

Design and Access Statement

142-144, Whitley Wood Lane, Reading, RG2 8PP



Proposal for Nine Flats
following Demolition of Existing Shops

June 2019

INTRODUCTION

We propose to create nine flats following demolition of the existing shops and ancillary buildings at 142-144 Whitley Wood Road.

Two 1-bed flats and seven 2-bed flats are proposed in a contemporary landmark building on the corner of Whitley Wood Lane and Whitley Wood road.



Aerial view of site

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located approximately 2.5 miles to the South of Reading town centre, in the Whitley Wood area of Reading Borough Council. The site lies on the corner of Whitley Wood Road and Whitley Wood Lane, and forms one of the corners to the Engineers Arms Roundabout.

The site consists of a largely rectangular plot some 20m wide x 42m deep.

The existing property includes retail space at ground floor level, in the form of 2 shops and a large single storey building to the rear. An existing flat is located at first floor over parts of the shop.

To the north, Whitley Wood Lane consists mostly of Edwardian houses, which are stepped, as the building plots are not perpendicular to the road.

To the south, on the other side of Whitley Wood Road is Copenhagen Close, which consists of 2 storey semi-detached buildings

To the west are 8 terraced houses separated from the site by their parking area for 9 cars.

To the east of the site is a Newsagent with further residential uses alongside and behind, mostly at 2 storeys plus roof over.

Opposite the roundabout, to the east, lies Engineers Court, a recent development consisting of 3 storey flats with parking positioned behind the building.

The site boundary extends well beyond the existing shop frontage and allows provides parking for up to 3 cars. The original buildings were most likely 2 Edwardian semi-detached houses, which have converted ground floors for retail use, with further ground floor areas added in the form of a single storey elements. There are 2 large, single storey buildings, ancillary to the retail use, located at the back of the site, used as a workshop and storage.

ACCESS

Pedestrian and vehicle access is provided from Whitley Wood Road directly into the site. Adequate sightlines are provided over the existing pavement.

Reading Town Centre is a 25 minute bus ride away from the site, and various buses serve from right in front of the site, or slightly further away including numbers, 6 emerald (every 9 minutes) and 5 emerald (every 9 minutes) furthermore a park and ride bus to MereOak serves the site.

PLANNING CONTEXT

No relevant planning history was available via the online planning search tool for the site itself.

Other relevant, and recent, applications are detailed below.

170300	133 Whitley Wood Road New development of two x 2-bedroom bungalows with 2 parking spaces per property.
71243	45 Whitley Wood Lane Outline application for a new detached dwelling at the land to rear of 45 Whitley Wood Lane with access off Byworth Close.
171425	Engineers Court New development of flats facing the roundabout.

PLANNING STATEMENT

This statement provides a list of applicable planning policies considered in the pre-application process and in the detailed design of the scheme.

This scheme would be considered within the context of the Council's LDF Core Strategy Policy, Sites and the Detailed Policies Document and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents.

LDF Core Strategy

Design Sustainability	CS1, CS2
High Quality Design	CS7
Infrastructure and Services	CS9
Housing Provision	CS14
Sustainable Transport Provision and parking	CS20, CS22, CS23, DM12
Air noise and light Pollution	CS34
Flooding	CS35
Biodiversity and Geological	CS36
Trees and Woodlands	CS38
Climate Change	DM1
Planning Obligations for Infrastructure	DM3
Impact on Surrounding Properties	DM4
Affordable Housing	DM6
Outdoor Amenity	DM10, DM11
Trees and Planting	DM18
Air Quality Policy	DM19

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND DESIGN

The site is within the settlement boundary of Reading, where the local development plan encourages new residential development to increase housing stock as required to meet the Council's delivery of new homes.

A pre-application enquiry was submitted for the site and advice was received in a letter dated 13th August under reference 180688. We have addressed the matters raised in the letter in the following paragraphs

Principle

The principle of redevelopment of the shops for residential use was found acceptable.

Character and Appearance

It was agreed that the building's mass and scale should be weighted toward the roundabout but there were some reservations regarding its relationship with adjoining buildings and its appearance. We feel this is an opportunity to design a contemporary landmark building to enhance the urban fabric of the existing predominantly residential area. Careful detailing, including vertical fenestration to reflect the nearby Edwardian window designs, private balconies and projecting eaves give the building an impression of depth and help to provide a positive contribution to the corner location.

Vehicle Parking

The preapplication scheme provided 8 parking spaces including 2 at the front of the building. In accordance with the advice we have removed the parking spaces at the front and provided 12 spaces in the rear. This is a parking provision of 1.25 spaces per flat in line with the provision at the former Engineers Arms site opposite.

5 bicycle spaces are to be provided in covered storage at the rear.

Residential Amenity

Concern was raised regarding the amount and quality of space provided. We have provided a secluded private garden area at the rear of the building together with private balconies or patios for every flat.

Trees and Landscape

A robust landscaping plan is proposed to provide a pleasant and useable garden area. The building is also set back from the boundaries along Whitley Wood Road and Whitley Wood Road and soft landscaping in the form of low metal fencing complemented by hedging will be introduced to separate the built form from the pavement.

Ecology

Ecological enhancements will be incorporated into the landscaping scheme in accordance with policy CS36.

Waste

Our proposal will include covered bin storage for 1 x 1100 litre general waste bin, 1 x 1100 litre recycling bin, 3 x 360 litre general waste bins and 2 x 360 recycling bins.