provide a high quality design layout and integration into the existing urban environment. It is of a scale that fits in with post war suburban typologies nearby.

- . The need to maximise the efficiency of land use;

The proposal creates two x two bedroom houses on a street fronted piece of land which is currently only used for a poor quality garage. It leaves in place a garden for use of existing residents of the house 5 Stoneham Close.

. The need to minimise environmental impacts, including detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers.

The proposal carefully avoids direct overlooking of neighbours and maintains excellent daylight provision.

H4 Build to rent schemes

The local plan encourages the expansion of the private rented sector in Reading and the scheme introduces smaller units into a mixed tenanted area at the lower end of the affordability scale. It is not large enough as a scheme to be able to sustain a proportion of affordable housing but meets the clear demand for accommodation outside of the full ownership category.

H5 Standards

The council requires that new build housing should be built to the following standards, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable:

a. All new build housing outside the Central Area as defined on the Proposals Map will comply with the nationally -described space standard.

The proposals are for two x 2 bedroom houses @ 74m2 each. They comply with the sizes defined in the local plan and nationally.

b. All new build housing will be built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations79.

The proposals will be fully compliant with this standard.

c. All major new-build residential development should be designed to achieve zero carbon homes.

The scheme is not a major one but the applicant wishes to use the available material technical standards to fulfil the zero carbon homes targets. High performance insulated cavity walls with energy conservation strategies for services, heating and ventilation.

d. All other new build housing will achieve at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in the 2013 Building Regulations.

The scheme will be fully compliant with these required standards.

e. All new build housing will be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations, unless it is built in line with M4(3) (see below).

f. 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'.

The ground floor of each house will be compliant with M4 (2). There is no lift required so the upper level will comply with normal space access standards.

H11 Development on private residential gardens

The policy sets out the criteria to be judged when considering building on gardens in the borough: The net loss of a small area of the rear garden behind the garage is seen as an efficient use of the existing site.

1. The proposals should create a positive contribution to the area and other buildings in it.

The revised scheme fits well within the massing and spacing of other dwellings in the area and creates a positive enhancement of a street frontage containing a sub station and a garage.

2. The proposal site should be of adequate dimensions

The two houses fit within the site leaving adequate space around them for maintenance and to keep the East West elevations from directly overlooking neighbours windows.

3. The proposal should include provision for access.

Access is easy from the adopted carriageway and will need additional drop kerbs to allow off street parking. The footway passes directly North South to the front of the site. The proposal shows the position of the proposed car parking spaces off the Close and the visibility splays available. The Northerly splay is cut short

by the topography of the close but the likely vehicle speeds in this part of the tightly curved existing roadway are much reduced.

4. The proposal does not lead to 'tandem development'

The building is sited on the frontage of the access road and is therefore not landlocked behind the existing house. Its outlook is clear and fits in with the pattern of the Stoneham close area.

5. The proposal minimises the exposure of private gardens to public areas, creating the need for additional security.

The existing enclosed private garden to 5 Stoneham Close remains and will be secured by planting of shrubs and small trees. The frontage of the building is directly on the street side and no access to the rear of the building from the street is possible.

6. Affect of the proposals on nearby and adjoining property.

As described the proposals have now been lowered from the previous scheme and are now aligned North South with roof lights and a staircase window to avoid overlooking of No 4 garden. The roadway separates the East elevation windows from the opposite properties to the East of the Close

7. The proposals provide family housing.

The definition of family sized accommodation is flexible and a small house of these dimensions is often valuable for young families to be able to live near relations, work and leisure of a City like Reading. The layout and outlook are attractive and the proximity of Prospect Park makes them suitable for smaller families.

8. The proposals create biodiversity net gain.

The landscape proposals seek to plant more trees to the rear garden and replace the Westerly bushes on the boundary with native species. This will increase the net biodiversity. The substation will be screened with new hedging to blend it more easily into the streetscape. The ecology report gives figures for net biodiversity improvement.

Other matters

There are separate policies on conversion of garages and outbuildings but these outbuildings on the site are to be removed and replaced rather than converted or extended.

4.0 SUMMARY AND SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION:

<u>NO</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NET INTERNAL M2</u>	<u>SUB TOTAL</u>
1	2 BED HOUSE	74	74
1	2 BED HOUSE	74	74

TOTAL INTERNAL FLOOR AREA

148 M 2

SUMMARY

The applicant seeks outline consent for the proposals as shown on the drawings and as described in the design and access statement.

We believe the scheme provides much needed low cost family housing. This in a well established predominantly residential area close to all amenities and is sustainable as defined by the NPPF.

The scheme satisfies the design criteria of the local authority as set out in local and central planning policy and is designed to blend with the existing urban design typology. The design uses the latest thinking in reducing energy cost for the build and develops a sympathetic language of vernacular design. The Architects have considered the scale, design , and proportion of the other residential buildings in the local area and have taken note of the commentary within the previous design committee report by officers and the comments of neighbours.

The layout of the homes provides flexible family living space capable of being easily altered over the occupancy and ownership period to respond to changing family needs.

APPENDIX

PROPOSAL DRAWINGS AND APP DOCUMENTS- FDF ARCHITECTURE

5 Stoneham Close Reading.

Dwg no.	Title
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100.P.01C	Floor plan layouts Terraced houses.
100.ELP.02B	Elevations and sections terraced houses
100.P.04B	Existing and proposed elevations on roadway.

100.SPA.06.C Site plan access proposed

500.SBPE.01	Site block plan existing
500.SBPP.03B	Site block plan proposed
200.AP4	Aerial view with boundaries

1250.LP.6 Location plan

Ecology report

Arboriculture impact report. Bucks Plant Cae

Sustainable construction notes FDF Architecture