

Planning Statement

Proposed Development.

7 Hawthorne Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 6LY

November 2021

Ref: 21105

Rev: B

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I. INTRODUCTION

- I.1 Plande has been appointed to submit a supporting statement for the redevelopment of 7 Hawthorne Road, Caversham, Reading.
- I.2 This statement, which should be read in conjunction with the supporting information submitted with the application, aims to give an appraisal of the planning issues and merits in context with planning and other policies, guidance, and material considerations.
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2. LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The existing cleared site previously comprised a one and a half storey dwelling on a generally flat site within an established residential area featuring a variety of scales and designs.
- 2.2 The site has access to the front, onto Hawthorne Road and is bounded by typical residential boundary treatments. A public footpath runs alongside the entire length of one boundary.
- 2.3 It is suggested the site is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of community services, amenities, and facilities as well as the main road network.
- 2.4 It is understood that the area originally featured small properties on large plots developed for Yorkshire and Welsh Miners in the 1920s. The idea was that the large plots would enable them to be self-sufficient. Since then, almost all of the estate has been developed through plots being split and new properties built evidenced by the numerous property numbers with 'a' 'b' and 'c' suffixes. Those properties that haven't been demolished and rebuilt have on the whole been substantially extended. Consequently, there is a varied mix of larger property styles throughout the immediate area.
- 2.5 The application site is not within a flood risk area or any particular local plan designation.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 A planning history search illustrates the following relevant applications for the site as a whole:

App. No.:	161484	Site Address:	7 Hawthorne Road Caversham Reading
Description:	Discharge of condition no.s 3 (Materials), 6 (CMS), 7 (Noise and Dust) and 10 (Landscaping) of planning permission ref. 151114		

App. No.:	151114	Site Address:	7 Hawthorne Road Caversham Reading
Description:	Replace existing residential dwelling with new build residential home		

App. No.:	080151	Site Address:	7 Hawthorne Road Caversham Reading
Description:	Demolition of an existing dwelling and the construction of a pair of two-storey semi-detached dwellings with associated car parking and amenity spaces.		

- 3.2 It is understood that the recent permission, 151114, was implemented and remains extant.

4. USE AND AMOUNT

- 4.1 This planning application is for the redevelopment of the site for the erection of a pair of two storey semi-detached dwellings and garage structure to the rear with associated access, servicing, and landscaping.
- 4.2 The siting, scale and massing of the proposed two dwellings remain broadly similar to the extant approval, albeit that the current proposals have a smaller footprint and a hipped roof from those proposals.
- 4.3 The applicant is intending to keep the right-hand side of the semi-detached building for themselves and requires additional garage and incidental accommodation, including a garden room, gym and home office. This structure is located to the rear of the plot, with access provided alongside the proposed dwelling.
- 4.4 It is suggested that the use of the site is the same as existing and will remain in keeping with and complementary to the vitality and mix within the area and will not have a negative impact on the amenity of any surrounding properties.
- 4.1 It is suggested that the density, scale, and amount of accommodation are appropriate for the site, the wider area and that the neighbourhood services can support the proposals.

5. ARBORICULTURAL & LANDSCAPING

- 5.1 The landscaping on-site will predominantly remain as extant permission, with minor changes proposed to the hardstanding and soft landscaping areas around the building, primarily to facilitate the amended footprint of the building and to provide access to the proposed garage to the rear. A tree will be planted on site and laurel hedging is proposed to the front boundary.

6. WASTE MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 No changes are proposed to the existing refuse collection arrangements for the property generally, other than to facilitate the additional dwelling and configuration of the site. Refuse and recycling bins will be put out on the appropriate day for collection. Surfaces that containers need to move over to be of smooth continuous finish and free from steps or other obstacles. Any steps shall incorporate a drop kerb.

7. ACCESS & PARKING

- 7.1 It is suggested that the vehicular and pedestrian access will generally remain as per the extant permission (151114) with the existing access being retained for one property and new access to Hawthorne Road for the other property.
- 7.2 It is proposed that the parking and cycling provision is appropriate for its location and scale of accommodation and complies with the relevant local standards, policies and remains similar to the existing situation. It is suggested that the provision of 2 cycle parking spaces per dwelling can be provided within the private amenity space to the rear of both properties.

- 7.3 As part of the recent application the following additional comments were received:

"The site is provided with a minimum of 2 car parking spaces which complies with the Councils policy.

The property is provided with a garage and a shed both of which could accommodate 2 bicycles so is therefore acceptable.

Refuse storage can be accommodated on the driveway and this again is acceptable."

- 7.4 Within the site, a driveway is proposed for access to the detached outbuilding to the rear of the site. A hard standing area is proposed for additional parking and manoeuvring of vehicles.
- 7.5 The proposals include electric car charging points, which it is assumed will be secured via conditions being added to any planning permission.
- 7.6 Access internally and externally will be fully compliant with the Building Regulations, including Part M.

8. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 8.1 In accordance with S.38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, this application should be determined in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes of this determination, the Development Plan of relevance comprises:

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019
the relevant supplementary guidance
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2019
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011
Affordable Housing SPD 2013
Section 106 Planning Obligations SPD 2013
Design Guide to House Extensions SPD 2021

- 8.2 It is suggested the relevant policies of the Local Plan are as follows:

CC1: Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
CC2: Sustainable Design And Construction
CC3: Adaptation To Climate Change
CC5: Waste Minimisation And Storage
CC6: Accessibility And The Intensity Of Development
CC7: Design And The Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
CC9: Securing Infrastructure
EN12: Biodiversity And The Green Network
EN16: Pollution And Water Resources
H1: Provision Of Housing
H2: Density And Mix
H3: Affordable Housing
H5: Standards For New Housing
H10: Private And Communal Outdoor Space
H11: Development of Private Residential Gardens
H14: Suburban Renewal and Regeneration
TR3: Access, Traffic And Highway-Related Matters
TR5: Car And Cycle Parking And Electric Vehicle Charging

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 8.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2012 and revised in July 2021. The NPPF aims to ensure there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that positive planning solutions are found to ensure development is brought forward. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions as outlined in Paragraph 2 of the NPPF and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 8.4 Sustainable development is broadly defined in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF as having three overarching objectives:

- a) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) An environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 8.5 The NPPF sets out Government planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. For decision-taking this means:
- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
 - Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, grant planning permission unless:
 - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the framework as a whole; or
 - Specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.
- 8.6 Paragraph 20 outlines that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for community facilities, such as health, education and cultural infrastructure.
- 8.7 Paragraph 38 states that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and should work proactively with applicants to secure development that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.
- 8.8 Paragraph 47 states that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.9 Paragraph 55 states that local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions.

9. SCHEME ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The following section will consider the compliance of the proposal with the Development Plan policies and material considerations for the erection of two dwellings on the site. It provides an analysis of the main planning matters related to the principle of the proposed development.

PRINCIPLE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 9.2 At Paragraph 7, the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 further states that, at a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 9.3 At Paragraph 11, the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which requires decision takers to approve applications that accord with the Development Plan without delay
- 9.4 The NPPF states that LPAs should “encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value”. The NPPF definition of ‘previously developed land’ excludes private residential gardens. Therefore, it is clear that

the priority for development should be on previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings. The proposal would provide additional dwellings to the Borough's housing stock on previously developed land - the principle of which aligns with the broad objectives of Policy H1 in assisting in meeting annual housing targets. The application site is also situated within a residential area, whereby its location and accessibility are considered to accord with Policy CC6.

- 9.5 Policy CC1, CC2, H1 and H2 have similar aims and provide more detail including setting out that the proposals in principle, being previously developed land, enabling higher densities and new homes are acceptable. It is suggested that the site and proposals generally are designed appropriately, efficiently and with care, taking into account the effects of climate change.
- 9.6 The previous 2008 permission confirmed the principle of development for "... a pair of two-storey semi-detached dwellings" in a similar configuration, with new and retained access to Hawthorne Road. In addition, the extant 2015 permission confirms that the development of the site for residential is acceptable in principle.
- 9.7 The proposals seek to improve the local built environment, improve the local housing stock and deliver additional homes in accordance with Policy H14.
- 9.8 It is suggested that the design of the proposed dwelling by virtue of its form, bulk, the general design and external materials of the building is in keeping with its surroundings, the existing neighbouring properties and the character and appearance of the area in which it is located and retains the inherent character and scale of the extant permission, which was previously considered acceptable on-site, in accordance with Policy CC7. It is further suggested that the proposals accord with Policy CC6 and H2 in that the scale, density and intensity of development is appropriate to the level of accessibility.
- 9.9 The proposed dwellings are three bedrooms which reflects the aspirations of Policy H2 for family homes.
- 9.10 It is therefore suggested that the proposals are acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with the other policies in the Development Plan and are sustainable development.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 9.11 It is suggested that the relationship with the existing properties remains the generally same as the original dwelling and the extant permission.
- 9.12 It is suggested that the future occupiers have an acceptable outlook, daylighting and access to private amenity space in accordance with Policy H10 and that the proposed dwellings accord with the nationally prescribed space standards.
- 9.13 With regards to the size of the external spaces, the Policy provides a guide that "Useable private outdoor space should be no less than the gross floor area of the dwelling to which it relates (measured externally and including garage space)", however for the equivalent 3 bedroom flat the size requirement is 40 sq m. It is suggested the right-hand side dwelling has an area substantially larger than this requirement and while the left-hand side dwelling has a smaller size, it is suggested that the size is far in excess of the requirement for an equivalent flat.
- 9.14 It is suggested the relationship with neighbouring properties remains broadly similar to the original dwelling and the extant permission and is such that the proposed new dwellings will not cause harm to the amenity of neighbouring owners and occupiers, particularly to a significantly more harmful degree than the extant permission.
- 9.15 The adjoining dwellings do not have habitable windows to the side elevations and the proposed dwellings also do not incorporate habitable room windows to the side elevations. It is anticipated that a planning condition could be added to ensure any side windows are obscured glazed. The adjacent property at no. 10c is separated from the application by a public footpath and electricity substation meaning any development on the site will have less of an impact anyway. As such it is suggested that

there is no direct overlooking or loss of privacy associated with the development and no impact on the outlook for either of the properties.

- 9.16 The proposed dwellings generally reflect the building line at the front and rear and have a smaller footprint than the extant permission. As such it is suggested that the proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties by way of overshadowing, visual dominance, being overbearing, affecting sunlight and daylight.
- 9.17 It is therefore suggested that the proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of adjoining occupiers in accordance with Policy H2 or CC8
- 9.18 It is suggested that the proposals incorporate functional and private external amenity space of adequate size and dimension, suitable for sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying spaces. The design of such spaces generally reflects the extant permission and character of the area generally and is well related to the proposed dwellings enhancing safety and the perception of safety for the occupiers and are not compromised by the relationship with neighbouring properties, for example in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing. The proposals reflect and enhance the existing boundary treatment, which it is suggested avoids the need for additional physical security measures. The proposed outbuilding use is incidental to one of the proposed dwellings and therefore is not tandem development as defined in Policy H11. It is therefore suggested the proposals accord with Policy H10 and H11.

PROPOSED OUTBUILDING

- 9.19 It is suggested that SPD for House Extensions provides some relevant context for the detached outbuilding to the rear of the existing garden although it is appreciated this is not specifically a householder or extension application. The proposed outbuilding could also be seen in the context of Policy H9 as well as the other policies. The structure is intended to function as additional space to the host dwelling providing incidental accommodation.
- 9.20 It is suggested that the proposals broadly comply with section 7.6 "Buildings in the garden" in that the proposals do not project forward of the principal elevation, do not cover more than 50% of the original garden and complement the appearance of the main house while being a subservient structure, (featuring a reduced roof height and small dormers within the roof space) It is suggested that the proposals will not detrimentally impact neighbouring properties in terms of character and appearance, loss of light or amenity and do not unacceptably reduce the garden space of the host dwelling.
- 9.21 It is acknowledged that the proposed structure has a slightly taller eaves height than specified in the guidance, but it is suggested that the location of the structure is such that is a substantial distance away from the immediate neighbouring properties along Hawthorne Road and features no windows at roof level directly overlooking those properties or their private amenity space.
- 9.22 The proposed outbuilding structure is located adjacent to the residential properties along Lowfield Gardens and sits directly next to no. 19. The orientation and location of that property are such that the proposed outbuilding will not materially affect the amenity of this property by virtue of overlooking, overshadowing, loss of privacy or being overbearing.
- 9.23 When considering the proposed structure from Lowfield Gardens, it is suggested the outbuilding will be seen positively within that street scene and seen as a subservient structure that is also screened by existing landscaping.
- 9.24 The nature of the site at no. 7 Hawthorne Road is that the plot is longer than its immediate neighbours and the location and orientation of the outbuilding are such that it overlooks the adjacent open space.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 9.25 In accordance with Policy H3, a financial contribution will be made to enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough and will be secured via the appropriate legal agreement albeit with reference to the fact that one dwelling is to be a self-build dwelling.

STANDARDS

- 9.26 In accordance with Policy H5, it is suggested that the proposed dwellings comply with the nationally-described space standard, will be built to the higher water efficiency standards, will achieve a minimum of 19% improvement in the DER/ TER and will be accessible and adaptable as set out in Building Regulations. It is anticipated that these standards will be secured by way of condition on any approval.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The proposals seek permission for the redevelopment of the site for the erection of a pair of two-storey semi-detached dwellings and outbuilding to the rear with associated access, servicing, and landscaping.
- 10.2 The proposed scheme has been developed to create high quality and energy-efficient family homes, reflecting the needs and requirements of the applicant as well as providing an additional market dwelling to improve the quality of the local housing stock.
- 10.3 The location and design of the proposed dwellings have been influenced by the existing context and extant permission, including the variety and scales of adjoining dwellings.
- 10.4 It is also proposed that the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development applies to this application and as such, it is proposed that any perceived adverse impacts do not outweigh the benefits of the proposals.
- 10.5 In conclusion, in the context of the extant approval, we propose that the site is suitable for residential development and the proposals conform to Government guidance and ensure sustainable and efficient use of the land. The siting, location and space around the dwelling house conform to all Local Policies and SPG's and are in keeping with the character of the area.
- 10.6 It is further suggested that the density, scale, and amount of accommodation are appropriate for the site, and the historic context, as well as the wider site and area as a whole. It is therefore suggested that the proposals are generally in accordance with planning policy and the relevant supplementary planning guidance.
- 10.7 It is therefore respectfully requested that the application be approved. If the Council do not agree with this view, the applicant would seek to engage with the authority to secure a solution, in line with the NPPF.