



24 Cressingham Road, Reading, RG2 7JF

Proposed erection of a new one bedroom detached dwellinghouse

Planning Statement

Author:

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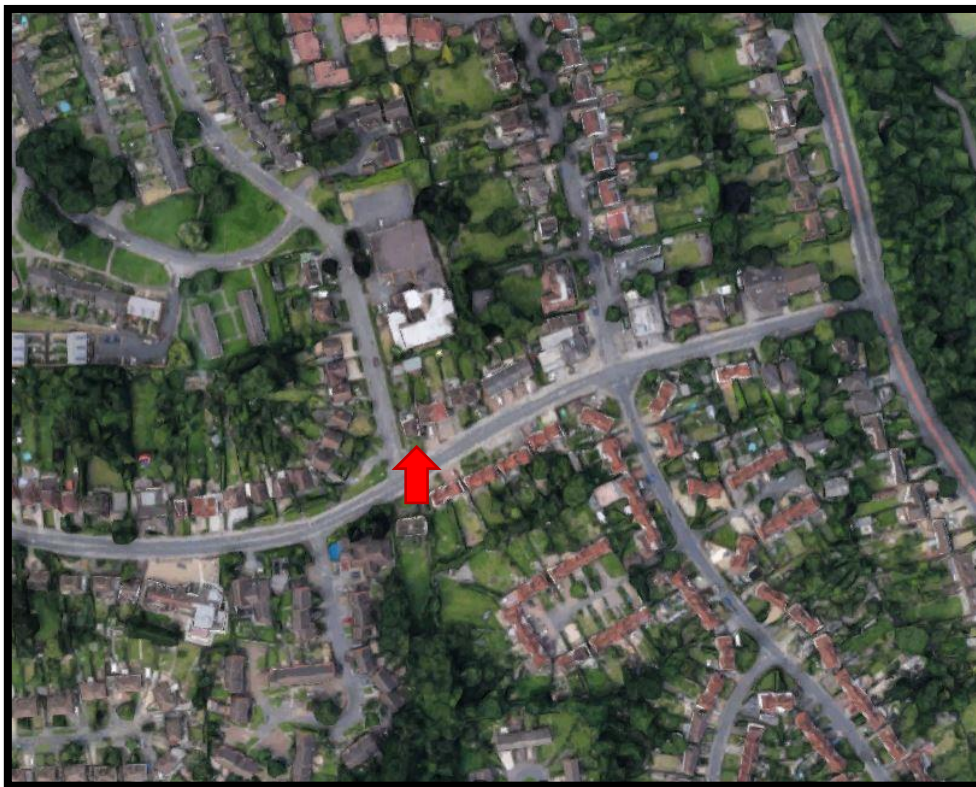
1. Introduction

1.1. Preface

This design statement has been prepared in support of a Full application for the proposed erection of a new one bedroom detached dwellinghouse at the back garden of 24 Cressingham Rd, Reading, RG2 7JF.

The following statement covers the subject and information required for submission as set National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and Reading Borough Council Core Strategy. This document will outline the application site history and the design strategy for the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

1.2. Site Location



1. Aerial photograph





2. Bird's eye photograph (back of the proposed dwelling)



3. Bird's eye photograph (front of the proposed dwelling)

1.3. Site Description

The application site is located on the corner of Cressingham Road and Barnsdale Road. The proposed dwelling would replace the existing detached garage, sited in the back part of the rear private amenity space of no. 24 Cressingham Road. The application site is surrounded by diverse buildings, which are relatively mixed in terms of their front appearance, design, architectural details or class of use. Only the group of three dwellings on the opposite side of the Barnsdale Road include dwellings of a fairly similar scale, roof forms and relatively consistent design pattern, however clearly altered through the implemented extensions. The rear part of the back garden (where the new dwelling is proposed) is adjacent to a massive and monolithic Telephone Exchange building, rear outbuilding in the back garden of neighbouring house no. 22 Cressingham Road and the application dwelling, which is a typical two storey detached house, extended with erected extensions to the rear, sited in a prominent location.



The site is occupied by a two storey building, which is currently used as a single dwellinghouse – Class C3. The host building comprises deep and narrow rear amenity space with insignificant landscaping, in total around 230.0m². The entire area of the application property (dwelling + front and rear garden) is circa 418.0m², where the host dwelling includes approximately 50.0m² footprint. The property benefits from off-street parking and given its exposed front and side elevation and close distance from the highway, it is considered to be clearly visible within the streetscene.

The application property is a detached dwelling, sited next to two pairs of similar semi-detached dwellings, in total six detached houses surrounding outside of a bend on the road along the opposite corner and facing six semis of a significantly larger scale, footprint and massive appearance. The most alien building in this residential neighbourhood is a Telephone Exchange building, with a flat roof, enormous scale and circa 1700.0m² footprint.







1.4. Surrounding Area Description

The majority of the Cressingham Road streetscene is characterised by a dominant presence of residential type of development, with some examples of groups of dwellings with repeatable design features, however mostly with a strongly diverse roofscape, scale with inconsistent frontages arrangement and not cohesive appearance. Nevertheless, the directly adjacent area surrounding the application dwelling's garden (where the proposed dwelling would be sited), contains a variety of forms. All adjacent buildings are presented in the below photographs included in this paragraph.







Within the closest proximity from the application property, there are numerous of buildings, diverse in terms of their:

- use (residential; office/commercial);
- type (semi-detached; detached; terraced);
- fenestration and architectural details;
- roof forms;
- scale/footprint/volume;
- landscaping;
- distance from the highway, boundary treatment and driveways.

The presentation of variety of adjacent residential properties design on the corner of Cressingham Rd and Barnsdale Rd streetscene, has been presented on the below diagram.





4. Barnsdale Rd streetscene



2. Planning Policy

2.1. NPPF

Achieving Sustainable Development

Paragraph 7 of the NPPF (July 2018) emphasises that *“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”* and expands that in the paragraph 8, that it *“has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive:*

- *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being;*
- *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”.*

Furthermore, a decision-making in favour of sustainable development is strengthened and its significant weight is confirmed in paragraph 38, which states that *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.*

Residential redevelopment location and appropriate density

Paragraph 68 of the NPPF encourages to prioritise small development sites with regards to housing land provision and it emphasises that *“Small and medium sized sites can make an important*



contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

- identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare;
- support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes”.

Furthermore, an effective use of land is significantly highlighted in paragraph 71, which says that development suitable for first time buyers or entry-level sites should “be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework, and comply with any local design policies and standards”, whereas paragraph 117 encourages Local Planning Authorities to “promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions” and “makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land”. Additionally, paragraph 118 says that decisions should “promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops”.

Paragraph 122 in the ‘Achieving appropriate densities’ part of NPPF, emphasizes that “Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a. the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
- b. local market conditions and viability;
- c. the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
- d. the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
- e. the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.”

Housing Quality and Design

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that the “creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve” and that “good design is a key aspect



of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”.

Furthermore, NPPF paragraph 126 emphasizes an important role of the design codes and guides, which should *“provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design”* and that *“their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified”*.

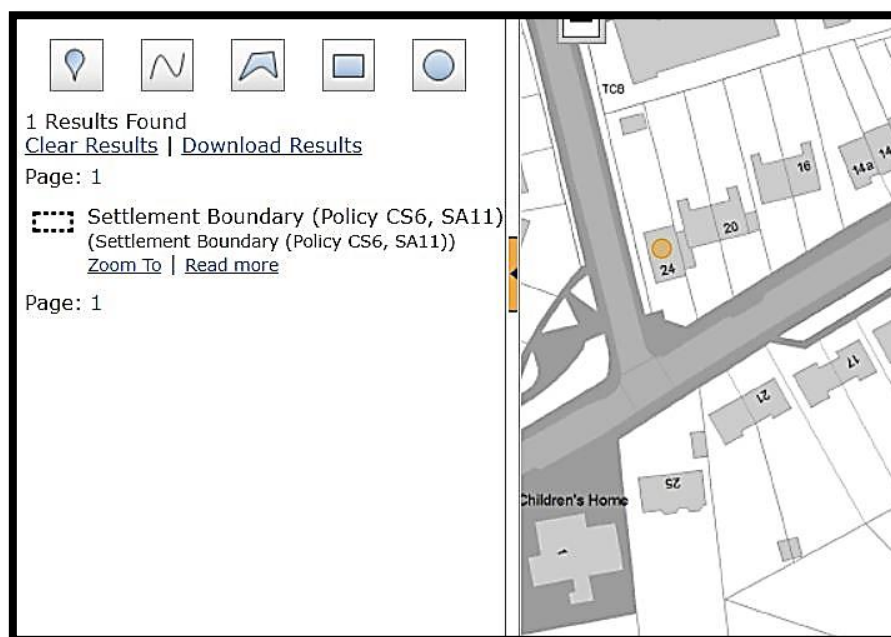
Paragraph 127 of the NPPF comprises a list, in terms of what decisions should ensure with regards to proposed developments, inter alia:

- *“function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *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);*
- *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- *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; and*
- *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.*

Delivering a decent level of design quality is comprised in paragraph 130 - *“Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents”*.



2.2.Core Strategy



5. Local Plan Policies Map

Residential redevelopment location

The application property is located within the settlement limits of Reading, therefore it stands in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS6 ‘Settlement Boundary’, which states that *“No development will be permitted outside the settlement boundary as defined on the Proposals Map”*. Also, by virtue of its typically residential character, Core Strategy includes a clear assumption in favour of such redevelopment from private amenity space use, as described in this statement. Paragraph 3.26 states that *“In addition to the major development areas outlined above, development will continue to occur on previously developed land throughout the urban area in accordance with national government policy. Residual areas will be considered for allocation for redevelopment for mixed use or residential purposes”*.

Besides large developers’ investments, small-scale housing development has been strengthened in para 3.29, which emphasises that *“Although the spatial strategy focuses on the location of major development and the role of different areas of Reading, much of the development that occurs in the Borough is relatively small-scale and piecemeal and this is particularly true for housing development. A significant proportion of new homes result from infill and back land development, redevelopment of existing accommodation (both residential and commercial), conversion of larger properties to flats and the change of use of commercial buildings. The strategy expects this type of development to continue throughout the built-up area”*. Furthermore, it continues that *“National government policy seeks to*



enable this development to continue to make efficient use of urban land and to reduce the need to use greenfield sites."

Accessibility

Number of Core Strategy Policies relate to sustainable development, such as CS3 and 'Accessibility' part or CS4 'Accessibility and the Intensity of Development'. Policy CS3 emphasises importance of sustainable communities – *"Planning has a key role to play in reducing the need to travel, in terms of shaping the pattern of development, and influencing the location, scale, density, design"* or in paragraph 4.27, which encourages to *"promote accessibility by alternative modes of transport, and reduce the need to travel by car"*.

Policy CS4 explains in paragraph 4.30 what good level of accessibility means - *"to be that within 400m of a defined centre with a good range of facilities by pedestrian routes, and within 400m by pedestrian routes of a bus stop served by a service with a frequency of better than one bus every 20 minutes in each direction within daytime hours (7.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.). In many parts of Reading (particularly the central area), it will be important to ensure that access to a range of facilities is unimpeded, and not affected by existing barriers (such as the River Thames, IDR and railway)."*

Design Quality

Policy CS7 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"*.

In addition, CS7 continues and encourages to ensure that proposed developments will *"positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character"* 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"*.

2.3. Reading Borough Council – 'Sites and Detailed Policies Document'

Sites and Detailed Policies Document comprises Policy DM11 'Development of private residential gardens', which includes rules which apply for the successful new development in residential private



amenity spaces. The most important and relevant (for the purpose of this application) aspects of the proposed residential development quality appraisal are:

1. Positive contribution to the character of the area;
2. Adequate size, dimensions, spacing, setting, landscaping and highways impact;
3. Appropriate access;
4. No tandem development;
5. Minimising of exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas;
6. Neighbours impact (light, privacy, noise, safety);
7. Mixed type housing;
8. Appropriate impact upon the biodiversity and green network;
9. The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area.

3. Appraisal

3.1. General concept

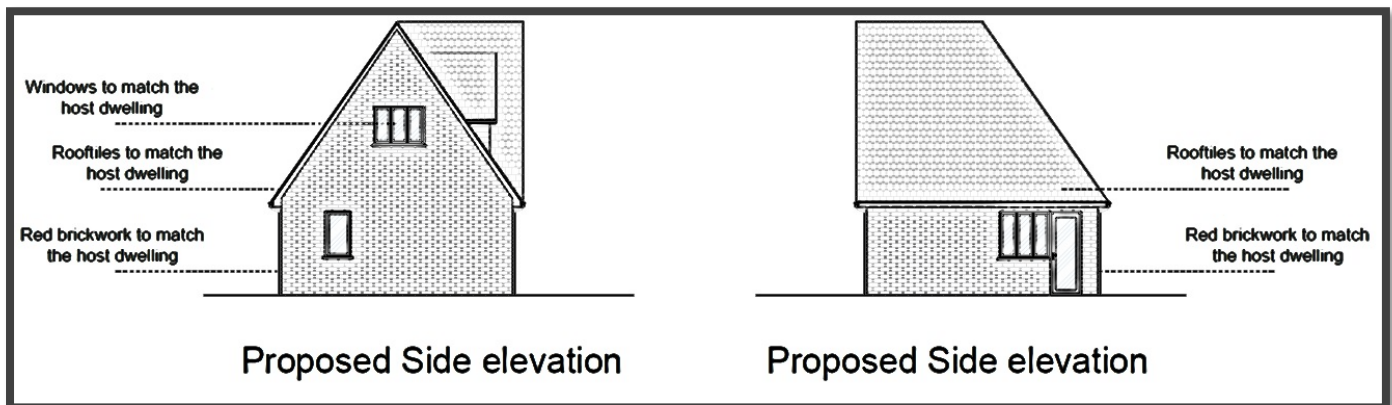
The overall aim of the proposal is to make efficient use of the existing site and its assets, by proposing a new detached, one bedroom dwellinghouse in the back garden of this corner plot property, through the above proposal. The application property is characterized with a location within Reading settlement boundaries, which is strongly mixed and inconsistent in terms of the design, where such residential development is acceptable, subject to conditions.

3.2. Impact on the Character of the Area

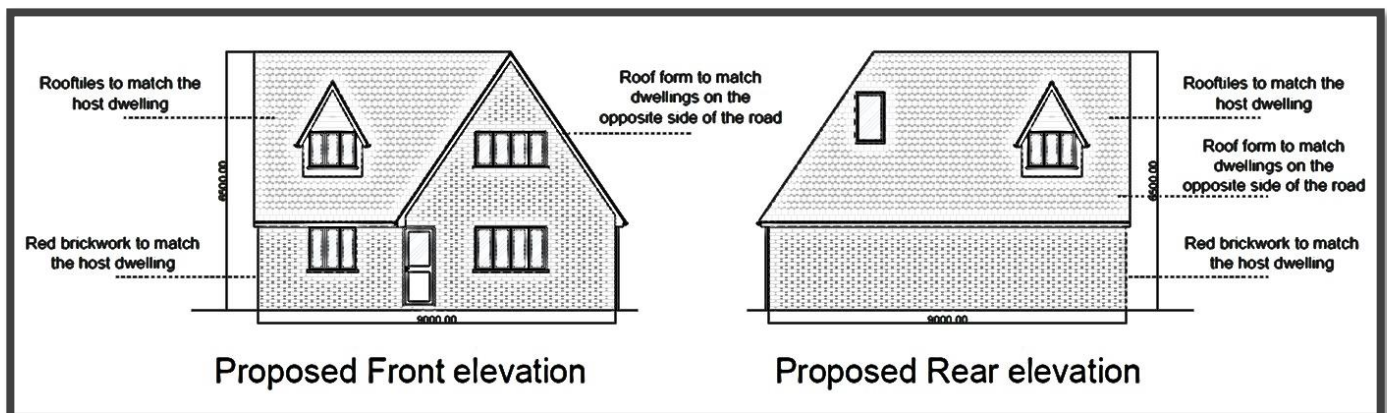
The proposed development would result in a two storey detached dwelling, with an in keeping appearance and with cohesive type and colour of used materials, consistent with the host property no. 24 Cressingham Road in Reading. The proposed development would provide a sympathetic design, reasonable scale and a roof form of an identical shape and adjusted slope angles as the dwellings on the opposite side of the road. The proposal includes sympathetic fenestration elements and a gable dormer installed within the front roofslope of the building, in order to provide an appropriate and decent quality design and to preserve a typical residential character of the area. Given the mixed appearance of the neighbourhood and particularly dwelling on the opposite side of the street, the proposed scheme was intended to appear in keeping and cohesive in relation to the adjacent buildings. The proposal includes replacement of the single storey timber garage/storage, which is currently in a poor condition (internally and externally), therefore its removal would bring some benefits for the overall visual arrangement and neatness of the streetscene. More contemporary rooflight installed



within rear roofslope, would serve as an additional source of light for the habitable accommodation to the bedroom. The proposed brickwork with windows and glazed doors would be considered in keeping with the fenestration details of the existing main dwelling. The unsympathetic and neglected rear additions would be removed and replaced, providing more sympathetic appearance from the back garden perspective. In relation to similar appearance of the adjacent houses, the proposal would appear well-balanced and fitted with the diverse character of the Barnsdale Road streetscape. The proposed alterations would be considered to successfully blend in within the residential character of the surrounding area, providing a consistent appearance in relation to the opposite houses.



6. Proposed side elevations



7. Proposed front and rear elevation

3.3. Impact on neighbours

Loss of Light and Overbearing

Due to the proposed development situation, overall scale and form of the enlargement and similar scale of the implemented extensions within the neighbouring properties, no adverse changes to current overbearing and overshadowing arrangement would be considered to arise. The overshadowing arrangement is considered to be similar as to the rear of adjacent dwellings and no further, detrimental loss of light would arise as a result of the proposed development.



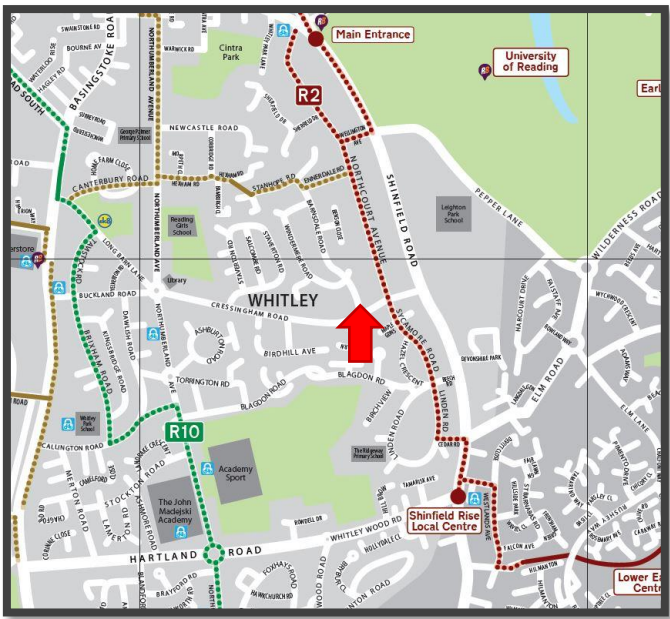
Loss of Privacy and Overlooking

Due to the proposed dwelling’s location, positioning of the new windows and sufficient separation gaps from the neighbouring properties, no adverse changes to current overlooking and overshadowing arrangement would be considered to occur. The only upper-level side elevation window would be facing the Telephone Exchange property parking/front garden and the rear dormer would be obscure glazed and non-opening up to 1.7m, therefore no unacceptable loss of privacy would occur.

3.4. Transport, parking and access

The proposed site is located to the south, around 2.5km from the Reading Town Centre. Given close proximity from adjacent bus stops on Cressingham Road, Shinfield Road or Nortumberland Avenue (about 5 min walk), the application property benefits from an extensive bus service including routes 3, 5, 9, 10, 244, 981 with frequent links to Reading Centre, Wokingham Town Centre, Swallowfield and towns/villages to the south of Reading.

The application dwelling’s close vicinity to London Road, which provides vehicle access to the A327 and links with the M4 for towards the east to London and Wales to the west. The broad road networks around the site also provide huge choice and possibilities of cycle routes and walking paths in and around the area, from local amenities on Shinfield Road or Nortumberland Avenue, which include wider range of services such as grocery shops, churches, temples, pharmacy, cafes, pubs, educational facilities, hospital or nursery. Range of services located within walking distance from the application site, makes it highly appropriate and sustainable for a residential development, as presented on the below cycle routes map.



8. Cycle routes network



The proposed dwelling would benefit from an allocated parking space, on-street parking on Barnsdale Road and adjacent streets. Additionally, the proposal includes lockable bike storage in the back for up to 4x bikes. The application property is benefited from easy cycle access to the town centre and direct access to few main cycle routes.

3.5. Development of private residential gardens

Policy DM11 of Sites and Detailed Policies Document confirms that in case of proposal for a new residential development, that includes land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable, however subject to numerous conditions

The proposal would comply in terms of housing mix guidance and requirements, due to provision of a one bedroom residential unit, which would positively contribute to the Mixed Housing Council's Policy and would stand in compliance with the NPPF. Furthermore, the application dwelling's location is considered suitable to provide more affordable one bedroom units, which would be well-fitted within the surrounding area's character. It is therefore considered that, as a result of the proposed development, new dwelling in the back garden of application property no. 24 Cressingham Road in Reading, would stand in accordance with the SDPD Policy DM11.

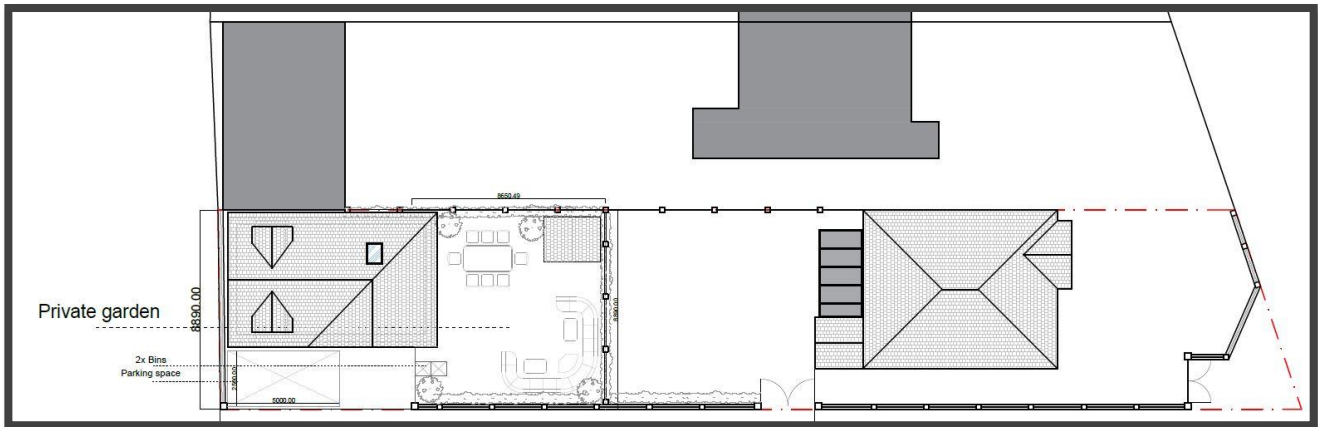
It is considered that the proposed scale and design of the new house would comply with bullet point 1) of the DM11 Policy, which emphasizes that a positive contribution should be provided in terms of:

- *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.*

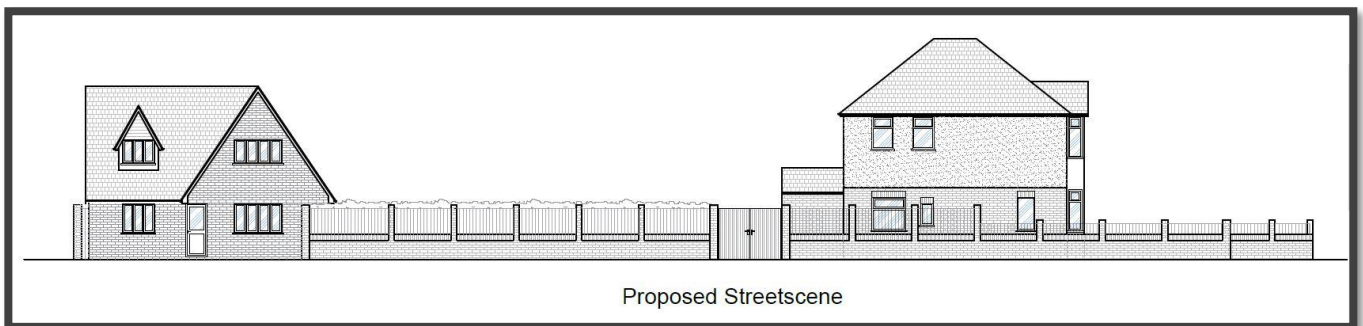
The figures numbers 6 and 7, which present the proposed dwelling's elevations are considered to positively answer to the above requirements in terms of the used materials, architectural features and fenestration details. Figure 9 shows the site plan, which clarifies the matters of sufficient amenity



space, appropriate spacing in between surrounding buildings and reasonable separation distances from the existing dwellings. Figure 10 is a presentation of the proposed streetscene. It is noticeable that the proposed dwelling is lower than the host building, however it is also adjacent to the Telephone Exchange building (to the north). This office/commercial building is of a totally alien form, with a flat roof and enormous footprint, however it is also lower than the surrounding properties. Therefore the proposed design, through slightly lowered ridge level would positively contribute to the surrounding area character and would appear well-blended within the neighbourhood.



9. Proposed site plan.



10. Proposed streetscene.

3.6. Internal and External Amenity Space

It is acknowledged that currently the application property comprises a sufficient outdoor amenity space within its residential curtilage of around 320.0m², in order to subdivide it to two dwellings. The proposed dwelling would contain circa 78.0m² private rear garden, whereas the larger, main property would retain around 83.0m² (excluding side and front garden). It is considered that it would stand in compliance with the SDPD DM11 Policy, which states that there should be an adequate size of any proposed private amenity space. Notwithstanding the above, the application site is located within close proximity of numerous green public spaces, accessible within walking distance. All recreational



areas are of high quality, large and offering extensive activities (various sports, playgrounds, lake, or green open grass areas), such as:

- Green Open Spaces at University of Reading Campus;
- Large park to the south of Blagdon Road;
- Longbarn Lane Recreation Ground (west).

In addition, Figure no. 11 includes internal space standards, where the minimum required is 58.0m². The proposed development would include around 80.0m² and effectively it would comply with the ‘Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard’ adopted by Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2015. The proposal would also successfully meet requirements in terms of minimum height, storage area and bedrooms internal space. The layout provides appropriate level of privacy and living quality, due to appropriate internal ground and first floor arrangement.

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5

11. Internal Space Standards (Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard, March 2015).

4. Conclusion

By virtue of the scale and nature of the proposed development, it is considered that it would comply with the relevant parts of NPPF, Reading BC Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document, therefore we kindly appeal, to approve the submitted application.

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