

Planning Statement

**Garages and Land at Dudley
Close, Tilehurst, Reading RG31
6JJ**

Prepared For
Mr and Mrs Matthews

8998
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CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On behalf of our client, Mr and Mrs Matthews, we submit this planning statement to support the application for the demolition of 8 no. garages and erection of two semi-detached dwellings on land at Dudley Close, Tilehurst.
- 1.2 In addition to this statement, the following reports are submitted in support of the application:
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan prepared by All Arboriculture
 - Extended Phase 1 Habitats Survey produced by AEWC
- 1.3 The application site is located on land to the rear of properties fronting Dudley Close and Armour Hill. Dudley Close is a cul-de-sac in a residential area of Tilehurst to the west of Reading which comprises a mix of terraced and semi-detached properties dating from about the 1950s with good sized gardens. The garages within the application site appear to have originally provided parking for properties in Dudley Close but have been in separate ownership for some time and used for parking and storage.
- 1.4 To the western end of Dudley Close is a more recent development known as Dudley Mews which comprises more modern semi-detached properties. The rear gardens of these properties immediately adjoin the eastern boundary of the site.
- 1.5 The site contains 8 no. garages constructed in concrete and blockwork with corrugated cement roofs which are in poor state of repair. The garages are accessed by a single width concrete access road which links to Dudley Close and the site slopes gently down from west to east. The immediate surrounds of the site comprise the gardens of the adjoining properties which give the site and its surroundings a verdant character. Photographs of the site are attached to this statement in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.6 The application site is located within the built-up area of Tilehurst with good access to a range of services, transport modes and facilities. The site comprises previously developed land.



PROPOSAL

- 1.7 The proposal seeks to demolish the existing garages and remove the existing concrete hardstanding within the site, excluding the access road/parking area which is likely to be retained.
- 1.8 It is proposed to erect two 2 bedroom semi-detached properties of a contemporary design positioned centrally within the existing garage area. The roofs would be mono pitched and clad in zinc with standing seams to ensure the height of the dwellings is kept to a minimum of this back land area. The elevations would be render at ground floor and timber clad at first floor.
- 1.9 The windows serving the main habitable rooms are positioned in the front and rear elevations of the dwellings. Windows on the side elevations of the properties are limited to a bathroom window at first floor level which would be obscure glazed and a kitchen window and door on the side elevation. Fencing is proposed on north, south and eastern boundaries.
- 1.10 1.5 parking spaces would be provided for each dwelling. Cycle storage for two bikes for each dwelling would be provided in a shed within the gardens. Each property would have a good size front and rear garden.
- 1.11 There is no relevant planning history relating to the site.



2 PLANNING POLICY AND MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. In the case of this application, the development plan of relevance consists of the Reading Borough Core Strategy (January 2008) and the Reading Borough Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012).
- 2.2 There are two adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which also need considering as part of this application. These are the Revised Sustainable Design & Construction SPD, Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 2.3 The application site is located within a residential built up area of Reading West. The Spatial Strategy within the Cores Strategy sets out that it will seek to maximise development opportunities within the built-up area of Reading. Policy CS14 in the adopted Core Strategy sets out that provision will be made for the completion of an average of at least 521 dwellings per annum in the period 2016-2026 in accordance with the spatial strategy set out in this Core Strategy.
- 2.4 The location of the application site within the built-up area of Reading means the principle of residential development on this site is acceptable.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.5 The main material consideration is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which sets out the Government's up to date policy guidance for plan making and decision taking.
- 2.6 The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development as the main thread running through the core of the document. It outlines the three dimensions of sustainable development which all development should seek to deliver, economic, social and environmental gains.
- 2.7 The scheme would deliver on the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development. In economic terms the development would generate employment during the build phase and once completed through the servicing of the dwelling. In social terms the



development would make a contribution to meeting the housing needs of the area and help support local services and facilities. In environmental terms, would make effective use of an unsightly and derelict previously developed site on a site well related to existing infrastructure and with access to means of transport other than the car. It is therefore considered that the proposed development represents a sustainable form of development.

SITE SPECIFICS

- 2.8 With the principle of development on site established, site specific issues and relevant policies within the development plan need to be considered and addressed.

Character and Appearance

- 2.9 Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy sets out 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. This includes design component such as layout, landscaping, density, scale, height, and architectural detail and materials.
- 2.10 In this case the proposed development represents the optimal utilisation of the site whilst at the same time delivering a scheme which would be appropriate to this back land location. The scale of the proposed dwellings with their shallow pitched roofs and choice of timber cladding would be appropriate for this site and would sit comfortably within its verdant surroundings and with its neighbours.
- 2.11 The layout takes into account the need to avoid development within the root protection areas of the adjoining trees to ensure their retention and leaves sufficient space for good size front and rear gardens which would be appropriately landscaped and enclosed to reinforce the character of the area.
- 2.12 The design of the dwellings responds positively to the site and its surrounds and the replacement of the currently derelict and unsightly buildings would represent an enhancement to the character and appearance of the area in compliance with policy CS7.

Residential Amenity

- 2.13 Policy DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document seeks to safeguard amenity. It sets out that development should 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, noise and disturbance, artificial lighting, vibration, dust and fumes, smells, or crime and safety.

- 2.14 The current lawful use of the site is for garaging and this represents the fall-back position as the garages could be repaired and let to bring the garage court back into active use. The associated activity/vehicular movements are likely to be greater than would be generated by the proposed two, two-bedroom dwellings.
- 2.15 With regard to privacy, the proposed dwellings would be situated about 28 metres from the rear of the properties fronting Amour Hill to the north. The site is slightly elevated above the rear gardens of these properties and the roof pitch of the proposed dwelling on the boundary has been designed to ensure that the side elevation of this property would not appear dominant from the rear gardens. A 1.5 m close boarded fence is proposed on the southern boundary which should ensure that the fence does not dominate the gardens of the neighbours and would provide privacy between the existing gardens and the amenity space for the proposed properties. The first-floor bathroom window would be obscure glazed to ensure no overlooking of the neighbouring gardens.
- 2.16 The northern boundary of the site adjoins the rear gardens of the dwellings fronting Dudley Close. The rear of these properties are sited about 25 metres from the proposed northernmost property. The distance in combination with the existing sheds, trees shrubs in the rear gardens would ensure that the proposed dwellings would not appear overbearing or result in a material loss of daylight and sunlight in the existing properties or their gardens. Again, the first-floor window of the northernmost property would be obscure glazed and a 1.8m close boarded fence would be formed on the northern boundary.
- 2.17 The closest property to the rear elevation of the of the proposed dwellings is no.6 Dudley Mews. The proposed properties would be about 90 degrees to the rear of this property and in combination with the distance between the properties (the proposed dwellings have a rear garden of 10.1 and 11.4 metres respectively) it is considered that there would be no harmful interlooking between windows or overlooking of the existing and proposed gardens.
- 2.18 Policy DM10 requires that dwellings are provided with functional private or communal open space that allow for suitable sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. The



proposed new dwellings will be provided with their own private residential garden space of at least 10 metres to the rear with further garden space to the front sufficient to meet the above objectives.

Transport

- 2.19 Policy DM12 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document deals with access, traffic and highway-related matters. It sets out that where proposals involving the generation of additional trips on the transport network consideration will be given to the effect on safety, congestion and the environment. It further identifies that development will only be permitted where accesses to the highway comply with adopted standards, the development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network, and the proposal would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network.
- 2.20 The Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (adopted October 2011) sets out the parking standards for the borough. Using zones it identifies the central core area, primary core area, secondary core area, and wider urban area. This application site is located within the defined primary core area which means it is well served by public transport. Within this zone and for residential development the SPD sets that for a 2-bed dwelling 1.5 parking spaces must be provided. The new dwellings will be provided with 3 spaces in accordance with the standards. Both dwellings will be provided with covered cycle sheds for the storage of 4 bicycles.

Ecology

- 2.21 Policy CS36 of the Core Strategy aims to protect features of biodiversity and geological interest.
- 2.22 The Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey submitted in support of the application confirms that the site largely comprises hardstanding and semi-derelict garaging, semi-improved grassland and scrub.
- 2.23 The survey report highlights that the buildings within the site have negligible potential for roosting bats and therefore advises that no further surveys are necessary but that the garages are inspected by an ecologist immediately prior to demolition. The survey report also advises a precautionary approach to the clearance of vegetation given the potential to disturb breeding birds and therefore any clearance should be undertaken outside the breeding season from March to August.



- 2.24 Ensuring the development delivers appropriate landscaping forms part of wider point of delivering a high design quality proposal. Policy DM11 specifically refers to landscaping and comments, *'providing appropriate hard and soft landscaping, particularly at site boundaries. This includes features such as the variety of trees, hardstanding/lawns and hedges, etc'*.
- 2.25 The scheme shows indicative hedge and tree planting within the site together with hard landscaping and fencing. A landscaping scheme can be secured via condition.

Other Matters

- 2.26 Policy DM6 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document is the affordable housing policy, it sets out the thresholds for contributions across the borough. It requires that on sites of 1-4 dwellings, a financial contribution is provided that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable elsewhere in the Borough. This proposal would make a proportionate contribution to affordable housing provision in the Borough.
- 2.27 Reading Borough Council implemented its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1st April 2015. Policy DM3 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document ensures that proposals for development make appropriate provisions for infrastructure, services, resources and amenities. These provisions will be secured through planning obligations and/or CIL as relevant. In accordance with the CIL Charging Schedule (January 2015), this development is subject to £120 per m². This proposal will be policy compliant regarding CIL requirements.



3 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The proposed development will deliver a new dwelling within the defined urban area of Reading. The site has good access to local services and facilities and access to transport modes other than the car. The location and scale of the proposed development means the principle of development is acceptable in this case.
- 3.2 The design of the scheme would contribute positively to the character and appearance of the site and the local area and the proposed dwellings would sit comfortably within the site and in relation to the adjoining properties.
- 3.3 The proposed development comprises sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF. The proposal would efficiently use the land within the urban built-up area which is capable of accommodating two dwellings.
- 3.4 In view of the above it is considered that the proposal would comply with the requirements of the development and would be in accordance with national policy. The presumption is therefore firmly in favour the development.





Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4



Photograph 5