

64-66 Chapel Hill, Reading, RG31 5DQ

Planning, Design and Access Statement

June 2019



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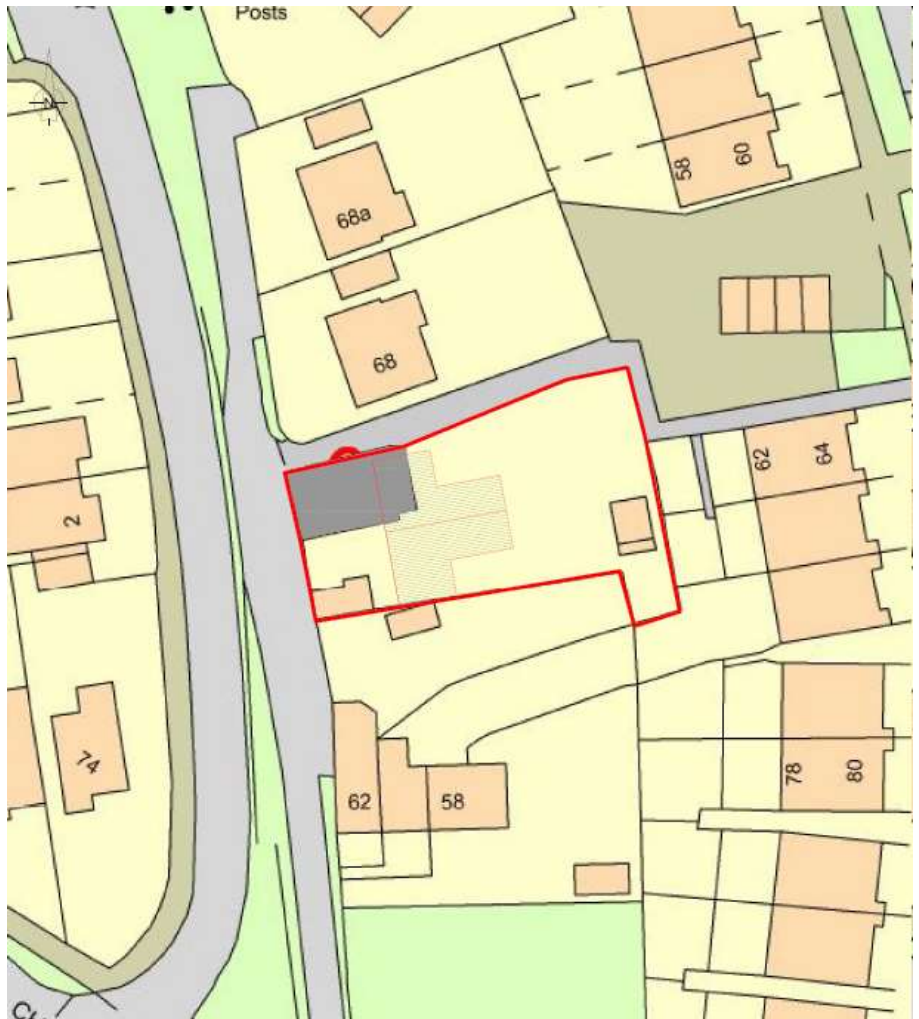
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1 INTRODUCTION

1. 1 This document has been prepared in support of an application for full planning permission for the redevelopment of the site at 64-66 Chapel Hill to provide 2 no. 3 bedroom semi-detached houses with associated parking and landscaping.
1. 2 The application site is indicated on the Site Location Plan at Figure 1.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



1. 3 This application follows a recently withdrawn application Ref: 182169/FUL and seeks to resolve this issues raised by the Council in relation to amenity, highways and ecology.
1. 4 This statement presents the proposals in the context of the key relevant planning policy considerations and is set out under the following headings:
 - Existing Site
 - Planning History
 - Proposed Development
 - Planning Policy Context
 - Planning Considerations
 - Conclusions

2 EXISTING SITE

- 2.1 The existing property is formed of a detached, two storey dwellinghouse with large garden and outbuildings, orientated with its flank (eastern) elevation facing Felton Way. The topography of the site falls from the east to the west.
- 2.2 As shown in the photograph at **Figure 2**, the house sits forward of the front building line of the two storey residential properties to the north and faces the rear elevation of the residential property to the east (no. 62) which overlook the allotments and towards Chapel Hill.

Figure 2: Photograph from Felton Way



- 2.3 To the north are a pair of two storey houses and garages that were granted permission in 1995 and replaced a single house and garage. As shown in the photograph at **Figure 3**, these dwellings have garages and forecourt car parking.
- 2.4 To the south there is a car park which serves the residential properties fronting Lower Elmstone Drive (**Figure 4**).

Figure 3: Houses granted Permission in 1995



Figure 4: Car Park at the rear boundary of the site



Figure 5: Example of predominant house type within the vicinity of the site.

2.5 Whilst there is some variety within the street, the predominant house type is



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- 2.6 The site is located within Tilehurst, to the west of Reading. It is within walking distance of the shops and services on School Road. It is a five minute drive to Tilehurst Railway Station to the north-east.

Designations

- 2.7 There are no proposals map designations affecting the site. There is a Green Link which terminates on the allotments to the south.
- 2.8 The site is in Zone 3 (Secondary Core Area: Variety of land uses, within 400m walk of high frequency bus services) according to the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (October 2011).
- 2.9 The site is within Flood Zone 1 on the Environment Agency Flood Map.
- 2.10 The site is not within a conservation area and there are no listed buildings within the vicinity of the site (the nearest Listed properties front on to Westwood Glen (to the North)).

Relevant Planning History

- 2.11 In February 2019, an application was withdrawn for:

Demolition of existing detached house and outbuildings. Construction of a pair of semi-detached houses. [LPA Ref: 182169]

- 2.12 Concerns were raised in relation to highways, neighbouring amenity and ecology. These proposals seek to address these concerns.

3 PROPOSALS

3.1 The application comprises the redevelopment of the site at 64-66 Chapel Hill to provide 2 no. 3 bedroom semi-detached houses with associated parking and landscaping. The proposal involves the following:

- Demolition of existing house and outbuildings;
- Erection of 2 no. 3 bed semi-detached houses;
- Provision of good sized rear gardens laid to grass with tree planting at the boundary. Further planting on front elevation;
- Rear garden access provided for both properties;
- Provision of bike stores within rear gardens;
- Forecourt car parking (2 no. Spaces per dwelling);
- Sympathetic, contemporary design with hipped tiled roof, white rendered walls, pitched roof dormers and grey windows and doors.

3.2 The proposed site plan and context elevation are included at **Figure 6**.

Figure 6: Proposed Site Plan and Context Elevation



4 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 This section sets out the relevant planning policy framework for the application site and surrounding area.
- 4.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:
- If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise*
- 4.3 The development plan is formed of the following documents:
- The Core Strategy (Adopted January 2008, altered January 2015);
 - Sites and Detailed Policies Document (Adopted October 2012, altered January 2015);
 - Proposals Map (Adopted October 2012)
- 4.4 The following national policy and guidance are material planning considerations:
- National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
 - MHCLG Planning Practice Guidance.
 - The following supplementary planning document is also relevant:
 - Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (October 2011)

National Planning Policy (2018)

- 4.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in February
- 4.6 2019. At the heart of the NPPF remains the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 10).
- 4.7 Para 127 sets out the requirements for developments in decision making. These require developments to function well and add to the overall quality of the area, to be visually attractive, to be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.
- 4.8 It requires development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place, to optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks.
- 4.9 It seeks to create places which are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing

and future users and where crime and disorder, and fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion or resilience.

Development Plan - Core Strategy

- 4.10 **Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)** 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, will be assessed.
- Layout: urban structure and urban grain;
 - Landscape;
 - Density and mix;
 - Scale: height and massing; and
 - Architectural detail and materials.
- 4.11 These elements 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
- 4.12 Legibility - clear image and easy to understand
- Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time
 - Diversity – meets a wide range of needs.
- 4.13 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, useable 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.
- 4.14 **Policy CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix)** states that developments should provide an appropriate range of housing opportunities in terms of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, in accordance with the housing market assessment.

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- 4.15 Paragraph 6.22 states that developments should include provision for family accommodation.

Development Plan - Sites and Detailed Policies Document (October 2012)

- 4.16 **Policy SD1** (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) states that a positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF.
- 4.17 **Policy DM4** (Safeguarding Amenity) resists development that would cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties in terms of (*inter alia*) privacy and overlooking, sunlight and daylight, visual dominance and overbearing effects.
- 4.18 **Policy DM5** (Housing Mix) applies to developments for 10 or more dwellings outside the central area and defined district and local centres. Whilst this policy does not strictly applies to smaller developments it identifies a demand for family dwellings outside the central areas.
- 4.19 Paragraph 5.1.6 states that a background paper has demonstrated that the greatest need over the plan period is likely to be for dwellings containing three or more bedrooms
- 4.20 **Policy DM10** (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) requires houses to be provided with private, functional outdoor space. It states that the design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of to other similar spaces in the vicinity.

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (October 2011)

- 4.21 The SPD sets a car parking standard of 2 spaces per 3 bedroom dwellinghouse and a cycle space standard of 2 spaces per 3 bedroom dwellinghouse.

Emerging Local Plan

- 4.22 The submission local plan (March 2018) is currently undergoing examination. The hearings were completed in October 2018 and the Council is currently in the process of responding to outstanding matters raised by the Inspector.
- 4.23 The draft plan includes area specific policies for West Reading and Tilehurst. It states that:

7.2.4 It is considered that West Reading and Tilehurst can accommodate around 2,400 homes between 2013 and 2036, around 15% of the total planned for (this includes 554 dwellings that were completed between 2013 and 2017). Enhancement of the Meadway centre, along with other developments, may deliver some commercial development, but this is unlikely to be a substantial proportion of development needs. It is important to note that this is an indication of potential capacity, not a policy target.

Opportunities for new development are largely spread out over the whole area, as there are not the same opportunities for large new development sites that exist in South Reading. Much of the development is expected to be in the form of small sites, as has historically been the case.

There are potential opportunities for some of the older residential areas to see some regeneration and renewal, although opportunities are not expected to be on the scale of the ongoing development at Dee Park.

5 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 This section considers the planning and design aspects of the proposals. The proposals have been assessed in relation to the key planning policies set out in the preceding sections of this statement.

Principle of Residential Development

- 5.2 The development will bring forward an additional dwelling (and a high quality replacement) to contribute to the borough's housing stock.
- 5.3 The site is sustainably located close to public transport links and within walking distance of shops and services. The site is in Flood Zone 1 and there are no ecological constraints to the redevelopment. There is already a residential use on the site.
- 5.4 It is therefore considered that the principle of residential development is acceptable.

Housing Mix

- 5.5 The development will bring forward an additional family sized dwelling outside the designated centres to contribute to the demonstrated need for larger dwellings in the borough.

Design Considerations

- 5.6 It is considered that the proposed design will result in an enhancement to the street scene.
- 5.7 The existing house abuts the front boundary with its blank side elevation. The proposed development will create two semi-detached houses with attractive frontages, addressing Felton Way. The houses will be set back into the site so that their front building lines sit just behind those of the houses to the north. This will create a welcome sense of openness at the front of the site.
- 5.8 Following feedback from the case officer during the course of the withdrawn application, the building has been pulled away slightly from the southern boundary and the height of the houses reduced so that the building sits below the properties on either side. The hipped roof and low ridge height will ensure that neighbouring amenity is protected.
- 5.9 Pitched roof dormer windows are proposed and pitched roof porches which complement those found on the neighbouring houses to the north. Fore-court car parking is a predominant feature within the locality and is therefore considered to be appropriate in this instance. Planting is proposed to soften the appearance.

Quality of Proposed Accommodation

- 5.10 The development will provide a good standard of accommodation. The size of the dwellings meets the Nationally Described Space Standards with good sized bedrooms and storage and comfortably arranged downstairs living accommodation. The main living spaces have outlook onto the private patios and good sized private rear gardens.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 5.11 The proposal has been carefully designed to protect neighbouring amenity.

Outlook

- 5.12 The proposal will improve the outlook from the rear windows of the house at no. 62 as it will pull the built form back from the road frontage as compared to the existing two storey house, providing an open outlook towards the north. While there will be built form situated at the side boundary of the rear garden of no. 62 (which extends to the east) this is only for a very short section of a very lengthy garden (as the building is in-set). Following feedback from the case officer during the course of the withdrawn application, the southernmost building has been pulled in slightly from the boundary and the height of the roof reduced. This will ensure that there will be no harm to the outlook of the garden to no. 62. There will be no impact on sunlight to the garden of no. 62 as the proposed houses are situated to the north.
- 5.13 The side elevation will be over 15 metres from the rear elevations of the remaining houses to the south, which also have rear gardens extending to the East and very open rear outlooks that will not be harmed by the proposals.

Privacy

- 5.14 There are no side facing windows above ground floor level to ensure that the privacy of the dwellings either side is protected. To the rear there is over 20m distance between the easternmost rear elevation windows and the rear elevations of the residential properties to the east. This is considered to be sufficient to ensure that privacy is protected.

Parking/ Access

- 5.15 Car parking is provided to meet the Council's adopted standards as set out in the relevant SPD at two spaces per dwelling.
- 5.16 Secure bike stores are provided in the rear gardens.
- 5.17 As set out in the accompanying Transport Statement by Highways Planning Ltd, there is adequate space for the vehicles to turn and travel along the track in forward gear. The small increase in activity along the track will not have a material impact on the safety and operation of the track and its junction to Chapel Hill.

Refuse

- 5.18 Bin stores are provided at the front of each of the properties for collection as per the existing arrangements.

Ecology

- 5.19 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for Bat Habitat was undertaken in response to feedback from the case officer in relation to the withdrawn application.
- 5.20 This Appraisal which was undertaken by Urban Tree Experts and found no potential for roosting bats at the property and no access points that could be used by bats.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This submission applies for full planning permission for the following development.

Redevelopment of the site at 64-66 Chapel Hill to provide 2 no. 3 bedroom semi-detached houses with associated parking and landscaping

- 6.2 The development will bring forward an additional dwelling (and a high quality replacement) to contribute to the borough's housing stock. Both dwellings will be family sized for which there is a demonstrated need in the borough, outside the designated centres.
- 6.3 The proposed design will enhance the streetscape by reorienting the development so that it addresses Felton Way and by locating the built form further within the site to create a welcome sense of openness on the frontage.
- 6.4 The appearance of the development is sympathetic to the existing character of the street. The proposed articulation responds to the 1995 development to the north and provides a transition between this development and the older houses to the south.
- 6.5 Good quality living accommodation is proposed with good sized, useable living spaces that meets the nationally described spaces standards and attractive outlooks onto the good sized private gardens.
- 6.6 The amenity of the neighbouring dwellings has been very carefully considered when drawing up the proposals. The outlook from the rear windows of no. 62 is improved by placing the built form further within the site. The southernmost part of the development will extend for only a very short section of the rear garden to no. 62 with a hipped roof design to ensure that the outlook from the garden is protected. Windows have been placed to ensure there is no harm caused by loss of privacy.
- 6.7 Car and cycle parking is provided to meet the Council's adopted standards.
- 6.8 Adequate provision is made for refuse with collection as per the existing arrangements.
- 6.9 It is therefore considered that the development complies with the development plan and other material planning considerations. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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