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Open Space Statement

71-73 CAVERSHAM
ROAD, READING RG1
8JA

JULY 2022

Q100020

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Open Space Statement has been prepared to support the planning submission for the redevelopment of 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading. This Statement should be read alongside the wider application submission.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Statement is to set out details of open space proposed and to detail the open space within in within proximity of the Site.

The Site and Development Proposal

- 1.3 The application site has an area of 0.16 hectares. The Site comprises a 2-storey vacant retail warehouse, with a service yard and car parking to the rear. There is a 2-no. detached 2.5 storey office buildings located to the west of the Site.
- 1.4 The Site is located within close vicinity to Reading town centre and is within walking distance of Reading train station.
- 1.5 The immediate area is largely characterised by commercial and service sector uses. To the immediate south of the Site is a single storey (with mezzanines) D2 (Pure Gym) unit. Beyond this is an adjoining music shop and Reading Fire Station. A three storey B8 (safeguard) storage unit lies to the north of the Site along with other town centre uses - including a furniture shop and several restaurants. To the west of Site is a part two, part three storey residential block of flats (Monmouth Court).
- 1.6 The proposal involves partial demolition of the former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 29 new homes, 318 sqm of retail floorspace (Use Class E(a)) at ground floor and associated car parking.

2 Existing Open Space in proximity to the site

- 2.1 The Site is located in proximity to a number of open spaces with walking distance, including, but not limited to:
- Christchurch Meadows (10-minute walk)
 - King's Meadows (11-minute walk)
 - Rivermead Park (10-minute walk)
 - Forbury Gardens Public Park (12-minute walk)
 - Victoria Park (12-minute walk)
 - Hills Meadow (12-minute walk)
 - River Kennet Walk (15-minute walk)
 - Westfield Park (16-minute walk)
- 2.2 The Site is surrounded by a wide range of parks and open public spaces which each provide a range of activities and facilities. Christchurch meadows is the closest outdoor open space to the proposal (10-minute walk) which provides a range of facilities including tennis courts and recreational sports pitches.

3 Proposed Open Space and Maintenance

- 3.1 At present the site is entirely covered in hardstanding.
- 3.2 The proposed open space includes a communal roof terrace area of 74 sqm that is to be provided on the fifth floor. The communal roof terrace has been carefully designed to provide a high-quality usable space for all future residents to benefit from. The communal roof terrace includes seating and landscaping in the form of perimeter planting, increasing biodiversity across the Site.
- 3.3 The communal roof terrace is designed to be a functional space that will facilitate social interaction and community living on the Site. The design principles of the roof terrace are to create a contemporary outdoor space with seating that will allow residents to sit and enjoy the landscaped space and enjoy views to the north of the Site.
- 3.4 Additional landscaping is also proposed to be provided to the rear of the Site (fronting the ground floor vehicular entrance on Northfield Road and running along the eastern edge of the parking area). The landscaping will maximise greening and bring structure to the outdoor area in addition to increasing the biodiversity of the Site.
- 3.5 In terms of maintenance, the roof terrace is designed to be low maintenance, mainly comprising hardstanding and therefore minimal maintenance will be required for the upkeep of this area.
- 3.6 In relation to the soft landscaping to be provided around the perimeter of the roof terrace and ground floor, maintenance operations will be carried out as necessary to ensure this remains of a high quality. Maintenance of the landscape will be undertaken by the site management team in accordance with a Management Plan. It is proposed the Management Plan be secured via planning condition.
- 3.7 For a period of ten years from the date of planting maintenance procedures will include watering and regular pruning in accordance with best practice, formal assessment of the health and development of planted vegetation and the replacement of any vegetation that has been damaged beyond repair.
- 3.8 Overall, the soft landscaping and public open space to be provided on the site is designed to be low maintenance and, in this context, it is not considered that significant amounts of maintenance and management will be required for their general upkeep. Irrespective a Management Plan can be secured by condition to ensure the maintenance and upkeep of these areas.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 The site will offer a high-quality communal roof terrace (74 sqm) to be accessed by all residents.
- 4.2 The Site also benefits from a wide range of open space, providing a variety of recreational facilities and uses, within walking distance.
- 4.3 There is no net loss of accessible open space as a result of development and the proposal increases greening and landscaping across the site.