

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR ERECTION OF
4 DWELLING HOUSES AND A DETACHED GARAGE,
INCLUDING VEHICLE ACCESSSES WITH
ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPING AND PARKING**

**PLANNING AND DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT (INCLUDING HEADS OF
TERMS)**

**LAND AT 45 UPPER REDLANDS ROAD, READING,
RG1 5JE**

ON BEHALF OF HURST GROVE ESTATES

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

Prepared by: Mr Nick Kirby BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Pegasus Group

Columbia | Station Road | Bracknell | Berkshire | RG12 1LP

T 01344 207777 | **W** www.pegasusgroup.co.uk

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Appendix 1: Photographs of the site and surrounding area

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a full planning application for the proposed erection of 4 dwellings on Land to the Rear of 45 Upper Redlands Road.
- 1.2 This statement will cover the background to the planning application and provide the necessary information to enable its consideration by officers at the Council. It will summarise the relevant planning policies and assess the proposal in light of these policies. This planning application follows previous pre-application advice including a meeting, and a recent full planning application.
- 1.3 In addition to this statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate application forms, duly signed and completed, the application fee of £1,848 and the following plans and documents:
 - Site Location Plan
 - House Plot 1-4 Proposed Plans
 - House Plot 1-4 Proposed Elevations
 - Proposed Garage Elevations
 - Proposed Site Plan
 - 3D streetscene images
 - Transport Statement
 - Arboricultural Survey and Report
 - Landscape Plan
 - Ecology Report
 - Heritage Statement

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located in south-east Reading, within the Redlands Conservation Area. It currently comprises of undeveloped land. The site fronts Upper Redlands Road to the north, Redlands Road to the west and New Road to the south. The site is surrounded by residential dwellings, other than at the points where it fronts a road. These residential dwellings are between 2 and 3 storeys in height, and their design varies within traditional architecture with examples of two storey brick terraced dwellings, two storey white washed dwellings and three storey stone dwellings. Views of the surrounding area and street scenes can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To the north of the site, across Upper Redlands Road, is the Grade II Listed Wantage Hall. This building was the first hall of residence at the University of Reading and opened in 1908. It was listed in 2008 and is fully described in the submitted heritage statement.
- 2.3 There are a number of trees at the site. These have all been classified as either C or B quality. A full schedule can be found in the Arboricultural Survey and Report.
- 2.4 The site lies within Flood Zone 1, and so is at the lowest risk of flooding.
- 2.5 The site is irregular in shape and provides the opportunity to develop complementary infill plots on previously undeveloped plots.

3. BACKGROUND OF THE APPLICATION

- 3.1 Following the spirit of national and local policy, a pre application was submitted to the Council in July 2018 for the proposed erection of 4 dwellinghouses with associated landscape and parking. A meeting was held with officers on the 17/10/18 in which the development was discussed. No accurate record of this meeting is available, but further information was requested by the council on various elements of the development including how the proposal would impact on tree roots. Subsequently, as requested by the tree officer, a meeting was held on site with the appellant's arboricultural consultant and the council's tree officer whilst air spading was ongoing. As a result an approach to mitigating impact on tree roots was mutually agreed with the tree and planning officer, which included setting back plot 3 & 4 from the road.
- 3.2 A full planning application for the erection of 4 dwellinghouses and accesses with associated landscaping and parking was submitted on the 17th December 2018 (Ref: 182214). The application was determined beyond the statutory 8 week period, which enabled plans to be amended to respond to comments made by officers of the council. The amendments included reducing the size of houses; reducing the width of the vehicular accesses and curving the openings using removed bricks, to improve visibility splays and maximise the extent of retained walls, which are of value to the conservation area. Furthermore, in response to residents' comments railings were removed from the frontage of plot 1 to again maximise the extent of retained wall which is of value in the conservation area. Following this engaged approach, the application was initially considered at Planning Committee on the 26th June 2019. A copy of this Committee Report is saved as Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The Officer in their Planning Committee Report commented that *"the site lends itself to development due to its irregular shape, and the grounds of No.45 are much larger than any others in the surrounding area."* It should be noted that the application was deferred at the 26th June 2019 Planning Applications Committee to enable a member site visit to take place. The site visit took place on 11th July 2019. The Planning Officer updated the Committee Report before the second Planning Committee on the 17th July 2019, which included an updated comment from the Conservation Officer (see Appendix 3). Despite the Planning Officers recommendations, Committee members opted to refuse the application 182214 for the following reasons:

3.4 Reason 1:

The proposed development of four detached properties within the gardens to 45 Upper Redlands Road would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area due to the loss of garden space around existing properties, loss of characteristic/historic garden walls in the streetscene and due to over-development within the context of the Conservation Area; all these elements are recorded in the Conservation Area Appraisal as contributing to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Proposed Plots 3 & 4, opposite the Grade II Listed Wantage Hall, would harm the significance of the Listed Building through detriment to its setting and the contribution it makes to the heritage of the area. Therefore the proposed development is not considered to achieve the requirement to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area or preserve the setting of the Listed Building, contrary to the statutory requirements of Sections 66(1) and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the requirements of Reading Local Plan policies and guidance in the NPPF and PPG and contrary to Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy (2008) (altered 2015) and the Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal (2008).

Reason 2:

3.5 *In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure acceptable Affordable Housing provision, the proposal fails to contribute adequately to the housing needs of Reading Borough and the need to provide sustainable and inclusive mixed and balanced communities. As such the proposal is contrary to CS16 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (altered 2015), Policy H4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan 2018, the Council's Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2013 and Section 106 Planning Obligations (2015).*

3.6 Application 182214 is subject to a current appeal, and the current full application represents the efforts of the applicant to resolve the issues that were raised during the previous application. It is hoped that if the current application can be approved, the appeal scheme can be withdrawn removing the potential for a development that caused some concern to local residents.

3.7 The current application consolidates the development on the site, achieving two houses (plots 1 and 2) between 17-19 Redlands Road and 45 Upper Redlands

Road. This provides buildings which are more in scale and design with the neighbouring villas, reduces the need for vehicular access onto Redlands Road. A shared garage and driveway serving dwellings 1 and 2 will now be positioned within the New Road plot, which will further protect the residential amenity and privacy of the neighbouring property of 1 New Road. The revised scheme has been modified to omit the previously proposed vehicular access onto Redlands Road, replacing this with two narrow pedestrian accesses. Consequently, shorter lengths of the Redlands Road wall will require removal from this part of the site. In addition to this, the consolidated layout will result in less garden space being lost compared with the appeal scheme.

4. PROPOSAL

Use and Amount

- 4.1 The proposal is for the construction of 2x four-bed detached dwellings (plots 3 and 4); 2x five bed semi-detached dwellings (plots 1 and 2); and a shared garage serving plots 1 and 2.

Layout and Scale

- 4.2 Compared with the appeal scheme, the revised layout ensures the dwellings will front onto two rather than three of the surrounding roads, with the four dwellings evenly divided between Redlands Road (plots 1 and 2) and Upper Redlands Road (plots 3 and 4). One garage will block will front onto New Road and will serve plots 1 and 2.
- 4.3 Plots 3 and 4 will be two storeys and plots 1 and 2 will be three storeys in height, which reflects the scale and proportions of other nearby properties.
- 4.4 Internally, the accommodation has been laid out to maximise the internal space and light afforded, with multiple full-length patio doors to maximise daylight into the rooms, and a layout which maximises utility and usable space. Each dwelling has a family room/conservatory, which will be a bright and open room offering views over the garden. These family rooms will lead onto a brick patio.
- 4.5 Externally, the dwellings will benefit from a significant plot size, with sizeable rear gardens. The amenity space will be ample for the proposed dwellings.

Landscaping

The submitted landscape plan shows that the siting of the dwellings allows for soft landscaping to be introduced to the front, side and rear garden in the form of select native planting and trees. Some of the existing category C trees at the site will be removed to facilitate development, whilst the remaining category C and B trees will be retained and protected. Overall the landscape plan shows a net increase in tree coverage across the site.

Appearance

- 4.6 The character of the area is residential, featuring housing of varying design and appearance. The proposed dwellings utilise materials such as brick and dark tiled

roof, and white washed which is a feature of the surrounding dwellings. Materials can be controlled by condition to ensure they complement the colour of materials of the adjacent dwellings.

Parking and Access

- 4.7 In order to address the Councillor's concerns over the loss of the brick garden walls from the refused scheme (182214), the proposal has been revised to only remove sections of the Upper Redlands Road and New Road walls to enable vehicular access. The openings onto Redlands Road will comprise of two separate narrow pedestrian entrances. Gravel areas will be created to the front of plots 3 and 4 for the parking of two vehicles per property and to the front of the garage serving plots 1 and 2 for the parking of one vehicle per property. The proposed garage will provide a further 2 parking spaces for plots 1 and 2.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

5.1 The Development Plan for Reading Borough Council currently comprises:

- Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)
- Relevant SPDs and SPGs

5.2 Material considerations in the determination of this planning application include:

- The NPPF (2019)

Principle of Development

5.3 Policy H11 of the Adopted Local Plan relates to 'Development of Private Residential Gardens'. Whilst this site is not currently part of a private residential garden, it shares many of the characteristics of a private garden given its location and surroundings. The policy states that *"Proposals for new residential development that includes land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:*

- *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.*
- *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 proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards;*
- *The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem development;*
- *The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures;*
- *The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants;*
- *The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing;*
- *The development 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 open space are deemed to make an important contribution to biodiversity and contribute to the green network; and*
- *The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area."*

5.4 This site meets all of these requirements, as shown below:

- The proposed dwellings have been designed so as to make a positive contribution to the character of the area. They fit well with the existing built form, and will fill a gap in the streetscape that currently lies empty. The proposals will integrate with the surrounding area, as their built form, design, size, height, and plot layout is similar to existing houses.
- The size of the plots is sufficient for the proposed dwellings, and they will not appear too cramped or too open when compared to existing plots. The Officer in their Planning Committee Report for the previous scheme (appendix 2) commented that *"the site lends itself to development due to its irregular shape,*

and the grounds of No.45 are much larger than any others in the surrounding area."

- Plots 3 and 4 will have suitable access from Upper Redlands Road and plot 1 and 2 via shared access from New Road. Both proposed accesses can demonstrate acceptable visibility splays. This will be achieved by removing sections of the existing walls which fronts Upper Redlands Road and New Road and installing cast iron gates in their place. More information can be found in the accompanying Transport Statement.
- The proposal will not lead to tandem development, as each proposed dwelling has a frontage onto an existing adopted highway.
- The proposal minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and will improve security by ensuring that no existing or proposed dwellings back onto open land, as they do currently.
- The proposal will not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring and nearby occupants, as it has been designed sympathetically and with the aim of reducing overlooking. The number of windows has been minimised on any parts of the proposal which face existing dwellings, and those windows that are proposed will be obscurely glazed, or on the ground floor. In addition to this, the plot fronting onto New Road will contain a garage rather than a dwelling house, which will further protect the residential amenity of the neighbouring property of 1 New Road.
- All four proposed dwellings are family-sized, plots 1, 2 have five bedrooms and plots 3, 4 has four bedrooms.
- Whilst this proposal would develop a block of gardens, there is currently little biodiversity at the site. The amenity grassland is well maintained and cut short, providing little habitat for animals. The small number of trees and shrubs at the site do not house any species of note. As the site will remain as gardens, there is not a significant ecological impact. More information can be found in the accompanying Ecological Report.
- The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area, as it comprehensively develops the site and makes efficient use of the space available. The site is surrounded by existing residential plots that cannot be developed further.

- 5.5 Furthermore, within the pre-application advice received on 1st October 2018 and the 26th June 2018 Committee Report for application reference 182214, Officers advised that the principle of development on site would be acceptable subject to a number of policies being satisfied. There is nothing to suggest since this date that the situation has changed.

Sustainability

- 5.6 Policy CC1 of the Adopted Local Plan relates to the 'Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development'. This states that *"A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. Where appropriate, the Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible."*
- 5.1 Local services and amenities required on a daily basis are located between 300m and 2km of the proposed development site. There is a parade of shops approximately 300m to the south which is accessible on foot via a segregated footpath section and controlled pelican crossing point. This is easily walkable and should provide residents with daily essentials. Approximately 2km to the north west of the site is the Oracle Shopping centre which offers shops, restaurants, cafés bars and a ten-screen cinema. To the north and east of the Oracle is the wider central reading retail and employment area meaning the site enjoys appropriate access to jobs. Within close proximity to the proposed development site (within 800m walking distance) there are 3 nursery and primary schools, a secondary school, Reading University and the Royal Berkshire Hospital. There are also a number of GP surgeries, dentists and local convenience stores.
- 5.2 The closest bus stop to the site is located approximately 200m in either direction on Redlands Road. This is served by four bus routes, the 9, Leopard 3, 3b and 10, which run regularly throughout the day to locations such as Central Reading, Bracknell, Wokingham and Arborfield Green. The 21 Claret service runs from a bus stop on Christchurch Road, approximately 350m from the site, and operates 24 hours a day during university term time. Reading station is located approximately 2.3km from the site. Further details can be found within the accompanying Transport Statement.
- 5.3 Additionally, the site is located within Parking Zone 2, the 'Primary Core Area' in the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011). Zone 2 covers areas

which are “directly surrounding the core area, well served by public transport”, and so the Council accepts that the site is located sustainably. This site is therefore sustainably located and complies with policy SD1.

Housing

- 5.4 Policy H1 of the Adopted Local Plan relates to the ‘Provision of Housing’. This states that “*provision will be made for at least an additional 15,847 homes (averaging 689 homes per annum) in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036. The Council will continue to work with neighbouring authorities within the Western Berkshire Housing Market Area to ensure that the shortfall of 230 dwellings that cannot be provided within Reading will be met over the plan period*”.
- 5.5 Paragraph 4.4.4. states “*it is considered that of the 16,077 homes needed, 15,847 can be delivered in Reading Borough, which equates to 689 dwellings per annum.*” In addition to this, provides the expected provision break down as follows:

Total need for Reading Borough 2013-36	16,077 homes
Minus completed 2013-2019	4,202 homes
Minus permitted or resolution to grant (>10 dwellings) at 31 st March 2019 ⁷⁴	4,696 homes
Minus allowance for small site (<10 dwellings) windfalls at 127 per year 2019-2036	2,159 homes
Remainder not already identified	5,020 homes
Identified in Local Plan	4,790 homes
Shortfall to be accommodated elsewhere in HMA	230 homes

- 5.6 This site will bring forward four sustainably located new dwellings, which will positively contribute to the supply of housing in Reading and contribute towards the shortfall of 230 dwellings as identified in the Adopted Local Plan.

Heritage

- 5.7 Paragraph 185 states that “*plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment*”, and this includes to:

“*c) local character and distinctiveness;*

“*d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.*”

5.8 Paragraph 192 sets out that when determining applications LPAs should take account of:

- "a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

5.9 Paragraph 196 states that *"where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."*

5.10 Policy EN1 of the Adopted Local Plan relates to the 'Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment'. This states that *"Historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings will be protected and where possible enhanced. This will include:*

- Listed Buildings;*
- Conservation Areas;*
- Scheduled Monuments;*
- Historic parks and gardens; and*
- Other features with local or national significance, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and assets on the Local List.*

All proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits.

Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings."

5.11 Policy EN3 of the Adopted Local Plan relates to the 'Enhancement of Conservation Areas.' This states that *"the special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Positive consideration will be given to proposals which take opportunities to enhance the character of conservation areas. These may include:*

- Reducing visual clutter caused by negative factors, such as poles and overhead wires, satellite dishes or unnecessary street furniture;*

- Restoring original building features;*

- Removing inappropriate additions or alterations to buildings;*

- Protecting and encouraging the maintenance of green spaces and important trees, particularly where they are intrinsic to the history and character of the area;*

- Improving signage and street furniture;*

- Restoring or re-establishing appropriate paving, railings or walls;*

- Sympathetic landscaping and planting;*

- Improving or restoring green spaces, including front gardens, that are appropriate to the historic interest of a Conservation Area;*

- Signage that reveals and promotes the Conservation Area and its boundaries;*

- Interpretation panels to inform the public of the area's historical significance.*

- Where a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been adopted for a particular Conservation Area, this will be a material consideration in determining applications for development."* In this case the Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal has been adopted for this Conservation Area.

5.12 The primary heritage asset in the area is Wantage Hall. This is a Grade II Listed hall of accommodation for University of Reading students, which is still in use today. The building was listed in 2008, as it was the first hall of residence at the University of Reading, and one of the earliest halls of residence outside of Oxford and Cambridge. The listing states that it is of neo-Tudor design, and comprises a quadrangle surrounded by a mainly two storey building. Wantage Hall lies to the

opposite of plots 3 and 4, across Upper Redlands Road. The context for Wantage Hall is already one which is characterised by buildings of domestic scale and in this respect the built form of 45 Upper Redlands Road, and the 2 storey dwellings on the southern side of Wantage Hall are already read in the same context without detracting from its setting or significance. It is clear that plot 3 and 4 have been sensitively designed to integrate into the existing streetscene in terms of architectural detailing. Furthermore, the set back position of plots 3 and 4 from Upper Redlands Road which also assists in retaining the important treed frontage, means there is no harmful impact from the proposals on the setting of Wantage Hall.

- 5.13 In addition to this, in February 2013 the Council approved outline permission for the erection of 34 dwellings at the Former Reading University Wells Hall of Residence (121820), which lies directly to the east of Wantage Hall, as shown on the approved site layout plan (appendix 4). Subsequent to this, a reserved matters application was approved by the Council in October 2014 (140428), and the 34 units have now been constructed. In the context of setting to the conservation area and Wantage Hall, the Planning Officer in their Committee Report (121820) commented that:

"it is considered that buildings of this scale could be accommodated in the positions shown, without undue harm to the character of the street, the setting of the conservation area, or the setting of Grade II listed Wantage Hall."

- 5.14 Regarding the impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area due to a loss of garden, whilst the proposals would build on undeveloped land within the Conservation Area, we agree with the view of the Council's Planning Officers expressed consistently from pre application stage to the previous Full application (planning ref 182214 committee report paragraph 2.2). Namely that this proposal represents appropriate infill development, and the proposed plots lend themselves to sensitive development as is proposed. This latest proposed infill development forms within the same site area and will also retain the setting of larger properties in commensurate grounds, retain trees that make the most valuable contribution to the Conservation Area, and replaces other less prominent trees that are proposed for removal as set out in the proposed planting plan. These are all features noted to be of value in the Redlands Conservation Area appraisal, and it is therefore suggested that the proposals preserve and do not

harm the character of the conservation area by removing important garden space.

- 5.15 In terms of the impact on the Conservation Area due a loss of garden walls, it is considered that the proposals cause no harm to the character of the Conservation Area by reason of the new modest openings in the walls, where numerous openings are present. The walls are of such length that the proposed openings will not significantly detract from the character and interest of the walls or their contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area. There is considerable variety in frontage treatments throughout the Conservation Area, and the proposed minor changes to the walls will not have a more general impact on historic character.
- 5.16 Regarding the impact on the Conservation Area due to perceived overdevelopment in the context of the Conservation Area, the proposed landscaping plan demonstrates a net increase of tree coverage across the site. It therefore complies with the Tree Officers requests in the recently refused application (182214) that the proposal should achieve a net increase in tree numbers.
- 5.17 Furthermore, the proposed new buildings (as shown in the elevation drawings), will not appear as if they intrude into the generous spaces around the present buildings, and in all the key views into and across the site. The unusually wide spacing of properties in the Conservation Area (probably caused by historical accident rather than design) allows for sensitive infilling without detracting from character. Therefore the character and appearance of the Conservation Area will still be readily apparent, and the new buildings will do no harm to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 5.18 Overall, as further outlined in the Heritage Statement, this latest proposal will have no harmful impact on either the Redlands Conservation Area or the setting of Wantage Hall. Therefore, this latest proposal further addresses reason for refusal 1 from the previous scheme (182214); and preserves the overall character of the area and setting of a Listed Building as required by Policy EN1 and EN3.

Affordable Housing

5.19 Policy H3 of the Adopted Local Plan relates to the *“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."*

- 5.20 Given the small size of the proposal, at 4 dwellings, it should not be expected that a range of dwelling types and sizes will be provided. Therefore, the proposal does provide an appropriate range of dwelling types and sizes, in accordance with Policy H3.
- 5.21 Although this development is for four dwellings, and so does not fall under the requirements of Policy H3, it is still compliant, as 100% of the scheme is for dwellings of three dwellings or more, and all of the dwellings are in the form of houses rather than flats.
- 5.22 This proposal will provide a policy compliant level of affordable housing. Four new dwellings are proposed, and so the equivalent of 10% of the housing should be provided through a financial contribution. This will be calculated as 5% of the Gross Development Value (GDV) based on valuations of the development by estate agencies. This will then be paid to the Council upon occupation of the development. The applicant is seeking revised GDV figures from local reputable estate agents for the revised proposal, and these figures will be submitted to the Council shortly.

Design

- 5.23 Paragraph 127 of the NPPF includes that decisions should ensure that developments:

"b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)"

- 5.24 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF sets out that it is important to have early discussions between applicants, the local planning authority (LPA) and local community concerning the design and style of emerging schemes to clarify expectations.

5.25 Policy CC7 of the Adopted Local Plan relates to 'Design and the Public Realm'. This states that *"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*
- *Ease of movement and permeability*
- *Legibility - clear image and easy to understand*
- *Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time*
- *Diversity – meets a wide range of needs.*

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; and*
- *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 and minor developments should be accompanied by a design and access statement that deal with all the above matters."*

5.26 The proposed dwellings have been designed to make a positive contribution to the character of the area and reinforce architectural styles. The current application consolidates the development on the site, achieving 2 houses (plots 1 and 2) between 17-19 Redlands Road and 45 Upper Redlands Road. This provides buildings which are more in scale and design with the neighbouring villas, reduces the need for vehicular access onto Redlands Road. The proposed development has also been carefully designed to be sympathetic with its position within a conservation area and its setting in relation to the Grade II listed Wantage Hall.

5.27 A hard and soft landscaping scheme could be secured by condition, but the proposals allow for generous areas of soft landscaping characteristic of the area. Therefore the proposal complies with Policy CC7 of the Adopted Local Plan

Amenity

Policy CC8 of Adopted Local Plan relates to 'Safeguarding Amenity'. This states that "*Development will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or 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."

5.28 The amenity of neighbouring properties was considered when designing the proposed houses. All windows in the side elevations of the proposed houses are obscure glazed, to ensure that no overlooking will take place. The back to back elevations from the proposed houses are all considerably more than 20m. The proposed houses are between 2 and 3 storeys, which is consistent with the prevailing character of the area. This ensures that they will not be visually dominant or generate an overbearing effect. The modest height of the proposed houses will also ensure that they do not block access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring properties. The proposed houses will enclose the currently open area of land behind many residential properties, increasing surveillance and security.

5.29 The proposed houses will generate a minor number of additional vehicle movements by small passenger vehicles, which will not have a negative effect on the amenity of nearby residents.

Transport and Parking

-
- 5.30 Parking standards are devised based on the Parking Zone in which the development falls, as stated in the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011). This site falls within Zone 2, and so the required number of spaces per 4-bedroom dwelling is 2. The proposal includes 2 spaces per dwelling, located to the front of the houses, and so meets the required standards.
- 5.31 A transport assessment accompanies this report, this sets out that in the first instance, the site is sustainably located and provides opportunities for residents to walk and cycle to local amenities and a nearby bus service. The Committee Report for application 182214 confirmed that the council did not have any objections relating to transport for this scheme. The revised proposal maintains the vehicular accesses onto Upper Redlands Road and New Road, albeit the Redlands Road vehicular access has been omitted.

Ecology

- 5.32 Local Plan policy EN12 sets out that development should retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity or geological interest (including protected species and their habitats).
- 5.33 An ecology report accompanies this application. This sets out that there are no significant ecological impacts as a result of the proposals and no significant impact on any protected species. As a result of this, no further surveys were recommended. The report recommended that the site could be enhanced through the planting of a native species within the garden landscaping. The details of which could adequately be secured via a suitable condition and detailed landscaping scheme.
- 5.34 The Planning Committee Report for application 182214, further outlined by the Council's Ecologist that subject to conditions there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.
- 5.35 For the reasons set out above the scheme would retain and enhance features of biodiversity on site in accordance with policy EN12.

Trees

- 5.36 Policy EN14 relates to trees, hedges and woodlands. This looks to ensure that individual trees, groups of trees and woodland to be protected from damage or removal and that the Boroughs vegetation cover will be extended.

- 5.37 It is proposed to remove some of the trees identified as being of a low quality to enable development and where possible trees have been retained. The submitted landscape plan shows a net increase in tree coverage across the site.
- 5.38 The submitted Arboricultural report concludes that the impact of the proposed development has been assessed and in accordance with the method statements specified within the report, the works will not be detrimental to the retained trees.

6. Heads of Terms

- 6.1 The applicant is willing to provide a financial contrition towards Affordable Housing based on 5% of GDV as required by policy. Valuations are currently being obtained and will follow the submission of the application.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This planning statement has been submitted in support of a full planning application for the construction of two detached and two-semi detached houses on the land to the rear of 45 Upper Redlands Road.
- 7.2 This statement has demonstrated that the proposals comply with all relevant planning policy, and are sustainably located new family homes, together with a valuable contribution towards affordable housing, which is much needed in Reading. The applicant has engaged in the pre-application process with the Council and the scheme has also evolved to address concerns raised by Local Councillors and residents from the recently refused application (182214). The development is considered to adhere with local and national planning policy. The proposal provides an alternative to the appeal scheme at the site, and it is hoped that it overcomes the main concerns expressed previously with the appeal scheme. Should the current proposal progress quickly, the applicant is willing to withdraw the appeal scheme in favour of this proposed development, to avoid the option of a development which attracted significant concern by local residents. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted without delay.

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA



Above: Existing wall along the site boundary on Upper Redlands Road



Above: Adjacent dwelling to plot 4 on Upper Redlands Road



Above: 45 Upper Redlands Road



17 and 19 Redlands Road



Views of the site (Plot 1) from New Road



Views onto New Road

APPENDIX 2 PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT 26TH JUNE 2019

BY THE DIRECTORATE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES READING BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 26th June 2019	ITEM NO. 12
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Ward: Redlands

App No: 182214

Address: 45 Upper Redlands Road, Reading

Proposal: Erection of 4 dwellinghouses and accesses with associated landscaping and parking

Applicant: Mr A Sharp

Date validated: 17 December 2018

Target Date: 11 February 2019

Extended: 1 July 2019

RECOMMENDATION:

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to:

i) GRANT Full Planning Permission with appropriate conditions and informatives, subject to the satisfactory completion of a S106 legal agreement by 1st July 2019 to secure an Affordable Housing contribution of £158,333.33 towards affordable housing in the Borough in accordance with Policy CS16 Index-linked from the date of permission, to be paid on commencement of the development.

OR

ii) to **REFUSE** permission should the S106 agreement not be completed by 1st July 2019, unless the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agrees to a later date for completion of the agreement to be able to grant permission.

Conditions to include:

1. Time limit for implementation (3 years)
2. Materials as shown on approved plans
3. Approved plans
4. Ecology - Vegetation Clearance
5. Ecology - Landscaping
6. Landscaping
7. Landscaping implementation
8. Landscaping maintenance/replacement within five years
9. Arboricultural method statement to be submitted
10. Arboricultural method statement to be followed
11. Arboricultural Site Supervision
12. Landscape: Boundary Treatment
13. Construction Method Statement
14. Provision of Vehicle Parking
15. Provision of Vehicle Access
16. Bin Storage
17. Provision/maintenance of Visibility Splays
18. No Bonfires
19. Parking permits 1
20. Parking permits 2

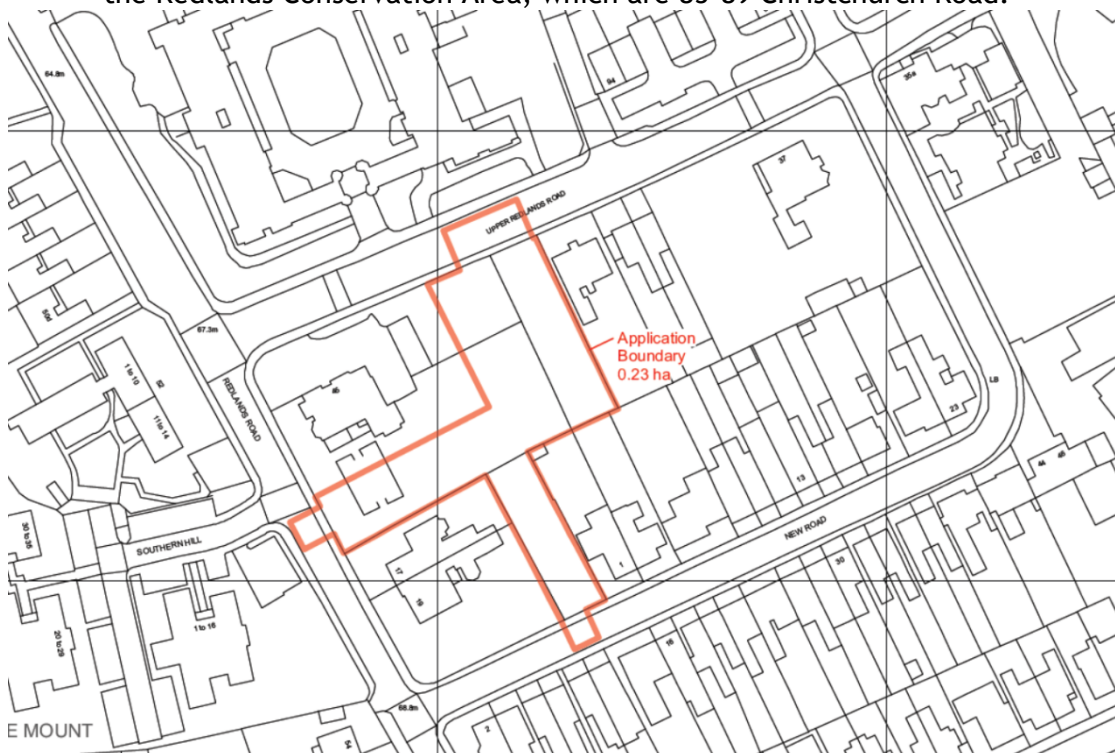
Informatives to include:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement

2. Pre-commencement Conditions
3. Terms and conditions
4. Need for building regulations
5. Highways S59
6. Complaints about construction
7. No parking permits

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is 0.23 hectares, and is located within the Redlands Conservation Area with frontages to Upper Redlands Road to the North, Redlands Road to the West and New Road to the South. Redlands Conservation Area is a tightly drawn essentially Victorian/Edwardian suburb of Reading.
- 1.2 The site currently comprises undeveloped garden land, which is surrounded by residential dwellings, other than at the sections where it fronts a road. The surrounding residential properties are between 2 and 3 storeys in height, and their designs vary within traditional architecture. There are examples of grey and red brick, mostly Victorian, with Stucco and render. The majority of the properties in the area are grand buildings, within generous plots and walled gardens.
- 1.3 The closest Listed building is Wantage Hall (Grade II), which is located to the north, opposite the application site on Upper Redlands Road. Wantage Hall was the first hall of residence at the University of Reading and opened in 1908. It was listed in 2008. There are three other listed buildings within the Redlands Conservation Area, which are 85-89 Christchurch Road.



Site plan - not to scale

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 It is proposed to build four detached houses in land currently occupied by gardens to the rear/side of 45 Upper Redlands Road, Reading. The land and surrounding buildings are owned and occupied by the University of Reading. The proposals were the subject of pre-application advice with officers before this application was submitted.

- 2.2 All of the four proposed houses would be two storey detached properties. Plot 1 would face onto New Road, Plot 2 would face onto Redlands Road, and Plots 3 and 4 would face onto Upper Redlands Road, directly opposite Wantage Hall. Although connected, the new plots for the houses would appear as separate 'infill plots' to each road.

Plot 1

Size - 153.46 sq.m with 3 bedrooms (6 persons)
Amenity Space - 171 sq.m
Walls - Red brick to match adjoining houses
Roof - Natural slate with red clay hips
Windows - White painted timber windows and concrete cills.

Plot 2

Size - 218.83 sq.m with 4 bedrooms (8 persons)
Amenity Space - 239 sq.m
Walls - White render to match adjoining houses
Roof - Natural slate with black clay hips
Windows - White painted timber windows and concrete cills.

Plot 3

Size - 217.89 sq.m with 4 bedrooms (8 persons)
Amenity Space - 329 sq.m
Walls - Red brick in Flemish bond to match adjoining houses
Roof - Natural slate with red clay hips
Windows - White painted timber windows and concrete cills.

Plot 4

Size - 201.96 sq.m with $\frac{3}{4}$ bedrooms (6/7 persons)
Amenity Space - 226 sq.m
Walls - Red brick in Flemish bond to match adjoining houses
Roof - Natural slate with red clay hips
Windows - White painted timber windows and concrete cills.

- 2.3 This application is being reported to Committee at the request of ward councillors in response to the concerns raised by neighbours.

- 2.4 In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. As per the CIL charging schedule adjusted for indexation (£148.24 per sq.m) this proposal will attract a charge of £117,426.84 based on the proposed floor areas (total GIA is 792.14 sq.m).

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Reference No.	Detailed Description	Outcome
960054	Redevelopment to provide new student housing and staff flats, include upgrading alterations to existing buildings (17-19 Redlands Rd, 45 Upper Redlands Rd)	Application Refused on 23 Dec-96
960745	Demolition of redundant outbuildings.	Application Permitted on 10 Jan-97
970879	Conversion of stable to one 2 bedroomed dwelling; creation of two additional study bedrooms through internal alterations of The Lawn together with external alterations (insertion of windows and doors).	Application Permitted on 21 Aug-97
181174	Pre-Application Advice sought	Acceptable in principle subject to details being appropriate.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Statutory:
None

4.2 Non-statutory:

4.2.1 **RBC Transport Strategy** was consulted on 7 January 2019. Their comments stated; *“The site is located within Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs.*

In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide parking provision of 2 parking spaces per dwelling.

The submitted Site Plan P6 F shows each dwelling with 2 off road parking spaces which is in accordance with the Council’s current standards.

Plot 1 will have vehicular access from New Road

Plot 2 will have vehicular access from Redlands Road

Plot 3 and 4 will share vehicular access from Upper Redlands Road

The proposed shared access for Plots 3 & 4 will need to be a minimum of 4.1m wide to facilitate two way movements in and out of the site. This will need to be illustrated on revised plans.

Visibility splays have not been illustrated on plans for any of the accesses. Plans will need to be submitted illustrating the proposed access points including visibility splays. Accesses will need to be designed in accordance with Reading Borough Councils Geometric Design Guidance for residential Accesses on to Classified Roads. Link to the guidance is below:

http://old.reading.gov.uk/media/2415/Geometric-Design-Guidance/pdf/Geometric_Design_Guidance.pdf

Visibility Splays required:

- Upper Redlands Road - 2.4m x 43m
- Redlands Road - 2.4m x 70m
- New Road - 2.4m x 43m

It should be noted that the development site is located in an area where a residential parking scheme operates, therefore there should be an assumption that future inhabitants of the dwellings will not be eligible to apply for residents and visitor parking permits. This will be covered by the appropriate conditions and informatives.

Transport would not support a formal break in the residential/shared parking bays surrounding the development site; however an access protection marking can be applied for if required.

A licence will be required to be obtained from the Highways Department to undertake any work on the Public Highway.

In line with the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, each dwelling should be provided with two secure cycle parking spaces. The submitted site plans shows each dwelling will be provided with a garden shed, therefore this is deemed acceptable.

Bin storage should not be further than 15m from the access point of the site to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods. Bin storage has been illustrated on the submitted site plan and is deemed acceptable".

4.2.2 The Planning Natural Environment (Tree Officer) was consulted on 7 January 2019. The comments received raised the following points:

- Conservation Areas provide a certain level of protection to trees.
- The most significant trees on or adjacent to the site are those which are highly visible growing adjacent to the highway. Of particular note are a Tulip Tree and a pollarded Lime.
- It is generally accepted that tree roots will not be growing under the adopted highway and the supporting tree information has therefore offset the identified rooting areas of the tree(s) to take this into account.
- The loss of any trees required in order to facilitate the build should be mitigated with replacement planting to ensure that the application does not result in a net loss of tree cover on site.
- Trees within the centre of the site are significant as groups but without the individual arboricultural merit or public amenity value which would make it expedient to serve a TPO at this time.
- The proposed property adjacent the Tulip Tree (which has a dense and extensive root spread) will be erected on a Abbey Pynford 'Housedeck' system in order to retain a void under the property. This will allow rain water to be directed under the building structure, and therefore with access to oxygen and water, tree roots will continue to thrive under the property.

- One significant problem is the laying of services to each of the new properties where it will be within the RPA of the trees. The applicant is proposing Air-spade excavation and suction. Whilst this is generally considered okay, if for any reason it proves unviable then the applicant will need to agree alternatives with the Borough Council and Site Arboricultural Consultant. In such case, the method statements and tree protection plans will need to be modified.
- If planning permission is granted, a full and detailed Arboricultural Method Statement will be required, which details the steps to be taken during the course of the building works, with step by step procedures for new areas of hard surfacing, the installation of the housedeck and laying of services in particular.
- It is expected that a detailed specification for Monitoring and Supervision is followed with visits fed back to the LPA who will make spot checks where possible during the course of the building works.
- Other conditions are also recommended in addition to the above.
- In order to be effective the tree related conditions will be required as pre-commencement conditions.

4.2.3 **The Council's Ecologist** was consulted on 7 January 2019. Their comments stated; *"As per our comments on the previous pre-application (ref: 181174) with similar plans and same ecological survey, the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Windrush Ecology, May 2018) states that the majority of trees will be retained. However, as per the plans submitted, a number of trees will be felled to facilitate the works and to accommodate the new houses. Nevertheless, the report states that the trees on site were assessed as having "negligible" potential to support roosting bats.*

The report states that the site is not considered to be suitable for reptiles, amphibians, badgers or other protected species. Nonetheless, the trees on the site are likely to be used by nesting birds, since four old bird nests were found, and as such, any vegetation clearance will need to be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (March - August inclusive). This should be secured through a planning condition to ensure that birds are not harmed or killed during the development...

...Additionally, as per the recommendations given in the report and in line with the NPPF, biodiversity enhancements and a wildlife-friendly landscaping scheme should be incorporated into the development to ensure that the site is enhanced for wildlife. This should be secured via a planning condition...

...As such, subject to... [two] conditions...there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds".

4.2.4 **The Conservation Area Advisory Committee** was consulted on 7 January 2019. A response was received on 4 June 2019 objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- The heritage statement does not demonstrate how the application will conserve and enhance the conservation area and its urban low-density setting.
- Detrimental impact upon the Conservation Area and heritage assets.
- Discrepancies within the Heritage Statement.

- 4.2.5 The Council's Conservation & Heritage Consultant objects to the application; *"The proposed development of four detached properties within the gardens to 45 Upper Redlands Road would detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area due to the loss of garden space around existing properties, loss of characteristic/historic garden walls in the streetscene and due to over-development within the context of the Conservation Area; all these elements are recorded in the Conservation Area Appraisal as contributing to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. These elements opposite the Grade II Listed Wantage Hall would harm the significance of the Listed Building through detriment to its setting and the contribution it makes to the heritage of the area.*

The proposals would erode the large, open gardens which are associated with 45 Upper Redlands Road and which are considered within the Conservation Area appraisal to be part of the character of the area.

In summary, the proposed development is not considered to achieve the requirement to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area or preserve the setting of the Listed Building, contrary to the statutory requirements of Sections 66(1) and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the requirements of Reading Local Plan policies and guidance in the NPPF and PPG".

- 4.2.6 Thames Water was consulted on 7 January 2019. No response has been received.

4.3 Public consultation:

- 4.3.1 Fifty-three households were consulted via letter, as well as a site notice being displayed.

42 letters of representation have been received from 26 households, although a petition added an additional 58 letters of representation (from 37 households) to this number, to give a total of 88 letters of representation. 16 of these households were duplicated from individually received letters of representation, which means a total of 47 households object to this application. These letters of representation were received before the re-consultation, which occurred on 9th May 2019.

On top of this, a second petition with 35 signatures was received, although this did not add any further households to the list of those objecting, as they were all duplicates from previously received responses.

The letters of representation raise the following issues:

- Loss of open space
- Parking and transport concerns
- Detrimental impact upon the Conservation Area
- Detrimental impact upon a Grade II Listed building
- The proposal does not assist with the shortage of social housing in the Borough
- The proposal is a cluttered design
- Detrimental architectural impacts
- Detrimental social impacts
- Detrimental environmental impacts

- Overlooking/invasion of privacy to the grounds of a mental health provider with 16 service users
- Loss of views
- Overdevelopment
- Overshadowing
- Detrimental impact upon trees
- No space in schools for the new families
- Out of character with the surrounding area
- Loss of a nature corridor
- The planning approval could be sold on a number of times leading to the possible use of poor quality materials, the loss of important trees and other aspects of design that fail to reflect the history and particular nature of this area
- The allotment next door to No.43 Upper Redlands Road should be preserved
- Noise concerns
- Air quality concerns

The petition states that the signatories object to the application on the basis of:

- Impact upon Conservation Area and Character of New Road
- Heritage Impact of the development
- Ecological Impact
- Residential Impact
- Car Parking
- Risks of selling-on, may result in poor materials and loss of important trees ***Officer comment: impact on ability to sell property is not a planning matter***
- Responsibility of the University and Planning Authority to listen to local opinions ***Officer comment: this application shall be assessed on its planning merits***

The second petition confirms that the objections remain the same as previously.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2019
National Planning Practice Guidance
- 5.2 Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (RCS)
(Adopted January 2008 - amended 2015)
 - CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design)
 - CS2 (Waste Minimisation)
 - CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)
 - CS5 (Inclusive Access)
 - CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)
 - CS9 (Infrastructure, Services, Resources & Amenities)
 - CS14 (Provision of Housing)
 - CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix)
 - CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)
 - CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)
 - CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology)
 - CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (Amended 2015)

- SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
- DM1 (Adaptation to Climate Change)
- DM3 (Infrastructure Planning)
- DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)
- DM6 (Affordable Housing)
- DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)
- DM11 (Development of Private Residential Garden Land)
- DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)
- DM18 (Tree planting)

Supplementary Planning Documents:

- The Council's 'Revised Sustainable Design & Construction SPD' (July 2011)
- The Council's 'Parking Standards and Design' SPD (Oct 2011)
- The Council's 'Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990' (2013)
- The Council's 'Affordable Housing' SPD (2013)
- Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal (2008)

6. APPRAISAL

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 S66(1) of the LBCA 1990 says "*in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*".
- 6.3 The main issues raised by this proposal are:
- The Principle of Development
 - Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area and Setting of Listed Buildings
 - Impact upon Trees
 - Development of Residential Gardens
 - Residential Amenity
 - Parking & Highways
 - Affordable Housing
 - Other Matters

6.4 Principle of Development

- 6.4.1 The site lies in a residential area of Reading where additional accommodation would normally be acceptable subject to satisfying a number of policies. In this case the site lies in a conservation area and close to a Listed Building so the design and appearance of the proposed scheme and its impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the Listed Building is the main consideration.

6.5 Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area and Setting of Listed Buildings

- 6.5.1 The Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal splits the Conservation Area into four character areas, and the application site predominately falls within the area entitled, *“Upper Redlands Road and 17-19 Redlands Road”*, although a small part of the application site falls within the character area entitled, *“New Road”*.
- 6.5.2 The character area for Upper Redlands Road and 17-19 Redlands Road, states, *“This area is mainly characterised by large detached and semi-detached houses standing in extensive and well-treed grounds...The architectural styles vary from the simple plain red brick style of the 1850s to later stucco villas (some very large) with Italianate and classical features, in particular, 17 and 19 Redlands Road. 35a Upper Redlands Road is an interesting gothic style building which turns the corner of New Road... Properties here and throughout the Conservation Area are “linked” by frontage brick walls and/or low brick walls with railings above, and good tree cover behind”*.
- 6.5.3 The character area for New Road states, *“This is a quiet and more intimate road of smaller early Victorian houses and cottages, of which a great deal of the original character remains (although some unsympathetic additions have been made). The general character of housing in this part of the area is of plain red brickwork, sometimes with a contrasting band of grey bricks marking the division between the floors, low pitched slate roofs, four panelled doors with arched fanlights and glazing bar sash windows (9 and 12 panes). Numbers 20 Hill and Myrtle Cottages, 28, 30, 40 and 23 add particular vitality to the area.*
- 6.5.4 Objectors, the Council’s Conservation Consultant and the Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (the CAAC) are concerned for the impact of the introduction of these properties on the application site and consider that this will have an adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area.
- 6.5.5 The Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal states, *“No individual building stands out in each street in the Conservation Area. Corner buildings tend to be prominent in the street scene, but not from any distance”*. The Redlands Conservation Area also mentions that *“Properties at the north (Upper Redlands Road)...of the Conservation Area are however epitomised by being fairly substantial properties in commensurately large grounds. These are typically bounded brick walls and railings and containing significant tree cover, providing a good setting for individual properties and the character of the Conservation Area as a whole”*.
- 6.5.6 The proposed properties would be set back within their sites and behind boundary walls and therefore will be in keeping with this characteristic of the Conservation Area. The proposed gardens are similar in size to existing gardens in the area with boundary treatments in keeping with those around them.
- 6.5.7 The application proposes four detached dwellings, which are proposed to be inserted between other buildings. The design of the proposed houses take their lead from the adjacent buildings, as details of ridge and eaves heights and window and door designs reflect those of adjacent buildings and others

of similar age. It is considered that the properties have been designed in such a way that they are sympathetic to the surrounding character of the area and the street scene. They have been carefully designed, with ample garden areas and settings, to be in keeping with other properties in the Redlands Conservation Area and will not detract from its character and appearance.

- 6.5.7 Although the original comments received from the Heritage & Conservation Officer were not positive, this was based on plans, which have since been superseded. The amended plans now proposed to provide narrower entrances and two of them reuse bricks to curve the wall inwards for the purpose of continuing the wall, and ensure the impact on heritage assets is minimal. As previously discussed, this will also aid with continuing the view of the wall, when gazed upon at an indirect angle, which will make the entrances appear narrower. As for the comments, which relate to the loss of large gardens, the site lends itself to development due to its irregular shape, and the grounds of No.45 are much larger than any others in the surrounding area. As previously mentioned within this report, the proposed amenity space proposed for each of the properties will be acceptable when compared to similar properties in the area, and therefore it is believed that on balance this scheme will not have a major detrimental impact upon the Conservation Area.

Impact on Wantage Hall (Grade II)

- 6.5.8 The Council's Conservation Consultant remains concerned for the impact of the development on the setting of the Listed Building. In considering this impact, it should be remembered that the principal setting to this building is within its own grounds on the North side of Upper Redlands Road. The impact of the new houses on the South side of the road, are considered to be comparatively minor. In any event this impact is considered to be mitigated further with the amendment, which proposes to reduce the entrance width for plots 2 and 3 as they will remain largely hidden behind the boundary wall, which will retain its height.

- 6.5.9 Overall the proposal is found to comply with the objectives of Policy CS33.

6.6 Impact upon Trees

- 6.6.1 An important part of the character of the Redlands Conservation Area is the mature and semi-mature trees within the ground of the buildings. All trees within conservation areas are protected as if they were the subject of an individual TPO.
- 6.6.2 32 trees are proposed to be removed as a result of the development, although these are not considered to be of particular importance to the character of the surrounding area. 24 of these trees are part of a clump in the middle of the site (fall within Plot 3). The important trees, which do add to the character of the surrounding area, and give the feeling of 'well-treed grounds' are to remain and a tree protection plan has been submitted to ensure that these are not damaged during the construction works. The Natural Environment Officer has suggested conditions which will ensure that the trees to remain receive the necessary protection measures - one of which is for a scheme of supervision and monitoring to be submitted before development commences. It is considered that from a heritage and conservation perspective, the proposed properties will have 'well-treed grounds', even with the proposed removal of some of the existing trees, and

therefore the proposal will retain its character as set out within the Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal. With the relevant conditions the proposal complies with Policy DM18, CS7 and CS33 in respect on landscape and trees.

6.7 Development of Residential Gardens

- 6.7.1 To some extent Policy DM11 Development of Private Residential Gardens is also relevant in this case. This policy accepts new residential development that involves land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:
- a) It makes a positive contribution to the character of the area;
 - b) The site is of an adequate size to accommodate the development;
 - c) The proposal has a suitable access;
 - d) The proposal would not lead to an unacceptable tandem development;
 - e) The design minimises the exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas;
 - f) It does not cause detrimental impact on residential amenities;
 - g) The emphasis is on the provision of family housing;
 - h) There is no adverse impact on biodiversity, and
 - i) The proposal does not prejudice the development of a wider area.
- 6.7.2 As noted above officers consider the proposal to be acceptable in the context of the character of the area, the plots are of a good size in keeping with those around them, they all have good access points, are not tandem development and protect adjacent boundaries, no harm is cause to the amenities of neighbours, all four properties are family houses and biodiversity concerns have been addressed.
- 6.7.3 The proposed properties would have gardens between 170 and 330 sq.m. which is considered to be commensurate with the general character of the area.
- 6.7.4 The proposed dwellings are considered to be accommodated appropriately within the development site as they will all have sufficient private amenity space (as mentioned in the previous paragraph), and also they will all have sufficient parking, bins etc. The dwellings will not appear cramped, and will fit well within the site, whilst having minimal impact upon the surrounding character of the area.
- 6.7.5 The proposed dwellings will all be set slightly further back from the existing build line and could potentially be seen as 'back-land development'. However their setbacks from the main building line frontages are quite minor and have done so as to ensure the protection of important trees within the Conservation Area. It is also considered that the setback from the frontage of Upper Redlands Road, aids with minimising the impact the development will have upon the nearby Grade II listed building - Wantage Hall. Overall, there is no conflict with the criteria set by Policy DM10.

6.8 Residential Amenity

- 6.8.1 Policy DM4 relates to safeguarding amenity, and aims to prevent detrimental impacts upon the amenity of neighbouring properties and

occupants/users of the application building; in regards to overlooking, overshadowing or outlook.

- 6.8.2 Plot 1, has a three windows which look towards No.19 Redlands Road. One of these belongs to a bathroom and the other two windows serve bedrooms. All of these windows are proposed to be obscured glazed as highlighted on the elevational plans. The bedrooms both have other windows, which will prevent the occupants of each bedroom being negatively impacted as a result of the frosted glass. As the proposal will need to be carried out with approved plans, there is no need for an additional condition in relation to obscured glazing.
- 6.8.3 Plot 2 has a first floor bedroom (bedroom 1) window facing towards No.45 Upper Redlands Road. This will be adjacent other first floor windows of No.45, and the distance between them will be ~11 metres. The elevational plans show this window to be obscure glazed, which will eliminate any possible overlooking. This bedroom is served by another window, which will prevent the occupant of the room being negatively impacted. The only other first floor side facing window is directed towards No.17 Redland Road, however this will serve a bathroom and will also be obscured glazed. As the proposal will need to be carried out with approved plans, there is no need for an additional condition in relation to obscured glazing.
- 6.8.4 Plot 3 will have two side facing first floor windows, one which serves bedroom 1, and the other a bathroom on the opposite flank. The one serving bedroom 1 will be slightly over 20 metres from the elevation of 45 Upper Redlands Road. Both of these windows are highlighted on the elevational plans as having obscured glazing, and as such there will be not potential overlooking. The bedroom is shown to have two windows serving it, and as such it is possible to obscure glaze one of them without resulting in a detrimental impact upon the occupant. As the proposal will need to be carried out with approved plans, there is no need for an additional condition in relation to obscured glazing.
- 6.8.5 Plot 4 will have five side facing first floor windows. Three of these serve bathrooms, one of them serves the stairwell, and the last one serves bedroom 2, which faces towards plot 3. These windows are all proposed to be obscured glazed (highlighted on the elevational plans), which will eliminate any possible overlooking. The bedroom is served by another window, which will prevent the occupant of the room being negatively impacted. As the proposal will need to be carried out with approved plans, there is no need for an additional condition in relation to obscured glazing.
- 6.8.6 As for overshadowing, none of the proposed dwellings will restrict a detrimental amount of light to any neighbouring properties, nor to each other, and as such it is considered that there will be no detrimental impact as a result of the proposed scheme in terms of overshadowing.
- 6.8.7 With regards to outlook, the positions of the proposed dwellings and their distances from neighbouring elevations, means that there will not be a detrimental impact upon the outlook of neighbouring amenity. Some of the public consultation comments mentioned that the view from New Road to Wantage Hall will be lost. This is true, however, there is an existing tree (which will remain), and this restricts much of the view of clock tower, which is considered to be one of the more impressive features on this elevation. Further to this, there is no right to a view, and the distance of

the proposed property on plot 1, will not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity in regards to outlook.

- 6.8.8 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy DM4 and respects the amenity of neighbouring properties. All of the side facing windows will be obscured glazed, which will be secured by a condition ensuing the builds are carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

6.9 Parking and Highways

- 6.9.1 From a transport perspective, each of the properties will have sufficient off-road parking, with spaces which are individually accessible and allow for turning on-site. This excludes Plot 1, which will require tandem parking, and no on-site turning.

- 6.9.2 It is important to note, that the entrance widths and styles have been designed with highway safety in mind, and these are now considered to be acceptable from a highways viewpoint, whilst retaining much of the boundary walls to the nature of the Conservation Area.

- 6.9.3 Some of the public consultation comments stated that the new owners would park on street to allow visitors to use their driveways. As a result of this application, occupants of the proposed dwellings will not be entitled to parking permits, but could apply for them in the future. Each dwelling has two parking spaces, which is considered sufficient when assessed against the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, and each dwelling will have a shed, which will allow for cycle parking. The Transport Section has reviewed this application, and has not raised any concerns with regards to parking.

6.10 Affordable Housing

- 6.10.1 This planning application needs to accord with the requirements of Policy DM6 and make an appropriate financial affordable housing contribution.

- 6.10.2 The planning statement states that *“this proposal will provide a policy compliant level of affordable housing. Four new dwellings are proposed, and so the equivalent of 10% of the housing should be provided though a financial contribution. This will be calculated as 5% of the Gross Development Value (GDV) based on valuations of the development by estate agencies. This will then be paid to the Council upon occupation of the development”*.

- 6.10.3 After three valuations were received, the valuations suggested an average GDV of £3,166,666.67. This is considered acceptable, and the policy compliant affordable housing contribution is therefore £158,333.33.

6.11 Other Matters

- 6.11.1 Biodiversity - The proposal has been reviewed by the Council’s consultant ecologists who states that that they have no objections subject to two conditions. A detailed summary of their comments can be viewed in the consultations section (above). Their suggested condition addresses details (including providing bird nesting and bat roosting opportunities on and around the new buildings, and specifications for fencing demonstrating how

hedgehogs and other wildlife will be able to continue to travel across the site.

6.11.2 The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable from an ecological/biodiversity viewpoint. Some of the comments received from the public consultation mentioned that the proposal would result in the loss of a nature corridor. The Ecology consultant has carefully considered the objections but is satisfied that, subject to conditions, the proposal is policy compliant.

6.11.3 Equalities - In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or would have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. Some concerns were raised by a neighbour but these are mitigated by the approach taken to protect neighbour amenities. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics, it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 Whilst there a number of concerns have been raised by objectors and consultants regarding the proposed four homes, when appraised against relevant policies officers consider that the four dwellings can be accommodated within this area without having a detrimental impact upon the character of the Redlands Conservation Area.

7.3 Officers have worked with the applicant to seek amendments so that the scheme, in terms of design and materials and boundary treatments, will not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity, trees, ecology, heritage or transport.

7.4 On balance, the proposed development is considered to meet the principles of Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal and complies with the appropriate Policies set out within the Local Development Framework.

Plans:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Date Received
Location Plan		P1 Rev A	19 Dec-18
Site Plan	Existing Shows Removal of trees	P4 Rev B	19 Dec-18
Street Scene	Existing	P5	19 Dec-18
Floor Plans	Plot 1	P11 Rev C	19 Dec-18
Floor Plans	Plot 2	P12 Rev B	19 Dec-18
Floor Plans	Plot 3	P13 Rev D	25 Mar-19
Floor Plans	Plot 4	P14 Rev A	19 Dec-18
Elevations	Plot 1	P15 Rev A	19 Dec-18
Elevations	Plot 2	P16 Rev B	19 Dec-18
Elevations	Plot 3	P17 Rev D	25 Mar-19

Elevations	Plot 4	P18 Rev A	19 Dec-18
Block Plan	Proposed	P2 Rev K	9 May-19
Site Plan	Proposed	P6 Rev S	9 May-19
Street Scene	Proposed Elevation AA	P19	9 May-19
Street Scene	Proposed Elevation BB	P20	9 May-19
Street Scene	Proposed Elevation CC	P21	9 May-19

Case Officer: James Overall.

Appendix



Block Plan



Plot 1



Plot 2



Plots 3 & 4



Plots 3&4 Street Scene (Upper Redlands Road)



Plot 2 Street Scene (Redlands Road)



Plot 1 Street Scene (New Road)

APPENDIX 3- PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT UPDATE (17th JULY 2019)

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES READING BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 17th July 2019	ITEM NO.
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Ward: Redlands

Application No.: 182214/FUL

Address: 45 Upper Redlands Road

Proposals: Erection of 4 dwellinghouses and accesses with associated landscaping and parking

Date Application Valid: 17th December 2018

Application target decision date: Extension of time to 24th July 2019

RECOMMENDATION

As per 26th June 2019 committee report (Appendix A) but to adjust the date for completion of the s106 agreement to 24th July 2019 and alter Condition 3 to ensure samples are provided for brickwork, render and roof materials.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application was deferred at the 26th June 2019 Planning Applications Committee to enable a member site visit to take place. The site visit took place on 11th July 2019.

1.2 The Conservation and Heritage Officer has reviewed the most up-to-date plans and retains an objection to the application on the basis that the loss of areas of brick wall in the street scene and loss of the garden areas around the existing Victorian villas would diminish the character of the Conservation Area. However, the level of harm is considered to be less than substantial and the proposals should be considered against paragraph 196 which states that:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

1.3 A material condition was requested should planning permission be granted, which would ensure samples of the brickwork, render and roof materials are provided before the relevant parts of the building work are begun.

1.4 As such condition 3 is proposed to change, to suitable wording proposed by the Conservation & Heritage Officer.

1.5 It should be noted that the public benefits of the scheme are in the form of four new family homes, an affordable housing contribution of £158,333.33, and a CIL Charge of £117,426.84

Appendices

Appendix A - Officer report to 26th June 2019 Planning Applications Committee.

Case Officer: James Overall

**APPENDIX 4- APPROVED SITE LAYOUT PLAN FOR APPLICATION REF
121820**



LEGEND

- Site boundary
- Primary access
- Secondary access
- Building zone
- Enclosed private garden
- Footprint of existing buildings
- Existing trees
- Root protection zone
- Existing masonry retaining wall
- Sustainable drainage system
- Open amenity zone
- Pedestrian access
- Pedestrian pathways
- Structural landscaping
- LAP - Local area of play
- Semi private amenity space (including driveways, front gardens and paths)
- Bin store

02	Amended and reissued for planning	DHG 20Aug12	NM
01	Reissued for team review	DHG 03Aug12	NM
00	Issued for planning	DHG 21Jun12	NM
Revision	Description	Drawn	Date Checked

SCOTT
BROWNRIGG

St Catherine's Court
46-48 Portsmouth Road
Guildford GU2 4DU
T +44 (0)1483 568686
F +44 (0)1483 575830
W scottbrownrigg.com

Client's Name
University of Reading

Job Title
Wells Hall
Upper Redlands Road

Drawing title
Parameter Plan

Scale
1 : 500 @ A1, 1 : 1000 @ A3

Job No Drawing No Revision
14156-6 DR-411-104 02

Status
APPROVAL