

DESIGN, ACCESS AND PLANNING STATEMENT



8 Riley Road, Tilehurst, RG30 4UX

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INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, this Design, Access and Planning Statement is submitted to Reading Borough Council in support of an application to redevelop 8 Riley Road, Tilehurst, Reading.

The submitted planning application proposes to demolish an existing detached dwelling and redevelop with 4 residential properties (2 pairs of semi detached).

The design rationale for that proposed has had full regard to pertinent design and access guidance within: -

- The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;
- The CABE (2006) guide to “Design and Access Statements – How to write, read and use them”;
- The DETR (2000) “By Design” and its associated companion guide “Better Places to Live: By Design”;
- The adopted Reading Borough Local Plan (2019); and
- The various supporting reports and plans which accompany this application.

This statement sets out the design rationale for the submitted application in the following manner. Firstly, it will provide an analysis of the site and its surroundings to establish existing constraints and influences for consideration in the design process. It will then examine the site’s planning history and policy context to ensure the design process has regard to any pertinent planning history and conforms to adopted and emerging planning policy guidance on the redevelopment of such sites. The statement will then assess the key design and access considerations for the site and describe how these have been satisfactorily achieved in the submitted proposals.

Finally, the statement will conclude that the submitted application has been well considered and is worthy of being granted planning permission.



SITE APPRAISAL

The site comprises 8 Riley Road, a detached 2 storey dwelling and its curtilage and associated highway land (which is not within the Highway Authority's ownership, rather it is privately held and is to be stopped up) within the established residential area of Tilehurst. The existing dwelling forms part of an estate constructed in circa 1970s, comprising a mixture of two storey detached, semi-detached, link detached and terraced properties. Materials vary

from render to brick and tile hanging, typical with this period of construction.

8 Riley Road is set back from Riley Road by some 4-5m and occupies a plot much larger than the majority in the area. A domestic cherry tree fronts Riley Road.

Access to the property and No.6 is from Riley Road. The coming and going of vehicles between the two properties is therefore established on the site's northern boundary. Pedestrian access is also taken from Riley Road.

There is a slight fall in the site from Riley Road eastwards, to the rear where the established building line of 2 storey detached and semi-detached properties in Atherton Close is visible from its garden.





SITE HISTORY

There is no relevant site history. It is however worth noting that an appeal was allowed for the redevelopment of 4 Riley Road with 5 dwellings on 12th March 2008. The Inspector concluded that the proposals would not be in conflict with the Local Plan Policies HSG5 and CUS14. He also anticipated that further residential development would take place on adjacent plots e.g. Nos. 6 and 8.



SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The site is well located within the established residential area of Tilehurst. Tilehurst Village Centre is located some 15 minutes' walk from the site, where there are a wide range of shops and other services for day to day use. There are also three schools and a recreation ground within a short walk of the site. Norcot Road is a public transport corridor served by the No. 17 bus service,

providing access to Reading and other destinations in the wider area. The No. 17 bus route is a flagship bus route running approximately every 7 minutes going to the City Centre, railway station, the college and up to the Three Tuns at Earley.

8 Riley Road represents one of 2 detached dwellings set on more spacious plots, in an otherwise compact estate layout. Nos. 8 and 4 were former MOD dwellings. A development of 5 dwellings was allowed on appeal in the 1980s on what was previously 4 Riley Road.

The wider estate was built in the 1970s and as a whole exhibits a mixed character, with repetitive house types / development patterns of closely spaced 2 storey detached / linked detached dwellings (i.e. 1 and 2 Riley Road). The predominant development pattern is closely spaced gable ended 2 storey semi-detached dwellings with closely spaced detached / link detached dwellings adjacent. Whilst terracing is largely focused in two specific areas to the north and south of the site, there are examples of terracing in the wider area.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(b) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The statutory development plan for the purpose of this application comprises: -

- Reading Borough Local Plan adopted November 2019
- Reading Borough Site and Detailed Policies Document

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC1	Principle in Favour of Suitable Development
Policy CC2	Sustainable Design and Construction
Policy CC3	Adaption to Climate Change
Policy CC4	Design and Public Realm
Policy CC8	Safeguarding Amenity
Policy EN12	Biodiversity and The Green Network
Policy EN14	Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Policy H1	Provision of Housing
Policy H2	Density and Mix
Policy H3	Standards for New Housing
Policy H11	Development of Private residential Gardens
Policy H14	Suburban Renewal and Regeneration
Policy TR1	Achieving the Transport Strategy
Policy TR3	Assess Traffic and Highway Related Matters

Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policy Document

The following policies are considered relevant to the proposal:

Policy SD1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Policy DM4	Safeguarding Amenity
Policy DM6	Affordable Housing
Policy DM10	Private & Communal Outdoor Space
Policy DN11	Development of Private Residential Garden Land
Policy DN17	Green Network

Policy SA11 Settlement Boundary

Policy SD1 states that a positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Policy DM4 explains development will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

Policy DM6 sets out the affordable housing provision. On sites of 1-4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough.

Policy DM10 states dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, refuse storage etc. The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity.

Policy DN11 states proposals for new residential development that includes land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private

residential gardens will be acceptable where they meet the nine criteria set out within the policy.

Policy DM17 explains the identified Green Network comprises Local Wildlife Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Areas of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and designated open space plus both existing and potential Green Links. It also includes Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.

Policy SA11 states the Settlement Boundary of Reading is defined on the Proposals Map. The site lies within the settlement boundary where the principle of additional residential development in such a site is considered acceptable.

Policy SA16 explains Important areas of public and Strategic Open Space will be protected from development. Proposals that would result in the loss of any of these areas of open space, or jeopardise their use or enjoyment by the public, will not be permitted. The application site is not identified in any such area in the proposals map of the Local Plan.

Policy SA17 identifies those areas defined as Major Landscape Features.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019)

As well as emerging Development Plans, there are other material considerations, Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that all material considerations are taken into account. Material considerations in this instance relate primarily to the NPPF.

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The sections of most relevance to this proposal are summarised below.

Paragraph 7 explains the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These comprise economic, social and environmental objectives.

Paragraph 11 highlights the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means that development proposals that accord with an up to date Development Plan should be approved "without delay".

Paragraph 59 confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes.

Paragraph 68 states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly.

Paragraph 118 explains that planning decisions should support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.

Paragraph 124 states "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".

Paragraph 127 states planning decisions should ensure that developments optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The site is located within the settlement boundary and within an already established residential area. The principle of new

residential development is therefore acceptable. This was the case with the redevelopment of 4 Riley Road (as per policy CS6) and SA11).

Furthermore, the NPPF makes it clear that: -

- It is the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes (paragraph 59);
- Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting housing requirements (paragraph 68); and
- Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs (paragraph 121).

The proposed development of 4 dwellings will also contribute towards meeting the Borough's housing need. It also accords with Policy CS14 as a form of housing provision coming forward on small previously developed windfall sites.

Impact of the Proposal of the Surrounding Area

The proposed development comprises the erection of four dwellings, 3-bed (3 person) houses. In terms of form and configuration, the proposed dwellings follow the staggering of terraces style of development to the south west of the site.

The scheme has been designed in response to the local vernacular and character of the surrounding area. The drawings submitted with this application illustrate the proposal in more detail.

The proposed materials and design have been carefully chosen in order to ensure it matches the surrounding properties. This includes the use of :

- Profiled red or brown concrete tiles
- White render - walls
- Red brick - walls
- White UPVC - windows
- Timber - doors

The windows have been carefully positioned so as to avoid any overlooking into the neighbouring properties.

The plot is of a sufficient size to ensure adequate spacing between the proposed development and No.6 avoiding overbearing and visual dominance.

It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with policies CS7, CS15 and DM4 in that the scheme maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area though ensuring high quality design. It also avoids detrimental impacts on the amenities and living environment of adjoining occupiers.

Policy DM11 sets out the criteria in which such development of existing residential plots is acceptable. The scheme has been designed in a way which accords with each of these criteria, many of which have been discussed above and set out below: -

- The proposal makes a positive contribution to the character of the area:

The scheme maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area through ensuring high quality design. It is proposed to use similar design styles and materials to that of the existing context, including render (Riley Road frontage) and red brick (Delaney Close) pitched and tiled roofs a white render and red brick and

concrete tiles as is used elsewhere, therefore integrating with the surrounding area.

- The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed:

There is sufficient space at the site for the proposal development, consisting of two, 2-storey dwellings at 70 square metres each. Both dwellings have a private garden to the rear and appropriate parking spaces (which accord with Reading's parking Standards and policy CS24).

- The proposal includes appropriate access:

Appropriate access is provided to plots 3 and 4 as well as the proposed garages for Plots 1 and 2.

- The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem development:

The development does not result in tandem development as can be seen from the submitted plans.

- The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas and avoids the need for additional security measures:

No additional security measures would be required as a result of the proposed development. The proposed dwellings will sit well in this corner plot and will not expose existing private boundaries.

- The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants:

The amenity of adjacent occupants will be respected. For example, the windows have been carefully positioned so as to avoid any overlooking into the neighbouring properties. Therefore, no detrimental impact to the amenity and living environment of adjacent or nearby occupants will be caused as a result of the proposal.

- The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing:

As also explained in Policy CS15, development should provide an appropriate range of housing opportunities in terms of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, and that this will be informed by both the characteristics of the area and the need to minimise detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers. The scheme comprises two 3-bed (4 person) dwellings and are of a similar size to

other dwellings along Riley Road, therefore fitting in with the local area. The proposed dwellings are also considered to be family sized, as stated in Policy DM8 "... suitable for family occupation with a minimum of two bedrooms".

- The development would not have an adverse impact on biodiversity:

The preliminary ecological appraisal prepared by Johns Associates accompanies the application. It concludes that the site is of low ecological value. The development proposal would not result in an adverse impact on biodiversity. For example, Louisehill Copse Local Wildlife Site, is situated to the rear of the site. The development proposal would not result in any negative impacts on this natural asset.

- The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area:

The scheme has been designed in response to the local vernacular and character of the surrounding area. The proposed dwellings will sit comfortably within its corner plot and the proposed materials to match the existing

surrounding dwellings will ensure the proposal blends in with the area. The well-designed and in-character proposal therefore ensure the satisfactory development of a wider area is not prejudiced.

Policy CS38 relates to trees, hedges and woodlands. The accompany Arboricultural Assessment confirm that there are no trees in the site itself and that the development would not impact upon the root protection areas of the trees. The Assessment confirms that provided the tree protection measure are implemented, the proposed development is arboriculturally acceptable.

As stated Louisehill is situated to the rear of the site. The development proposal would not result in any negative impacts on this natural asset. The closest part of the proposed development (the north east corner of H2) is 3 metres distance from the boundary of the site, providing a buffer between the area and the proposed development, therefore maintaining, protecting and safeguarding the area. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with policies DM17, SA16, SA17, CS36 and CS37.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development is acceptable in principle, being located within the existing built up area and provides 4 dwellings in a relatively sustainable location.

It represents a deliverable site which would contribute to delivering new housing in the Borough.

The erection of four residential dwellings in this location will ensure a more effective use of land within an urban area, whilst at the same time ensuring no adverse impacts on the adjacent Local Wildlife Area of Louisehill.

The accompanying Arboricultural Implications Assessment confirms that provided the tree protection measure as set out within the Assessment are implemented, the proposed development is arboriculturally acceptable.

The proposed scheme is a well-designed form of development which is character with its surroundings and respects the amenities of exiting dwellings.

In accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF and policy SD1 of the Reading Borough Sites and Details Policy Document, this proposal should therefore be approved without delay.