



Planning

Planning Statement

Client:

Michelle Wigmore

Chiltern Nursery & Training College

18 Peppard Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JZ.

Erection of two signage advertisements following the removal of existing signage and a combined cycle and buggy store.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a full planning application for the erection of two signage advertisements following the removal of existing signage and a combined cycle and buggy store at Chiltern Nursery and Training College, 18 Peppard Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8JZ.
- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents prepared by Space and Ground Control Professional Services:
 - 1:1250 Site Location Plan
 - 1:200 Existing Site Plan
 - 1:200 Proposed Site Plan
 - 1:100 Proposed Plans and Elevations
 - Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site comprises of multiple buildings, with gated access from Peppard Road. The property is immediately surrounded by hardstanding providing parking, with sections of amenity space including various trees on the site boundary.
- 2.2 The site is located within an urban area where there are a variety of land uses. These consist of residential areas on the adjacent and surrounding roads, small businesses such as Bohemian Landscaping Services, Berkshire (0.29 KM to the north west) and Emmer Green Surgery (1.1 KM to the north). The site has good access to surrounding areas, with Reading Train Station being located 1.66 KM to the south.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 There is an extensive planning history associated with the site linked to its wider educational use. The relevant planning history is outlined further below.
- 3.2 151663 – Retrospective change of use to a school for 4-11 year olds (D1 use) and associated alterations to parking circulation area – Granted – 12.02.16
- 3.3 Application for the removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission (151663) – Granted – 06.05.16
- 3.4 160408 – Application for approval of details reserved by condition (151663) – Granted – 09.05.16

- 3.5 160692 – Application for approval of details reserved by condition. (151663): Condition 2: Submission of boundary noise mitigation scheme – Granted - 15.12.16
- 3.6 180149 – Application for discharge of conditions 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18 and 19 as varied by 160522 – Granted – 20.04.18

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use and Amount:** The proposal relates to an augmentation of the existing lawful Nursery, seeking the erection and display of two signage advertisements following the removal of the existing signage and a combined cycle and buggy store.
- 4.4 **Layout and Scale:** The proposed signage is of small scale and in keeping in style with the existing signage already in place. The proposed cycle/buggy store is of a scale suitable to the area and the proposed purpose.

- 4.5 **Height & Mass:** The proposed signage is of small scale and sympathetic to that already in place. The proposed buggy/cycle store is of appropriate scale considering the surrounding built form and is single storey.
- 4.6 **Landscaping:** The proposal is part of the wider planning unit of Chiltern Nursery and as such, landscaping measures of the wider planning unit are utilised.
- 4.7 **Appearance:** The proposed signs are of sympathetic design and appearance to the existing signage already in place. The proposed buggy store utilises sympathetic materials to surrounding development allowing it to assimilate within the existing area.
- 4.8 **Access & Parking:** The existing access is utilised, but a new single drive is proposed.

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that "Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way" and "at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible".
- 5.3 Paragraph 126 identifies that "Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and

work and helps make development acceptable to communities”, whilst paragraph 134 states that significant weight should be given to “outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”

- 5.4 The National Design Guide builds on the above and clarifies that “well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use” (para 109).
- 5.5 All planning applications should be determined in accordance with the relevant development plan documents unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in all planning applications. In this instance, the relevant development plan documents include:
 - Reading Borough Local Plan (**RLP**) (November 2019)
- 5.6 **Principle of Development (including sustainable development):** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.7 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF outlines the three overarching aims of the planning system and how sustainable development is key to achieving this. Paragraph 8b discusses the social objectives of the planning system and states that the planning system should seek to

foster well-designed places that support communities' well-being. The proposed buggy/cycle park and signage has been designed to high-quality to ensure that they withstand the test of time. As a result of this, the proposed developments will benefit the users in the long term. Additionally, due to their high-quality design they will positively contribute to the character of the area. In doing this, it is considered that due to their high-quality design and structure the proposal will not detract away from the visual amenity of the area, thus reducing feelings of anxiety about the appearance of their area among members of the local community, an important consideration under the umbrella of community well-being.

- 5.8 **RLP Policy OU1: Net and Existing Community Facilities** states that proposals for new, extended or improved community facilities will be acceptable, particularly where this will involve the co-location of facilities on a single site. Proposals for on-site intensification of important facilities for important uses such as schools will be supported subject to other policies in the plan. The proposed buggy/cycle store and advertisements are associated with the existing educational use at the site. The advertisements are an important aspect of the school's operation providing road-side publicity to the site and raising awareness of the use and facilities on offer. Associated with this, the proposed buggy and cycle store will provide a secure, covered area to store cycles/buggies promoting sustainable modes of transport. Later parts of this policy states that new community facilities should be located where there is a choice of mean of travel (including walking and cycling). As such, the proposed cycle store makes cycling a more viable travel option to the site.
- 5.9 **RLP Policy OU4: Advertisements** states that advertisements will respect the building or structure on which they are located and/or their surroundings and setting in terms of size, location, design,

materials, colour, noise, lettering and other factors. The proposed advertisements will be a direct, identical replacement for the pre-existing advertisements and as such, are considered acceptable as the principle of advertisements in this area has been established and the proposed advertisements are considered to accord with the Council's requirements for advertisements as a result.

- 5.10 **Student Numbers:** The proposal will not lead to an increase in student numbers and as such, there will not need to be any further consideration of these aspects.
- 5.11 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** Considering the advertisements firstly, **RLP Policy OU4** is a further consideration in respect of character of the area. The policy outlines how the design of the advertisements in addition to the cumulative impact of advertisements will be taken into account especially with regards to visual amenity. As outlined above, the proposed advertisements are a direct replacement for the pre-existing signs that are already in place.
- 5.12 Notwithstanding any additional advertisements that have already been erected since the establishment of the pre-existing signs, the fact that the proposed advertisements are a direct replacement means the proposal does not increase the cumulative impact of advertisements in this area. The proposal would have a positive impact on character and appearance of the area through the use of new materials.
- 5.13 More generally and considering the store also, it is important to consider **RLP Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm** whereby all development must be of high-quality design that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area. As outlined on the proposed elevations submitted in support of this application, the

proposal will utilise timber frames and timber weatherboard as part of the structure of the proposal, coupling this with polycarbonate horizontal cladding. The proposed timber materials will be of similar and sympathetic design to the existing boundary fence. As outlined previously, the proposed signage will be a direct replacement for pre-existing signs which are already established parts of the character of the area. Therefore, as a whole, the proposal is considered to positively contribute to the character of the area and as such, is deemed acceptable.

- 5.14 **Impact on Amenity – Chiltern Nursery and College:** When considering amenity, **RLP Policy CC8: Safeguarding amenity** is a key consideration. Despite the policy relating more to residential development, there are several aspects of the policy that can be applied to the proposed development. Key considerations of this policy include proposals not having a negative impact on visual dominance as well as crime and safety. The store is of single storey, providing sufficient space for users to safely store bikes and buggies when using the educational facilities as a school. Within the wider security measures in place at the school already, it is envisaged that this store could be locked or provide spaces to lock bicycles, reducing the potential risk of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 5.15 **Impact on Amenity – Neighbours:** **RLP Policy CC8** is also of relevance when considering amenity impact on neighbours. The supporting text for this policy states that one of the key concerns of planning is to ensure that new development does not reduce the quality of the environment for others, particularly where it would affect residential properties.
- 5.16 As detailed above, the advertisement aspect of the proposal will lead to a high-quality replacement. The sign is a direct replacement for the pre-existing sign and whilst similar in appearance the visual

environment for the surrounding community will be enhanced. With regards to the store, the proposal the proposal is of small scale and as demonstrated by the proposed plans, is largely obscured by the surrounding boundary fence. Its single storey nature is not overly dominant within the pre-existing varied, urban landscape and as such, the proposal is considered acceptable.

- 5.17 **Trees and Landscaping:** The proposal does not harm pre-existing trees present on the proposal site and will form part of the wider planning unit of the College. As such, associated landscape considerations will form part of this. Due to the proposal's small scale, it is not considered that any negative landscape considerations will be brought forward.
- 5.18 A tree survey is submitted in support of this application and states that the current layout proposals will see the retention of all but 3 trees (only 1 due to the proposal) and the minor loss of two groups (G1 and G4). All the trees have been assessed as Category C (low).
- 5.19 The site contains a high percentage of existing hard surfacing that can be utilised as working area for the proposal. The existing hard surfacing will act as ground protection for all retained trees/groups.
- 5.20 Methodology has been put in place to address concerns with working within RPAs of retained trees.
- 5.21 The proposed landscaping scheme (amenity areas) for the site will allow new rooting areas for remaining trees. Additional proposed planting (See section 4.11 of Tree Report) will mitigate any lost trees and further improve site amenity.
- 5.22 The proposed development will only have a very minimal impact on the long-term health of the retained trees and amenity value of the site providing the mitigation measures outlined in this report are

adhered to. It is considered that the proposal will not have any significant impact on retained trees or wider landscape.

- 5.23 **RLP Policy EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodlands** states that individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance. The proposed development will accord with this and can be controlled by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.24 **Transport and Parking:** The site will utilise the wider pre-existing parking arrangement at the College.
- 5.25 **Cycle Provision: RLP Policy TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities** states that developments will be expected to make full use of opportunities to improve access for cyclists to, from and within the development. The proposed development achieves this, creating an end storage point where users feel safe to store their bike, thus promoting further usage.
- 5.26 **Refuse Provision:** There is not expected to be any change to the existing refuse situation and as such, the proposal is considered acceptable.
- 5.27 **Air Quality:** The site is not located in an air quality management area and as such, this is not a relevant consideration in this application.
- 5.28 **Drainage and SuDS:** The site is located in Flood Zone 1 – the lowest risk of flooding. Due to the low risk of flooding and the small-scale nature of the proposal, a Flood Risk Assessment is not required in support of the planning application.
- 5.29 **Contamination:** The site it not known to be contaminated it is considered unlikely due to the wider education use of the site. If concerns are raised during the course of a planning application, these

can be dealt with by way of condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.

- 5.30 **Archaeology:** The site is not known to be in an area of archaeological potential. If concerns are raised during the course of the planning application, these could be dealt with by way of condition.
- 5.31 **Ecology: RLP Policy EN12: Biodiversity** and the green network states that development should provide new ecological enhancements. As outlined above, the existing mature trees on the site are to be retained. Further ecological enhancements can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.32 **Special Protection Area:** The site is not located within the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area and as such this is not a relevant consideration within this application.
- 5.33 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The relevant forms are submitted in support of this application.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would be high-quality, sustainable development and could be brought forward to the benefit of the area and without impacting on neighbours.

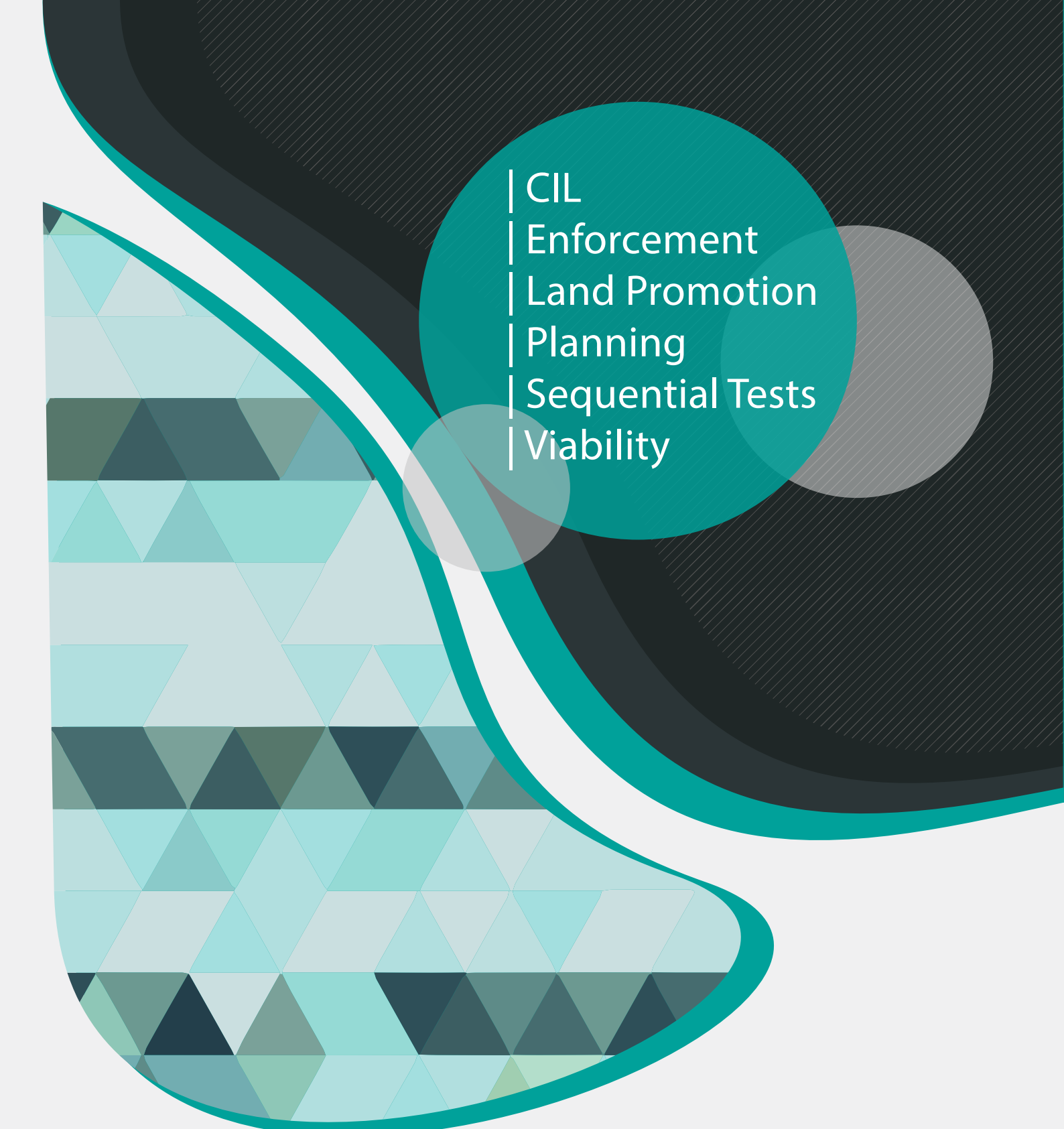
6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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