

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

**Erection of 2-storey building
comprising 1x1bed flat and 1x2bed flat.
Relocating vehicular access and
associated works**

**Land rear of 97 and 99 London Road,
Reading RG1 5BY**

On Behalf of: Royle Berkshire Developments

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the erection of a detached building containing 2no. flats (1x1bed and 1x2-bed) at the rear of no.99 London Road.
- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following documents prepared by The Keen Partnership:
- Site Location Plan
 - PL-04 Proposed Site Plan
 - PL-07 Proposed Plans
 - PL-11 Streetscene
 - Transport Statement by Motion (R01, 23.07.20)
 - Heritage Statement by Artichoke (20A035)
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location

- 2.1 The site relates to the rear of 97 and 99 London Road, comprising garden areas for the properties, which opens onto Fatherson Road. Adjoining the north boundary of the site is a Victorian property accommodating a nursery. The area is varied in use and building character.

3. Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 181373 - Erection of 3 storey detached building, comprising 2x1 bed flats and 2x2 bed flats, with associated hard and soft landscaping. Refused Oct 2018 and dismissed at appeal.
- 3.2 Planning application 181373 was refused for a 3-storey building comprising 4 flats to rear of 97 London Road. The Local Plan has been updated since this decision. This proposal has considered the refusal reasons and adjusted the proposals to address the issues.
- 3.3 172286 (99a, flat 2) – Use as 1 bed flat for over 10 years. Granted 2017
- 3.4 172285 (99 flat 1) - Use as flat for over 10 years. Granted April 2018.
- 3.5 172282 (97, basement flat) - Certificate of lawfulness for existing use as a 1 bedroom flat for over 10 years. Granted April 2018.

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “*well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time*” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:

Use and Amount

- 4.3 The proposed use is for 1x 1 bed and 1 x 2 bed C3 flats contained within a detached building. The ground floor 2-bed flat (Flat 1) measures 62sqm internal space. The first floor 1 bed flat (Flat 2) measures 53sqm internally plus 5sqm for the entrance/staircase.
- 4.4 The surrounding area is residential in nature and thus the proposed use is acceptable. The amount of development proposed has been carefully considered to respect the character of the street scene.

Layout and Scale

- 4.5 There is one flat per floor. The ground floor flat has 2 bedrooms and the first floor flat has 1 bedroom. The bathrooms are stacked. The building has a scale that respects the existing streetscene, transitioning the building up from the single storey rear projection of no.99 London Road to the higher adjoining no.22 Fatherson Road.
- 4.6 The ridge height matches the eaves of adjacent no.22 Fatherson Road to provide balance, with the ridge also being comparative to the modern terraces opposite.
- 4.7 The building line is set back slightly from the front elevation of no.22 Fatherson Road, however, still maintains an alignment between the properties to maintain a sense of continuity.
- 4.8 Internally, the accommodation has been laid out to maximise the internal space and light afforded.

Landscaping

- 4.9 The existing brick boundary wall will be removed. A new dwarf wall with planting is proposed to the front boundary. Timber gate/fencing is proposed to define the side and garden area. This will improve the current landscaping of the area which detracts from the appearance of the street scene.

Appearance

- 4.10 The proposed building embodies a two-storey dwelling house with front gable feature, bay window and cat slide roof to the front elevation. The building will be brick and tile, with hanging tile feature. The materials will match the streetscene, with the architectural features taking cues from neighbouring no.22 Fatherson Road.

Access and Parking

- 4.11 Each flat will benefit from its own external entrance. The proposal will stop up the existing access and relocate it to the southern boundary of the site. Two parking spaces are provided, 1 per flat. Cycle storage is also proposed.
- 4.12 Internally, disabled access and circulation requirements are designed to achieve Building Regulations Part M standards, including entrance doors to be a minimum of 800mm, electrical fittings and service controls at suitable heights for disabled persons use, and all bathrooms and WC facilities designed for disabled access.

5. Policy Assessment

National Guidance

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is relevant to the consideration of the application. Some weight also needs to be given to the content of the Ministerial Statement, 'Planning for Growth', issued in March 2011.
- 5.2 The 'Golden Thread' running through the centre of guidance within the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that "*Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way*" and "*at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible*". Paragraph 117 of the NPPF comments that planning should "*make effective use of land*" in "*meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions*".
- 5.3 Paragraph 59 confirms the Government's objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.4 Paragraph 124 identifies that "*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*", whilst paragraph 131 states that "*In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.*"

- 5.5 The National Design Guide builds on the above and clarifies that *"well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use"* (para 109).

Principle of Development

- 5.6 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.7 The proposal has been reduced in size, scale and the number of flats from the previous refused application, from 3 storeys and 4 flats, to 2 storey and 2 flats. The proposal is within the defined settlement where residential development is acceptable in principle subject to Policy H11 regarding development of residential gardens. The proposal is assessed against the criterion below.

1. Makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in terms of:

- The relationship of the existing built form and spaces around buildings within the surrounding area*

The building line aligns with the front elevation of adjoining no.22 Fatherson Road. It will provide a height transition between the single storey element of 99 London Road and the taller 22 Fatherson Road. The design integrates with the streetscene and softens its bulk from the south through its articulated roof form, ensuring it will not appear incongruous, cramped or prominent within the streetscene Please refer to *Character and Appearance of the Area* for further details.

The front building line reflects the established line of no.22 Fatherson Road. The distance to the side boundary (to no.22 Fatherson Road) reflects existing side boundary gaps within the streetscene, including no.22 Fatherson Road, and the gap between no.97 and 99 London Road, and no.93 and 95 London Road.

- *A layout which integrates with the surrounding area with regard to the built-up coverage of each plot, building line(s), rhythm of plot frontages, parking areas, and existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments on the site frontage*

The coverage is proportionate to the plot coverage of no.3-17 Fatherson Road. and does not dominate the surrounding built up coverage. The distance from the buildings at London Road ensures the building will not be cramped within the plot. Further, the building benefits from adjoining garden spaces to the rear which assists in the building appearing not cramped. The proposed parking area, boundary treatment and frontage are comparative to the existing and would not be out of character with the varied streetscene.

- *Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. This includes features such as the variety of trees, hardstanding/lawns and hedges, etc*

The proposed soft and hard landscaping is an improvement on the existing. The proposed dwarf wall will complement the dwarf wall at no.22 Fatherson Road, whilst the planting will soften the development.

- *Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area*

The height is compatible as it will act to step the building height from the single storey rear projection of no.99a London Road to the higher no.22 Fatherson Road. The ridge height is relative to the eaves of no.22 Fatherson to ensure it does not appear unbalanced, whilst also being comparative to the ridge of the modern terraces opposite. This also addresses the Inspector's concerns regarding the 3-storey height of the previous scheme.

- *The materials and elevational detail. These should be high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary*

The brick and tile reflect the existing character of the streetscene, whilst the gable roof and bay window reflect the character of no.22 Fatherson Road. Roof form adds intrigue into the front elevation. Locally sourced materials will be used where possible.

- *The arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and their rhythm between buildings*

The doors, windows and features, including bay window and gable, are proportionate to the building and complement the proportions and features of the adjoining no.22 Fatherson Road. The existing development fronting the road is varied in style and thus there is not an established pattern to follow.

2. *The application site provides a site of adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of the setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access roads and parking*

The site is adequate in size for the proposed development. The proposed building is proportionate to the space of the site and

provides ample space for landscaping and parking (to be expanded on in later sections).

3. *The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards*

The access is relocated from the northern side of the site to the southern side, but still maintains adequate highway standards, discussed in later sections of this report.

4. *The proposal does not lead to tandem development*

The proposal is not tandem development. The development is essentially infill.

5. *The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures*

There is no exposure of private boundaries as a result of the development, and additional security measures is not required. In fact, the proposal actually ensures the existing exposure of the private areas associated with 97 & 99 London Road is minimised

6. *The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants*

The development does not cause significant impact on existing amenities, as discussed in 'Amenity' sections below.

7. *The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing*

The proposal includes 1x1 and 1 x2 bed flats. Whilst it is not family sized housing, the central location, character of the area being flats, and the site characteristics means it is considered more appropriate in this instance to provide 2 flats in this location. The supporting text of Policy H11 does not expand on this point. However, Local Policy H2 relates to Housing Mix, where paragraph 4.4.10 reads "*It is not*

possible to introduce a blanket requirement across the whole Borough. A very substantial amount of Reading's housing need will need to be met in the town centre... and delivery of a substantial amount of family housing on these sites will not be achievable", and paragraph 4.4.11 reading "Within the centre of Reading, the considerations will be somewhat different". Therefore, the proposal of 2x flats is considered acceptable in this instance.

8. *The development provides biodiversity net gain wherever possible, and would not have an adverse impact on biodiversity in terms of the fragmentation of blocks of gardens, which as a unit or in association with adjacent green space are deemed to make an important contribution to biodiversity and contribute to the green network*

The existing site is gravel and grass and provides negligible biodiversity benefit. The site is enclosed on all sides by close boarded fence and thus the proposal does not fragment green networks. The proposed planting to the front boundary provides a net gain above the existing.

9. *The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area*

The development does not prejudice development of a wider area given the context as infill development.

- 5.8 The proposal therefore complies with policy H11 and represents acceptable development of private residential garden land.

Size of Dwellings

- 5.9 1x1 bed and 1x2 bed units are provided, measuring 53sqm and 62sqm respectively, meeting minimum internal space standards.

Character and Appearance of the Area

5.10 The ridge will align with the neighbouring eaves height and is comparative to the ridge of the modern terraces opposite. The height acts to step from the single storey extension comprising 99a, up to the prominent Victorian semis, providing a step-in building height that creates a balanced transition from London Road to Fatherson Road buildings. The distance from the buildings at London Road ensures the building will not be cramped within the plot. The design includes gable and bay window with proportionate windows to complement the Victorian semi's at no.22 Fatherson Road. The proposed building has been reduced from the refused 3 storey building and better aligns with the height and dominance of no.22 Fatherson Road. The design therefore integrates with the streetscene and softens its bulk from the south through its articulated roof form, ensuring it is not incongruous, cramped or prominent within the streetscene, addressing the previous refusal reason and Inspector's comments in paragraph 10 of the Appeal Decision. The proposal will balance the streetscene by providing a building height that transitions logically from the ridge heights of London Road, to the prominent ridge of adjoining no.22 Fatherson Road. Evidence of this can be found in the photographs submitted with the submitted street scheme plan and accompanying heritage statement, as denoted below.

5.11 The proposal therefore complies with policy CC7 and H11, as well as paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

5.12 Heritage

5.13 The site is adjacent to Listed Buildings 95 and 97 London Road. A heritage statement has been submitted with this application, which concludes the proposal results in less than substantial harm and is compliant with local and national policy. The reduction in no.97's garden area is outweighed by public benefits of providing centrally located and sustainable housing. In

addition, the site makes effective use of land, promotes sustainable transport and provides safe and healthy living conditions. The proposal therefore is compliant with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, with the public benefits of the reduction of the garden outweighing the less than substantial harm identified.

Residential Amenity

- 5.14 The flats both exceed minimal internal standards for 1 and 2 bed flats. The bathrooms are stacked to protect internal amenity. As there is one flat per floor, there is multiple aspect to ensure sufficient access to light.
- 5.15 The first-floor flat has been designed to minimise overlooking with rooflights to the side and rear elevations, and main windows to the front living room. In addition, the rear elevation refrains from first floor windows, to prevent overlooking into the garden of no.95. This protects the privacy of neighbours, addressing previous refusal reasons and Inspectors comments at paragraphs 16-18 of the Appeal Decision. Sufficient access to light is maintained to existing properties, given the orientation. There will be a small impact to the access to light to the corner of the garden of the adjoining Nursery (no.22). There is a small breach of the 45-degree line however given the sites' orientation, relationship to the Nursery garden, as well as the roof form sloping away from the boundary, the vast majority of the Nursery garden will still receive adequate levels of direct light throughout the day and afternoon. Therefore, it is considered Policy CC8 is complied with, and the refusal reasons have been addressed regarding amenity.
- 5.16 Policy H10 requires amenity space, and separate garden space is provided for each flat. The size of the gardens and resulting gardens of 97 and 99 is comparative to the terraces along Fatherson Road, where the resulting garden of no.99 London Road would be 36sqm and no.97 would be 48sqm.

Trees and Landscaping

- 5.17 No trees are on the existing site. The existing brick boundary wall removed. New dwarf brick with planting to define front boundary, and timber fencing to separate communal space.

Transport and Parking

- 5.18 The parking standards for Zone 2 are 1 space per 1 or 2 bed flats. This has been provided, complying with the parking standards, addressing the previous refusal reason Space has been provided to allow pedestrian access to the rear door of the flat at 99a (noting no.99a's principal entrance is directly off Fatherson Road). Parking exists to the front of 99 and 97 which maintains their parking.
- 5.19 A transport statement has been submitted with this application which demonstrates the site is highly accessible, provides alternative transport options, the development will not produce additional parking stress on the local network, and will not harm the flow of the network. The statement concludes the proposal complies with national and local policies. This statement addresses previous refusal reasons and Inspectors comments on there being no submitted transport information.
- 5.20 The existing access is removed and relocated further south however the arrangement remains the same: reversing onto an unclassified road, therefore there is no unacceptable impact on the highway network, in accordance with paragraph 109 of the Framework.

Cycle & refuse provision

- 5.21 Two cycle and bin stores are provided, one per flat. In accordance with policies TR5 and H10.

Drainage/SUDs

- 5.22 The site is flood zone 1 where a flood risk assessment is not required.

Sustainability/Energy

5.23 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF supports the transition of development to a low carbon future. The national Code for Sustainable Homes has now been abolished; however, it is proposed that the development would conform to Part L of the Building Regulations which as of 2010 requires a 25% reduction in carbon emissions over the 2006 standards. This is equivalent to Code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. By way of contributing to the reduction in carbon, the proposal would also achieve current building construction standards with added sustainability measures through;

- a) The limitation of the amount of inherent material, structure and embodied energy through the employment of good building standards to create an excellent SAP rating;
- b) Use of locally sourced, recycled materials and labour where practicable
- c) Reduced internal water consumption of 110 litres per person per day through the incorporation of water efficient sanitary fittings, including low flow toilets and water efficient taps for wash basins.
- d) Refuse, recycling and composting facilities to be provided to work with the Council's existing waste and recycling collection service
- e) Secure cycle provision to encourage sustainable modes of transport
- f) 'A' rated electrical appliances and energy saving light fittings
- g) 'A' rated double glazed windows with natural cross ventilation provision
- h) Recycling of waste construction materials where practicable
- i) Permeable driveway/parking spaces to avoid increase in surface water runoff

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with sustainability objectives in this respect.

Affordable Housing

- 5.24 Local Policy H3 requires a 10% financial contribution. The client is willing to enter into a legal agreement to secure such contribution.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 5.25 The proposed development is CIL liable. The relevant forms have been completed and submitted with the application.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land. The proposal has considered previous appeal inspector and council comments in the design.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would contribute an appropriate windfall site to the Borough's housing supply, whilst improving the character of the area and privacy of existing gardens and is without adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.