

Proposed Temporary Car Park

Land to between Lesford Road and Wensley Road, Reading, Berkshire

PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared in support of an application by the Reading Borough Council Housing Department for the regularisation of the temporary car park on land between Lesford Road and Wensley Road for a period of 18 months.

The starting point for consideration of this application is that the proposal change of use of the site for a temporary (18 month) period only. It is not intended the site be laid out and used as a car park on a permanent basis. However the car park is currently making use of the 28 day rule in one calendar year if planning approval isn't received the council would look to return the site to its previous function as private amenity land. The surface treatment, and the manner in which it would be laid out is intended to reflect the fact that the proposal is for a temporary period only. Following the 18 month period, the site will be restored to its former use as private amenity space.

The Housing Department are currently delivering a 2 phased programme of works. Phase 1 includes 46 new affordable homes built to passivhaus principles (highly sustainable), new parking, play equipment, extensive landscaping to west of the site, additional tree planting and improvements to courage park. Phase 2 of the works includes the refurbishment of the three towers blocks, applying passivhaus principles, including, new entrances and refuse areas, improvements to the external fabric of the building , new triple glazed windows, cycle storage, tree planting and improvements to the landscaping. However the works have displaced parking spaces to both on street parking and parking courts. Due to the timing of the development along with the amendment of the bus route and consequential additional temporary yellow lines an additional 2 on road parking spaces will be lost for a period of some months. These additional temporary parking space in the grass strip will help ensure any impact on the highway network is reduced during the construction phase.

The site is normally fenced off and the proposal would look to open it up for period of 18 months or until the works are completed on site.

THE PROPOSED TEMPORARY CAR PARK

The application, seeks a temporary planning permission for a change of use from private amenity space to car parking which can accommodate approximately 11 spaces. The surface finish will remain as grass, using a reinforced crate system rolled in to reinforce the grass area so cars can park on it. Access is provided from the Lesford and Wensley Road via a dropped kerb.

The current works to deliver the 46 homes and the stopping up of Wensley road will cause a temporary impact on the number of available parking spaces, therefore the provision of these space plus the additional temporary parking at 72 Wensley and the 45 spaces provided within the redline boundary of the works will help limit any impact on the highway network. Additional parking will also become available during the works as parking areas complete and this will help to minimise any temporary impact on the highway network.

There is no planning history to this site.

Housing recognises that National Planning Guidance and Development Plan Policies suggest that the car park and its provision are used as part of managing the demand for car travel. Housing are actively seeking to reduce car journeys and promote the use for alternative forms of transport through the provision of cycle storage and the use of public transport this application is attempting to simply offset the temporary loss of parking during the works.

ALTERNATIVE LOCATION

The council is looking to provide as much temporary parking within the area to help alleviate the impact on the highway network during the construction phase. We have therefore considered all options across the area and as set out above we have already provide some additional parking on 2 other sites. Therefore no alternative solutions are available in a suitable location.

Ecology

The site is currently laid to grass which is cut on cyclical basis. There are no trees within the redline of the proposal. The works have been designed to limit any impact on the existing site and temporary reinforcing has been chosen to ensure that the works have limited impact on the site. Once works are complete we will return the land to existing state and will re-seed any areas that have been damaged by the works.

Highways

The parking will operate a one-way system with vehicles entering via Wensley road and exiting via Lesford road. The parking has been arranged to ensure cars can enter and leave in forward gear. Each bay will be marked and will be 5m by 2.5m. The site also benefits from knee high railing along the boundary of the site and this will help ensure the adjoining boundaries are protected. We have erected signage on the entrance and exit to encourage vehicles to comply with this arrangement.

The site will be regularly visited by housing to ensure it is well maintained during the period of operation.

Planning Policy

CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

4. GENERAL POLICIES

4. GENERAL POLICIES—CROSS-CUTTING POLICIES

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To meet these requirements:

- All major non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible;
- All minor non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to

meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Very Good' standard as a minimum;

- All non-residential development or conversions to residential should incorporate water

conservation measures so that predicted per capita consumption does not exceed the

appropriate levels set out in the applicable BREEAM standard. Both residential and nonresidential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting

where systems are energy and cost effective.

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form, including: -

- Layout: urban structure and urban grain;
- Landscape;
- Density and mix;
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials

will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to

the following urban design objectives: -

- Character - a place with its own identity and sense of place
- Continuity and enclosure
- Quality of the public realm and provision of green infrastructure and landscaping
- Ease of movement and permeability
- Legibility - clear image and easy to understand
- Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time
- Diversity – meets a wide range of needs.

Developments will also be assessed to ensure that they: -

- Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;

- Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion;

- Address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all

potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily;

- Are visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces, the inclusion of public art and appropriate materials and landscaping.

Applications for major developments, or other relevant developments, should be accompanied by a design and access statement that deals with all the above matters.

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in

terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- Harm to outlook;
- Noise and disturbance;
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Dust and fumes;
- Smell;
- Crime and safety; or
- Wind, where the proposals involve new development of more than 8 storeys. The position of habitable rooms, windows and outdoor living spaces will be particularly important. A back-to-back distance of 20 metres between dwellings is usually appropriate, although the circumstances on individual sites may enable dwellings to be closer without a detrimental effect on privacy.

As well as immediate impacts, other aspects to which this policy applies will include matters such as hours of operation of businesses, and effects of traffic movements, particularly of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). Proposals which would generate regular movements of HGVs on residential roads will not be acceptable. Where an otherwise acceptable development could change its character to a use that would have a greater impact on amenity without needing planning permission, conditions will be applied to restrict such changes.

EN8: UNDESIGNATED OPEN SPACE

There will be a presumption in favour of retention of undesignated open space, which will include allotments. Development should not result in the loss of or jeopardise use and enjoyment of undesignated open space. Development may be permitted where it is clearly

demonstrated that replacement open space, of a similar standard and function, can be provided at an accessible location close by, or that improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space. The quality of existing open space should not be eroded by insensitive development on adjoining land

EN12: BIODIVERSITY AND THE GREEN NETWORK

a) The identified Green Network, the key elements of which are shown on the Proposals Map, shall be maintained, protected, consolidated, extended and enhanced. Permission will not be granted for development that negatively affects the sites with identified interest or fragments the overall network. The Green Network comprises:

- Sites with identified biodiversity interest - Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, protected and priority species and their habitats, Priority and Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, and the River Thames and all its tributaries (including the River Kennet and the Kennet & Avon Canal); and
- Areas with potential for biodiversity value and which stitch the Green Network together – designated Local Green Space and open green spaces, and existing and potential Green Links.

New development shall demonstrate how the location and type of green space,

landscaping and water features provided within a scheme have been arranged such that they maintain or link into the existing Green Network and contribute to its consolidation. Such features should be designed to maximise the opportunities for enhancing this network. All new development should maximise opportunities to create new assets and links into areas where opportunities are as yet unidentified on the

Proposals Map.

b) On all sites, development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity, and should provide a net gain for biodiversity wherever possible. Development should: • Protect and wherever possible enhance features of biodiversity interest on and adjacent to the application site, incorporating and integrating them into development proposals wherever practicable; and Provide new tree planting, wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological

enhancements (such as wildlife ponds, bird and bat boxes) wherever practicable. In exceptional circumstances where the need for development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site, and it is demonstrated that the impacts cannot be: 1) avoided; 2) mitigated or; 3) compensated for on-site; then new development will provide off-site compensation to ensure that there is “no net loss” of biodiversity. Provision of off-site compensation shall be calculated in accordance with nationally or locally recognised guidance and metrics. It should not replace existing alternative habitats, and should be provided prior to development

TR5: CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING Development should provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport. Development should make the following provision for electric vehicle charging points: • All new houses with dedicated off-street parking should provide charging points; • Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 1

Housing consider that the proposed use of the site as a temporary car parking are in accordance with the above policies.