

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

80 Brunswick Street,
Reading, RG1 6PE

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE CONVERSION
OF REDUNDANT LAUNDRY, BIN STORE AND CYCLE
STORAGE AREA TO CREATE A ONE-BEDROOM
APARTMENT; PROVISION OF NEW COMMUNAL
REFUSE AND CYCLE STORAGE FACILITIES**

**PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT**

80 BRUNSWICK STREET, READING, RG1 6PE

ON BEHALF OF YORK ASSOCIATES/READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004**

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PLANNING | **DESIGN** | **ENVIRONMENT** | **ECONOMICS**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group to support a planning application for the conversion of a redundant laundry, internal bin store and cycle storage area to a one-bedroom apartment at 80 Brunswick Street, Reading. The detailed description of development is as follows:

"Conversion of redundant bin store, laundry and cycle storage area to create a one-bedroom apartment; new refuse and cycle storage facilities and soft landscaping."

- 1.2 This Statement sets out the justification for the proposed development firstly by reviewing the site and its surroundings in terms of the relevant physical, social, economic and planning context as well as the relevant planning history and local and national planning policies.
- 1.3 The main justification section then explores whether the proposal is compliant with the policies in the adopted and emerging development plan and considers the proposal against other material considerations including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to which the appropriate weight is given.
- 1.4 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the associated drawings, prepared by York Associates Ltd.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 The application site comprises redundant laundry, bin store and cycle storage areas situated on the ground floor of an existing apartment building known as 80 Brunswick Street. The building itself is owned by Reading Borough Council and contains 17 apartments, with the proposal being to create an additional one-bedroom apartment on the ground floor of the east wing. Photos of the site are included at Appendix 1 of this statement.

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOSHEET

- 2.2 The site is located within the settlement boundary of Reading and lies just over one kilometre away from the Town Centre. The site lies within a highly sustainable location with a number of bus services operating from the nearby (within 400m) stops along Tilehurst Road to the north, and Bath Road to the south. Reading West train station is also within just under one kilometre of the application site.
- 2.3 Residential uses/properties make up the vast majority of the surrounding area, although there is also a residential care home, junior school, public house, hotel/guest house and parish church in the immediate surrounding area.
- 2.4 The site is not a listed building and does not lie within a conservation area. However, it does lie in close proximity to a small number of Grade II listed buildings. These include, a water tower, 42 Bath Road, the Brunswick Arms public house, Church of All Saints, All Saints Infants School and its playground area railings.
- 2.5 The site lies in Flood Zone 1, the area least at risk of flooding.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is to convert the redundant laundry, internal bin store and cycle storage areas on the ground floor of the apartment building's west wing into a self-contained, one bedroom flat. The new flat will be used by Reading Borough Council to provide additional affordable housing for local people.
- 3.2 The new flat will be broadly split into three sections, kitchen/dining area, lounge and bedroom with en-suite bathroom.
- 3.3 The proposal will also involve the installation of soft planting along the northern elevation.
- 3.4 New secure bin and cycle storage areas will also be provided within the grounds, as detailed on the General Arrangement Plan (Drg. No. 16/037/01). These will service the entire block of flats to compensate for the space lost through the creation of the new apartment.
- 3.5 External alterations will constitute the blocking up of an existing door along the northern elevation. No other external alterations are proposed.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The online planning register only dates back to October 1988 and, as such, there are no applications associated with the site or of relevance listed on the Council's online planning register.

Pre-application engagement with Reading Borough Council

- 4.2 Prior to the submission of this application, advice was sought from officers at the Council in relation to proposals for a number of different sites, including no. 80 Brunswick Street.
- 4.3 The Council's response stated that officers were likely to support the proposals for 80 Brunswick Street, assuming that is satisfactorily addressed the following issues:
- Parking;
 - Bike storage; and
 - Bin storage.
- 4.4 A copy of the pre-application response from the Council is attached as an appendix to this statement.

APPENDIX 2 – PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE FROM READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

5. PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 In this section, the national and local planning policy and guidance pertinent to the application site and development proposal are summarised. The plan-led approach to development, as enshrined by Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires development proposals to accord with the adopted development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

i) Local Planning Policy

- 5.2 This section will consider the important policies contained within the relevant documents of the development plan. The relevant documents of Reading Borough Council's Development Plan are as follows:

- Core Strategy (adopted 2008, altered 2015);
- Sites and Detailed Policies (adopted 2012, altered 2015).

Core Strategy

- 5.3 This document sets out the Council's adopted planning strategy for the Borough. It sets out how planning and development will achieve the Reading 2020 Vision for the town. It provides a framework for how Reading can grow in a sustainable way in the future. It also sets out how Reading will accommodate the growth expected of it in the emerging South-East Plan and through the council's commitment to New Growth Point status.
- 5.4 **Policy CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design.** This policy outlines the Council's commitment to ensuring that new development and the redevelopment of sites make efficient use of energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources during the construction process.
- 5.5 **Policy CS4: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development.** This policy relates to the relationship between the intensity of development and existing/required levels of accessibility and how this affects the decision-making process.
- 5.6 **Policy CS6: Settlement Boundary.** This policy states that development proposed outside of the settlement boundary will not be permitted.

- 5.7 **Policy CS7: Design and the Public Realm.** This policy states that all development must be of a high-quality design that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.
- 5.8 **Policy CS14: Provision of Housing.** This policy outlines the Council's housing requirement throughout the duration of the plan. The plan states that an average of 521 dwellings need to be completed per year between 2016 and 2026.
- 5.9 **Policy CS15: Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix.** This policy states that the appropriate density and mix of residential development within the Borough will be informed by an assessment of a number of factors relating to location, accessibility, design and minimisation of environmental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers.
- 5.10 **Policy CS18: Residential Conversions.** This policy states that proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area, particularly in terms of intensification of activity, loss of privacy, loss of external amenity space, the provision and location of adequate on-site car parking, and the treatment of bin storage areas.
- 5.11 **Policy CS24: Car/Cycle Parking.** This policy 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.

Sites and Detailed Policies Document

- 5.12 This document contains detailed policies to help guide decisions on planning applications. This includes policies on matters that affect the daily lives of Reading's population, such as residents' amenity, house extensions and the use of residential garden land. It also includes more far-reaching matters such as securing affordable housing, and adapting to the effects of climate change.
- 5.13 **Policy SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.** This policy reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF.

5.14 **Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity.** This policy states that permission will be granted for development that will have a significant detrimental impact on the living environment of existing or future residents in terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- Noise and disturbance;
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Dust and fumes;
- Smell; or
- Crime and safety.

5.15 **Policy DM8: Residential Conversions.** This policy outlines the criteria that must be met in order for the conversion of a property/building into a self-contained flat (or HMO) under Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy. To clarify, such proposals, *"will only be acceptable where:*

- *The proposal respects the physical character of the area and additionally would not, either individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single family housing;*
- *There are no unacceptable adverse impacts to other residential properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties;*
- *There is appropriate sound insulation between proposed and neighbouring units and layouts avoid inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units;*

- *Bin and cycle storage is of an appropriate size and standard for the units proposed and should be located at ground floor level with easy access."*

5.16 The policy also states that, *"in the case of self-contained flats:*

- *Individual units provide appropriate minimum internal floor standards and headroom in accordance with the Council's adopted minimum internal floorspace standards."*

Other Relevant Policy Documents

5.17 The Council has a Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011) which outlines the requisite parking provision for various uses in support of Policy CS24. The site lies in Zone 2, where the maximum provision for a one-bedroom apartment should be 1no parking space.

The Council also has a Residential Conversions SPD (2013) which relates to the conversion of existing residential dwellings into apartments and HMOs.

Space Standards

5.18 Although Policy DM8 applies space standards to dwellings that have been subdivided/converted to a HMO, the Council does not have any adopted space standards for new residential developments.

Emerging Policy Documents

5.19 Reading Borough Council are in the process of preparing a New Local Plan. This plan is at a relatively advanced stage with it being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in March 2018. The hearing sessions are expected to commence toward the end of September.

5.20 As the Inspector's report is yet to be issued, limited weight can be attached to its policies. In any case, the pre-application advice response from the Council (provided in June 2018) did not indicate that there were any emerging policies that would conflict with the proposals.

ii) National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018)

- 5.21 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised on the 24th July 2018. **Paragraph 2** is clear that the NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of development plans, *"and is a material consideration in planning decisions"*.
- 5.22 **Paragraph 8** states that to achieve sustainable development the planning system has three overarching objectives: Economic, Social and Environmental. They are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, each objective is described (inter alia):-
- An **Economic Role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
 - A **Social Role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible local services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and,
 - An **Environmental Role** – 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.
- 5.23 **Paragraph 10** advises *"So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development"*.
- 5.24 **Paragraph 11** sets out how to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It goes on to outline that for decision making this means *'approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay'*.

Section 4 Decision-making

- 5.25 **Paragraph 38** sets out that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way.

Section 5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- 5.26 **Paragraph 59** requires local planning authorities to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. **Paragraph 61** goes on to clarify that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies.

Section 9 Promoting sustainable transport

- 5.27 **Paragraph 109** confirms 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.

Section 11 Making effective use of land

- 5.28 **Paragraph 117** confirms that planning decisions should 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. **Paragraph 118** goes on and sets out how this can be achieved. Planning decisions should (inter alia):

- give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes; and,
- 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.

- 5.29 **Paragraph 122** advises on achieving appropriate densities and states that decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land taking into account the identified need for different types of housing.

Section 12 Achieving well-designed places

- 5.30 **Paragraph 124** confirms that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to planning, and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 5.31 **Paragraph 127** describes various aspects of good design. Development should ensure that (inter alia):
- it functions well and add to the overall quality of the area;
 - is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - is 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);
 - establishes or maintains a strong sense of place; and,
 - creates places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 5.32 Overall, the NPPF confirms that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent it. The Government's overarching vision throughout the NPPF is that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in doing so there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development to be approved without delay.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 This section contains a detailed analysis of the application proposal against the relevant material planning considerations. These considerations have been derived from an understanding of the site and its surrounds and the policy analysis of the previous section. The following detailed matters are considered:

- Principle of Development;
- Impact on Residential Amenity, Overlooking and Privacy; and
- Transport and Highways.

6.2 Matters in relation to design and access will be covered in the following section.

Principle of Development

6.3 The application site lies within the settlement boundary of Reading where the principle of sustainable development/re-development is acceptable, subject to compliance with other relevant policies of the development plan.

6.4 Policy CS14 of the development plan outlines the requirement borough's requirement to deliver an average of 521 dwellings per year between 2016 and 2026. The proposal will result in the introduction of an additional dwelling within Reading and contribute towards the Council's annual delivery requirement.

6.5 Whilst Policy CS18 relates to the conversion of existing residential dwellings to apartments, some of its provisions could be applied in this instance. The policy specifically states that proposals for residential conversions will be considered acceptable assuming that the proposed conversion would not have an adverse impact on a variety of factors (see 5.18). These issues will be addressed below.

6.6 The proposed conversion would not result in the loss of a family home and would see what is effectively redundant floor space brought into residential use, with no loss of facilities for residents. The laundry area of the apartment building is not currently used by residents as most apartments typically have their own private washing facilities, and the bin and cycle storage areas can comfortably be provided elsewhere within the site, as outlined on the general arrangement plan (Drg. 16/037/02). There will, therefore, be the same level of provision of facilities within the development alongside the benefit of providing an additional dwelling.

- 6.7 Compliance with building control will ensure that the insulation and revised openings are in accordance with current energy efficient guidelines and confirm that the development is in accordance with CS1 of the development plan

Impact on Residential Amenity, Overlooking and Privacy

- 6.8 Regarding future occupants, the proposed apartment comfortably provides the requisite facilities and floorspace to ensure a good standard of accommodation is achieved.
- 6.9 All existing windows will be retained and ensure every room benefits from natural light. The provision of soft landscaping along the northern elevation will create a buffer zone around the property and will help to ensure the privacy and amenity of future occupants is also protected.
- 6.10 Regarding the impact on nearby residents, the proposals would have no meaningful impact on their amenity in terms of noise or odour. All building works are internal or will only involve minor alterations to the existing elevations. The footprint of the host building will remain unchanged.
- 6.11 The orientation of the three wings of the building are such that there is no scope for direct views into other properties from the proposed apartment (and vice versa). Therefore, there will be no issues with overlooking/privacy caused by the creation of the new ground floor apartment.
- 6.12 Finally, the proposed use will increase levels of surveillance of the external amenity areas, including one of the entrances to the apartment building, thus helping to reducing the potential for criminal activity within these parts of the site.

Transport

- 6.13 The site is in a highly sustainable location with strong public transport links. A number of regular bus services operate along Tilehurst Road and Bath Road connecting the area with Reading Town Centre, Calcot, Newbury, Mortimer, Tilehurst, and Little Heath (*inter alia*).
- 6.14 As stated above, secure cycle storage space will be re-provided within the site and continue to facilitate the use of active modes of transport. The proposals incorporate spaces for 7no. Cycle spaces. These are enclosed within a secure store to the west of the site.

- 6.15 Turning to vehicular parking, it should be stressed that the proposed flat will often be used as temporary accommodation. As such, vehicular ownership among future occupants is likely to be very low (if not nil). As such, the actual demand on parking facilities in the surrounding area is unlikely to materially increase.
- 6.16 However, RBC confirmed in their pre-application advice that the proposals would need to provide/demonstrate access to 1no. parking spaces in accordance with their adopted standards. As the on-site provision would not be sufficient to accommodate an extra flat and the pressure for on-street parking in the locality, a parking survey has been commissioned by the applicant, the results of which are submitted with this application. The submitted parking survey demonstrates that there is sufficient capacity in the area to accommodate the additional vehicle generated by this development.
- 6.17 The above, coupled with the fact the site lies within a generally sustainable location with good public transport links means that the proposed intensification of the site can be accommodated in transport terms. The proposals are, therefore, considered to comply with policy CS24 of the development plan.

Bin Storage

- 6.18 New bin storage facilities have been installed in the grounds of the apartment building to compensate for the loss of the space to the proposed flat. Photos of the secure stores are attached as an appendix to this statement.

APPENDIX 3 – BIN AND CYCLE STORES

7. DESIGN AND ACCESS

Design

- 7.1 The proposal requires only one minor alteration to the physical appearance of the host building. This comprises the filling in of a set of double doors. The replacement windows will reflect the materials of the existing building to ensure a coherent aesthetic is maintained.
- 7.2 Other alterations comprise new soft planting areas to create a buffer zone along the northern elevation of the proposed flat to protect the privacy/amenity of the future occupants as well as somewhat enhance the aesthetic of the host building.
- 7.3 As stated above, the proposed conversion will increase natural levels of surveillance over parts of the amenity space and entrance to the apartment building. Thus the proposal will contribute to reducing the potential for criminal activity in these parts of the site.

Access

- 7.4 The proposed apartment will be accessed from the common area/hallway of the apartment building.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group in support of an application for the conversion of a redundant laundry room, cycle store and refuse storage area to a one-bedroom, ground floor apartment, creation of new communal refuse and cycle storage areas and soft landscaping.
- 8.2 This statement has demonstrated that the principle of development is entirely acceptable in this residential location and will have no unacceptable impacts on the amenities of the nearest properties.
- 8.3 Furthermore, the statement has demonstrated that the location is highly sustainable and the existing parking provision will be able to accommodate the minor intensification of the use of the site.
- 8.4 The proposal will see the re-provision of secure refuse and cycle storage areas and allow for a more efficient use of the site to provide an additional dwelling in a sustainable location.
- 8.5 This Statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is compliant with both the NPPF and local planning policy and it is therefore considered that planning permission should be granted for the application.

APPENDIX 1

PHOTOSHEET



PHOTO 1: THE SITE



PHOTO 2: THE SITE



PHOTO 3: THE SITE



PHOTO 4: THE SITE



PHOTO 5: THE SITE



PHOTO 6: THE SITE



PHOTO 7: THE SITE



PHOTO 8: THE SITE



PHOTO 9: THE SITE



PHOTO 10: THE SITE



PHOTO 11: THE SITE



PHOTO 12: THE SITE

APPENDIX 2

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE FROM READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Our Ref: 180568/PREAPP

Direct: ☎ 0118 937 3625
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22 June 2018

Your contact is: **Matthew Burns Planning & Building Control**

Without prejudice

Dear Andrew

180568/PREAPP - Conversion of existing residential space to flats for the homeless/erection of new dwelling and associated parking for homeless families (six separate addresses)

This is a pre-application response further to the above enquiry received on 29th March 2018 and the meeting held at the Council Offices on 14th June 2018.

Background & Introduction

The pre application enquiry relates to conversion of existing spaces within residential buildings and one proposal for the erection of a new building to form a number of new dwellings for use by homeless families. The enquiry relates to proposals across six different sites which are all owned by Reading Borough Council.

Relevant Planning Policies

Any planning application at the site would be considered within the context of the Council's LDF Core Strategy (2008, Altered 2015) and Sites and the Detailed Policies (2012, Altered 2015) documents. Supplementary Planning documents would also be applied where relevant, together with national guidance (the NPPF). Please use [this link](#) to view the local policies and guidance.

Please be aware that a new local plan is emerging, although adoption of the [new local plan](#) (and its policies - replacing the existing policies referenced above) is not anticipated until the end of the 2018 / beginning of 2019 at present. It is also advised that the emerging policies can be afforded some weight in the determination of planning applications now that the draft local plan has been submitted

to the government (The Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on Thursday 29th March 2018. This marks the beginning of a process of public examination that will take place during 2018). This weight is limited at this time, but will increase in weight as the plan moves closer to adoption. Once adopted, the new policies will be afforded full weight.

Appraisal

The principle of providing additional housing is welcomed and would help meeting the objectives of Policy CS14, in assisting in meeting the Councils annual housing targets. However, this would need to be balanced against the loss of existing accommodation and site specific considerations of each individual proposal, which are addressed in turn below:

72 Brunswick Street and 80 Brunswick Street

Site

Both proposals relate to cross shaped three storey blocks of flats located on the west side of Brunswick Street.

Pre-application Proposal

Both proposals seeks advice relating to conversion of existing ground floor bin store, laundry and cycle store areas to one bedroom flats. It is understood that the laundry room is no longer used with flats now having their own washing facilities.

Appraisal

Character and Residential Amenity (Policies CS7, CS8, CS34, DM4 and DM8)

Externally only minor alterations to the buildings are proposed, including replacement of doors with windows, small fenestration changes and provision of defensible planting and a low dwarf wall to flank elevations. These minimal alterations are considered to integrate satisfactorily with the appearance of the existing buildings and surrounding area.

It is not considered that the proposals would result in any harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers. Internal noise transmission to existing residential units in the building would be addressed via building regulations standards.

The proposed flats are small but are considered adequate and to be served by sufficient outlook and daylighting. The proposed defensible planting is considered necessary to protect the privacy of future occupants from people using the entrance footpaths to the buildings. Landscaping details should be provided as part of any application.

Parking/Cycle Parking/Bin Storage (Policies CS20, CS24, DM12 and CS7)

Both sites are located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, each development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 space per unit.

Brunswick Street is not part of the Council's Resident Permit scheme and there is considerable pressure for on-street car parking in the vicinity of the site. Whilst it is accepted that the accommodation is intended for the homeless, any overflow parking demand created by the

developments could not be accommodated on the surrounding roads. Given that the Council's adopted parking policy requires 1 parking space for each flat, it is suggested that a concise parking survey is undertaken. The survey should be undertaken over two days including an evening and weekend observation to establish the take up of spaces associated with the existing developments.

New secure bin and cycle storage areas will also need to be provided given the facilities to be displaced by the proposal. These will service the entire block of flats to compensate for the space lost through the creation of the new apartment. Any application would need to include details/plans of the size and appearance of the replacement bin and cycle store facilities. Clarification should also be provided regarding the existing number of cycle storage spaces and details of the proposed cycle store should be provided if a full application is submitted.

Sustainability (Policies CS1, DM1 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD)

The proposals would be required to meet the Council's sustainability standards. As a residential conversion this would be a BREEAM rating of 'very good'.

Affordable Housing (Policy DM6)

West Berkshire District Council and Reading Borough Council applied for a judicial review of the Secretary of State's Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) to Parliament in 2014 on changes to national planning policy. Those changes sought to exempt developments of 10 or less dwellings from planning obligations for affordable housing and social infrastructure contributions and to introduce a new measure known as the Vacant Building Credit.

The High Court handed down its judgment on the case on 31st July 2015. The High Court found in favour of the challenge by the local authorities and quashed the amendments to the NPPG. The Secretary of State appealed the judgment and the Court of Appeal has now quashed the decision of the High Court.

Reading Borough Council has been considering its options for implementing its affordable housing policy in the light of this decision.

At its meeting of the Strategic Environment Planning and Transport Committee on 13th July 2016, the Council discussed the outcome of the Court of Appeal's decision on its challenge (the report can be found here:

http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/5651/Item09-SEPT-C-Report-on-C-of-Appeal-judgement-05-16/pdf/Item09_SEPT_C_Report_on_C_of_Appeal_judgement_05_16.pdf).

Having considered its options, the Committee agreed the following as the basis for determining planning applications where Policy DM6 of the SDPD is relevant:

To implement Policy DM6 as currently adopted in the SDPD but excluding proposals that solely involve the conversion of an existing property, where the conversion involves the provision of 10 or less dwelling units (i.e. not HMOs), or the replacement of dwellings by the same number of replacement dwellings where there is no net increase.

Given both proposals relate to conversion of existing building Policy DM6 would not apply.

Furthermore, the proposals themselves are to provide affordable housing for people at risk of homelessness. Subject to securing the use of the proposed units as such by way of a section 106 legal agreement the proposals would not be required to contribute towards affordable housing provision elsewhere in the Borough.

Conclusions

Subject to the satisfactorily addressing the parking, bike storage and bin store issues outlined above it is my opinion that planning applications for both proposals would be supported by officers.

125 Basingstoke Road

Site

The proposal relates to a four storey block of flats located on the east side of Basingstoke Road opposite the junction with Craddock Road.

Pre-Application Proposals

The proposal seeks advice relating to the conversion of redundant ground floor storage areas to a single three bedroom flat.

Appraisal

Character and Residential Amenity (CS7, CS8, CS34, DM4 and DM8)

Externally the only alteration to the building would be the addition of windows to what is an existing blank brick façade at ground floor level. The windows are reflective of existing and are considered to integrate satisfactorily with the appearance of the building and surrounding area.

It is not considered that the proposals would result in any harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers. Internal noise transmission to existing residential units in the building would be addressed via building regulations standards.

The proposed flat is a good size and all habitable rooms would be served by sufficient outlook and daylighting.

Parking/Cycle Parking/Bin Storage (Policies CS20, CS24, DM12 and CS7)

The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1.5 space per unit.

No new car parking spaces form part of this proposal. Whilst it is accepted that the accommodation is intended for the homeless, any overflow parking demand created by this development should not be accommodated on the surrounding residential roads. Given that the Council's adopted parking policy requires 1 parking space, it is suggested that a concise parking survey is undertaken. The survey

should be undertaken over two days including an evening and weekend observation to establish the take up of spaces associated with the existing development.

Details of the proposed cycle storage and bin storage for the unit should also be provided if a full application is submitted.

Sustainability (Policies CS1, DM1 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD)

The proposals would be required to meet the Council's sustainability standards. As a residential conversion this would be a BREEAM rating of 'very good'.

Affordable Housing (Policy DM6)

Given the proposal relates to conversion of an existing building Policy DM6 would not apply.

Furthermore, the proposals themselves are to provide affordable housing for people at risk of homelessness. Subject to securing the use of the proposed units as such by way of a section 106 legal agreement the proposals would not be required to contribute towards affordable housing provision elsewhere in the Borough.

Conclusions

Subject to the satisfactorily addressing the parking, bike storage and bin store issues outlined above it is my opinion that a planning application for the proposed development would be supported by officers.

Tyrell and Padley Court Boulton Street

Site

The proposal relates to part five/part four/part two storey block of flats located on the south side of Boulton Street.

Pre-Application Proposals

The proposal seeks advice relating to the conversion of twelve ground floor single garages to create four one bedroom flats.

Appraisal

Character and Residential Amenity (CS7, CS8, CS34, DM4 and DM8)

Externally the only alteration to the building would be the replacement of twelve garage doors with windows and an access door to each of the proposed flats. The proposed windows and doors are considered to integrate satisfactorily with the appearance of the existing building and surrounding area.

It is not considered that the proposals would result in any harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers. Internal noise transmission to existing residential units in the building would be addressed via building regulations standards.

The proposed flats are adequate in size and whilst mainly single aspect the units are served by good sized windows which is considered would provide for sufficient outlook and daylighting.

Parking/Cycle Parking/Bin Storage (Policies CS20, CS24, DM12 and CS7)

The supporting documentation states that all of the garages are currently empty and are not used for parking.

The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 space per unit.

No new car parking spaces form part of this proposal. The development site is located in an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Area; Zone 11R. Under the Borough's current parking standards, this proposal may generate additional pressure for parking in the area. Therefore if a full application is submitted there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed flats will not be issued with resident parking or visitor permits which would be covered by condition and an informative applied. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

It is stated that no cycle parking is provided as part of this application which is not acceptable. Cycle parking must be provided for the new flats at a ratio of 0.5 spaces per flat equating to 2 secure cycle parking spaces. Details of the proposed cycle store as well as bins store arrangements should be provided if a full application is submitted.

Sustainability (Policies CS1, DM1 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD)

The proposals would be required to meet the Council's sustainability standards. As a residential conversion this would be a BREEAM rating of 'very good'.

Affordable Housing (Policy DM6)

Given the proposal relates to conversion of an existing building Policy DM6 would not apply.

Furthermore, the proposals themselves are to provide affordable housing for people at risk of homelessness. Subject to securing the use of the proposed units as such by way of a section 106 legal agreement the proposals would not be required to contribute towards affordable housing provision elsewhere in the Borough.

Conclusions

Subject to the satisfactorily addressing the bike and bin store issues outlined above it is my opinion that a planning application for the proposed development would be supported by officers.

Isis Court

Site

The proposal relates to a three storey block of flats located on the west side of Lymouth Road. Street. The site is located within flood zone 3.

Pre-Application Proposals

The proposal seeks advice relating to the conversion of existing ground floor office, laundry and lobby areas to form a single two bedroom flat. It is understood that the facilities to be lost are redundant and have not been utilised for some years.

Appraisal

Character and Residential Amenity (CS7, CS8, CS34, DM4 and DM8)

Externally the only alteration to the building would be minor alterations to windows and doors. These alterations are considered to integrate satisfactorily with the appearance of the existing building and surrounding area.

It is not considered that the proposals would result in any harm to the amenity of surrounding occupiers. Internal noise transmission to existing residential units in the building would be addressed via building regulations standards.

The proposed flat is a good size and habitable rooms would be served by sufficient outlook and daylighting.

Parking/Cycle Parking/Bin Storage (Policies CS20, CS24, DM12 and CS7)

The site is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 space per unit.

No new car parking spaces form part of this proposal. The development site is located in an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Area; Zone 03R. Under the Borough's current parking standards, this proposal may generate additional pressure for parking in the area. Therefore if a full application is submitted there should be an assumption that any future occupants of the proposed flats will not be issued with resident parking or visitor permits which would be covered by condition and an informative applied. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on street car parking in the area.

Details of the proposed cycle and bin storage should be provided if a full application is submitted.

Flooding (Policy CS35)

The site is located within flood zone 3. Given the proposal relates to conversion of part of an existing dwelling a planning application would not be required to undertake the flood risk sequential or exceptions tests. However, a site specific flood risk assessment would be required. Details as to what information is required to be demonstrated within a site specific flood risk assessment can be found via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#Site-Specific-Flood-Risk-Assessment-checklist-section>

Sustainability (Policies CS1, DM1 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD)

The proposals would be required to meet the Council's sustainability standards. As a residential conversion this would be a BREEAM rating of 'very good'.

Affordable Housing (Policy DM6)

Given the proposal relates to conversion of an existing building Policy DM6 would not apply.

Furthermore, the proposals themselves are to provide affordable housing for people at risk of homelessness. Subject to securing the use of the proposed units as such by way of a section 106 legal agreement the proposals would not be required to contribute towards affordable housing provision elsewhere in the Borough.

Conclusions

Subject to the satisfactorily addressing the flooding, bike and bin store issues outlined above it is my opinion that a planning application for the proposed development would be supported by officers.

Land at no.5 Ian Mikardo Way

Site

The proposal relates to land to the west of no. 5 Ian Mikardo Way which is a two storey semi-detached dwelling. The site is located within flood zone 2.

Pre-Application Proposals

The proposal seeks advice relating to the erection of a new two storey detached three bedroom dwelling with two off-street parking spaces and private rear amenity space. The two existing parking spaces for no. 5 are to be re-positioned to accommodate the additional dwelling.

Appraisal

Flood Risk (Policy C35)

The proposal seeks to provide a new dwelling within flood zone 2. As a more vulnerable development in terms of flood risk classification any planning application would be required to successfully demonstrate that it has passed the flood risk sequential test.

The flood risk sequential test seeks to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. The aim is to steer new development to Flood Zone 1 (areas with a low probability of river or sea flooding). Only where there are no reasonably available sites in Flood Zone 1 should the suitability of sites in Flood Zone 2 be considered.

Within each flood zone, surface water and other sources of flooding also need to be taken into account in applying the sequential approach to the location of development.

The Council's latest 'Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (May 2017) notes that 'there are not sufficient sites to meet the objectively assessed need for housing in Reading on sites in Flood Zones 1 and 2'. Therefore, subject to a detailed sequential test assessment being submitted as part of any application it may be possible to demonstrate that an application for additional residential development on the site could pass the sequential test. However, the onus is on the applicant to

present a detailed sequential test for this particular development and demonstrate the case to the Council.

A site specific flood risk assessment would also be required. Details as to what information is required to be demonstrated within a site specific flood risk assessment can be found via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#Site-Specific-Flood-Risk-Assessment-checklist-section>

At the pre-application meeting we discussed the possibility that the application site may have formed part of flood compensation for the historic development of the estate. Loss of such an area of land would have been unlikely to be acceptable unless re-provided elsewhere. However, following a review of the site history it appears that this is not the case with the flood compensation area located to the south of the site on the opposite of Amersham Road. Nonetheless the sequential and site specific flood risk assessments referred to above would still be required as part of any planning application.

Character and Residential Amenity (CS7, CS34 and DM4)

In terms of appearance, plot size and spacing to boundaries it is considered that the proposal would satisfactorily integrate within the character of the surrounding area.

The siting of the proposal is not considered to result in any adverse impacts in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy or loss of light or overbearing to existing surrounding properties.

The dwelling is considered adequate in size with all rooms served by suitable daylighting and outlook.

Parking/Cycle Parking/Bin Storage (Policies CS20, CS24, DM12 and CS7)

The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. In accordance with the adopted SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 2 spaces per 3 bedroom dwelling.

There are no changes proposed to the main vehicle access off Ian Mikardo Way. Two parking spaces are provided at the front of the property and two further parking spaces are re-provided for in a parallel parking arrangement. In principle, this is acceptable, but parallel parking spaces need to be 6m in length opposed to the standard 5m long and this must be demonstrated as part of any application.

Cycle and bin storage will be provided to the side of the dwelling and details of this should also be provided if a full application is submitted.

Natural Environment (Policies CS36 and CS38)

The land beside 5 Ian Mikardo Way comprises disused amenity grassland, tall ruderal vegetation, and a single tree bordered by wire and wooden fencing. The ecology report has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that this part of the site is of limited value to wildlife such that further reports are not considered necessary.

Any application would need to be accompanied by a hard and soft landscaping scheme as well as details of provision of biodiversity enhancements.

Sustainability (Policies CS1, DM1 and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD)

The proposal would be required to demonstrate sustainability measures in accordance with Policies DM1 and CS1.

Affordable Housing (Policy DM6)

Given the proposal seeks to provide an additional single dwelling Policy DM6 would require an application to provide a financial contribution equivalent to 5% of the GDV of the new dwelling to go towards the provision of affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough.

However, the proposals themselves are to provide an affordable home for people at risk of homelessness. Subject to securing the use of the proposed units as such by way of a section 106 legal agreement the proposals would not be required to contribute towards affordable housing provision elsewhere in the Borough.

Conclusions

Subject to the satisfactorily addressing the flooding, parking and bike and bin store issues outlined above it is my opinion that a planning application for the proposal development could be supported by officers. However, please note that the sequential test would be a significant obstacle to any application.

Other issues relating to all sites

The Council has introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The levy is charged at a rate of £120/sq.m in Reading Borough but the rate is subject to indexation. For 2018 CIL for residential developments is now levied at £147.29/sq.m. You may wish to explore whether any of the CIL charge could be off-set by existing floor space. To do this you would need to demonstrate what existing floor space had been in use for a minimum period of 6 months (continuously) within the last 3 years.

An entirely separate planning application would need to be submitted for each of the sites, with specific documents submitted for each site. Given the proposals would be Council's own applications they would automatically be required to be considered / determined by the elected members of the Planning Applications Committee. In light of this and the fact that s106 legal agreements will be required in each case, it is unlikely that the applications would be able to be determined within the statutory 8 week timeframes, although officers would naturally seek to progress the applications as quickly as possible.

Please note the validation requirements set out in the Council's Validation Checklist (December 2016) and refer to the Council's website for details. In particular, please ensure you include existing/proposed section plans (to show the floor to ceiling heights of the accommodation), include land levels on the plans (ground, eaves, ridge level on the Ian Mikardo Way new build proposal) and evidence (typically through colour coded and annotated floor plans) as to how you have calculated the floorspace figures stated on the CIL forms submitted.

This advice is given on a without-prejudice basis and not all policies have been considered. This advice is in good faith and will not over-ride the formal consideration of a planning application by the Council. If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter, please contact me on the number given above.

Yours sincerely,

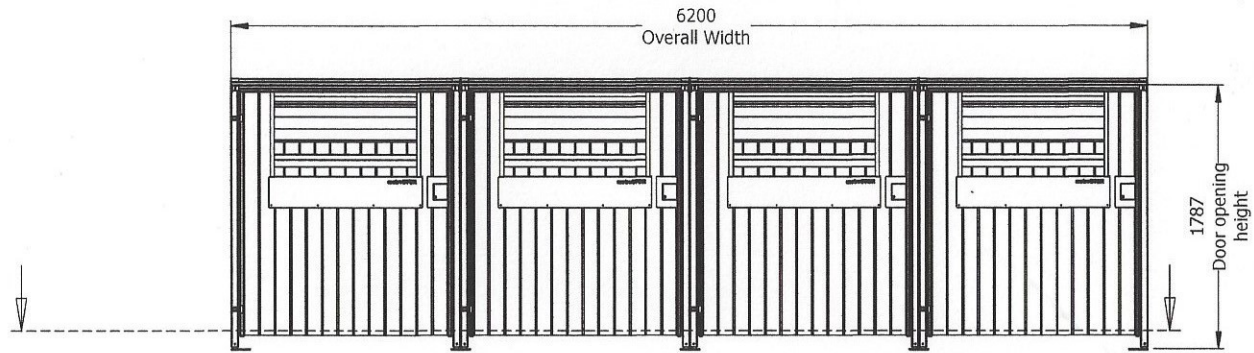
Matt Burns

Matt Burns
Senior Planning Officer
North / Central Team

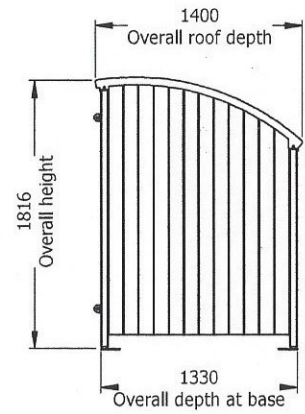
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APPENDIX 3

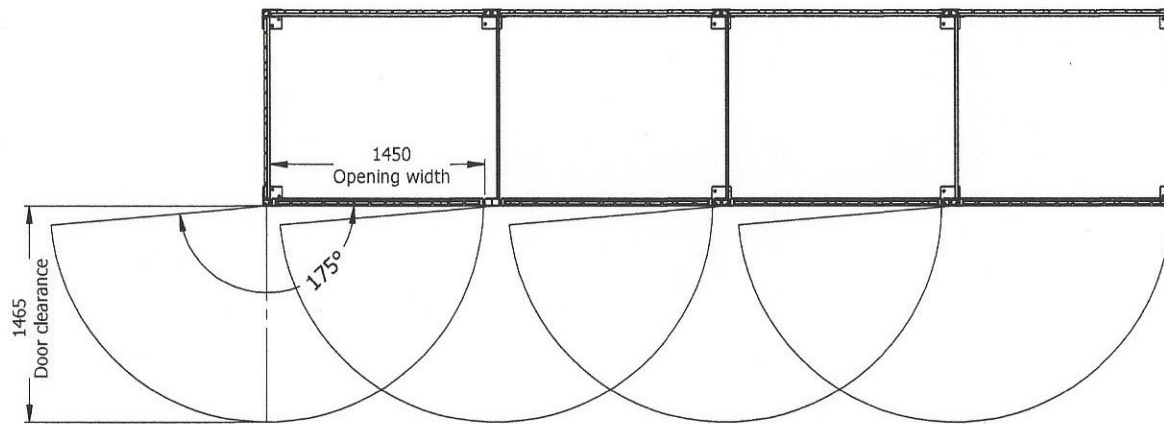
BIN AND CYCLE STORES



Front Elevation



End Elevation



Plan View

2D Drawing

Drawn By:- LB Drawn Date:- 31.03.16

Model Date:-

Title: PBM4t-2D Drawings - 31.03.16

metroSTOR™

DWG NO.
PBM2-Sheet1-2D Drawing

Sheet1

SHEET 1 OF 3



Velo-Safe

The Bike Locker

velo-safe.com

Velo-Safe Locker

The stylish, space efficient locker that fits the bicycle perfectly.

Velo-Safe is a revolutionary bike locker. Velo-Safe provides secure storage for individual bikes in a patented space-saving design. Velo-Safe can accommodate any type of single-seat bike and can be installed where standard rectangular bike lockers simply cannot go.

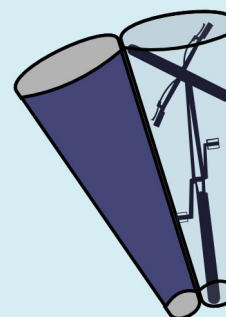
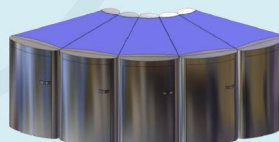
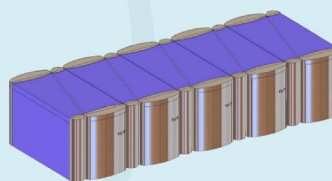
All this is down to the **unique, patented shape** of the Velo-Safe locker. The wedge design was created to fit sites that cannot accommodate bigger lockers, or where the shape of the site limits the use of other lockers.

The **stylish design** of the Velo-Safe enables the architect or designer to be creative with the layout. Velo-Safes can be laid out in many ways for a modern, funky look. Velo-Safe will enhance the design of your cycle parking project and give the most functional solution.

Velo-Safe is tough too. The top panel is made from 6mm Aluminium plate and the structure, door and side panels are from pre-galvanised and zintec coated steel. Everything can be powder coated in the colour of your choice.

A variety of locking mechanisms are available for the Velo-Safe. These include an integrated lock, ABLOY EXEC high security lock, a combination lock, a user supplied padlock (with over-ride) and now electronic access control. The Velo-Safe can be supplied with tough PET or polycarbonate viewing panels in the door if required.

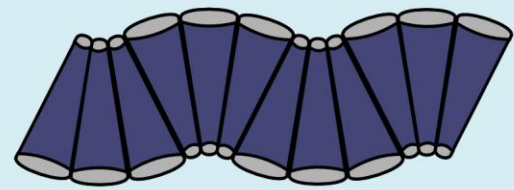
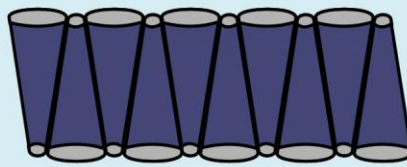
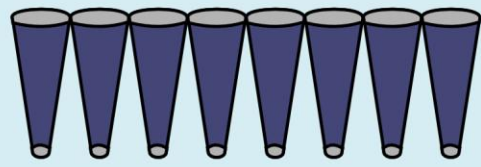
Velo-Safe can be installed on many surface types such as asphalt, concrete, slab paving, brick or stone. If your site has a flat hard ground surface then it is likely that Velo-Safe lockers can be installed without any additional ground works.



US Patent Number D619387
European Design Protection 2007

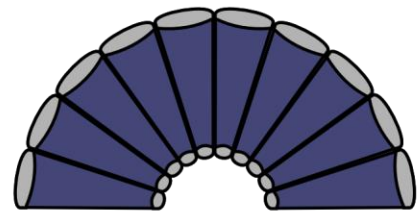
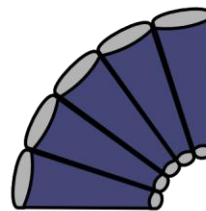
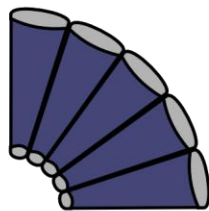
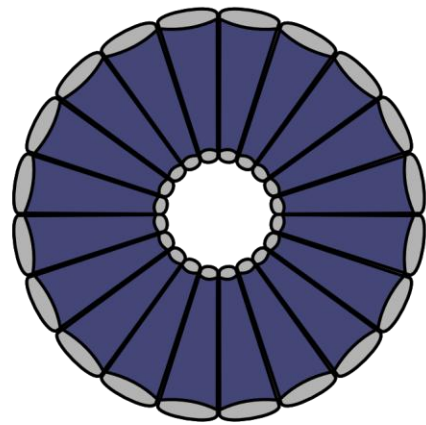


Velo-Safe Layout Examples

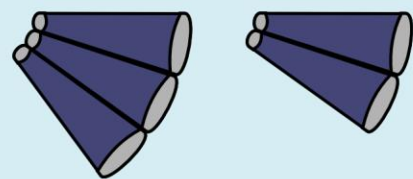


Velo-Safe lockers can be arranged into lines in a number of ways. The simplest is just to put the lockers side by side. This may be simple but the rounded front and door result in the best looking line of lockers you can buy.

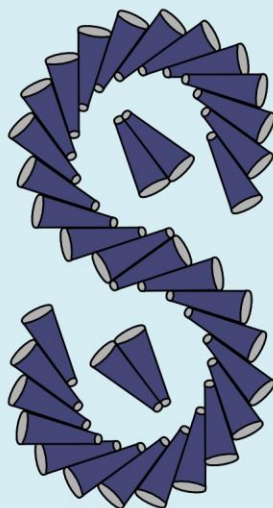
If access is possible from both sides then the lockers can be interlocked to double the parking density. An alternative to a simple line is to create an attractive wave effect by alternating groups of 3 Velo-Safe lockers.



The shape of the Velo-Safe means that 5 lockers fit into a quarter circle, great for installing bike parking into corners. A semi-circle of 10 Velo-Safes is perfect against walls - the Velo-Safe design typically fits 2 more units into the space needed for a semi-circle than rectangular lockers. A circle of 20 lockers has a diameter of 5.2 metres.



For long, narrow spaces a saw tooth configuration using banks of 1, 2 or 3 lockers is ideal. The shape of the Velo-Safe means that the rows of lockers can be closely spaced without fouling access to the lockers behind.



The patented shape of the Velo-Safe locker allows you to unlock your creativity, making your cycle parking project attractive and exciting.

Locker Dimensions

Length:	1900mm (74.8 inches)
Width (front):	780mm (30.7 inches)
Width (rear):	260mm (10.2 inches)
Height:	1200mm (47.2 inches)



Velo-Safe
velo-safe.com



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