

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

LAND REAR OF 27-43 BLENHEIM ROAD
CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 7RT

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 3 DWELLINGS

FEBRUARY 2019

1. Introduction

This design and access statement has been prepared by Key Land Estates Ltd to support the detailed planning application submitted on behalf of our client First Avenue Estates Ltd, for the erection of 3no. residential dwellings with associated parking and landscaping.

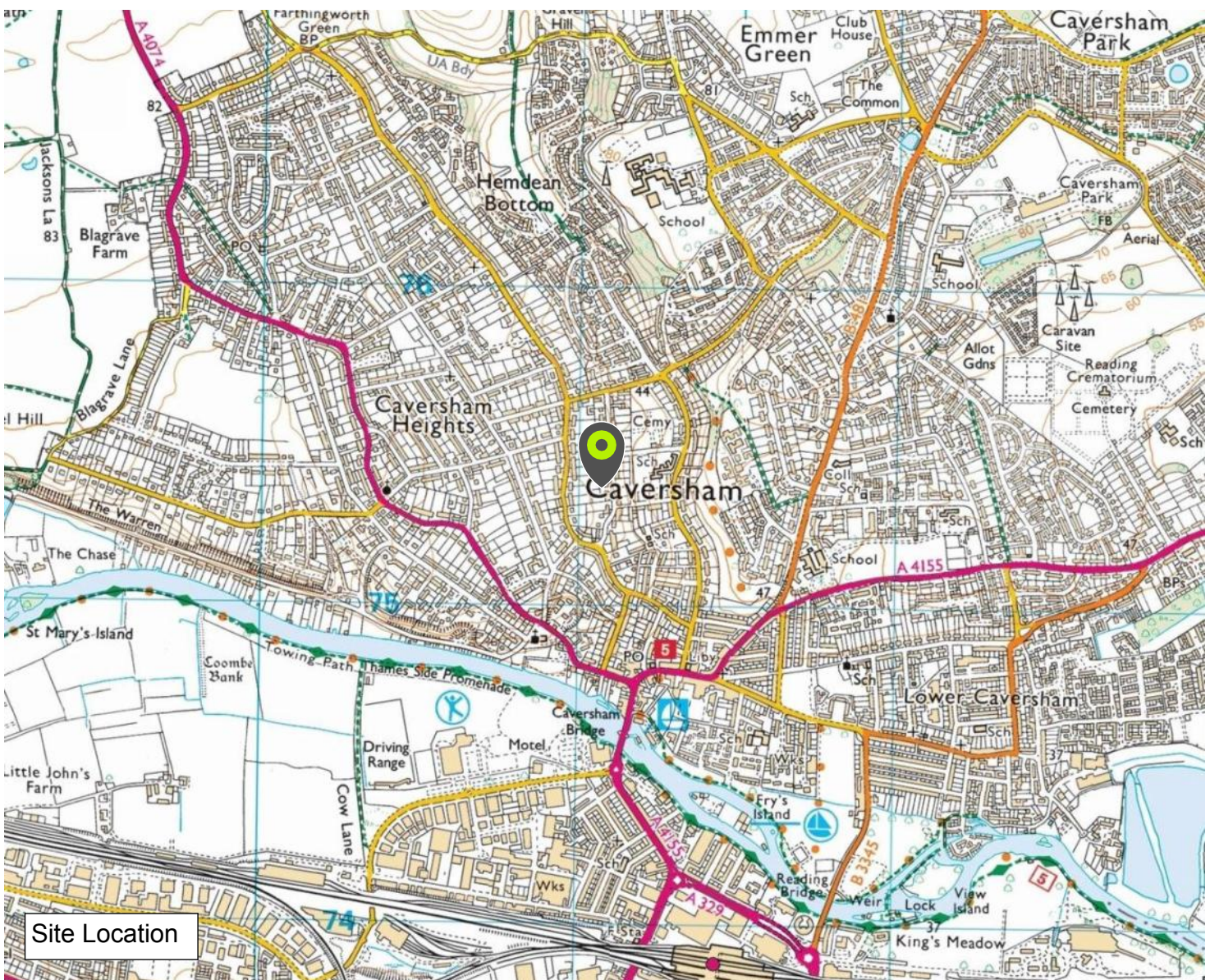
This statement has been prepared in the context of the Reading Borough Council's LDF Core Strategy (2008) and Sites and Detailed Policies (2012). Further consideration has been applied to Biodiversity and Trees, Hedges and Woodland policies.

The application seeks to develop a scheme that has been designed to respect the character and scale of the surrounding area and it's layout shows regard to existing residents privacy. The application aims to deliver quality homes in a desirable living environment with a reduced impact on existing biodiversity.

The site is located to the rear of the gardens of no.s 27-43 Blenheim Road in the Caversham area of Reading. It is situated in a sustainable location north of Reading Town Centre and within walking distance of local shops, bus stops (serving Reading Town Centre). Caversham primary school is located within 5 minutes walking distance.

Blenheim Road is suburban in character with mostly semi-detached, 2 storey houses with some detached properties. The housing style is very mixed with houses varying from Georgian to modern traditional.

There is a significant increase in ground level between the rear of existing properties fronting Blenheim Road and the proposed site.



2. Existing Use

The site is largely overgrown, poor state and in has been unattended for a number of years. It is part of a woodland area TPO. There is an existing access to the site between no.s 29 and 31 Blenheim Road. The site is approximately 0.1880 ha (0.4645 acres).





Various venacular styles within surrounding Area

3. Planning History

Planning records show there are two previous planning applications made on this site. Outline application 00/0487 was for the erection of 5 houses with garages and was refused. Application 99/0482 was for the erection of 10 mews-style terrace houses with four garages and was refused and later dismissed on appeal. The principle of the use of the site for residential purposes is accepted. Further information can be found within the planning statement.

4. Planning Policy

The proposal has been developed within the guidelines of the NPPF and requirements of Reading Borough Council's LDF Core Strategy (2008, Altered 2015) and Sites & Detailed Policies (2012, Altered 2015). Specific to this application is Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) and Policy DM10. Policy CS7 aims to preserve or enhance the character of the area while development design should respond positively to their context and reinforce local distinctiveness.

Policy DM10 aims to see that outdoor areas respect the size and character of similar spaces in the vicinity. In terms of landscaping and biodiversity; Policy DM18 aims to make provision for tree planting within the site in order to preserve or enhance the tree levels of Reading Borough. Policy CS36 (Biodiversity) aims to protect and enhance biodiversity within the application site, while Policy CS38 applies the same principle to trees and woodland with the aim to enhance levels of vegetation cover in the borough.

5. Proposal

The detailed planning application is for the erection of 3no. residential dwellings (one pairs of semi detached dwellings with garages and a single detached dwelling with parking spaces), amenity and landscaping. It is the applicant's intention to provide a good quality housing scheme that is designed to fully respect the privacy of existing residential properties while maintaining the general scale of development in the area.



6. Design

The architectural appearance of the proposed dwellings draws on the traditional style of existing buildings fronting Blenheim Road with the use of decorative brick detailing throughout, projecting bay windows at ground floor and typically low pitched roofs and small dormer details.

The design also achieves an appropriately matched scale when compared to existing properties. This is realised by similar footprints, storey heights, roof styles, eaves and ridge heights that are apparent when viewing the Blenheim Road street scene.

7. Amount

The site is adequately sized to accommodate the proposed 3no. dwellings without creating a negative impact of neighbouring properties. The proposed density of 16 units per hectare enables more exiting trees to be retained and provides generous landscaping around the dwellings. The proposals are appropriate and in keeping with the area providing two storey homes with a mix of 2no. four bed houses and 1no. three bed houses with the required amount of associated parking spaces.

The proposal allows for one garage and 1 space in front of the garage for the 4 Bed houses and 2 spaces for the 3 bed house. Secure bicycle storage (for two bicycle spaces per dwelling) is provided within garden sheds and garages. Rear gardens are minimum of 10 metres in length and generously sized.

8. Scale

Proposed dwelling scale have been considered to ensure that the houses do not form an overbearing appearance in relation to the rear of neighbouring buildings and with special consideration relating to the difference in height of the existing ground level. This is achieved, in part, through proposing two storey dwellings with low pitched roof profiles that create a soft transition away from existing dwellings.

Given the site's location to the rear of gardens of properties fronting Blenheim Road, it is considered that the proposal's impact on the street scene is significantly reduced.

Existing trees and foliage help to provide a natural screen to the rear boundaries of properties facing the adjacent Kidmore Road.

9. Layout

The proposed design gives particular consideration to reducing the impact of existing properties fronting Blenheim Road. The proposed dwellings are situated approximately 29 metres away from the rear of the existing dwellings with proposed hedge screening and trees between the proposed access road and existing rear gardens, providing a sufficient amount of separation and privacy. It is also considered that the proposed will have no adverse impact on daylight to neighbouring properties.

Dwellings are arranged efficiently and sympathetically to the existing terrace pattern of houses in the surrounding area.



10. Appearance

Building facades will use traditional materials in keeping with the surrounding local vernacular and seeks to reinforce the sense of place according to its suburban location.

Despite a mix of styles exhibited on Blenheim Road, the proposed scheme draws on the evident details and traditional language of its surroundings with use of decorative brick quoining and brick banding, a mixture of arched and splayed brick headers, stone cills, projecting square window bays and decorative gables.

Elsewhere, the proposed uses brick stock, clay roof tiles, slate roof tiles timber front and garage doors and windows with transoms which are traditional in appearance..



11. Landscaping

Landscaping has been designed to compliment the proposed scheme by introducing softness and interest throughout while reinforcing boundary treatments to dwellings and helping to define semi-private areas and screening to parking and the access road.

An important consideration of the landscaping scheme is the introduction of various tree species to mitigate against the loss of some existing trees and planting. Elsewhere within the site and adjacent to the site, existing trees and planting has been preserved and protected.

A comprehensive ecology report, Hard and Soft Landscaping Schemes have been developed to support this application.

12. Access

Access to the proposed dwellings makes use of the existing access situated between properties 29 and 31 Blenheim Road.

The application is supported by plans developed to illustrate the maneuverability of various vehicles (including fire tender) of up to 8m into and within the site.

To increase the safety and mitigate against increased traffic flow into the site and along this section of Blenheim Road, a proposed raised speed table is situated at the junction to Blenheim Rd.

The proposal will be wheelchair accessible in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document Part M.

13. Refuse & Recycling

Refuse collection will be from Blenheim Road. The bin collection point is located 15 metres from the junction to Blenheim Road enabling the refuse to be collected without the refuse vehicle entering the site. Further information is contained within the Transport Statement which accompanies this application.

Conclusion

The proposed development is well placed to offer a modest amount of thoughtfully designed family housing in a sustainable location that respect neighbouring properties privacy while reinforcing the existing area's sense of place.

The site in its current state is of poor quality and offers a good opportunity for a sensitive residential development. It is considered that the applications respectfully designed layout and appropriate scheme density should contribute positively to the existing residential area without impacting the quality or outlook of existing properties.

The proposal seeks to successfully address the principles set out by Reading Borough Council's relevant policies while delivering desirable, much needed housing to the borough within the development parameters of the site. While the application site is subject to a loss of existing trees and planting, it is believed that the proposed scheme has the capacity to mitigate and re-introduce biodiversity through well-designed landscaping.

We thank you for your favourable consideration of this application and we look forward to receiving Reading Borough Council's support for this residential development proposal.



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