

18 Parkside Road, Reading

Planning Statement

Date June 2020

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1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared by Nexus Planning on behalf of Colony Architects in order to outline the compliance of the proposed development of 18 Parkside Road, Reading ("the Proposal") with national and Local Plan policies.

2. The Site

The site is an almost square plot on the corner of Parkside Road and Westcote Road to the west of Reading town centre within Reading Borough Council. It is approximately 0.12 ha in area and is approximately 1.5 miles from the town centre via Bath Road to the south.

The property comprises a 1960's house, with a triple garage and a three bedroom annexe over. There is also a small basement beneath. It sits in a large garden with trees and shrubs on the borders. The ground rises from south to north, albeit the house is cut into the ground with a retaining wall along the northern boundary with Westcote Road.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential but with a number of offices and residential Institutions in the vicinity. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) includes an analysis of the context of site and the storey heights of the surrounding buildings.



Figure 1 – street view of entrance to the site from Parkside Road

London

Birmingham

Manchester

Reading



Figure 2 – street view of the site from the junction between Westcote Road and Parkside Road

3. The Proposal

The proposed development (“the Proposal”) will create a block of 13 flats. The development will be arranged over 4 floors, with the ground floor comprising an undercroft car parking and two flats, two floors of flats above, and a penthouse flat on the top floor that will create a corner feature.

There are no site-specific designations or constraints on site (see figure 3 in section 4 below), in particular no listed buildings, or flood risks, a draft Tree Protection Order (TPO) has been issued and this has been taken into account in the layout. The only significant planning constraints relate to the detail of the development’s design and layout, with particular regard to the context of the site and adjoining properties.

4. Planning Policy Framework

Below is a summary of the relevant policies pertaining to the Proposal. See the Appendix for the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) and the Local Plan in full.

National Planning Policy Framework – February 2019

The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. Relevant points to this Proposal include Chapter 12 of the NPPF which focuses on achieving well-designed places and promotes the creation of high quality buildings.

Additionally, Paragraph 68 outlines that local planning authorities should allow for at least 10% of their housing requirement to be met on sites no larger than 1 hectare. Paragraph 123 outlines that where there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, planning decisions should ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential for each site.

Reading Local Plan – November 2019

The Reading Local Plan was adopted in November 2019. The following policies are considered to be relevant:

- CC2 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3 – Adaption to Climate Change
- CC5 – Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC7 – Design and the Public Realm
- CC8 – Safeguarding Amenity
- EN9 – Provision of Open Space
- EN10 – Access to Open Space (?)
- EN18 – Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems
- H2 - Density and Mix
- H3 - Affordable Housing
- H5 - Standards for New Housing
- H10 - Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- H11 - Development of private residential gardens
- TR3 – Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters (?)
- TR4 - Cycle Routes and Facilities
- TR5 - Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging.

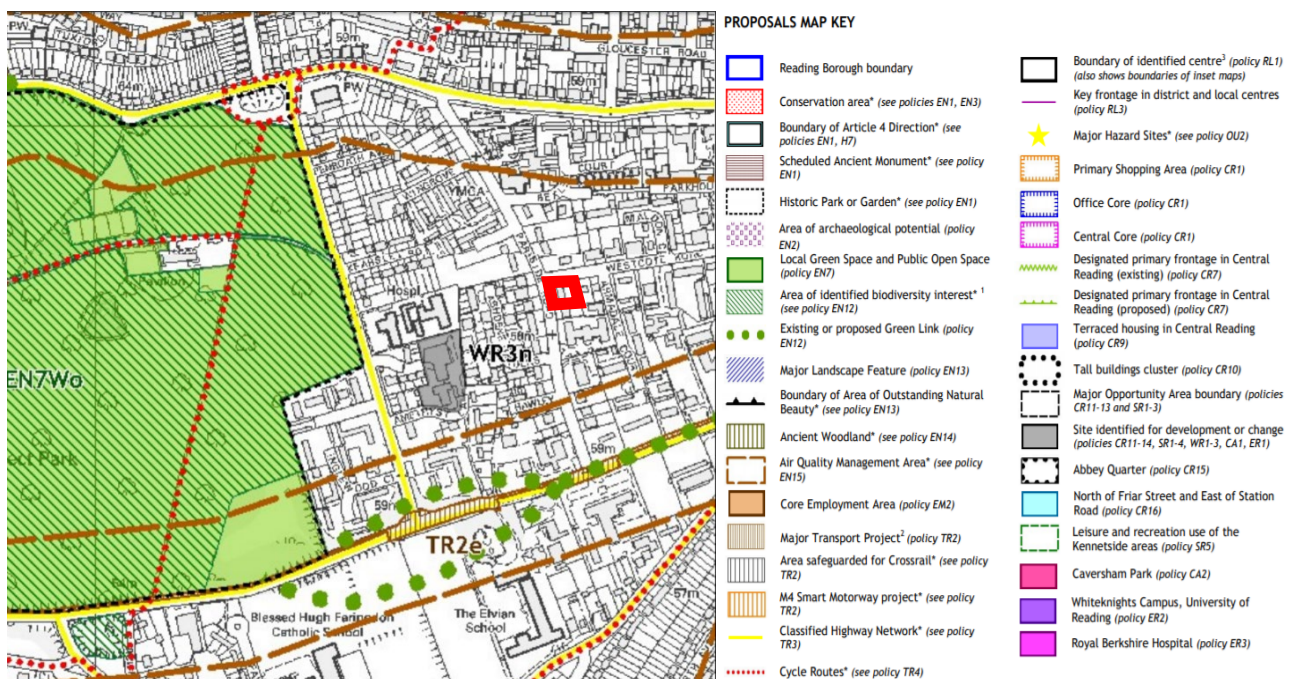


Figure 3 – extract from the adopted Policies Map and Key

Design and Local Context

Following the advice given in the pre-application meeting, where details such as brick types were discussed, and as illustrated in the DAS, the Proposal has sought to maintain and enhance the local character and appearance of its surrounding context through high quality design, as required in Policy CC7.

Moreover, the Proposal carefully locates windows and balconies in order to avoid any overlooking of adjoining properties. In doing so the Proposal is compliant with what Policy CC8 sets out, which

requires development proposals to avoid having a “detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of”, for example, privacy and overlooking, or access to sunlight and daylight.

Further, Policy H11 sets out the criteria that new residential developments which include land within the curtilage of private residential gardens must meet in order to be considered acceptable.

The above policies emphasise the need for the design and layout of the development to be sympathetic to the scale, form and character of adjoining properties.

Sustainable Design, Flooding and Climate Change

Where possible, the Proposal’s design and layout has been arranged to fulfil the sustainability measures set out in Policies CC2 and CC3 and additionally highlighted in the pre-application meeting.

For example, the Proposal has complied with Policy CC3 where it sets out that “All development shall minimise the impact of surface water runoff from the development in the design of the drainage system, and where possible incorporate mitigation and resilience measures for any increases in river flooding levels as a result of climate change”. Whilst the site is entirely within flood zone 1, in accordance with Policy EN18, the Proposal will feature the recommended flood mitigation measures, including Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) features.

Further, the Proposal follows Policy CC5’s recommendation in regards to minimising waste generation sustainably and layouts and designs providing adequate, well-designed space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.

Affordable Housing

The Proposal is within the threshold of Policy H3’s requirement that residential development of 10 or more dwellings are required to provide 30% of the total dwellings as affordable. A viability will be prepared to inform discussion regarding this requirement.

Private, Communal and Open Space

Policy H10 requires new development to provide dwellings with functional private or communal space, including green space wherever possible, that meets a certain criteria (see Appendix 1). It allows flats to meet this criteria if they provide communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens. The Proposal seeks to address these requirements through communal gardens.

Further, Policy EN9 recommends all new development should make provision for open space, which the Proposal will achieve this through its proximity to Prospect Park, which is around 300 metres west of the Site.

Car and Cycle Parking

The Proposal will address Policy TR5’s requirement for new development to provide appropriate levels of car and cycle parking and will meet the policy’s requirement for developments with communal car parking for residents of at least 10 spaces to provide active charging points on 10% of spaces. Moreover, sufficient cycle parking and storage area will be provided.

Other material considerations

Policy H5 sets out a number of standards that new build housing should follow and the Proposal seeks to comply with.

Distinct to the requirements outlined above, Policy H5 requires that new residential development outside the Central Area (defined on the Proposals Map) complies with the nationally-described space standards and, if under 20 dwellings, be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations.

Policy TR3 requires that proposals must not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network or safety of users. By the retaining the existing access, the Proposal will not cause any of the aforementioned impacts, as supported by the visibility splays provided as part of the "Means of access" plan.

In accordance with Policy H2, the Proposal will be of an appropriate density as informed by the need to maximise the efficiency of land use and the accessibility of the site.

National Design Guide – October 2019

The National Design Guide is part of the Government's planning practice guidance and details how well-designed places and buildings can be achieved in practice. For example, Policy I2 'Well-designed, high quality and attractive', paragraph 55, states that well-designed places contribute to local distinctiveness. The DAS has been prepared to take account of National Design Guide policies and further information can be found there.

APPENDIX 1: Extract from NPPF (February 2019) - Relevant Policies

Paragraph 68

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. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

- a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;
- b) use tools such as area-wide design assessments and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;
- c) 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; and
- d) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.

Paragraph 123

Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:

- a) Plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at examination, and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;
- b) The use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range; and
- c) Local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).

APPENDIX 2: Extract from Reading Local Plan (November 2019) - Relevant Policies

Policy CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

Proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

To meet these requirements:

- All major non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Excellent' standards, where possible;
- All minor non-residential developments or conversions to residential are required to meet the most up-to-date BREEAM 'Very Good' standard as a minimum;
- All non-residential development or conversions to residential should incorporate water conservation measures so that predicted per capita consumption does not exceed the appropriate levels set out in the applicable BREEAM standard. Both residential and non-residential development should include recycling greywater and rainwater harvesting where systems are energy and cost effective.

Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change

All developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. The following measures shall be incorporated into development:

- Wherever possible, new buildings shall be orientated to maximise the opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation and reducing exposure to wind and other elements;
- Proposals involving both new and existing buildings shall demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change for example by including measures such as solar shading, thermal mass, heating and ventilation of the building and appropriately coloured materials in areas exposed to direct sunlight, green and brown roofs, green walls, etc;
- Use of trees and other planting, where appropriate as part of a landscape scheme, to provide shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets and to help to connect habitat, designed with native plants that are carefully selected, managed and adaptable to meet the predicted changed climatic conditions; and
- All development shall minimise the impact of surface water runoff from the development in the design of the drainage system, and where possible incorporate mitigation and resilience measures for any increases in river flooding levels as a result of climate change.

Policy CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage

Development should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management, including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts and designs that provide adequate, well-designed space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.

Policy CC7: Design and the Public Realm

All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form, including:

- Layout: urban structure and urban grain;
- Landscape;
- Density and mix;
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials

will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to the following urban design objectives:

- Character - a place with its own identity and sense of place
- Continuity and enclosure
- Quality of the public realm and provision of green infrastructure and landscaping
- Ease of movement and permeability
- Legibility - clear image and easy to understand
- Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time.

Developments will also be assessed to ensure that they

- Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;
- Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion;
- Address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily;
- Are visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces, the inclusion of public art and appropriate materials and landscaping.

Applications for major developments, or other relevant developments, should be accompanied by a design and access statement that deals with all the above matters

Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development; • Harm to outlook;
- Noise and disturbance;
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Dust and fumes;

- Smell;
- Crime and safety; or
- Wind, where the proposals involve new development of more than 8 storeys.

The position of habitable rooms, windows and outdoor living spaces will be particularly important. A back-to-back distance of 20 metres between dwellings is usually appropriate, although the circumstances on individual sites may enable dwellings to be closer without a detrimental effect on privacy.

As well as immediate impacts, other aspects to which this policy applies will include matters such as hours of operation of businesses, and effects of traffic movements, particularly of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). Proposals which would generate regular movements of HGVs on residential roads will not be acceptable.

Where an otherwise acceptable development could change its character to a use that would have a greater impact on amenity without needing planning permission, conditions will be applied to restrict such changes.

Policy EN9: Provision of Open Space

All new development should make provision for appropriate open space based on the needs of the development. This can be achieved through on or off-site provision, contributions toward provision or improvement of existing leisure or recreational facilities.

On sites of 50 dwellings or more, or for developments where the availability and quality of existing open space has been identified as deficient, new provision will be sought. Development must ensure satisfactory provision of children's play areas and neighbourhood parks.

A secure maintenance arrangement shall be demonstrated to ensure that any open space is properly maintained throughout the life of the development. In exceptional circumstances where the Council agrees to the adoption of the open space, a commuted sum for future maintenance will be required as part of any legal agreement.

On sites of less than 50 dwellings, or in areas not identified as deficient in the provision of open space, new open space provision, improvements or enhancements will be sought, including through appropriate contributions.

The provision of open space for all developments shall satisfy the most urgent need subject to considerations of particular deficiencies. The most up-to-date Open Spaces Strategy should guide provision type and size. New open space should:

- Be in useable parcels of land and not be fragmented;
- Be safely and easily accessible and not severed by any physical barrier, including a road;
- Be accessible to the general public and be designed so as to feel that it is part of the public and not private realm;
- Create a safe environment, appropriately considering lighting and layout to reduce the fear of crime;
- Provide some informal landscaping for aesthetic, wildlife and recreational purposes; and
- Link into the Green Network where possible.

Policy EN10: Access to Open Space

In areas with relatively poor access to open space facilities (including as a result of severance lines), new development should make provision for, or contribute to, improvements to road and other

crossings to improve access to green space and/or facilitate the creation or linking of safe off-road routes to parks.

Policy EN18: Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems

Development will be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding in the first instance, following the Sequential and Exceptions Test set out in the NPPF, and taking into account the effects of climate change. It will consider flooding from all sources, including fluvial, surface water, groundwater and sewer flooding. Where development in areas at risk of flooding is necessary, it will not reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store floodwater, impede the flow of floodwater or in any way increase the risks to life and property arising from flooding. Wherever possible, development should be designed to reduce flood risk, both on- and off-site.

All major developments must incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) as appropriate and in line with the Government's Technical Standards. Smaller schemes are encouraged to incorporate SuDS, where possible. Runoff rates should aim to reflect Greenfield conditions and, in any case, must be no greater than the existing conditions of the site. Schemes should ensure that the movement of water through vertical infiltration as well as horizontal run-off does not worsen contamination effects. Wherever possible, SuDS provision should maximise ecological benefits, link into the existing Green Network, incorporate tree planting and landscaping and avoid damage to existing significant trees, including through changes to the site hydrology. All new developments in areas of flood risk should give priority to SuDS.

Policy H2: Density and Mix

The appropriate density of residential development will be informed by:

- the character and mix of uses of the area in which it is located, including the housing mix, and including consideration of any nearby heritage assets or important landscape or townscape areas;
- its current and future level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- the need to achieve high quality design;
- the need to maximise the efficiency of land use; and
- the need to minimise environmental impacts, including detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers.

Indicative densities for different types of area are set out in figure 4.5, but the criteria above may indicate that a different density is appropriate. Residential development capacity figures within the site allocation policies are often based on these densities, but the capacity of each site will likewise depend on various factors that need to be addressed at application stage, including detailed design and layout, and may differ from the range set out in the allocation. Net densities of below 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable.

Wherever possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing set out in figure 4.6, in particular for family homes of three or more bedrooms. As a minimum, on new developments for 10 or more dwellings outside the central area and defined district and local centres, planning decisions will ensure that over 50% of dwellings will be of 3 bedrooms or more, having regard to all other material considerations.

Residential proposals for ten houses or more (excluding houses that are to be provided as affordable homes) will consider making appropriate provision for plots as self- or custom-build wherever viable and achievable, based on the number of entries on the self-build register. The provision of self-build plots will be secured through legal agreement. Any plots that have not been sold after 12 months of appropriate marketing will revert to the developer to build.

Policy H3: Affordable Housing

Residential development will make appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading:

- on sites of 10 or more dwellings, 30% of the total dwellings will be in the form of affordable housing;
- on sites of 5 – 9 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 20% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough; and
- 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.

For sites of 10 or more dwellings, provision should be made on site in the first instance with a financial contribution being negotiated to make up the full requirement as appropriate.

In all cases where proposals fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open-book approach will be taken and the onus will be on the developer/landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.

In determining residential applications the Council will assess the site size, suitability and type of units to be delivered in relation to the current evidence of identified needs. The Council will seek an appropriate tenure mix of affordable housing to include social rented, affordable rent, intermediate rent and shared ownership affordable units. The affordable units provided should be integrated into the development.

Priority needs are currently for housing with two or more bedrooms that can house families. The Council will regularly monitor and review the need for, and delivery of, affordable housing.

The following types of residential development will be exempt from the requirement to provide affordable housing:

- Replacement of a single dwelling with another single dwelling; and
- Conversion of a dwelling to self-contained flats where there is no new floorspace.

Policy H5: Standards for New Housing

New build housing should be built to the following standards, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable:

- a) All new build housing outside the Central Area as defined on the Proposals Map will comply with the nationally-described space standard.
- b) All new build housing will be built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations.
- c) All major new-build residential development should be designed to achieve zero carbon homes.
- d) All other new build housing will achieve at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in the 2013 Building Regulations.
- e) All new build housing will be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations, unless it is built in line with M4(3) (see below).
- f) On developments of 20 or more new build dwellings, at least 5% of dwellings will be wheelchair user dwellings in line with M4(3) of the Building Regulations. Any market homes provided to meet this requirement will be 'wheelchair adaptable' as defined in part M, whilst homes where the Council is responsible for allocating or nominating an individual may be 'wheelchair accessible'.

Policy H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

Dwellings will 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. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens. The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identify whether they are private or communal spaces, ensure that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhance safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing.

Policy H11: Development of Private Residential Gardens

Proposals for new residential development that includes land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:

1. The proposal 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;
 - 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;
 - Providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. This includes features such as the variety of trees, hardstanding/lawns and hedges, etc;
 - Compatibility with the general building height within the surrounding area;
 - The materials and elevational detail. These should be high quality, and where appropriate distinctive and/ or complementary;
 - The arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and their rhythm between buildings.
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;
3. The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards;
4. The proposal does not lead to tandem development;
5. The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures;
6. The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants;
7. The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing;
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; and
9. The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area.

Policy TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

In determining proposals involving a new or altered access onto the transport network, improvement works to the transport network, the creation of new transport infrastructure or the generation of additional trips on the transport network, consideration will be given to the effect on safety, congestion and the environment.

Development will only be permitted where:-

- i) Accesses and works to the highway comply with the adopted standards of the Transport Authority;
- ii) The development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network;
- iii) The proposals would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists;
- iv) The proposal would not generate regular movement of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on unsuitable roads, or on roads without easy access to the Classified Highway Network; and
- v) For non-residential uses, or new dwellings on classified roads, off-street servicing would be provided.

Proposals involving either the construction of a new site access, or a material increase in the use of an existing site access, directly onto the Classified Highway Network will not be acceptable if they would be likely to result in the encouragement of the use of the network for short local trips or compromise the safe movement and free flow of traffic on the network or the safe use of the road.

Policy TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities

Developments will be expected to make full use of opportunities to improve access for cyclists to, from and within the development and to integrate cycling through the provision of new facilities. Development of new facilities for cycling, such as cycle hire points and cycle parking, will be acceptable.

The cycle routes identified in the most up-to-date Cycling Strategy will be maintained, enhanced and added to or extended. Development will not detrimentally affect an identified cycle route. Where opportunities exist, improvements to that route, including the provision of connecting routes, and/or cycling facilities will be sought within developments or through planning contributions.

Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

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.

Development should make the following provision for electric vehicle charging points:

- All new houses with dedicated off-street parking should provide charging points;
- Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point.