



Stuart Henley & Partners

Planning Statement:

in respect of:

***The erection of 2 new townhouses at the rear of
Dukesbridge House, Reading***

6 Wrotham Business Park

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1.0 Introduction to the Application:

- 1.1 This document should be read in conjunction with the submitted plans and associated planning application documents.
- 1.2 The Applicant's design team are also conscious of national, regional and local policy as contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (hereinafter referred to as "the NPPF") July 2021, and the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019).

2.0 Site and Area Description:

- 2.1 The application site is located within an Urban Block immediately to the north of the River Kennet and within the Central Zone, which is also inside the Inner Distribution Road (IDR Zone 1).
- 2.2 The site is located within 7 minutes' walk from Reading train station through the quiet backstreets along the Kennet River. The site is also well connected by local bus routes which are within 2 and 5 minutes' walk and providing transport options in all directions.
- 2.3 The site is also well located for local amenities with the shopping areas of Reading. Local areas provide a complete and wide range of services including major supermarkets.

3.0 Design of the Current Proposal:

- 3.1 The design proposals are specified in the design and access statement accompanying the planning application documents.

4.0 Amount of Development:

- 4.1 As far as the amount of development is concerned, this is set out in the design & access statement.

5.0 National Planning Policy Framework:

- 5.1 The NPPF, published on 20th July 2021, now contains all government advice. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking. For decision taking, this means approving development that accords with the development plan without delay (paragraph 11).

5.2	Paragraph 126 advises on requiring good design and the fact that the government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. The advice is repeated that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning.
6.0	The Reading Borough Local Plan, November 2019:
6.1	The Reading Borough Local Plan replaces all existing development plans in Reading. This means that the Core Strategy (adopted 2008, amended 2015), Reading Central Area Action Plan (adopted 2009) and Sites and Detailed Policies Document (adopted 2012, amended 2015) cease to be used now that this Local Plan is adopted. With the exception of minerals and waste planning, which will be undertaken jointly with neighbouring authorities, it means that all planning policies are contained within this single document.
6.2	The Core Strategy policies that are considered relevant to this application are CC1, H1, H5 and CR6.
6.3	Policy CC1 - PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT states: <i>A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Where appropriate, the Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible.</i> <i>Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan (including, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.</i> <i>Where there are no policies relevant to the application or the policies which are most important to determining the application are out of date at the time of making the decision then permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:</i> <i>• The application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or</i> <i>• Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.</i> The Current Proposal, where relevant, fully complies with this policy.
6.4	Policy H1 - PROVISION OF HOUSING states: <i>Provision will be made for at least an additional 15,847 homes (averaging 689 homes per annum) in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036.</i> <i>The Council will continue to work with neighbouring authorities within the Western Berkshire Housing Market Area to ensure that the shortfall of 230 dwellings that cannot be provided within Reading will be met over the plan period.</i> <i>“There is a pressing need for additional housing in Reading and the surrounding area. The six Berkshire authorities (Reading Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Slough Borough Council, West Berkshire District Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham Borough Council) together with the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership co-operated on the production of a Berkshire (with South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment, which reported in February 201672.</i>

This study identified the Housing Market Areas within which the Berkshire authorities should work, and set out levels of housing need between 2013 and 2036.”

The Current Proposal, where relevant, fully complies with this policy.

6.5 Policy H5 – STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING states:

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.*
- b. All new build housing will be built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations⁷⁹.*
- c. All major new-build residential development should be designed to achieve zero carbon homes.*
- 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.*
- 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 Current Proposal, where relevant, fully complies with this policy.

6.6 Policy CR6 - LIVING IN CENTRAL READING states:

Proposals for residential development within the central area will be assessed against the following criteria:

- i) All proposals for residential development within the central area will be required to contribute towards a mix of different sized units within the development. This will be measured by the number of bedrooms provided within individual units. Ideally, a mixture of one, two and three bedroom units should be provided. As a guide, in developments of 15 dwellings or more, a maximum of 40% of units should be 1-bed/studios, and a minimum of 5% of units should be at least 3-bed, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable.*
- ii) Proposals for new residential development within the central area will be required to demonstrate how the issue of potential noise disturbance from neighbouring land uses and other sources, and air quality implications of residential development, have been considered and if necessary, mitigated. New residential development should not be located next to existing town centre uses where those uses would give rise to unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance to the occupiers of the new scheme, unless this can be mitigated.*
- iii) In meeting the requirement to provide affordable housing, in the central area an over-concentration of social renting for single persons will be avoided.*
- iv) Where proposals for serviced apartments and apart-hotels fall outside the C3 use class, they will be located within the Central Core. Such proposals will not be permitted unless the duration of occupation of residents is restricted, to ensure the units are used on a short stay basis and not as residential flats, and information monitoring the implementation of this restriction is regularly supplied.*

6.7 The Current Proposal, where relevant, fully complies with this policy.

- 6.8 It is considered that the Current Proposal fully complies with all relevant government guidance, strategic policies and relevant policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan in relation to new dwellings.
- 7.0 Assessment of the Current Proposal against Policy:**
- 7.1 National Policy Planning Framework:
- The Current Proposal is in accord with the NPPF as it achieves sustainable development of a good design.
- 7.2 The Reading Borough Local Plan, November 2019:
- The Current Proposal fully complies with Policy CC1, requiring schemes to be compliant with the NPPF.
- The architecture will make a positive contribution to the public realm, being of good quality in terms of design and materials. In addition, the Current Proposal will optimise the potential of the Application Site.
- The Current Proposal will respect the local context and built environment. In the circumstances, the Current Proposal, where relevant, fully complies with the Reading Borough Local Plan.
- 8.0 Conclusion:**
- 8.1 The current proposal has taken into account national and local policy guidelines and fully respects local context and built environment.
- 8.2 The current proposal demonstrates a good design and proportion in relation to neighbouring properties, therefore should be granted planning approval.