

Oxford Road, Reading

Statement of Community Involvement

Iceni Engagement
September 2020



1. Purpose of this document

1.1 This Statement of Community Engagement has been prepared by Icení Projects on behalf of Stonegate Homes ('the Applicant') and provides a record of the pre-application public consultation carried out.

1.2 This document describes the process, findings and provides an overview of how the proposal responds to feedback.

1.3 The appendices to this report contain a record of publicity and consultation material produced during the consultation and engagement process.

2. The Project Team

2.1 The following project team members supported the pre-application public consultation:

ECE Architecture – Design

Nexus Planning – Planning

eb7 – Rights of Light

iTransport – Transport

2.2 Icení Engagement provides stakeholder engagement, public consultation and communications services to support the creation of great places. The team is made up of planning, design and communications professionals with direct experience of development, planning, community development and design. The team have a track record of supporting clients in delivering effective and meaningful dialogue with local communities.

3. Overview of Proposed Development

3.1 The proposal includes development of a vacant site for a residential scheme with associated access, car parking, cycle parking, and landscaping. It is allocated for residential use as part of Reading Borough Councils Local Plan.

4. Consultation Aims

4.1 The aims and objectives of the consultation process were to:

- Develop a better understanding of the local area and community
- Raise awareness and provide information regarding the project
- Be accessible and informative to the local community
- Collect feedback from local communities regarding the proposals

5. Consultation Process

5.1 As a result of COVID-19 we had to focus our engagement strategy online. We launched a website in September and a 4-page colour newsletter was posted first class to over 1,200 surrounding homes and businesses, directing people to the website for further information and to complete a feedback form: <http://oxfordroadreadingconsultation.co.uk/>

5.3 We stated in the newsletter that hard copies of material could be sent in the post if preferred, to ensure that anyone not able to access information online could still provide feedback.

5.4 We also offered telephone and video calls to all those leafleted.

5.5 The website included an outline of the existing site, wider context and existing site photos. It outlined the design approach to the site in detail. The design approach section included several computer-generated images and elevations. A feedback section was included allowing visitors to respond to questions with space for open feedback.

5.6 We asked for feedback around the following areas:

- What are your reasons for interest in the redevelopment?
- Do you agree with the principle of new homes in the area?
- Do you support the layout?
- Any other comments?

6. Feedback Received

6.1 To date we have had 3 written responses from Winterbrook House, 1 from Battle Place and 1 from Brocksett Close. We have also had 3 telephone contacts alongside over 150 visits to the website. A further response was promised via letter but we have yet to receive, we have included the comments made by that local resident over the phone in the table below.

6.2 We have created the table below to summarise the most cited comments received, together with a response.

Key Issue	Number of respondents who cited in their feedback	Response
Congestion – comments included that the site should be used for car parking, entrance to Winterbrook House gets blocked, concerns over construction traffic during	3	As noted in our transport assessment, the 26 proposed apartments at the site are likely to generate circa six two-way vehicle movements in the morning peak hour and circa seven two-way vehicle movements in the evening peak hour. This level of traffic would need to use Curzon Street to access the site. Whilst Curzon Street and the

build and that Curzon Street is blocked		other roads to the east are residential streets with some on street parking, they are adequate to accommodate this very small increase in traffic.
Too many flats in the area/ overcrowded	3	The proposals provide 26 new homes. A high-quality design-led scheme has been developed. The design of the buildings, including the density has been carefully considered.
Insufficient car parking in the area	3	An appropriate level of on-site car parking provision has been agreed with Reading Borough Council as part of pre-application discussions, alongside cycle storage. The development proposal relates well to the site's proximity c.0.3 miles from Reading West Railway station. There are also a number of bus stops within a short walk of the site. The location of the site is highly sustainable, close to existing amenities. The new commercial units proposed will also encourage short trips.
Loss of sunlight	2	The scale, height and mass has been carefully considered, taking into account sunlight analysis of the local context. As noted in the daylight/ sunlight assessment submitted as part of the application the amenity space of neighbouring properties retains the same degree of sunlight. The amount of daylight received within each of the neighbouring habitable rooms will remain very high and in excess of the BRE criteria. The assessment of sunlight to neighbouring windows has also shown full compliance with the BRE criteria.
Would like to purchase a property	2	Interest noted.
Looks really nice, support design and layout	1	Positivity noted.

Support loss of tree given overshadowing and debris that falls into garden.	1	Noted. The large existing Sycamore tree in the south east corner of the site is proposed to be removed and replaced with a smaller tree within an area of landscaping in the southeast corner of the site.
Too high	1	The scheme would be 3 – 6 storeys in height, to reflect the pattern of development in the area around the site. The buildings will also step down adjacent to the Curzon club as shown in the imagery.
Impact on wildlife given loss of tree	1	A tree surgeon has assessed the existing tree and a replacement tree within an area of landscaping would be provided.

7. Summary

7.1 In summary, we have had over 150 visits to the dedicated website and have been contacted by people who would like to purchase a property, enquiring about the mix of units and prices.

7.2 There are concerns around the impact on car parking and congestion.

7.3 Transport concerns have been fully considered and addressed in the Transport Statement contained as part of the application.

7.4 The project team remains committed to engagement with the community and stakeholders and will continue to ensure that those who have displayed an interest in the proposals remain informed as the proposals are submitted as an application.

Appendix 1: Copy of the 4 page newsletter distributed to over 1100 homes and businesses.

Oxford Road, Reading | Community Newsletter



Dear Resident,

Welcome to our community newsletter for Stonegate Homes' proposals at Oxford Road in Reading.

Stonegate Homes are seeking to provide new homes on the site and are excited to show their proposals to the neighbouring community, before preparing to submit a planning application later this month. The proposals will provide around 26 high quality new homes close to the town centre.

Both car and cycle parking will be provided. Further information about the proposals can be found via the dedicated consultation website where you can also submit your feedback:

www.oxfordroadreadingconsultation.co.uk

Alternatively, please use the contact details at the end of this newsletter to contact us.



STONEGATE
HOMES

Oxford Road, Reading

Community Newsletter



The Site

The site is located to the north of Oxford Road in Reading. It is between the Curzon Club to the south and a Tesco supermarket to the north west. The site is currently vacant although has previously been developed.

It is allocated for residential development as part of Reading Borough Council Local Plan.

The surrounding area has seen development in recent years, including the Tesco superstore and new homes, up to five storeys in height. Vehicular access to the site is via Curzon Street (immediately to the north), which connects with the A329 (Oxford Road) via Valenta Road.

There are no Listed Buildings at the site. It is not within a Conservation Area and the site is within Flood Zone 1, which demonstrates the lowest risk of flooding.

The Design Approach

ECE Architecture has been instructed by Stonegate Homes to prepare a design for the new homes. The design shows that 26 new flats could be accommodated on the site together with a new commercial unit at ground floor.

The scale, height and mass has been carefully considered, taking into account sunlight analysis of the local context.

The scheme would be between three and six storeys in height, to reflect the pattern of development in the area around the site. Please scroll down to see the floorplans and sketches.

The buildings nearest to neighbours fronting onto Curzon Street will be 3 storeys to ensure the scale respects the neighbouring development. The building will also step down adjacent to the Curzon Club - as shown on the images below.



A Sustainable Development

Stonegate Homes is committed to creating sustainable new communities.

The wider environment has therefore been considered throughout the design process - from the specification of the building fabric, through to the orientation of units to minimise over-heating and provide natural ventilation.

The new homes will be a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bed flats. A ground floor there would be a commercial property, for example a shop, cafe or office building.

A proportion of the apartments would be affordable homes, including for shared ownership.

An existing tree at the site would be replaced with a new tree.

STONEGATE
HOMES

Oxford Road, Reading | Community Newsletter



We Want to Hear From You

We are keen to hear your thoughts on the proposals and would welcome feedback or comments you may have. If you would like to provide feedback, please visit our consultation website at www.oxfordroadreadingconsultation.co.uk and click on the 'Feedback' tab on the website.

The consultation approach has been adapted given the current difficulties with COVID-19 and the need to restrict public gatherings.

Members of the team can be available to discuss any aspects over the phone by video call. We would be grateful if you could submit your feedback before **Monday 28th September**.

If you need this information translated into another language then please just call the mobile number opposite and we will arrange this.

Contact Us

Please do not hesitate to contact us via the details below if you need a paper copy of the online material or if you have any further questions about the proposals.

Phone: 07795 614 307

Email: consultation@iceniprojects.com

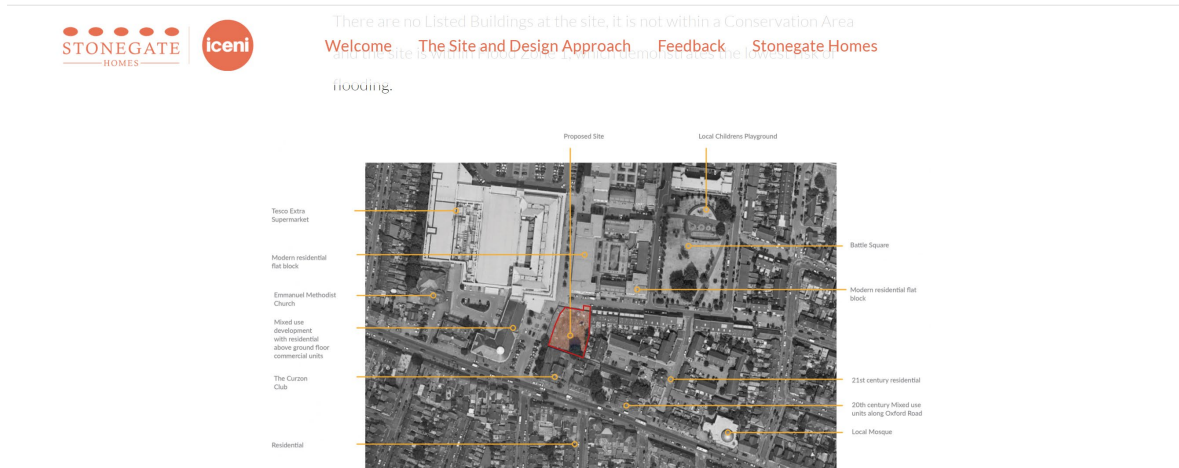


Appendix 2: A series of screenshots from the dedicated website for the project -
<http://oxfordroadreadingconsultation.co.uk/>



Welcome to the consultation website for Stonegate Homes' proposals for land at Oxford Road in Reading.

Stonegate Homes are seeking to provide new homes on the site and are



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Key: Context Image Locations



1: View of Battle Square to the north east of the site



2: View looking west towards the site along Curzon Street



3: View looking north towards the site across adjacent car park located off of Oxford Road



4: View of Battle Place which backs on to east boundary the proposed development site



5: The site looking north east as viewed from Oxford Road



6: View of the adjacent car parking to the south of the site from Oxford Road



The scale, height and mass has been carefully considered, taking into account sunlight analysis of the local context.

The scheme would be between three and six storeys in height, to reflect the pattern of development in the area around the site. Please scroll down to see



Feedback

Stonegate Homes believes that consulting and engaging with the community is vital to creating successful places that deliver genuine benefits for local people. We therefore invite you to submit your feedback in the box below. Please make sure you press 'submit' after you have typed your feedback.

If you need this information translated into another language then please just call the number at the bottom of the page and we will arrange this.

Please submit your feedback before Monday 28th September 2020.

Name

First

Last

What is your interest in the project?