



Project Management



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Planning Statement

Land Adj 20 Chazey Road
Caversham
Reading

Prepared on Behalf of: Mr & Mrs Rosier

Ref: 15172

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Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS	2
3. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL	4
4. PLANNING HISTORY	6
5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT	7
The Development Plan	7
National Planning Policy Framework	9
Other Material Policy Consideration.....	11
Appropriate Weight	11
6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS	13
Principle of Development	13
Design and Impact on the Character of the Area.....	13
Highways and Transportation	15
Impact on Amenity	15
Ecology	16
Affordable Housing	17
The Objectives of Sustainable Development	17
An Economic Objective.....	17
A Social Objective.....	17
An Environmental Objective.....	17
7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	19
 Figure 1 - Site Location (taken from Google Maps)	 2
Figure 2 - Proposed Site Layout (extracted from submitted plans)	4

Executive Summary

Evans Jones Ltd have been instructed by Mr & Mrs Rosier to produce a Planning Statement to accompany an application submitted by Absolute Architecture to Reading Borough Council for the demolition of the existing building and erection of a new dwelling and associated work on land adjacent to 20 Chazey Road, Reading, RG4 7DS.

The application site is within the urban area of Caversham set along the residential road of Chazey Road. Chazey Road is suburban in character with a mix of detached dwellings and strong landscape features including a woodland area directly adjacent to the application site.

The proposal is acceptable as it provides for a contemporary dwelling that suits the local context by virtue of being an individually designed dwelling set among other individually designed dwellings. There is no harm to neighbouring amenity and sufficient outdoor amenity space provided with the new dwelling. Sufficient on-site parking is provided, and no highway safety issues caused by virtue of traffic generation.

The proposal is acceptable in principle complying with the relevant Development Plan policies. This Statement has assessed all the other relevant planning considerations and found that the scheme is fully compliant with the Development Plan and other material policy considerations, including national policy and the pursuit of sustainable development.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the full planning application seeking permission for the erection of a new dwelling and associated work on land adjacent to 20 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DS.

1.2 This Statement sets out the main planning considerations and justifications for the scheme. In support of the application, this Statement demonstrates that the proposed scheme is acceptable in principle and expands upon issues relating to, *inter alia*, design, impact on the character of the area, highways and transportation, the impact on amenity, ecology, and affordable housing provision.

1.3 The application submitted comprises the following plans and documents.

- Drawing No. 386 001 – Exg. Location Plan
- Drawing No. 386 002 – Exg. Site Plan
- Drawing No. 386 004 – Exg. Plan and Elevations
- Drawing No. 386 040 – Pro. Site Plan
- Drawing No. 386 050 – Pro. Ground Floor Plans
- Drawing No. 386 051 – Pro. Roof Plan
- Drawing No. 386 060 – Pro. Elevations
- Drawing No. 386 061 – Pro. Elevations
- Drawing No. 386 062 – Pro. Elevations
- Drawing No. 386 070 – Pro. Sections
- Drawing No. 386 080 – Pro. Visualisations
- Drawing No. 386 081 – Pro. Visualisations
- Drawing No. 386 082 – Pro. Visualisations
- Design and Access Statement produced by Absolute Architecture

1.4 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the plans and documents that make up the application as a whole.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site is located on land adjacent to 20 Chazey Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7DS.
- 2.2 The site comprises a disused pumping station, several underground chambers and associated curtilage. The site can be seen in its context in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1 - Site Location (taken from Google Maps)

- 2.3 Access to the site is currently obtained via Chazey Road with a pre-existing dropped kerb. Chazey Road is residential in nature with no parking restrictions and footpaths on either side of the carriageway.
- 2.4 The character of the area is suburban in nature with Chazey Road being dominated by large detached dwellings. There is no fixed vernacular in Chazey Road with the dwellings present being a mixture of appearances and designs. The built form is linear with relatively consistent building lines on either side of the road. Whilst the majority of the dwellings are two storeys in height, there are also a number of bungalows present.

- 2.5 In addition to the built form, the character of Chazey Road is informed by the presence of a number of large trees that are situated to the front of a number of properties. Additionally, the woodland area to the north and east of the application site forms a strong character feature of Chazey Road and the surrounding area (noted on the Proposal Maps as a Major Landscape Feature).
- 2.6 It is also noted that there are a number of public opens spaces and leisure facilities within the local area, including but not limited to Mapledurham Playground and Lawn tennis Club, Albert Road Park, Caversham Heath Golf Course, Bugs Bottom and High Down Sport and Leisure.
- 2.7 The site is within the urban area of Caversham and is not affected by any site-specific heritage, landscape or environmental designations.

3. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing building and erection of a new dwelling and associated work. The proposed site layout is shown below in Figure 2.



Figure 2 - Proposed Site Layout (extracted from submitted plans)

- 3.2 The proposal will include the demolition of the existing pumping station, which is a pitched roof single storey structure. The proposed new dwelling will have a contemporary appearance comprising two distinct sections, one under a mono pitched roof, with the other under a flat roof. When viewed from Chazey Road the dwelling will appear one and a half storeys in height but due to the slope on the site will provide two storeys of accommodation to the rear.
- 3.3 As described previously Chazey Road is made up of a mix of dwelling types. This is also reflected in facing materials with no defining palette of materials in the street scene. There is a mixture of materials including brick, render and cladding. For the proposed dwelling a combination of materials is suggested to break up the massing of the building. The elevations will be clad with a combination of knapped flint, render and green tinted zinc. The same zinc will be used on the pitched roof and the terraces will be clad in a composite timber decking board with glazed balustrades. The driveway and terraces to the front

of the building will be paved to a fall, with surface water collected and drained.

- 3.4 Internally the dwelling provides 2 bedrooms, an office, utility room and bathroom space at lower ground floor level. At first floor level is an open plan kitchen, dining, living room, an entrance hall and a WC. The dwelling provides for 182.58 sqm of internal floor space.
- 3.5 With regard to amenity space the dwelling will be provided with a rear garden space at lower ground floor level, a terrace at ground floor level and a further terrace at roof level. The total amount of amenity space included with the dwelling equates to 108.93 sqm.
- 3.6 The proposed dwelling is set back from Chazey Road which allows for the provision of 2 off road parking spaces. Access to the terrace area is also provided to the front of the dwelling.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 A review of the Council's online planning register shows the following applications which are of relevance to this application:

- Application 142025 was submitted in December 2014 for the demolition of pumping station and erection of 3-bedroom dwelling house at the site. The application was withdrawn prior to determination.

4.2 Given the application was not determined it does not provide any significant material considerations for this application. However, it is noted that the application was accompanied by an ecology survey produced by Stacey Dawn Waring. The ecology report found that there were no protected species on site and very low potential for habitats.

5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan

- 5.2 The Development Plan policy context for the site and the surrounding area is provided by the Reading Borough Local Plan Adopted 2019 (Local Plan).

- 5.3 The policies that are of relevance to this application are:

- Policy CC1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy CC7 – Design and the public realm
- Policy CC8 – Safeguarding amenity
- Policy EN13 – Major landscape features and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Policy H1 – Housing provision
- Policy H3 – Affordable housing
- Policy H5 – Standards for new housing
- Policy H10 – Private and communal outdoor space.
- Policy TR3 – Access, traffic and highway related matters
- Policy TR5 – Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging

- 5.4 Policy CC1 of the Local Plan effectively echoes the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 5.5 Policy relating to design is provided by CC7. This policy seeks high quality design from all forms of development.

- 5.6 With regard to the safeguarding of amenity, Policy CC8 is clear that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties.
- 5.7 Policy EN13 is clear that planning permission will not be granted for any development that would detract from the character or appearance of a Major Landscape Feature.
- 5.8 Policy H1 confirms that provision will be made for 15,847 new homes (averaging 689 homes per annum) in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036.
- 5.9 The provision of affordable housing is covered by Policy H3. 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.
- 5.10 Policy H5 sets out standards for new build dwellings. As part of this, dwellings outside of the central area will be required to meet the National Space Standards, be built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations, achieve at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in the 2013 Building Regulations, and be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations, unless it is built in line with M4(3).
- 5.11 Policy H10 requires dwellings to be provided with functional private or communal open space, including green space wherever possible, that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space.
- 5.12 In terms of access, highway and transport related matters, Policy TR3 is clear that proposals which result in new or altered access to the public highway will be considered against their effect on safety, congestion and the environment.

- 5.13 Finally, Policy TR5 states that 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. Furthermore, electric car charging points should be provided for off street car parking spaces associated with new homes.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.14 The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) was revised on 19th February 2019. The Framework sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England and details how these are expected to be applied. It is, in itself, a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 5.15 The Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means *"approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay"* or *"where there are no relevant Development Plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless: i) the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or ii) any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework as a whole."*
- 5.16 The Framework defines the three overarching objectives of sustainable development as:

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 at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

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 a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being;*

An Environmental Objective – *to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

- 5.17 These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of policies in the Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 5.18 Paragraph 212 of the Framework advises that the policies within the Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication.
- 5.19 Paragraph 213 of the Framework advises that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to publication. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with the Framework and that the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.
- 5.20 Section 5 of the Framework relates to the delivery of a sufficient supply of new homes. Paragraph 59 supports the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. It reaffirms the importance of a sufficient amount and variety of land coming forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

- 5.21 Paragraph 68 highlights the important contribution that small and medium sized sites can play in meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should, inter alia, support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.
- 5.22 Section 11 of the Framework places emphasis on making effective use of land. Paragraph 117 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.23 Section 12 of the Framework provides context to design within planning. Paragraph 124 states *“The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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.”*

Other Material Policy Consideration

- 5.24 Outside of the Development Plan and the Framework, there are other material policy considerations that need to be discussed in relation to this development. In this case, the other material policy considerations are:
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document
 - Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document

Appropriate Weight

- 5.25 Regarding the weight that is given, Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, determination of applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, full weight is given to the Local Plan as it forms the Development Plan.

- 5.26 As it forms the basis of Government policy for planning applications, a high degree of weight should be given to the policies of the Framework. This should not be at the expense of the Development Plan since it is up to date.
- 5.27 Since they do not form part of the Development Plan, limited weight can be given to the aforementioned SPDs/SPGs. However, they are material considerations and should not be overlooked.

6. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 Having regard for the proposed development; the sites planning history; the relevant planning policy context; and all other material issues; the main planning considerations for the determination of this application relate to design and impact on the character of the area, highways and transportation, the impact on amenity, ecology, and affordable housing provision
- 6.2 This section also considers the proposal against the objectives of sustainable development as set out within the Framework.

Principle of Development

- 6.3 The application site is within the settlement boundary of Reading and thus part of the urban area. The spatial strategy set out in the Local Plan, states at paragraph 3.2.8 *“Development opportunities within the West, North and East of Reading are more limited, with these areas largely consisting of existing residential areas. As primarily residential areas, any development will be generally residential in nature, with some development for community uses. Around 2,400 homes (15% of the total to be provided in the plan period) can be provided in West Reading, with around 700 (5%) in North Reading and 1,100 (7%) in East Reading. The amount of residential in West Reading is substantially higher than the others simply because this is the largest and most populous of the areas and is where the majority of small housing sites have historically tended to come forward.”*
- 6.4 The site constitutes previously developed land and is unconstrained by virtue of a lack of any site-specific designations. These factors, together with the fact that the site is in the settlement boundary, confirm that the provision of a new dwelling on this site is wholly acceptable in principle.

Design and Impact on the Character of the Area

- 6.5 Policy in relation to design is principally provided by CC7 of the Local Plan and the relevant sections of the Framework. In essence, both seek to achieve high quality design from all forms of development. Also, of relevance are Policies H5 and H10 that provide for the housing standards and amenity considerations respectively.

- 6.6 As described the proposal is for a contemporary dwelling that will utilise a mixed pallet of facing materials. The application site is relatively modest being some 279 sqm in size. The proposed dwelling has responded to this with an appropriate site coverage and intelligent use of space with multiple floor levels that respond to the topography of the site. This results in a dwelling that is of a suitable size and scale for the plot which it occupies.
- 6.7 The National Space Standards would require 102 sqm of floor space for a 6-person, 3 bedroomed dwelling. The proposed dwelling shows 2 bedrooms (although the office could potentially be used as a bedroom) and provides for 182.58 sqm of internal floor space. The dwelling therefore easily complies with the National Space Standards. Additionally, the dwelling has been designed to meet Part M of Building Regulations.
- 6.8 As part of the proposal the dwelling has been designed to provide a suitable level of amenity space for future occupiers. There are three outdoor amenity areas comprising a rear garden space at lower ground floor level, a terrace at ground floor level and a further terrace at roof level. The total amount of amenity space included with the dwelling equates to 108.93 sqm.
- 6.9 In addition to the amenity space provided with the proposed dwelling, as previous described within this statement, the site is in close proximity to other public open spaces and leisure facilities. Thus, future residents will have a wide variety of options to them for utilising various amenity facilities.
- 6.10 The use of a mixed pallet of facing material is reflective of the local area which has no defined vernacular. Furthermore, the mixed pallet of materials helps to break up the mass of the dwelling but also adds interest to the overall appearance.
- 6.11 The character of Chazey Road is very much suburban with predominantly large detached dwellings of varying designs set back within their plots forming a relatively uniform building line. Whilst the proposed dwelling is generally smaller than those in the vicinity it is still an individual, detached dwelling set back within its plot. It respects the relative uniformity of the building line but also relates to the context of the adjacent woodland.

- 6.12 The proposal provides for a high-quality design that has had clear regard to its surroundings whilst providing a dwelling of contemporary design features. The proposed dwelling is therefore compliant with Policy CC7 of the Local Plan and the relevant considerations of the Framework.

Highways and Transportation

- 6.13 Policy relating to highways and transportation considerations is provided by TR3 and TR5 of the Local Plan, the Framework, and the Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document.
- 6.14 As described earlier within this Statement the application site already benefits from dropped kerb access from Chazey Road. When in use it would have been accessed by Thames Water operatives when necessary. Chazey Road is a typical residential street with no parking restrictions and limited traffic flows. As such, it does not present any clear highway safety issues.
- 6.15 The addition of a single dwelling to Chazey Road will not lead to any significant traffic generation. There is footpath access along the entire length of Chazey Road and there are opportunities to utilise other transport modes other than the private car. Whilst not within the central area of Reading the site still represents an easily accessible location.
- 6.16 Within the scheme provision has been made for 2 on-site parking spaces, this being in line with the requirements of the Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document. Provision is also made for electric car charging points as required by Policy TR5. Additionally, an area is provided for dedicated cycle storage.
- 6.17 The proposal will not lead to any highway safety concerns and can provide suitable on-site parking provision for both cars and cycles. With this being the case, the application is fully compliant with the Local Plan, the Framework and Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document in relation to highway and transportation matters.

Impact on Amenity

- 6.18 Policy H10 of the Local Plan is clear that proposal that lead to detrimental impacts on neighbour amenity or do not provide sufficient amenity for future

occupiers, will not be allowed.

- 6.19 It has been highlighted already within this Statement that the proposed dwelling will be provided with sufficient internal and external space such that it will benefit from suitable amenity levels. Furthermore, there is clear opportunity for residents to utilise existing public facilities within the local area.
- 6.20 Given the proximity of the site, the only neighbouring property that could have its amenity level impacted upon is number 20 Chazey Road which shares the site's western boundary.
- 6.21 There are no windows proposed on the west facing elevation of the proposed dwelling facing 20 Chazey Road. The garden terrace is at approximately the same level as 20 Chazey Road and will be bounded by privacy screens so again offers no opportunity for overlooking. The roof terrace is on the opposite side of the proposed dwelling and thus sheltered by the building itself. Thus, there is no potential for loss of privacy due to overlooking or inter-visibility.
- 6.22 It is noted there is a ground floor window and dormer window on the side elevation of 20 Chazey Road (east facing). Due to the topography of the site (the application site being significantly lower than 20 Chazey Road) and the orientation and separation of the dwellings, there is limited potential for any detrimental loss of light.
- 6.23 There are no other properties in the vicinity of the application site that could potentially be affected by the proposal.
- 6.24 As such, the proposal is acceptable in amenity terms and thus consistent with Policy H10 of the Local Plan.

Ecology

- 6.25 The application site has previously been the subject of an ecological survey which found no protected species and limited opportunity for habitat on site. Whilst it is anticipated that this situation remains unchanged an updated ecology report will be provided with this application to demonstrate the proposal is acceptable in ecology terms.

Affordable Housing

- 6.26 In line with Policy H3 it is anticipated that a financial contribution equating to 10% provision will be required. It is anticipated that this contribution will be secured by way of a Unilateral Undertaking subject to, but in advance of, planning permission being granted.

The Objectives of Sustainable Development

- 6.27 Paragraph 8 of the Framework sets out the three overarching objectives of sustainable development. These are independent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, so that opportunities can be taken to secure new gains across each of the different objectives. As previously mentioned, these objectives are economic, social and environmental. However, they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. In the case of this application, all of the objectives need to be taken into account.

An Economic Objective

- 6.28 The development proposed will provide a new home which will marginally increase the local population. These residents can help support the existing local community through an increase in local spending and making use of local services. There will also be a short-term economic benefit during the construction of the development through the employment opportunity of local trades people.

A Social Objective

- 6.29 The Framework aims to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by bringing forward a sufficient number and range of homes to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment. The approval of the development proposed would make a positive contribution to Reading's housing supply by bringing forward a contemporary, modest sized home, a housing type which is recognised as being in shortage nationally.

An Environmental Objective

- 6.30 The proposal seeks to make efficient use of land within the urban area of Reading, considered to be a sustainable location for the siting of a new home.

Bringing forward housing on previously developed land helps preserve the development of isolated Greenfield sites in the countryside and helps mitigate urban sprawl beyond existing urban settlement boundaries.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of the existing building and erection of a new dwelling and associated work on land adjacent to 20 Chazey Road, Reading, RG4 7DS.
- 7.2 As demonstrated the proposal is clearly acceptable in principle being previously developed land within the urban area of Reading set along an existing residential road.
- 7.3 The design of the proposed dwelling is respectful of its local context whilst providing a contemporary, individual appearance. The scheme provides for suitable off-street parking and raises no issues with highway safety. There are no negative amenity impacts for either adjacent dwellings of future occupiers.
- 7.4 This Statement has reviewed the relevant Development Plan Policy Framework as it applies in this case, together with the other material considerations. On the evidence presented it has been demonstrated that the proposal accords with all relevant Development Plan policies and national guidance, and there are no other material considerations present to override them.
- 7.5 It is therefore urged that the Local Planning Authority grant planning permission for this sustainable development.

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