



TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Gardeners Arms
48 Surley Row
Emmer Green
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 8NA

Prepared for Greene King Retailing Ltd

October 2018

Prepared by
Caldecotte Group

Site •

Gardeners Arms, 48 Surley Row, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 8NA

Report for •

Greene King Retailing Ltd

Document revisions •

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This document has been prepared on behalf of Greene King Retailing Ltd in relation to their Full Planning Application for the erection of 8 dwellings following the demolition of the existing building.
- 1.2 This planning statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings and documents:
- Site Location & Block Plan- Drawing No.
 - Site Plan - Drawing No.
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan - Drawing No.
 - Proposed - Drawing No.
 - Proposed - Drawing No.
 - Proposed Elevations - Drawing No.
 - Tree Report prepared
 - Phase 1 Environmental Report
 - Heritage Assessment
 - Soakaway Testing Report
 - Drainage Strategy
 - Alternative Public House Assessment

2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The site lies to the north east of Surley Row in a predominantly residential area. The site measures approximately 0.325 hectares and comprises the Gardeners Arms public house, a two-storey mock-Tudor gothic building. In addition, the site has a single-storey brick and feather board outbuilding on its southern boundary, as well as a small outdoor dining area and a car park for circa 23 vehicles. Behind the main pub building there is an ancillary single storey building previously used as a skittle alley.



Figure 1: Site Location Plan



Figure 2: Site Location (Image courtesy of Google Maps)

- 2.2 The application site has two vehicular accesses off Surley Row. One serves the customer car park and the other serves a driveway which leads into a private parking area for the tenant of the public house.
- 2.3 A public park sits to the north of the application site. A pedestrian access runs from Surley Row through the park towards Stuart Close.
- 2.4 The eastern boundary adjoins the rear gardens of a number of residential properties on Stuart Close. Similarly, the south eastern boundary adjoins the gardens of properties on Southdown Road. To the south lies No. 46 Surley Row. This is a two-storey timber framed building with brick and flint detailing. On the opposite side of Surley Row, a modern terrace of dwellings is runs parallel to Surley Row however it is set at higher level than the application site.

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The application seeks Full Planning Permission for the erection of 8 dwellings as detailed in the plot schedule in Table 1, following the demolition of the existing pub building and modern ancillary outbuilding.
- 3.2 The existing access serving the car park would be modified to provide access to the site via a new private drive. The second access would serve a driveway shared between plots 1 and 2.
- 3.3 All dwellings would be west facing and have rear gardens. The existing outbuilding on the southern boundary would be retained for use as storage and would sit within the garden curtilages of plots 7 and 8.
- 3.4 A landscape buffer would run within the rear gardens of plots 3 – 6.



Figure 2: Proposed Site Layout Plan

Schedule of Accommodation			
Unit	Bedrooms	Size (sqm) GIA	Garden Area (sqm)
1	4	125.4	171.7
2	4	125.4	104.6
3	3	95	432.9
4	3	95	127.4
5	3	95	127.8
6	3	95	215.1
7	2	79.6	48.9
8	2	79.6	87.1

Table 1: Schedule of Residential Accommodation

4.0 Planning History

4.1 There is no planning history that is considered relevant to this application.

5.0 Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.1 The revised NPPF was published in July 2018 and provides the Government's framework for delivering sustainable development and facilitating economic growth through the planning process. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the

development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The introduction of the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

5.2 The following sections of the NPPF are considered directly relevant to the current application:

- 2: Achieving sustainable development
- 4: Decision making
- 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 6: Building a strong, competitive economy
- 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- 11: Making effective use of land
- 12: Achieving well-designed places
- 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The Development Plan

5.3 The development plan for Reading Borough Council comprises the Council's Core Strategy (January 2008) with alteration adopted 27 January 2015 and the Reading Borough Local Development Framework: Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD), adopted October 2012 with alterations adopted 27 January 2015. The policies applicable to this application are as follows:

Core Strategy

- CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
- CS4 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CS5 Inclusive Access
- CS7 Design and the Public Realm
- CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities
- CS14 Provision of Housing
- CS15 Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix
- CS20 Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy
- CS24 Car / Cycle Parking
- CS31 Existing and Proposed Community Facilities
- CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- CS34 Pollution and Water Resources
- CS35 Flooding
- CS36 Biodiversity and Geology
- CS37 Major Landscape Features and Strategic Open Space

5.4 The SDPD Policies considered relevant are:

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (SDPD) (Altered 2015)

- SA11 Settlement Boundary
- SA16 Public and Strategic Open Space
- SA17 Major Landscape Features
- DM4 Safeguarding Amenity
- DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Matters
- DM15 Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses
- DM17 Green Network

- 5.5 The Council have adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). Those relevant are listed below.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- Design of Residential Extensions and New Residential Development (April 2011)
- Parking Standards (20 September 2011)

6.0 Planning Analysis

- 6.1 The main considerations of this planning application relate to the following matters:
- Principle of development
 - Impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of the Grade II Listed Building
 - Impact on residential amenity
 - Impact on parking provision and highway safety
 - Other material considerations

Principle of Development

Housing

- 6.2 Core Strategy Policy CS14 envisages the completion of an average of at least 521 dwellings per annum in the period 2016-2026 through, among other things, encouraging housing development on small previously developed windfall sites including changes of use and conversions. The LPA's housing strategy finds support in the NPPF which seeks to significantly boost the supply of homes. Significantly, Paragraph 68 makes it clear that small and medium sized sites such as the application site can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly.
- 6.3 The application site lies within an urban area where, in accordance with the overall development strategy as stated at paragraph 5.4 of the Core Strategy, the focus on urban areas mean making effective use of land. Due to the application site's location within the settlement boundary, the principle of development of this site would be acceptable according to Policies CS6 and SA11. Further national advice within the NPPF supports this approach stating at Paragraph 118 c), that substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land. Furthermore, the site lies in Flood Zone 1 where Policy SP1 seeks to direct all new residential development.
- 6.4 The Core Strategy makes provision for Small-scale Housing Development in Paragraph 3.29 by recognising the contribution of infill and back land development, as well as the change of use of commercial buildings. Moreover, Policy CS14 recognises the change of use of previously developed windfall sites as a source of the Strategy's envisaged housing supply. Thus, the proposed redevelopment is considered to make efficient use of a previously developed (brownfield) site in line with the Core Strategy and the NPPF.
- 6.5 The proposed development would therefore support both local and national goals in respect of the need to boost the supply of dwellings by using previously developed or brownfield land as much as possible.

- 6.6 In accordance with Policies CS15 and DM5, the proposed development would provide an appropriate range of housing opportunities in terms of a mix of housing types and sizes. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment published in 2016 finds that 3-bedroom dwellings are in most demand within the open market category 40 – 45%, followed by 2 bedrooms at 25 – 30% and 4 bedroom properties at 20 – 25%.
- 6.7 The proposed scheme would deliver 4 x 3-bedroom dwellings, equivalent to 50%, and 2 x 2 bedroom and 2 x 4-bedroom dwellings with an equal weighting of 25%. These figures are in line with the finding of the Housing Market Assessment. Furthermore, all of the dwellings would exceed the Nationally Prescribed Space Standards in terms of their floor area.
- 6.8 Although the density of the site would fall below that required within the Council's policies, it is considered that it be acceptable when having regard to the site's context such as its relationship to neighbouring residential dwellings and location within a conservation area.
- Loss of a community facility
- 6.9 Core Strategy Policy CS31 states that proposals involving the redevelopment of existing community facilities for non-community uses will not be permitted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a need to retain that facility. Policy DM15 of the SDPD) goes further to outline specific criteria required to be considered in assessing the loss of Public Houses and states that outside of a defined centre development involving the loss of leisure facilities or a public house will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:
- a. There is no need for this type of facility in this area; or
 - b. The function of the facility can be adequately fulfilled by an existing facility, or a facility proposed as part of the development, where that facility would be at least as accessible to the same catchment; or
 - c. The impacts on the amenity of residents of retaining the facility could not be dealt with through other measures, and would be so severe as to outweigh the benefits to the wider community of retaining the facility.
- 6.10 This policy thrust is echoed in NPPF Paragraph 92 (c) which seeks to, among other things, guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. However, this does not prohibit the re-development of Public Houses, but rather states that planning decisions should ensure that the local community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs is not threatened. In this case, the redevelopment of the Gardeners Arms, would not significantly affect the community's leisure needs as these would continue to be met by the various alternatives offered in the area.
- 6.11 It is imperative to note that there is no requirement to satisfy all the criteria listed in Policy DM15. Complying with one and not the others would still achieve the policy aspirations. In this case, the application is premised on criterion (b) which requires the applicant to demonstrate that alternative facilities are available within the same catchment area.

- 6.12 To this end, an assessment of the alternative Public House facilities within the same catchment area was carried out and the results confirm that these facilities are capable of meeting the current and future needs of the community.¹ The nearby Public Houses that offer similar or higher quality services are: the White Horse (0.6 miles), the Black Horse (0.6 miles), Prince of Wales (0.8 miles), Baron Cadogan (0.9 miles) and the Caversham Rose (1 mile).



Map 2: Alternative provision in the area, courtesy of Google Maps

- 6.13 Given that the function of the Gardeners Arms can be adequately fulfilled by a variety of existing facilities easily accessible to the same catchment by public transport, foot and cycle, as required by the SDPD Paragraph 7.3.8, it is considered that the loss of the existing Public House would not have a significant impact on the ability of the community to enjoy its day-to-day life. Significantly, the site falls within an urban area and Flood Zone 1, is small scale in nature, utilising a previously developed site hence the proposal is an opportunity to use land effectively by adding to the supply of dwellings as required by both local and national planning policies and as such, on balance, there should be no in principle objection to the redevelopment of the site.

Impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and setting of the Listed Building

- 6.14 These policy requirements are echoed in the NPPF which states 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.²

¹ Assessment of the alternative pub facilities

² NPPF Paragraph 124

- 6.15 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character and comprises a mix of design styles. The proposed dwellings would be 2 storey high and would complement the existing properties in the immediate vicinity of the application site. In the wider street scene, dwellings are mostly traditional in style. The proposed dwellings would be finished in materials that would be in keeping with the surrounding developments and this could be secured through a planning condition. Overall, the proposed development would reflect the general pattern of developments hereabout and thus conform with Policies CS7 and CS33.
- 6.16 NPPF paragraph 200 is supportive of new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset or which better reveal its significance should be treated favourably. In this case, the extensive car park associated with the Public House detracts from the character and appearance of the area when viewed from Surley Row and hence its re-development with dwellings that reflect the character of the area would be an enhancement to the Conservation Area. It is also imperative to note that the proposed dwellings would not be any closer to the listed cottage than any of the existing adjoining dwellings and as such, the development would not be harmful to the setting of the Grade II Listed building. Whilst some trees would be lost to give way to the development, replacement planting as identified in the tree report could be secured through an appropriate landscaping condition and this would provide adequate mitigation to the visual amenities of the Conservation Area and the setting of the listed building.
- 6.17 The current public house building was built between 1913 and 1936 to replace the public house that was operating from No.46 Surley Row. Due to its date of construction and appearance, it is not considered to have any special architectural or historic interest.
- 6.18 The existing outbuilding sat on the southern boundary is to be retained and would become storage space for plots 7 and 8. It is likely that this outbuilding originally belonged to No.46 when it was originally the Gardeners Arms public house. It is therefore deemed curtilage listed, however no specific changes are being proposed to it and therefore listed building consent is not being sought.
- 6.19 Taking these factors into account, it is considered that the proposed development would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and would not be harmful to the setting of the Grade II listed cottage. A heritage statement also accompanies this application which elaborates on this particular point and assesses the impact in greater detail.

Impact on residential amenity

- 6.20 As part of creating a high standard of design and layout, Policy CS7 requires new developments to achieve a satisfactory relationship with the adjoining properties avoiding significant harmful impact in terms of loss of privacy, daylight or sunlight, or overbearing effect due to bulk and proximity or outlook.
- 6.21 The proposed dwellings would maintain adequate separation distances with the adjoining existing properties such that no harm to residential amenity would be caused through loss of privacy, daylight and sunlight and loss of outlook. No windows would directly overlook any of the adjoining properties' private spaces to such an extent as would result in significant loss of privacy. With regard to the amenity of the future occupiers of the proposed dwellings, it is considered that the proposed dwellings would provide

acceptable living conditions with respect to internal and external space requirements. The separation distances between the proposed plots and the private amenity space provision would be comparable to what is to be found within the vicinity of the site. The proposed development would therefore provide the future occupiers of the dwellings with acceptable living conditions.

- 6.22 Taking these factors into account, it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of both the existing and future occupiers.

Impact on access, parking provision and highway safety

- 6.23 Core Strategy Policy CS24 states that maximum car parking standards and cycle parking requirements will be applied in relation to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.
- 6.24 The Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD identifies the application sites as falling within Zone 3 – Secondary Core Area. Typically, these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes. These buses link not only to the Central Core Area, but also zone 2 areas and beyond to major supermarket and local centre facilities
- 6.25 The LPA's maximum parking standards as set out in the same document requires 1.5 parking spaces per 2 bedroom house and 2 parking spaces per 3 and 4 bedroom house. Two, three and four bedroom houses should have sufficient space for 2 cycle spaces. The proposal meets the parking standards and sufficient space is provided within the curtilage of each dwelling for cycle storage facilities.
- 6.26 The site already benefits from two accesses, one of which would be modified through widening. A 4.8m private drive would serve plots 3 – 6 and the parking for plots 7 and 8. Turning heads are provided adjacent to plots 3 and 6 to ensure vehicles can manoeuvre appropriately in order to exit the site. It is also expected that the change of use from commercial to residential should reduce the number of vehicle trips to and from the site. The amount of parking would reduce from 23 spaces to 17.
- 6.27 Significantly, national advice within the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. This would clearly not be the case here. We therefore consider that the proposal complies with Policies CS20, CS24 and DM12.

Other material considerations

Land Contamination

- 6.28 A Phase 1 Environmental Report prepared by YourEnvironment Consultants identifies the following sources of contamination:
- Orchard (immediately north, 80m southeast);
 - Potentially infilled pond (10m south);
 - Old chalk pit (40m south);
- 6.29 The other sources identified from the historical maps are considered far enough from the site to pose any risk.

- 6.30 Nevertheless, an intrusive contaminated land investigation is recommended to determine the actual pollution linkages and to quantify the risk to the receptors and could reveal on-site sources of contamination that were not established by the Phase I Desk Study and Site Walkover. A condition could be applied to secure a Phase 2 investigation should planning permission be forthcoming.

Landscaping & Trees

- 6.31 The proposed development would also fulfil the environmental requirements of SDPD Policy DM17, Policy CS36 and Core Strategy Core Objective 4, by making provision for a landscaped buffer to the rear of the site.
- 6.32 The rear part of the site is a designated green link which connects two areas of designated Public and Strategic Open Space Major Landscape Feature Areas to the north and south of the site. The area of land to the south of the site is also identified as a wildlife site.
- 6.33 The green link has been incorporated into the scheme though a buffer which lies within the gardens of plots 3 – 6 and between these plots and the rear gardens of the properties on Stuart Close. Being located within private garden space would ensure that the green link would be maintained, protected. It is proposed that this buffer be lined with a number of trees, the species of which have been identified on the site layout plans. Furthermore, we do not envisage that the development would have an adverse impact on the function of wildlife corridors.
- 6.34 A full ecology survey was undertaken which finds that there was no evidence of any protected species. Due to a number of trees and scrub being removed in the northern corner of the site, mitigation measures are provided by the way of recommendations for a landscaping scheme.
- 6.35 We are not aware of any tree specific tree preservation orders but recognise that the trees on and adjacent to the site have wider protection through the conservation area designation. An arboricultural report has been undertaken. It is formed of two parts, one for general tree care and management and the second, tree work required in order to facilitate the development. Following the recommendations of the arborist, a number of replacement trees are proposed (as referred to above) within the green link.
- 6.36 Following the mitigation measures as provided by the ecologist and arborist, the integrity of the Green Link would be protected, in the context of a holistic view of the Green Network as envisaged by relevant policies of the Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document.

Flooding and Drainage Strategy

- 6.37 The site lies outside Flood Zones 2 and 3. A drainage strategy has been prepared by RAB consultants which finds that majority of the site is at very low risk from surface water flooding except for an area to the north of the site.
- 6.38 The proposed drainage scheme takes into consideration the site constraints and proposes a sustainable urban drainage system (SuDS) in order to provide a betterment at site level and to others downstream, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

6.39 Two permeable pavement structures are being proposed to manage runoff from the proposed development, with infiltration to the ground being the method of surface water disposal.

6.40 Consequently, it is considered that the proposal would comply with Policies CS34 and CS35 as it would not increase the flood risk to other people, and would provide betterment with respect to the sustainable management of surface water runoff.

CIL

6.41 According to information on the LPA's website, the Council levies £120/sqm (subject to indexation) on new residential development. In this case, the estimated CIL charge resulting from the proposed development would be £45,840.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The proposal represents a policy compliant scheme which would make effective use of underutilised land and is an appropriate form of development on previously developed land within an urban area which would provide much needed housing.

7.2 Given the existence of alternative facilities within the same catchment area, the proposed redevelopment of the Public House would not represent an unnecessary loss of a valued facility and would not reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

7.3 The proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and would not be harmful to the setting of the Grade II Listed cottage at Number 46 Surley Row.

7.4 The proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of the existing adjoining occupiers and would provide acceptable living conditions for the future occupiers of the dwellings.

7.5 The development would make appropriate contributions towards the maintenance of existing infrastructure or the provision of new facilities in accordance with the LPA's adopted CIL charging schedule.

7.6 The proposal constitutes sustainable development and hence national advice within the NPPF requires decision makers to adopt a presumption in favour of such proposals.