

Outline Planning Statement

Proposed development

Land adjacent to Mitcham Close, Millman Road, Reading

Ms J Woosnam



Aerial view of site area

The submitted application is an outline proposal for residential development on an existing Brownfield site adjacent to Mitcham Close. The site shares an existing access and right of way with No 31 Milman Road which is currently divided into flats. The site also includes a small vehicular access to the adjoining site to the West which is to be retained as part of the development. The remaining section of the site beyond the current parking and turning area is scrub land, without any significant landscape features. Although periodically cleared and tidied by the owners, the site contributes little to the existing area in landscape terms and is potentially a target for dumping rubbish and other antisocial behaviours. As such there are clear benefits in infilling this corner of Mitcham Close and securing the site, as well as providing ideally located family accommodation.

The proposal is for the construction of 2 no. 2/3 bed semi-detached properties on the remaining site area orientated North south and generally set in line with the existing terraced development of 4 properties served from Mitcham Close which run East to West. The new houses are not designed at this stage as this application is seeking agreement only on the principle of development in this location along with the access and number of units on the site. However an indicative sketch is enclosed which assumes the bulk of accommodation at Ground and First floor level with a small amount of additional accommodation within the roof-space.

In terms of amenity the proposal assumes similar sized usable garden areas to those existing for numbers 1-4, with similar separation between properties to maintain privacy and amenity for surrounding properties. No public amenity land is lost and parking is to be provided on site commensurate with the location and access to alternative means of transport and local facilities.

A single allocated parking space is proposed for each property due to the sites location within Zone 2 of the Parking standards SPD, which is acknowledged as being close to the city core area and is well served by public transport and existing facilities. However a further unallocated visitor space is available for each property as part of the existing car park arrangements as currently only 4 spaces are provided for the existing flats at no.31 Milman Road.

Our clients would be willing to consider the option of a condition formalising this arrangement if required or as an alternative, the securing of a parking permit linked to the sale of each property.

The proposal forms a modest and logical extension to the existing development form created by numbers 1-4 Mitcham close, makes use of brownfield land in a sustainable development area and provides family accommodation of the type needed as part of the councils overall housing strategy.

PLANNING POLICY

The sites position in relation to both the central area of Reading and local shops and services confirms that it is a sustainable location.

The principle of the proposed development is clearly supported by Local Policy CC1 and the NPPF which confirms a presumption in favour of sustainable development including the use of previously developed or Brownfield Land.

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development This policy ensures that planning decisions are taken in line with the Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development as articulated in the NPPF. It ensures that a positive approach is taken when considering development proposals in order to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

The NPPF states – "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. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land".

There is also some support under Local Policy - H14: SUBURBAN RENEWAL AND REGENERATION which lists improving the Local environment and the delivery of new homes in its policy aims.

Policy H2 – Density and Mix fig 4.6 confirms that the proposed 3 bedroom units sit within the level of accommodation highlighted as the largest category identified in the Berkshire SHMA.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Provision for Affordable housing will be provided as part of Policy H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING, which confirms that 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. This will be subject to both the final detail design of the proposals and any viability report to be submitted as part of a reserved matters application should outline approval be granted.

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

Although detailed approval (including the design of the proposed new dwellings) is not being sought as part of this application, the intention is that the new dwellings will be constructed in line with Policy CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION, which confirms that the construction of new buildings 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.

In addition it is proposed that the new houses will comply with Policy H5: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING which confirms that *“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 Regulations⁷⁹ . All other new build housing not forming part of a major development 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. All new build housing will be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations.*

The size and GIA of the proposed new houses is in line with the National space standards for a 3bed property. The indicative design makes full use of the whole house volume and its simple form will reduce costs and be suitable for self- build. The extended roof provides shelter from the North and shading from the South and its orientation on site, as an extension of the existing built form to Mitcham close effectively means that only one external wall is fully exposed to the West.

The south facing roof provides an opportunity for renewable PV and grey water collection for cloaks and garden use. Whilst the scale of development precludes any district or shared heating there is the option of a heat pump installation for the provision of heating and hot water. The south facing roof also provides an option for solar hot water.

Taking into account all of the above, our view is that the development of this site provides significant benefits and matches those aspirations within both Local and national planning policies to make the best use of existing brownfield land, particularly where development can and is clearly sustainable.

We trust that this application will meet with the support and approval of both residents and officers and that development proposals are considered to be acceptable and sufficient to confirm outline approval at this stage.

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Ark Architects

For and on behalf of the applicant



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