



ET Planning

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Client:

M Saood

Land Adj. 8 Thornton Road

Reading, RG30 1JY

Erection of new dwelling

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CIL | Enforcement | Land Promotion | Planning | Sequential Tests | Viability

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for new dwelling on land adjacent to 8 Thornton Road, Reading, RG30 1JY.
- 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, Flood Risk Assessment Letter Report and the following plans prepared by The Keen Partnership:
- 1:1250 Site Location Plan
 - Site Plan
 - Proposed Floor Plans
 - Proposed Elevations
 - Street Scene
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site comprises a vacant area of land adjacent to 8 Thornton Road. The site is located at the end of the terrace with Thornton Mews running alongside the northern boundary and Thornton Road running along the western side of the boundary. The proposed build would sit on the corner plot to the north of 8 Thornton Mews and is not dissimilar to land opposite where two detached houses have recently been approved (Ref: 150412).
- 2.2 The site lies within Norcot, a mile outside of Reading City Centre, south of the railway line. The immediate locality is exclusively residential in nature, with houses along Thornton Mews and Thornton Road typically being two storey and 1.5 storey semi-detached dwellings. The site is located off Oxford Road, which is highly accessible in terms of public transport, with several bus stops and Reading West train station 0.8 miles away.
- 2.3 The site has an existing entrance, benefitting from a dropped curb along the northern boundary.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 Application Ref 160460 – Erection of one new detached dwelling, refused 29/09/16, appeal dismissed 02/11/16.
- 3.2 Application Ref 172115– New single storey two bed bungalow, refused 29/01/18, appeal dismissed 17/09/18

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 proposed use is for a single dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) accommodating 2 bedrooms with a private rear garden and parking.
- 4.4 **Layout and Scale:** The proposed 1.5 storey dwelling has been located at the end of the terrace on Thornton Road, extending around the bend in the road to Thornton Mews.
- 4.5 The erection of the proposed dwelling will have no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity or the surrounding environment due to the dwelling being located at a suitable distance from any existing dwelling houses, with no party walls being constructed.
- 4.6 **Landscaping:** In the previous application (ref: 172115), the Natural Environment Trees consultee responses stated that there are no trees affected on this site and there is limited space to the rear plus sight lines around the bend to the front which would make any landscaping that would benefit the local area very difficult.

- 4.7 **Appearance:** The proposals have been designed to take inspiration from the existing residential development along 8 Thornton Road with a gable end and front and rear dormers. The materials proposed will also be similar in appearance to the existing development along Thornton Road.
- 4.8 **Access & Parking:** A dropped kerb is located at the rear of the site and this will be used to access two on-plot car parking spaces.

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application. Weight should also be given to Reading Borough Council's Local Plan.
- 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*". Paragraph 117 of the NPPF comments that planning should "*make effective use of land*" in "*meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions*".
- 5.3 Paragraph 59 confirms the Government's objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.

- 5.4 Paragraph 124 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 131 states that *“In determining applications, great 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.”*
- 5.5 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).
- 5.6 **Principle of 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 The site is located within the built-up boundary of Reading, the principle of new residential development in this location is therefore acceptable in principle subject to the technical matters which are discussed within this statement.
- 5.8 **Character of the Area:** Policy CC7 requires all development to be *“of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading.”*
- 5.9 Both of the previous appeals for residential development on the site were primarily dismissed due to the harm to the character and appearance of the area. This application has sought to address these

points however the context of the site has now changed since the decisions were made on both appeals.

- 5.10 The Inspector for the first appeal which considered a new dwelling on the site stated that, *"I consider that there would be sufficient space around the property and within its curtilage so that the property would not appear cramped"*.
- 5.11 The appeal however was dismissed due to the Inspector considering that *"the proposed dwelling would appear as an isolated structure harmfully out of character with the overall more dense pattern and grain of built development in the area, and would appear intrusive into the street scene because of its prominent location"*.
- 5.12 A second application for a bungalow on the site was then submitted to address this point however this too was dismissed at appeal. The Inspector stated at Paragraph 5 of the appeal decision, *"From my reading of that appeal decision, **the Inspector's concerns did not, in terms of character, relate to its two storey scale, but the harm arising from its isolated siting. In this respect, the single storey side extension at No 8 Thornton Road would now help avoid the dwelling appearing isolated from the main built form of the terrace**, even though that addition has a limited influence on the overall character of the street. The dwelling would also broadly conform to the building line of the terrace whilst also providing an active frontage to Thornton Mews. Nevertheless, **in my judgement, the side elevation of a detached bungalow would appear incongruous when viewed in the context of the Thornton Road street scene in particular"***. (our emphasis)
- 5.13 In the intervening time between the two appeal decisions, a single-storey extension was built at 8 Thornton Road (application reference: 171589). This now means that the concern from the Inspector in the

first appeal decision relating to the new house being 'isolated' in the streetscene has now fallen away due to built form stretching across Thornton Road meaning that a new dwelling in this location would not appear 'isolated'.

- 5.14 The concern from the Inspector for the second appeal was the appearance of the bungalow in the streetscene being out of character. This application therefore proposes a dwelling that is more consistent with the existing development along the road, being 1.5 storey in scale, and it is similar in layout to the proposals considered in the first appeal which was confirmed by the Inspector to not be cramped and a suitable scale for the site.
- 5.15 The application site has sufficient space to meet the required parking standards, external residential amenity space and necessary space around the proposed dwelling to site it away from existing buildings, whilst ensuring that it is in keeping with the prevailing character. The proposed development is also designed to ensure that the dwellinghouse retains sufficient external amenity space for its existing and future occupiers. The site can accommodate the required parking spaces.
- 5.16 The submitted Site Plan shows that the site can accommodate the proposed development. There is no prospect of any further development coming forward on this site or the surrounding area, as a result it does not prejudice the development of the site or of the wider area. It in fact allows for the development of a sterile piece of land that has no other function. The redevelopment of the site will therefore improve the appearance of the site, in turn contributing to improving the character of the area.
- 5.17 It has been demonstrated that the proposals have sought to overcome the issues identified by both Inspectors in the previous

appeals on the site. The change in the context of the area, including new built development in the form of an extension at 8 Thornton Road, now means that a new dwelling on the site will assimilate into the surrounding area without harm to the local character whilst providing a new dwelling.

- 5.18 The proposed development is therefore in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Local Plan.
- 5.19 **Residential Amenity:** Policy CC8 states that “*development will not cause detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties” in terms of: privacy and overlooking, access to sunlight and daylight, visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development and noise and disturbance*”.
- 5.20 The proposed development will not have any detrimental impact on other properties in terms of privacy given its positioning, similarly, the development will not impact the privacy or access to sunlight for neighbouring buildings. External amenity space is provided for future residents.
- 5.21 The proposals are therefore in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Local Plan.
- 5.22 **Trees and Landscaping:** There are no trees or vegetation of significance on the site.
- 5.23 In the previous application (ref: 172115), the Natural Environment Trees consultee response stated that there are no trees affected on this site and there is limited space to the rear plus sight lines around the bend to the front which would make any landscaping that would benefit the local area very difficult. Additional landscaping can be controlled via condition however based on this previous response, it is unlikely that this can be accommodated.

- 5.24 **Transport and Parking:** The site benefits from an existing dropped kerb on its northern side. This will be utilised to provide access.
- 5.25 Two car parking spaces are provided at the rear of the site and cycle parking can be accommodated within the rear garden.
- 5.26 **Refuse Provision:** A suitable bin storage area can be provided for the dwelling within the rear garden.
- 5.27 **Flooding and Drainage:** A Flood Risk Assessment Letter Report has been prepared and submitted alongside this application.
- 5.28 The site lies within Flood Zone 2 which has a medium probability of river flooding. However, the Environment Agency (EA) have provided modelled flood levels for the area from their River Thames Flood Alleviation Study completed in 2011. This confirms that the proposed location of the new development lies at or above the modelled 1 in 1000 annual probability level and would therefore fall within Flood Zone 1 'Low Probability'.
- 5.29 As the proposed building lies outside the extreme 1 in 1000 annual probability fluvial floodplain, there will be no detrimental impact on fluvial flow routes or storage and continuous safe access is available.
- 5.30 The 'more vulnerable' development is considered appropriate within Flood Zone 1 and the Sequential Test is de-facto passed.
- 5.31 The FRA therefore confirms that the development is safe, it does not increase flood risk and does not detrimentally affect third parties, in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF.
- 5.32 **Sustainability and Energy:** Paragraph 8 of the NPPF supports the transition of development to a low carbon future. The national Code for Sustainable Homes has now been abolished, however it is proposed that the development would conform to Part L of the

Building Regulations which as of 2010 requires a 25% reduction in carbon emissions over the 2006 standards. This is equivalent to Code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. By way of contributing to the reduction in carbon, the proposal would also achieve current building construction standards with added sustainability measures through;

- A. The limitation of the amount of inherent material, structure and embodied energy through the employment of good building standards to create an excellent SAP rating;
- B. Use of locally sourced, recycled materials and labour where practicable;
- C. Reduced internal water consumption of 110 litres per person per day through the incorporation of water efficient sanitary fittings, including low flow toilets and water efficient taps for wash basins;
- D. Refuse, recycling and composting facilities to be provided to work with the Council's existing waste and recycling collection service;
- E. Secure cycle provision to encourage sustainable modes of transport;
- F. 'A' rated electrical appliances and energy saving light fittings;
- G. 'A' rated double glazed windows with natural cross ventilation provision;
- H. Water butts fitted to the rainwater down pipes for watering the garden;
- I. Recycling of waste construction materials where practicable;

- 5.33 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with sustainability objectives in this respect.
- 5.34 **Ecology:** Both previous applications were dismissed at appeal for non-ecological reasons. These faced no ecological constraints, subject to a condition that ensures that biodiversity enhancements are provided. Taking this into account, there are therefore no barriers to this application on ecological grounds
- 5.35 **Affordable Housing:** The Applicant is willing to enter into a Section 106 agreement to secure affordable housing contributions in accordance with Policy H3 of the Local Plan.
- 5.36 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The proposed development is CIL liable. The relevant forms have been completed and submitted with 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 contribute an appropriate windfall site to the Borough's housing supply, without adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents. The proposals have sought to overcome previous concerns over built development on the site.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National

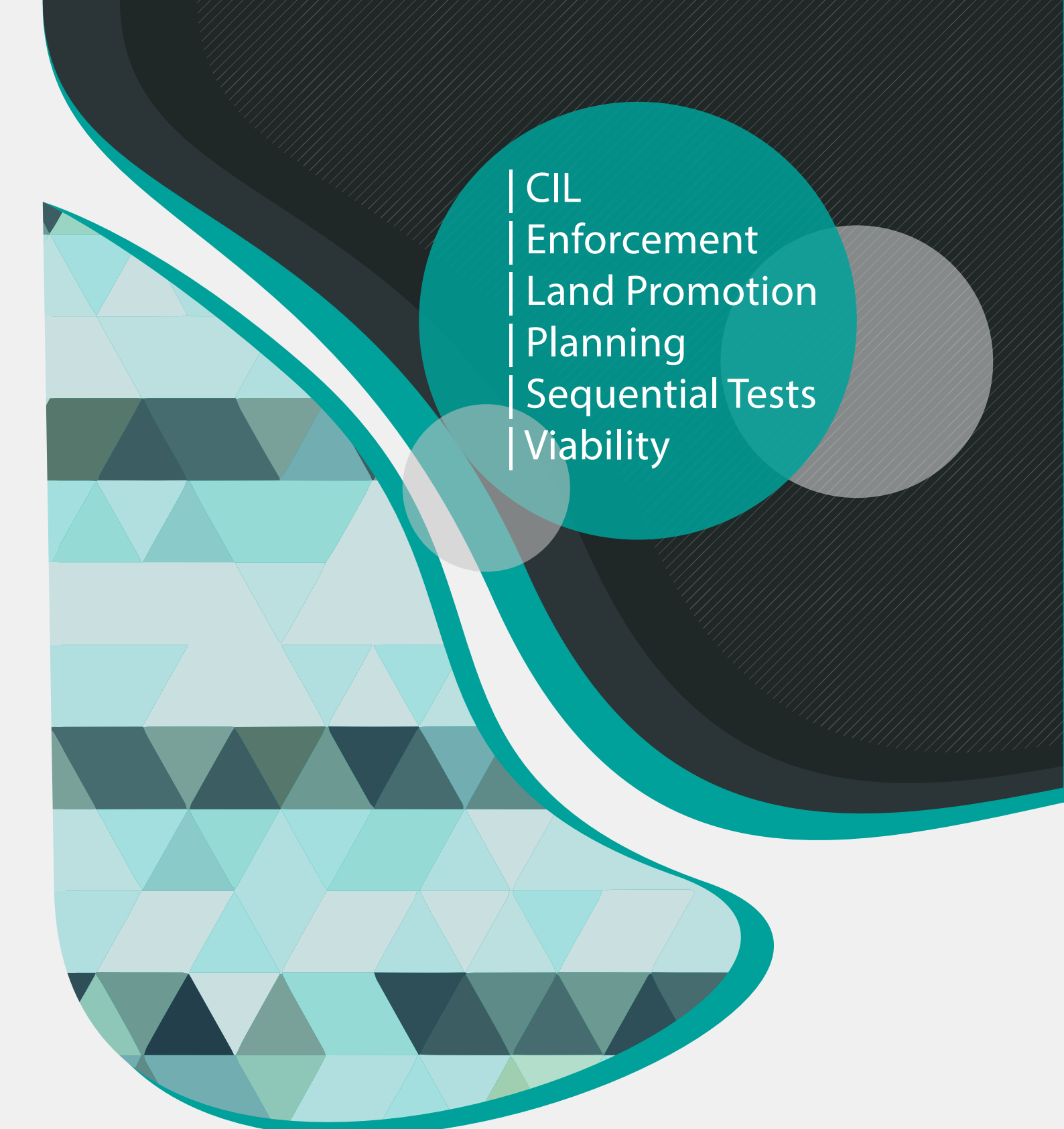
Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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