

Land to the rear of 209-219 Henley Road, Caversham

Design, Access and Planning Statement

June 2018

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1 Introduction

1. 1 This Design, Access and Planning Statement accompanies an application for planning permission for the erection of 9 dwellings to the rear of 209-219 Henley Road with access from the proposed road in a recently approved adjacent development.
1. 2 The principle of development to the rear of properties on Henley Road was established by planning permission (170959 FUL dated 6th June 2018) which provided three storey dwellings to the rear of the site. The same principles have been adopted at this site and continue the form, scale and character previously approved.
1. 3 This Statement is structured in accordance with the advice in National Planning Practice Guidance. It also takes account of the local requirements of the Council as well as setting out the appropriate planning background to the proposals and is set out under the following headings:
 - Site and Surrounding Area
 - Planning Context
 - Proposals
 - Planning Considerations
 - Access
 - Conclusion
1. 4 Details of the application site are set out in Section 2 while details of the proposals and an analysis of the planning case for the proposals are in Section 3.

Figure 1: Aerial View of the Site



2 The Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The application site is on the B4155 (Henley Road) which links to Reading to the south west and Henley to the north east. The site is within Reading Borough Council.
- 2.2 It has an area of 0.37ha and comprises the rear gardens of nos 209 to 219.
- 2.3 Henley Road is predominantly residential in character with the original form of development comprising large detached properties with long back gardens. Recent developments have involved building on the rear gardens of the properties in the vicinity of the site. In particular, the site is adjacent to a large development at Ruskin Court which extends from Henley Road into the rear of the site.
- 2.4 The development must also be considered in the context of the recent planning permission on the adjacent site, and from where access into the application site will be gained. This recently consented development consists of a three storey block of development to the front and three storey, semi-detached properties to the rear. The current proposals replicate the form and scale of development to rear and continue the line of development in this location.
- 2.5 The site is well located for access to facilities and services in the local area as well as for public transport access into Reading Town Centre.

Planning History

- 2.6 There is no relevant planning history on this site but as noted above a planning permission exists for the adjacent land. This comprises 45 dwellings and an access road through the site. The approved layout is shown in Figure 2.
- 2.7 This planning permission granted consent for a large block of development to the front of the site with a row of three storey properties to the rear. This itself continues a form of development created at the adjacent site of Ruskin.

Figure 2: Site Plan of Consented scheme



3 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 This section considers the relevant planning policy context for the site as well as any relevant planning history for the site and its surrounding area.

National Planning Policy

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and established a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- 3.3 In making decisions, Local Planning Authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way and should look for solutions rather than problems. They should, at every level, seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 3.4 The NPPF sets out the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for the planning system and it encompasses three distinct areas; economic, social and environmental.
- 3.5 The NPPF also sets out the need to 'boost significantly' the supply of housing land and this is complementary to the ethos of planning for positive growth which is the golden thread running through the document.
- 3.6 The NPPF sets out that the development plan should be the starting point for decision making, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 17 sets out a number of core planning principles that are to underpin decision making. These include encouraging the effective use of land by re-using land that has already been developed.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.7 The Council's current planning policy context is contained within the Core Strategy (January 2008, altered January 2015) and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (October 2012, altered January 2015). Policies that are relevant to these proposals include:
- CS7: Design and the Public realm
 - CS14: Provision of Housing
 - CS15: Location, accessibility, density and housing mix
 - CS16: Affordable Housing
 - DM4: Safeguarding Amenity
 - DM5: Housing Mix
 - DM6: Affordable Housing

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- DM10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
 - DM11: Development of Private residential Gardens

3. 8 Other relevant documents to these proposals include:

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (October 2011)
- Affordable Housing SPD (January 2013)

3. 9 In addition to these planning policies, the Council is progressing a review of its Local Plan. A Pre-Submission plan was consulted on in November 2017. This document includes an increased annual housing target of 671 homes per annum to meet objectively assessed housing need; this is a substantial increase in housing requirements in the Borough from the previous targets.

3. 10 The southern part of the site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3 due to its proximity to Berry Brook which runs along the southern boundary.

4 Proposals

- 4.1 The proposals seek planning permission for the following form of development:

The erection of 9 dwellings to the rear of 209-219 with associated access from the adjacent development on Henley Road.

- 4.2 The proposals consist of larger family dwellings located to the southern part of the site with the retention of open space to the rear of the site in the form of private amenity space. This layout has added benefits in terms of flooding and biodiversity improvement. The style of the properties will follow that of the adjacent site to the west.
- 4.3 The layout provides for 2 car parking spaces per dwelling.
- 4.4 The layout is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Proposed Site Plan



5 Planning Considerations

5.1 This section assesses the planning considerations for the redevelopment of this site under the following headings:

- Principle of Development
- Housing Provision
- Design and Appearance
- Residential amenity
- Parking and Access
- Trees and Landscaping

Principle of the Use

5.2 The site is currently in residential use and lies within a predominantly residential area.

5.3 The redevelopment of the site for a more dense form of residential use is compatible with surrounding land uses, and other similar developments in the area, and is in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development that is central to the government's National Planning Policy Guidance.

5.4 Furthermore, Core Strategy Policy CS14 states that the need for housing will be met from, inter alia, development coming forward on large and small previously developed site.

5.5 Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) states that proposals for the development of residential gardens will be acceptable provided that they meet a number of specific criteria. The following section will describe in more detail how this development will meet these specific criteria but overall the proposals are considered to be in accordance with Policy DM11.

Redevelopment of Residential Gardens

5.6 Policy DM11 of the Local Plan sets out the criteria against which proposals for new residential development within the curtilage of private residential gardens will be considered. This sections considers the criteria of this policy in turn.

Positive contribution to the area

5. 7 The proposed development has been designed to reflect the existing form of development on the adjacent site and in the wider vicinity of the site particularly at Ruskin where larger dwellings are located to the rear of the site.
5. 8 Policy DM11 requires new residential development to create an appropriate relationship to existing built form which integrates with the surrounding area.
5. 9 This layout integrates with the surrounding area with regards to the existing build form, plot frontages, parking areas and existing pattern of openings and boundary treatments, building heights reflect the surrounding area with particular attention given to accommodate good spacing around buildings with well-designed landscaping around the boundary, buildings, access and parking areas and the introduction of good quality amenity space.
5. 10 As shown in Figure 4, the design of the proposals would replicate a form of development seen at the adjacent site.

Figure 4: Proposed Streetscene



5. 11 Land to the south of the site is included as rear gardens, with some supplemental planting, to ensure that a buffer zone to Berry Brook is retained. This also acts to further enhance the landscaping of the site.
5. 12 In terms of materials the suggested use of brick and render is in keeping with the traditional design and form of dwellings along Henley Road.

Suitability of site layout

5. 13 The site provides good levels of landscaping and an access through the site to the dwellings at the rear. The indicative layout (see Figure 3) shows the predominance of landscaping proposed on the site creating a good balance between landscaping, amenity areas, access road and hardstanding areas.
5. 14 The layout of the site limits the impact on the private rear gardens of the properties which back onto the site.

Amenity Space

5. 15 Policy DM10 requires that sufficient amenity space is provided within developments. The application site, overall, has been designed to provide a suitable level of amenity space for all dwellings.

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5. 16 Each of the proposed houses would have a private rear garden of approximately 20m long and 6 metres wide providing more than sufficient amenity space for the dwellings.

Access

5. 17 The proposal site lies within Zone 3 (Secondary Core Area) as identified in the Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This means that the parking requirements for the proposals are 2 spaces per 4 bed house.
5. 18 This would result in a requirement of 18 spaces for the development which is provided in the layout.
5. 19 A Transport Statement is submitted with this application to provide further details. This statement confirms that the site is designed to have a fully compliant access which meets appropriate highway standards and concluded that the site access/junction and other criteria can be satisfactorily achieved in accordance with all design standards.

Tandem development

5. 20 Policy DM11 discourages any form of tandem development. The proposals do not constitute a form of tandem development but instead provide for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site.

Amenity of surrounding residents

5. 21 Residential amenity is a key consideration in the acceptability of proposals for the redevelopment of private rear gardens. The proposed layout respects the privacy of adjacent properties and minimises overlooking into rear gardens.

Provision of family housing

5. 22 Policy DM11 requires developments to place an emphasis on the provision of family-sized housing. The proposals provide 100% family accommodation in the form of family houses. This complements the recently consented scheme on the adjacent site well where there is a number of smaller apartments to the front of the site with family housing to the rear.
5. 23 Meeting housing need and providing for a mix of housing types is an important consideration in creating sustainable communities. The proposals are therefore considered to meet the principles of sustainable development and those of Policy DM11.

Impact on Biodiversity

5. 24 An Ecological Assessment is submitted with this planning application, the conclusions of which states:
- The buildings present on site have ‘negligible’ to ‘low’ potential for roosting bat species with no evidence of any recent activity found at the time of survey.
 - The gardens are generally laid to lawn and regularly maintained with a species poor assemblage of vegetation common in amenity grassland habitat. Trees and boundary hedgerows are composed of common ornamental and native tree species. The report recommends additional surveys in respect of bats and reptile species..
 - The site was comprised of common species typical of the habitat type, no rare or unusual plant species were recorded on site. The site in general offered a limited floral assemblage; any loss of diversity could easily be replaced through the use of a native planting scheme and suitable habitat creation areas.
 - The proposals do not result in fragmented back gardens but instead the layout creates large areas of green space creating well-designed public and private amenity areas and it makes an important contribution to biodiversity and the green network.

Prejudice development of wider areas

5. 25 The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area in that it is offering a proposal for a comprehensive redevelopment of the site. Furthermore, an appropriate access been design to accommodate further future development to the east of the site in accordance with Policy DM11.

Affordable Housing

5. 26 Affordable housing policy contained in Policy CS16 requires 20% affordable housing to be provided on sites of 5-9 units. This level of affordable housing can be provided on the site.

Flooding

5. 27 The site lies within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3. All development on the site lies in Flood Zone 1 with some areas of decking in Flood Zone 2 as shown in the accompanying Flood Risk Assessment.
5. 28 The report contains the following conclusions:
- All of the proposed residential properties are free from flooding in the 1 in 100 year event, 1 in 100 year return period flood event plus 35% climate change allowance and the 1 in 1000 year return period flood event. The 1 in 100 year return period flood event plus 70% climate change allowance,

which can be used as a worst case sensitivity, shows partial flooding to properties 8 and 9 only.

- As specified in the Reading Borough Council SFRA, finished floor levels should be 300mm above the maximum water level for the 1 in 100 year plus climate change allowance event. This gives a level of 37.1mAOD for the upper allowance.
- A safe egress route is available from the properties. The route will be to the north and onto Henley Road, which remains dry even during extreme flood events.
- As the updated modelling shows that the planned properties are located in Flood Zone 1, and thus at the lowest possible risk of flooding, there is consequently no need for the Sequential Test to be passed.
- Planning permission has been granted for the adjacent residential development site located at 199-205 Henley Road. Therefore, there is precedent in this area for the construction of residential property. It is considered that the flood risk posed to this adjacent site is very similar to that experienced by this site.

Arboriculture

5. 29 An Arboricultural report has been submitted as part of the planning application due to the presence of a number of trees on the site. The survey confirms that the existing trees on the site are of limited value and that the proposals will have no adverse impact in this regard.

Sustainability

5. 30 An Energy Statement has been prepared in support of this planning application. The Statement includes an energy demand assessment showing how selected energy efficiency, low carbon and renewable energy measures have been considered and those, which have been incorporated into the scheme.
5. 31 A Sustainability Statement has also been prepared which comprehensively assess the aspects of the proposals that address sustainability of the site and the development as a whole.

Air Quality

5. 32 An air quality assessment has been undertaken as the application site lies within an AQMA.
5. 33 The assessment indicates that annual mean NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations are below the objectives in the 'without' and 'with' development scenarios. Based on the evidence it is also considered unlikely that there will be exceedances of either short term objective for NO₂ or PM₁₀ under either scenario.

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5. 34 The proposed development has been assessed, and found to be compliant the relevant air quality guidance for new buildings.

Transport

5. 35 A Transport Statement is submitted with this planning application. The conclusions of that report are:
- The location of the site is accessible for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users and integrates with the surrounding residential area. Therefore the site is in line with NPPF.
 - A satisfactory priority junction site access in accordance with Reading Borough Council's Geometric Design Guidance for Residential Accesses and served by a right turn lane in accordance with the DMRB is permitted off Henley Road. This would also serve the new development.
 - The net increase in vehicular flows on the local road network as a result of the combined permitted and proposed developments would be a reduction in traffic compared to the refused scheme which was acceptable to the Highway Authority. The traffic of the proposed scheme would not give rise to a material impact on existing traffic and safety conditions.
 - The design of the site road would be in accordance with the principles of Reading Borough Council's Geometric Design Guidance for Residential Accesses. The road would also serve potential further development to the east of the site.
 - The level of car parking proposed for the site is in accordance with the required level of parking indicated in Reading Borough Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design document and is consistent with local Census car ownership levels.
 - The site can be satisfactorily serviced by refuse vehicles which would enter the site, turnaround within the development and leave again in a forward gear.

6 Access

6. 1 The issue of access covers two different aspects, the accessibility of site in its wider sense and the accessibility of the proposed homes.
6. 2 The site has good access to public transport with bus stops directly outside of the site. These bus stops provide 6 different services into Reading and the wider area.
6. 3 The proposed dwellings will be built to Part M building regulation standards to ensure that they are accessible and flexible to meet the changing needs of future residents.
6. 4 Where appropriate, the proposals will also be built to Lifetime Homes standards as required by Policy DM5 (Housing Mix) of the Sites and Detailed Policies Development Plan Document.

7 Conclusions

7. 1 The proposed development for the site at land to the rear of 209-219 Henley Road, Caversham comprises an application for 9 dwellings.
7. 2 The site adjacent to the application site has recently secured consent for residential development setting a precedent for the redevelopment of land in this location. Therefore, the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable.
7. 3 The main focus of the analysis in this statement is a consideration of the proposals against Policy DM11 which is concerned with the redevelopment of sites within residential curtilages. This policy seeks largely to ensure that such proposals do not have a negative impact on the site and its surroundings particularly in terms of character and residential amenity. The proposals are considered to represent an acceptable form of development that takes account of the character of the site and its surroundings.
7. 4 The proposals provides 9 family sized dwellings that complements the adjacent site as well as the wider area.
7. 5 A significant amount of supporting studies have been undertaken to assist the scheme design and support the application for the purposes of this application submission including ecology, arboriculture and flooding.
7. 6 Overall, in planning terms the proposals meet requirements relating to appropriate density, housing mix and exhibit elements of good urban design and site layout.

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