

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF A SINGLE DETACHED DWELLINGHOUSE WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, PARKING AND LANDSCAPING

PLANNING STATEMENT

**LAND ADJACENT TO 43 UPPER REDLANDS ROAD,
READING, RG1 5JE**

ON BEHALF OF HURST GROVE ESTATES

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**



Pegasus Group

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 **DESIGN**  **ENVIRONMENT**  **PLANNING**  **ECONOMICS**  **HERITAGE**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group in support of a full planning application which is submitted to Reading Borough Council for the erection of a new detached dwellinghouse to be sited on land to the west of No.43 Upper Redlands Road and east of No.45 Upper Redlands Road. The proposed development can be described as follows:

"Erection of a single detached dwellinghouse with associated access, parking and landscaping."

1.2 This statement will introduce the proposals to the Council in the context of the site and relevant planning history, including a previous refused application and subsequent appeal, before demonstrating how the proposals have been informed by pre-application engagement. The statement will explain how the proposed development is in accordance with relevant Development Plan policy and national guidance and as such concludes that planning permission should be granted.

1.3 In addition to this statement, application forms and the relevant fee, the application is accompanied by the following plans and supporting documents:

- Existing Location Plan (1089 P01)
- Proposed Site Plan (1089 P02)
- Proposed Site Plan (1089 P03)
- Street Elevation and Longitudinal Section (1089 P04)
- Proposed Floor Plans (1089 P05)

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- Proposed Front Elevation (1089 P06)
 - Proposed Side Elevation (1089 P07)
 - Proposed Rear Elevation (1089 P08)
 - Trace Architects Design and Access Statement (February 2021)
 - Pegasus Group Transport Statement Letter (January 2021)
 - Pegasus Group Heritage Assessment (January 2021)
 - MWA Arboriculture Arboricultural Survey and Report (January 2021)
 - MWA Arboriculture Soft Landscaping Scheme (February 2021)
 - MWA Arboriculture Tree Protection Plan
 - MWA Arboriculture Tree Planting Plan
 - MWA Arboriculture Tree Removal Plan
 - Preliminary Ecology Appraisal (Windrush Ecology)

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located in south east Reading, within the Redlands Conservation Area. It currently comprises of an undeveloped plot of land located between No.43 and No.45 Upper Redlands Road and opposite the Grade II listed Wantage Hall. Wantage Hall opened in 1908 as the first hall of residence for the University of Reading and was listed in 2008. It is fully described within the accompanying heritage statement.
- 2.2 The site is surrounded by residential uses. To the west of the site lies No.45 Redlands Road, a large detached three storey building located on the corner of Upper Redlands Road and Redlands Road. To the east is the adjoining plot of No.43 which consists of a detached two storey dwelling, with further residential plots located to the east. No.17-19 Redlands Road lies to the south east and is a Care Home known as Yew Tree Lodge. The exact design of the nearby dwellings varies, with examples of two storey brick terraced dwellings, two storey white washed dwellings and three storey render dwellings.
- 2.3 There are a number of trees on the site and as such the application is supported by a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Method Statement. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and so is at the lowest risk of flooding and it is not necessary to provide a Flood Risk Assessment in support.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Most relevant to the current application is application **182214** for the erection of four dwellinghouses and accesses with associated landscaping and parking. The application was refused by Reading Borough Council at the planning committee in July 2019. Two reasons for refusal were cited, the first and primary reason raising detailed concerns that the development would detract from the character and appearance of the Redlands Conservation Area and Listed Buildings for a number of reasons. The other reason for refusal was secondary and related to the requirement of the Council to secure acceptable affordable housing provision via the application (albeit a sum had been agreed).
- 3.2 This decision was appealed, reference **APP/E0345/W/19/3237840**, and the appeal was dismissed in February 2020. Only the first refusal reason relating to the character and appearance of the conservation area and listed buildings was upheld. This decision is highly relevant to the application now proposed, and the specific concerns of the Planning Inspector have been given significant consideration when formulating this revised scheme and are referenced throughout this statement.
- 3.3 Following the refusal of the above application, a subsequent application for four dwellings was submitted under application reference **191860** however this was withdrawn before a determination was made.

4.0 PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 As set out within Paragraph 39 of the NPPF, early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties, and that good quality pre-application discussion enables better co-ordination between public and private resources. As stated in Paragraph 41, the more issues that can be resolved at the pre-application stage, the greater the benefits. With reference specifically to design matters, Paragraph 128 states that design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussions about the design and style of emerging schemes are important.
- 4.2 In light of the specific concerns highlighted by the Planning Inspector, a pre-application enquiry was submitted to the Council in August 2020 and given reference **201168/PREAPP**. Two modern architectural design options were submitted to the Council, both concerning the erection of a single detached dwellinghouse adjacent to No.43 Upper Redlands Road.
- 4.3 The two design options were put before the Design Review Panel on 15th October 2020 with a full written response received from the Council on 23rd November 2020. The response confirmed that the reduction to one dwelling would not result in concerns with regard to the loss of garden space or not following the established building line of Upper Redlands Road that contributed to the refusal of the previous application and its dismissal at appeal.
- 4.4 The design proposals were reviewed by both the Design Review Panel and Planning Officers, and the conclusion given was that the scheme put forward by Trace Architects was suitable and related to the size and grain of existing plots. Concerns were raised regarding a flat roofed rear 'box dormer', the depth of a two storey flat roofed element and the depth of a single storey side and rear element. The access arrangement was considered appropriate and helps minimise the impact on boundary walls that was a previous concern. The provision of additional tree planting was welcomed. The plans have been amended as set out within this statement and the Design and Access

Statement to address the design feedback provided.

- 4.5 No significant concerns were raised with regard to residential amenity, ecology or transport, and the quality of accommodation was considered acceptable.
- 4.6 Following the receipt of pre-application advice and prior to finalising the scheme for submission, the applicant has consulted with the Councillors and the local community for their views on the revised proposals. Dialogue has been ongoing with local residents and amendments have been made to the proposals to reflect the comments received. Summary feedback was received on 31st January 2021.
- 4.7 On the proposal as a whole, comments were positive and welcomed the substantial care taken to provide an original design, and that the proposal would result in a distinctive new building in the Conservation Area. It is understood the neighbour adjoining the development is content with the depth of the rear projection following discussion direct with the architect. As a result of engagement with the local community and councillors, an option for the gate to be high quality metal has been included and we are endeavouring to provide material samples to them as requested. The width of the vehicle access has been raised as a concern and this will be reviewed with the council's highways officer to see if it can be reduced and still provide the visibility splays requested. Furthermore following concern regarding the impact of erection of further outbuildings in the future, it is confirmed that the applicant is content to accept a condition removing permitted development rights.
- 4.8 A few comments were received raising queries on specific aspects of the proposal which mainly related to the access and gate. It was questioned why the access needs to be 6.5m wide, and following further consultation with the project transport consultants it has been clarified that the width is necessary in order to meet the Council's requirements for visibility splays. In terms of the gate itself there were some queries over the brick design in terms of appearance and practicality. The brick design has been maintained for the application as it is considered to provide more continuity of the existing

boundary wall. However, it is proposed that the gate design be retained as a detailed matter by condition, and the Design and Access Statement shows the applicants willingness to consider a quality metal gate as an alternative. It should also be noted that the heritage assessment raises no concerns over the width of the access or the gate.

- 4.9 Queries were also raised regarding whether the development would be carried through as a 'self-build' project and what impact this could have on the quality of the design and the materials of the implemented development. Firstly, the proposed development would be required to provide materials by condition, and these would be secured via the planning process, and would be within the control of the local authority and local residents. Notwithstanding this, I can confirm that Hurst Grove Estates intends on seeking a self-build/Pre sale for the plot, on the proviso that Hurst Grove Estates remain as the commissioned contractor to manage the build out process, alongside Trace Architects. This should provide further comfort that the quality of the development is not diluted.

5.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 The application proposes a scheme by Trace Architects that was initially formed in response to the Inspector's comments following the dismissal of appeal **APP/E0345/W/19/3237840**. Following the receipt of pre-application feedback, the scheme has been further revised to take account of the Council's comments.
- 5.2 In comparison to the previous scheme, the number of dwellings proposed has been significantly reduced from four to one, and the number of access points from three to one. The proposed scheme uses an existing plot of land between No.43 and No.45 Upper Redlands Road which, visually lends itself to development as an individual plot.
- 5.3 The scheme consists of the erection of a single detached dwellinghouse fronting Upper Redlands Road. The dwellinghouse is sited in a similar position to where

two dwellinghouses were proposed under the previously refused application, albeit reflecting the building line of the adjacent houses. The dwelling comprises a primary pitched roof element to the frontage with secondary flat roofed two storey and single storey elements to the side and rear. The primary living accommodation would be provided at ground floor level, with three bedrooms at first floor level and two bedrooms within the roofspace.

- 5.4 The proposed building would be constructed in white brick with grey roof slates to relate to the neighbouring properties. A diamond pattern detail would be included on the side elevation to add interest and reference that already present in the conservation Area. The single storey flank, including a front entrance element, would be constructed from red brick which would utilise an existing boundary wall which will be rebuilt and incorporated into the dwelling. Glazing to the rear and side would offer attractive views into the garden areas.
- 5.5 Outdoor terraces will be provided to the side and rear of the dwelling, with further outdoor garden space to the side. A biodiverse green roof is proposed to the flat roofed single storey elements, with solar panels proposed to the two storey element.
- 5.6 Parking is proposed to the front of the property on a new permeable driveway. Refuse storage would be provided within the driveway, with cycle storage to the side of the dwelling. The parking area would be accessed via a new opening in the wall which, as proposed at the pre-application stage, would consist of a sliding brick panel forming a gate to preserve the integrity of the existing wall when closed. Pedestrian access would be via an existing entrance gate.
- 5.7 Finally, a number of alterations have been made since the receipt of pre-application advice. The box dormer to the rear elevation has been split into two smaller dormers which would reflect the size and design of a similar element to the rear of No.41. The two storey rear element has been reduced in depth to ensure it reflects a similar rear element at No.43 with further reductions also made to the size of the ground floor element and canopy. The number of materials has been reduced to utilising white and red brick on the

elevations and a grey slate roof in response to concerns regarding the cohesiveness of the design, with the brick patterns now proposed reflective of those on surrounding buildings.

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

6.1 The Development Plan for Reading Borough Council currently comprises policies within the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) will be referenced where relevant together with the Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal.

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision-taking means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

Local Plan

6.3 The Local Plan was adopted subsequent to the refusal of application 182214, therefore no policies from this plan are referred to within the reasons for refusal. However the plan was adopted prior to the appeal being dismissed and the Inspector found conflict with the following policies:

6.4 **Policy EN1** (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) states that historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where possible enhanced. These include listed buildings and conservation areas. All proposed will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Any harm to heritage assets should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits. Applications which affect listed buildings will not have an

adverse impact on the elements which contribute to their historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.

- 6.5 **Policy EN3** (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) states that the special interest, character and architecture of conservation areas will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals within conservation areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 6.6 **Policy EN6** (New development in a historic context) sets out that in areas characterised by heritage assets, the historic environment will inform and shape new development. New development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities, and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development.
- 6.7 Whilst previous development proposals would not have been in conflict with the following Local Plan policies, they remain relevant to the development.
- 6.8 **Policy CC1** (Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development) sets out that a positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.
- 6.9 **Policy CC7** (Design and the Public Realm) states that all development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The components of development form will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to a number of urban design principles. Developments should respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, and should be visually attractive as a result of high quality built forms and spaces, appropriate materials and landscaping.
- 6.10 **Policy CC8** (Safeguarding Amenity) sets out that development will not cause

a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

- 6.11 **Policy EN12** (Biodiversity and the Green Network) sets out that development should retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity of geological interest (including protected species and their habitats).
- 6.12 **Policy EN14** (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) seeks to ensure that individual trees, groups of trees and woodland are protected from damage or removal, and that the Borough's vegetation cover will be extended.
- 6.13 **Policy H1** (Provision of Housing) states that provision will be made for at least an additional 15,847 homes in Reading Borough in the period 2013 to 2036. A shortfall of 230 homes over the plan period is identified.
- 6.14 **Policy H3** (Affordable Housing) sets out a requirement for all residential development to make an appropriate contribution to affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading. On sites of 1-4 dwellings, this will be a financial contribution to enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough.
- 6.15 **Policy H5** (Standards for New Housing) sets a number of criteria for new housing, such as all new build housing outside the central area complying with the nationally described space standards.
- 6.16 **Policy H11** (Development of Private Residential Gardens) sets out that such development will be acceptable provided that certain criteria are met. These include the contribution of the development to the character of the area, the application site size being adequate to accommodate the development, the development not causing a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants, and an emphasis on the provision of family sized housing.

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- 6.17 **Policy TR3** (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters) states that development will only be permitted where accesses and works to the highway comply with the adopted standards of the Highway Authority, and the development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network.

NPPF

- 6.18 **Paragraph 108** sets out that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes are taken up, given the type of development and its location.
- 6.19 **Paragraph 127** sets out that planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area for the lifetime of the development, are visually attractive and are sympathetic to local character and history. Developments should create places that are safe, including and accessible with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 6.20 **Paragraph 189** states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 6.21 **Paragraph 193** sets out that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
- 6.22 **Paragraph 194** states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, including from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification.

Parking Standards SPD (2011)

- 6.23 Parking standards are devised based on the parking zone in which the

development falls. The site is within Zone 2, which requires two parking spaces per dwelling. The parking standards are expressed as maximums, with the exception of those for residential development.

Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal (2008)

- 6.24 The appraisal sets out that this is a tightly drawn essentially Victorian/Edwardian suburb of Reading. The special interest of the heritage asset derives to a large extent from the sheer variety, exuberance and blending of the architectural styles of the Victorian period in close proximity. This is reinforced by the retention of boundary walls throughout the area which, together with mature tree cover, give the area its coherence.
- 6.25 The site is located within the '*Upper Redlands Road and 17-19 Redlands Road*' character areas within the conservation area. This states that the area is mainly characterised by large detached and semi-detached houses standing in extensive and well-treed grounds.
- 6.26 Features that make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the conservation area include the retention of original buildings and their setting with few detrimental changes, the retention of original brick walls throughout the area and good tree cover within the grounds or individual properties. Negative features include the use of non-traditional materials (e.g., upvc windows) and loss of original brick walls.

7.0 ASSESSMENT

Principle of the Development

- 7.1 The site is located within an existing residential area of Reading where additional residential development is considered acceptable in principle, subject to detailed impacts. The Committee Report for application **181224** highlighted that residential development in this location is acceptable subject to satisfying policy requirements, and the reasons for the refusal of that application made no reference to the principle of development. Finally, the recent pre-application response raised no issues on the matter of principle.
- 7.2 As with previous proposals at the site the development is therefore acceptable in principle. The detailed considerations of the proposal are set out below.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area and Heritage Assets

- 7.3 Given the previous refusal and the comments of the Inspector within the appeal decision, careful consideration has been given to the design of the scheme and its impact on the surrounding area. This is reflected in that two differing schemes, both for one dwelling in the same location, were submitted for consideration at the pre-application stage and reviewed by the Design Review Panel.
- 7.4 The comments of the Planning Inspector have been given significant weight in developing the revised scheme and have been responded to accordingly. The Inspector stated that the Conservation Area is primarily characterised by '*large detached and semi-detached properties standing in extensive and well-treed grounds*' and agreed that 45 Upper Redlands Road is reflective of this character, thereby making an important contribution to the character and appearance of the heritage asset. Wantage Hall was also identified as a Grade II listed building of significance, and that the spaciousness of surrounding

development contributes to the setting and significance of the building.

- 7.5 In terms of the refused scheme, both the Council and the Inspector were concerned about the substantial loss of garden space that was required to accommodate the four dwellings. The erosion of open land, which was considered to make a contribution to the conservation area and the setting of Wantage Hall, was identified as harmful.
- 7.6 The reduction in built development from four dwellings to one has ensured the retention of the majority of garden space to ensure that this remains commensurate to the size of most corner plots in the area. It is no longer proposed to construct a dwelling between No.45 Redlands Road and No.17 Redlands Road, which was previously considered to reduce the visual gap to a harmful degree. As is evident from the site plan, the reduction from two dwellings to one fronting Upper Redlands Road has ensured the retention of a substantial gap of openness between the proposed dwelling and No.45 Redlands Road. The pre-application response acknowledged that the reduction to one proposed dwelling does not result in the same concerns in terms of loss of garden space.
- 7.7 Specific to the two plots previously proposed to front Upper Redlands Road, the Inspector identified that these '*would detract from the established building line along this part of Upper Redlands Road*'. This concern has been addressed by ensuring that the new dwelling would have the same building line as the dwellings to the east, and the pre-application response acknowledged this as appropriate.
- 7.8 The proposals in respect of trees and landscaping are assessed in detail below, however the proposals would deliver a net gain in trees on site to ensure that there would be no adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area in this regard.
- 7.9 As previously proposed the development would have resulted in the removal of multiple sections of brick wall resulting from three new access points. This

was considered to compound the harm, as the boundary walls are considered to make a significant contribution to the townscape due to their substantial scale and prominence in the streetscene. The reduction in the proposals to one dwelling has reduced the number of access points and punctuation of the walls fronting Redlands Road and New Road is no longer proposed.

- 7.10 In respect of the new access onto Upper Redlands Road, this will require the removal of an area of the brick wall, which would now be the only removal required. Furthermore, a sliding brick gate is proposed with materials to match the existing brickwork which would help mitigate the loss of the section of wall and ensure that the gap in the wall would only be apparent when vehicles are accessing the site. The pre-application response acknowledged the reduction in punctuations to the brick walls and highlighted that the proposed approach was considered appropriate.
- 7.11 Given the importance of heritage assets to the area, the impacts of the proposal on both Wantage Hall and the Redlands Conservation Area as designated heritage assets are addressed in detail within the accompanying Pegasus Group Heritage Statement (January 2021). This sets out that whilst the application site contributes positively to both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the significance of Wantage Hall via setting, this does not mean that the site cannot accommodate new development undertaken in a sensitive and well-designed manner.
- 7.12 The Heritage Statement considers the impacts on the proposals on the identified significance of the designated heritage assets in turn. In respect of the Conservation Area, it is assessed that the proposals maintain the open nature of the site as a whole, ensuring the characteristics of the Conservation Area which are identified as positively contributing to its significance are preserved. It is concluded that the design, scale, form and siting of the new dwelling will ensure that the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is preserved. With reference to paragraph 194 of the NPPF it is therefore considered that the development would not result in any harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.

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- 7.13 In terms of the setting of Wantage Hall, the gap between the side of No.45 Upper Redlands Road and 17-19 Redlands contributes to the setting of Wantage Hall, and the reduction to one dwelling fronting Upper Redlands Road allows for a significant gap to be maintained to the built form of No.45, significantly reducing the loss of garden space which the Inspector was concerned about as is clarified within the Heritage Statement. In drawing on surrounding architecture and utilising a locally appropriate palette of materials, the proposal would sit comfortably within the setting of the listed building and would be a coherent addition to the streetscene. As such the proposals will respect and preserve the setting of Wantage Hall and, with reference to Paragraph 194 of the NPPF, would not result in any harm to its significance. The Statement also concludes no harm to the boundary walls as a result of the amendments.
- 7.14 With regard to the detailed design, the accompanying Design and Access Statement sets out how the proposal has responded to both the concerns raised in terms of the previous scheme and also the comments of the pre-application response. To summarise, the proposed building is formed of two elements, the first a two/three storey element that has followed the massing established by the adjacent properties to the east to create a cohesive group of townhouses. The second is a single story element that is less visible and creates living areas which stretch along the plot and allow views to the garden; the overall design of this element is to create a 'garden pavilion' feature that addresses the extensive grounds.
- 7.15 When viewed from the street, the scale and roof form of the dwelling are sympathetic to the neighbouring properties, with materials in keeping with the appearance of these properties. The brick façade has been designed to relate to Wantage Hall, in particular the diamond brick detailing that is similar to that used on the boundary with Wantage Hall. The range of materials to be used have been reduced from that proposed under the pre-application scheme in order to ensure a coherent design.
- 7.16 With regard to the scheme's design, the pre-application response was generally

supportive, stating that the size and character would be suitable and relates to the size and grain of existing plots. It was stated that the proposed 'box dormer' was not supported and suggested that two smaller pitched roof dormers would be more appropriate. The design has been amended to take account of this concern, with two smaller rear facing dormers now proposed. Whilst these would have flat roofs, it is considered that these would be more in keeping with the area as they would be similar in design to a rear facing dormer at No.41 Upper Redlands Road.

- 7.17 Concerns were also highlighted regarding the size of both the two storey flat roof element and the side and rear wrap around element. The two storey element has been reduced in size and as a result now has the same depth as a two storey rear element at the adjoining property of No.43 and will now include solar panels. Both the ground floor element and the overhanging canopy have been reduced in depth and flat roof will form a biodiverse green roof. The size is therefore required in order to create the different habitats set out on the plans and increase its ecological value.
- 7.18 Finally, with reference to Local Plan Policy H11, although the site is not a private residential garden as existing the principles outlined are relevant to the proposals. The proposed dwelling would fit comfortably into the site, which is highlighted by the extensive open areas that would remain. It would contribute positively to the character of the area and would provide much-needed family sized housing.
- 7.19 As such, it is considered that the reductions and amendments made following the appeal and again in respect of the pre-application advice have overcome the concerns that led to the refusal of the previous planning application and its dismissal at appeal, which primarily related to its impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and significance of Wantage Hall. The amendments made have enabled a conclusion that the development would not result in any harm to the significance of heritage assets and the design of the dwelling now proposed would provide a high quality design that will be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the area. The proposals will

therefore be in accordance with the relevant policies of the Reading Local Plan, the Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal and the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

- 7.20 The pre-application response sets out that the two neighbouring properties potentially most affected by the development are No.43 and No.45 Upper Redlands Road. As highlighted by the response, given the significant distance to No.45 the development would not result in a material loss of light to or overbearing impact on that property. The only upper floor windows on the western side elevation will be at ground floor level and as such the development would not overlook any part of No.45.
- 7.21 In respect of No.43, the pre-application response highlighted that no part of the development would project forward of the dwelling of rear of the two storey rear element, which will remain the case. The development would therefore not result in any loss of light to or overbearing effect on that property. As no side facing windows would face east towards No.43, there would be no loss of privacy to residents of that property.
- 7.22 The pre-application response highlighted that a condition will be attached restricting the use of the rear flat roof areas for other than for maintenance to prevent an impact on privacy. It is now proposed to include solar panels and a biodiverse green roof on these elements which should ensure that such a condition is unnecessary. However the applicant is happy to accept it if required.
- 7.23 The response also set out that the application plans should clearly show that there would be no breach of a 45 degree line to the nearest habitable room window and regard should be had to the placement of windows. It is evident from the plans that the 45 degree line referred to will not be breached, and as set out above no windows at first floor level or above would overlook the neighbouring properties.

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- 7.24 The response also commented that due to the depth of the single storey element, this would have the potential to be overbearing should there be a change in boundary treatment. The depth of this element has been significantly reduced so that it projects 6.5m beyond the rear of the neighbouring dwelling, and the height of the element closest to the boundary has been reduced so that it would not be visible above the boundary wall. The visible element would be set 3.3m off the boundary with a height of 3m, and it is not considered that this would have an unduly overbearing effect. As such the development would result in an acceptable impact with regard to residential amenity.

Quality of Accommodation

- 7.25 The pre-application response advises that a specific statement is submitted with regard to Policy H5, responding explicitly to the applicable elements of the policy.
- 7.26 Policy H5(a) requires new building housing outside the central area, which includes the proposed development, to comply with the nationally described space standards. The pre-application response states that the submission should show that the proposed units and bedroom sizes will meet the standards, including details on ceiling heights for rooms in the roofspace.
- 7.27 The dwelling would provide approximately 330m² of floor area over three floors, which would be well in excess of the minimum floor internal floor areas expected by the national standards. With regard to the two bedrooms in the roof space, both would have a usable area (i.e. above 1.5m in headroom) of approximately 14m², again in excess of the requirements of the standards. The headroom is illustrated on the plans. The development will therefore adhere to the nationally described space standards.
- 7.28 In respect of the water efficiency requirements of Policy H5(b) and the 19% improvement in emission rate in H5(d), a number of measures are set out within the Design and Access Statement as to how the best possible sustainable approach will be achieved. A key element to this will be the solar panels that

are proposed for the roof. The Statement also confirms that level access is provided to the ground floor areas. The development therefore complies with the applicable elements of Policy H5.

- 7.29 The development would provide suitable outlook, ventilation and daylighting to all habitable rooms. Large amenity areas will be provided, and the enjoyment of these will be highlighted by the glazing to the side and rear. The proposal will provide a high quality scheme for future occupants of the property.

Highways and Transportation

- 7.30 The application is accompanied by a Transport Statement Letter (Pegasus Group, January 2021) which sets out in detail the highways and transportation matters in respect of the proposal.
- 7.31 The site is in a highly sustainable location to the south of Reading Town Centre with a number of shops and other amenities located within ten minutes' walk of the site, and the shops at Christchurch Road only a five minute walk away. Infrastructure within the vicinity of the site is also appropriate for cyclists.
- 7.32 The site also benefits from bus stops on Redlands Road which provide frequent services to central Reading as well as other destinations. These provide convenient access to other amenities within the town centre, and also Reading Station for destinations further afield. It is therefore considered that there are a range of sustainable transport options within close proximity to the site, the result of which means that occupants of the development would not be reliant on the private car.
- 7.33 Access is proposed via a 6.5m wide dropped kerb, and the visibility splays shown on the plan accompanying the letter illustrate that appropriate visibility will be provided as has previously been agreed with the Council's Highways Officer. Tracking plans show that on site turning will enable cars to enter and exit the site in a forward gear.

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- 7.34 The parking standards require two parking spaces to serve the development, which are not expressed as a maximum within the relevant SPD. The required car parking spaces will be provided on the permeable driveway forward of the dwelling. A shed will provide the required cycle storage of two spaces, with a refuse storage area also provided to the front within 15m of the access as required. The development would not result in a substantial increase in trips and as such would not result in a significant impact on the local highway network.
- 7.35 In respect of the pre-application response, it was indicated that 2.4m x 43m visibility splays would need to be illustrated, however as highlighted within the letter due to the low speeds and light traffic levels on Upper Redlands Road a lower standard of 2m x 43m has previously been agreed as appropriate with the Highways Officer which is the visibility provided.
- 7.36 The development would therefore not result in any transportation or highway safety concerns, and would be sustainably located to ensure that residents are not reliant on the private car.

Trees and Landscaping

- 7.37 The pre-application acknowledges that the Conservation Area affords a certain level of protection to the trees on site, and the loss of any trees required in order to facilitate the development should be mitigated with replacement planting to ensure that there would not be a net loss in tree cover. The loss of trees was previously been highlighted as a concern in respect of the refused scheme.
- 7.38 The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement together with tree protection, planting and removal plans and a soft landscaping scheme all undertaken by MWA Arboriculture. The documents set out that T1 (Apple) and a Section of G1 (Sycamore, Ash) are required to be removed to accommodate the development. T1 is considered a low value tree in the context of the site, categorised as a C1 tree. The group

G1 as a whole is categorised B2, however the proposals only require removal of a small section of this. As set out on the landscape proposal and tree planting, plan, the introduction of several young trees across the site results in a net gain of trees planted, to mitigate against the removal.

7.39 The pre-application response set out that a Tulip and Lime trees are of particular note, which is supported by the findings of the tree survey which categorises these as B1 trees. No trees of such category are proposed to be removed, and the tree protection plan sets out how these will be protected during construction. Some minor crown lifting is required to the Tulip.

7.40 In summary, although some tree removal is needed to facilitate the development, the proposals would deliver a net gain of trees on site through the implementation of the landscaping scheme. The development would therefore not result in a loss of trees that would be harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Ecology

7.41 The previous application was supported by an Ecology Report which concluded that the site as a whole was unlikely to be used by protected species, with the exception of nesting birds within the trees. The pre-application response confirmed that the Council's Ecologist considers it unlikely that that conditions on site would have changes significantly since the time of the survey. Information to ensure that nesting birds will not be harmed can be secured via condition.

7.42 Biodiversity enhancements will be provided in the form of a biodiverse green roof, which was recommended within the pre-application response.

Affordable Housing

7.43 Policy H3 requires a financial contribution to be made that will enable the

equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough. This is calculated as 5% of the Gross Development Value (GDV) based on valuations of the development by estate agencies.

7.44 Three valuations from three different estate agencies are provided, which value the development at £1,250,000, between £1,300,000 and £1,400,000 and between £1,250,000 and £1,500,000. If the median figure is taken for the two 'between' valuations, then these become £1,350,000 and £1,375,000 and the average of all three valuations then equates to £1,325,000 which has therefore been taken as the GDV.

7.45 The affordable housing contribution has been calculated at 5% of the GDV of £1,325,000. This results in £66,250 as a contribution to affordable housing. Once agreed, a draft Section 106 Agreement will be submitted in order to secure the required contribution.

8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 The application submitted to the Council seeks to address the previous concerns that led to the dismissal of the previous proposals at appeal. The development now proposed has responded to pre-application advice from the Council and reflects feedback from the local community.

8.2 The previous concerns have primarily been addressed through the reduction in the number of dwellings from four to one, and the focus on a high quality design for the development now proposed that would respond to and enhance the character and appearance of the Redlands Conservation Area. The proposals have been assessed as having no harm on designated heritage assets and would provide a high level of amenity for future occupants without compromising the amenities of neighbours.

8.3 Acceptable access and parking in accordance with Council standards is proposed, and the development would result in a net gain in tree cover on site.

An affordable housing contribution will be secured in accordance with Council policy. As such, the development is considered to be in accordance with relevant Development Plan policy and national guidance and as such Reading Borough Council are respectfully requested to **approve** the application, thereby granting planning permission for the proposed development.