

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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C206/3.1

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Construction of a one-bedroom dwelling
Land adjacent to and including garage of 4 Dovecote
Road, Reading, RG2 8UJ

Subject: In support of Planning Application

Distribution:	Planning	Reading Borough Council
	Client	Mr Jude
	File	Lapd

1. Planning Background

This Design and Access statement has been prepared to explain the rationale and the evolution of the design of 1 no. one-bed dwelling on land currently used as a garage and remote amenity space for 4 Dovecote Road, Reading. A pre-app enquiry, including a site visit and written response, was received in January 2019. (Ref: 182110)

The following supportive documents will be submitted as part of the application:

1. Lapd drawings C206.11 and C206.12

2. Site/Building Appraisal

Dovecote Road is characterised generally by developments of 2-storey link-detached and semi-detached houses. House plots are generally similar in width along Dovecote Road.

Numbers 4, 5, 6 & 7 Dovecote Road are a combined block of one-bedroom houses. Number 4 is different in that it has a garden and car parking area completely remote from the house as well as garden and parking area immediately the house.

The site is located in Zone 3, within 400m of high frequency public transport routes and a good provision of shops and services.

The remote garden and garage are under-utilised and would be better served if used in the formation of the proposed dwelling in this planning application.

lapd ltd

directors
opinder liddar RIBA
trevor avery RIBA

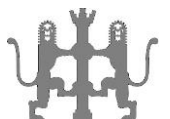
studio 24
building c2
culham science centre
abingdon
oxford
ox14 3db

tel 01865 407722
fax 01865 407200

enquiry@lapdarchitects.co.uk

www.lapdarchitects.co.uk

registered in england
company no. 5324993



an riba registered practice



QR scan for lapd

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As the site is generally unmaintained and underused, due to the impractical connection of this space with the house it is meant to serve; there is potential to make the area better used by the creation of a small one-bed dwelling. The proposal makes for a far better and efficient use of wasted land in a residential context. The dwelling has been designed in such a way that its scale and window orientations do not have any significant impact on any neighbouring amenity.

The site is enclosed to the rear and side by a timber fence enclosing the site from the neighbour's gardens. A mixture of fencing, mature shrubs, trees and hedges define the boundary to the north east. The proposed dwelling is 0.64m higher than the existing garage roof with rooflights set with cills at 1.7m above first floor level so there is no possibility of overlooking neighbours.

Recently, there was a tree on the green verge which had started to damage the enclosing wall to the front of the site. The tree has been removed to prevent further damage to building structures.

The entrance façade of the new dwelling is 15.6m away from the opposite neighbour and similar to the existing relationship of front of dwellings to dwellings along this road albeit this proposal is a 1-storey with room in the roof and existing properties are all 2-storey with full roof. The single-storey flank gable wall is 8.5m away from the side wall of nr 5 Dovecote Road and has no windows overlooking the private amenity of this dwelling.

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The scale of the proposed dwelling is low so that it will not cause any significant overshadowing on neighbouring amenity land.



View of the plot – remote garden is not used and struggling to keep tidy. Access is only available from the garage door (shown) which is also remote from the dwelling it is meant to serve.



View of Dovecote Road – site to right hand side of photograph

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3. Policy Context and Design approach

(policies most relevant for the proposal as identified in the pre- application enquiry)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan (including, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Proposed development that conflicts with the development plan will be refused, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

The proposal does not create any significant adverse impact in its environment and as this document shows complies with the relevant policies that apply to it.

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

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 and provision of green spaces and landscaping*
- 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.*

Also, with regard to policy CC7 the quality of the development is in keeping with the surrounding area and character. As the proposal utilises the existing garage with an addition where the roof is 0.64m higher but at the same roof pitch; the proposal will fit in well with the neighbouring context and accord with this policy well.

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Front doors and parking are to the front of the street as are all the other properties in this area.

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

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; or*
- *Crime and safety.*

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.

In this context there is a 2-storey dwelling facing the side of a single-storey dwelling with a 1.8m fence dividing the private amenity spaces of both dwellings. Therefore, the privacy of both dwellings is maintained as there are no direct or indirect windows facing each other. As with policy CC7 the scale of the proposal will not harm outlook or dominate the streetscene. The proposal is residential as existing with garden next to garden space so complimentary to the setting as the existing situation. Amenity provision for the existing property at number 4 Dovecote Road is maintained as use will be made of the garden space directly attached to the property, providing sufficient amenity for a 1-bed dwelling.

H1: PROVISION OF HOUSING

Provision will be made for at least an additional 15,134 homes (averaging 658 homes per annum) in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036.

This proposal is sustainable in its location, form and contribution to needed housing mix in the area.

H2: DENSITY AND MIX

The appropriate density of residential development will be informed by:

- *the character and mix of uses of the area in which it is located, including consideration of any nearby heritage assets or important landscape areas;*
- *its current and future level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;*
- *the need to achieve high quality design;*
- *the need to maximise the efficiency of land use; and*
- *the need to minimise environmental impacts, including detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers.*

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Figure 4.6: Estimated size of accommodation type required in Reading (Source: SHMA 2016)

	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4+ bedroom
Market	10.3%	29.6%	41.5%	18.5%
Affordable	43.4%	32.9%	21.6%	2.1%
Overall	18.6%	30.5%	36.5%	14.4%

Whilst the proposed dwelling cannot be classed as “affordable” in the local plan sense, it is a smaller dwelling which in turn is more attainable on the open market for the majority of people seeking a new home in this area. If a financial contribution is required towards the provision of true “affordable” housing elsewhere in the Borough, this will be positively considered by the client and in accordance with Policy H3.

H4: STANDARDS FOR NEW HOUSING

New build housing should be built to the following standards:

- All new build housing outside the Central Area as defined on the Proposals Map will comply with the nationally-described space standard.*
- All new build housing will be built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations⁶⁶.*
- All new build housing will achieve at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in The Building Regulations for England Approved Document L1A: Conservation of Fuel and Power in New Dwellings (2013 edition)*
- All major new-build residential development should be designed to achieve zero carbon homes;*
- All new build housing will be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations where it is viable, unless it is built in line with M4(3) (see below).*
- On developments of 20 or more new build dwellings, at least 5% of dwellings will be wheelchair user dwellings in line with M4(3) of the Building Regulations.*

Following pre-application advice, we have amended the size of the dwelling so it is now 60.1 sqm GIA. Therefore, it now exceeds the minimum of 58sqm as prescribed by the DCLG Technical Housing Standards – Nationally described space standard.

Table 1 - Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
	1p	30 (37) *			1.0
1b	2p	50	58		1.5
	3p	61	70		
2b	4p	70	79		2.0
	4p	74	84	90	
3b	5p	86	92	99	2.5

We can comply with policy H4 in meeting higher water efficiency (H4b) and higher target emission rates (H4c). The dwelling will be level threshold on all ground floor doors so in compliance with H4e.

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The layout has also been modified so it can be fully wheelchair accessible on the ground floor ie an accessible wet room and kitchen and sufficient space that should the need arise the occupier can remain in the dwelling even if first floor access is no longer viable. This would then also accord with policy H4f and H5 being in a sustainable location.

The proposal is for a high-quality development, using sustainable and innovative materials.

H9: PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL OUTDOOR SPACE

Dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space, including green space wherever possible, that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens.

The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identify whether they are private or communal spaces, ensure that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhance safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing.

Rather than opt for a Coach House approach where garden amenity would not need to be provided. The site is large enough to allow for a modest garden appropriate to the proposed dwelling. There is space for bin stores, cycle parking and drying area within the site. Therefore, our proposal is in compliance with policy H9.

Highways require 1 car parking space for a 1-bed development which this development provides and maintains 1 car parking space and amenity for the original 1-bed dwelling. All parking is within land the client owns and does not impinge on the highways owned strip at the front of the site over which our client has right of access.

H10: DEVELOPMENT OF PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL GARDENS

Proposals for new residential development that includes land within the curtilage or the former curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:

1) 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.*

2) 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;

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- 3) The proposal includes access, which meets appropriate highway standards;*
- 4) The proposal does not lead to unacceptable tandem development⁷⁴;*
- 5) The design and layout minimises exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas, and avoids the need for additional physical security measures;*
- 6) The proposal does not cause a significant detrimental impact to the amenity of adjacent and nearby occupants;*
- 7) The emphasis is on the provision of family-sized housing;*
- 8) The development provides biodiversity net gain wherever possible, and 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*
- 9) The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area.*

Recognising that the site is strictly speaking a residential garden its context is different from a normal garden in that it is remote from the dwelling it was meant to serve. In accordance with Policy H10 the proposal will not be harmful to the original dwelling and complimentary to the surrounding area.

Considering that under permitted development, our client could erect a single storey outbuilding in excess of the size of the proposed dwelling (total existing curtilage 180sqm – additional footprint proposed 37sqm). Whilst the proposal is higher the fact that it is on a more compact footprint allows for retention of more open space and therefore the harm of the proposed dwelling is insignificant in comparison,

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The height of the building is 0.64m higher than the existing garage and designed so that above fence level there are no windows. This east facing end elevation will be 8.5m away from the rear of number 5 Dovecote Road. Looking at shadowing the low height of the scheme does not overbear or overshadow the rear garden of number 5. Therefore the proposal will not have any significant detrimental impact on the neighbours's amenity.



Rear of number 5 Dovecote Road and area of development

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4. Design Solution

1. Access

Existing vehicular access is used providing 1 car parking space for the new dwelling (and maintaining 2 car parking space for the existing dwelling). Pedestrian access is proposed for access to bins/ cycle storage to service the dwelling.

2. Siting

The proposed new building is located by utilising the existing garage structure and extending onto it into garden area that it not used for 4 Dovecote Road.

3. External Appearance

The external appearance of the new building will match the main dwelling and neighbouring buildings and has been carefully considered to enhance the current locality and contribute to its character. The palette of materials for the new building is predominantly brick and tiled roof with UPVC doors and windows.

4. Landscaping

The landscape measures are complimentary to the size of dwelling proposed, offering a private garden space. Bin storage and cycle parking are also provided in accordance with current requirements.

5. Sustainability

The building will be designed to comply with the recent Part L Building Regulations amendments and it is envisaged that the following elements will be incorporated into the design to ensure that a suitable standard of sustainability is achieved:

- A-rated gas boiler and units internally
- High performance double glazing
- High levels of insulation to floors, walls and roofs and minimizing thermal bridging
- High levels of air tightness with MVHR
- SuDS drainage scheme to disperse surface water within site, dependent on suitable ground conditions.
- Reusing an existing building and redundant residential space to provide a useful dwelling.

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5. Conclusion

- The proposed development is located within the built-up area of Reading and it does not result in the loss of important facilities. It will not be harmful to the character of the area, as it compliments the scale, mass and appearance of neighbouring buildings.
- Careful consideration has been given to the relationship of the proposed development with neighbouring buildings, preserving their residential amenities. The design makes best use of the site so there is no detrimental harm to others amenity.
- Adequate internal and external amenity space has been provided for a 1-bed property.
- The site is generally not used and difficult to maintain, due to its separation from the main dwelling it was meant to serve. The proposal makes use of a redundant, difficult area in a sustainable location which will now provide improved visual amenity by making use of the site and contribution to the provision of small dwellings in the area.