



CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

PLANNING STATEMENT

**LAND AT CROWN STREET AND
NEWARK STREET,
READING**

On behalf of Thomas Homes Ltd

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The John Phillips Planning Consultancy

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 1

2.0 THE SITE AND PROPOSAL 2

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY AND BACKGROUND 3

4.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 4

5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT 9

6.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE OVERALL PLANNING BALANCE..... 29

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Thomas Homes and is in support of a detailed planning application for residential development comprising 9 apartments on the corner of Newark Street and Crown Street, Reading.
- 1.2 In addition to this statement the application is supported by the following documentation:
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Transport Statement
 - Ecology Report
- 1.3 This statement describes the application site and the surrounding area, outlines the proposal, sets out the planning policy framework relevant to consideration of the application and then assesses the proposal against this framework.
- 1.4 This statement draws on current Government Guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Reading Core Strategy (Altered 2015), Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009) and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (Altered 2015).

2.0 THE SITE AND PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application site is located to the south of the Town Centre and within the Reading Central Area. It is within 15 minutes' walk of Reading Town Centre and is well served by outbound and inbound bus services
- 2.2 The site forms a secondary corner onto the main thoroughfare of Crown Street to the North and Newark Street to the West. It is broadly rectangular in shape and is currently scrubland with no buildings or notable features.
- 2.3 The land forms part of the land allocated for residential development for between 50-85 dwellings, as per Policy RC4I of the Reading Central Area Action Plan.
- 2.4 The proposal area lies adjacent (to the west) of land on the corner of Crown Street and Silver Street which Thomas Homes was granted planning permission for in October 2017 (application reference: 170794/FUL) for the redevelopment of part of the allocation to provide 80 apartments.
- 2.5 The site area is rectangular with an area of approximately 370 square metres and is level.
- 2.6 An existing vehicular access on a strip of land to the back of the land off Crown Street provides a right of access to rear of properties for residents of Newark Street, but this proposed development will have no vehicle access point.
- 2.7 The application site is not covered by any heritage designations, but does lie immediately to the southern edge of the Market Place London Street Conservation Area.
- 2.8 The surrounding context to the site is diverse in height, scale and character; comprising a mix of residential, commercial and retail uses.
- 2.9 A full detailed analysis of the site and surrounding context is provided in the accompanying Design and Access Statement by Woodfield Brady Architects.
- 2.10 The development seeks planning permission for the erection of a 2-4 storey height building to provide 9 apartments, including affordable housing.

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The planning applications of most relevance to these proposals are reference: 160868/OUT which granted outline consent (30th December 2016) for a Class C2 84 no. unit assisted living scheme. The proposal consisted of a single L-shaped building with two wings, with the building ranging in heights of four storeys to six storeys. And, most recently and relevant to this scheme, application reference: 170794 for a residential scheme on land to the east of the application site for 80 apartments.
- 3.2 The permission for the apartment scheme will shortly be under construction by Thomas Homes and provides a detailed frame of reference for this scheme.
- 3.3 The scale, massing and heights of the new building have been designed with reference to approval 170794 and seek to provide a continuation/complement of that scheme
- 3.4 Prior to submitting this proposal the applicant engaged with the Council at pre-application stage. The advice received confirmed that the principle of housing on the site was acceptable but that the bulk and scale needed to reduce quickly as the scheme turns into Newark Street. Following the advice received, the proposals have been amended and are considered to comply with officers' advice. The full detail of the design response is covered in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

4.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 4.1 The legislative framework for consideration of this application is provided by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Section 38 (6) of the 2004 Act states that:

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

- 4.2 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states also that in the determination of applications:

"The Authority shall have regard to the provisions of a development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material consideration."

- 4.3 The Development Plan for the area comprises policies of the Reading Core Strategy (Altered 2015), Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009) and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (Altered 2015). These policies are discussed below, but first consideration is first given to national guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March, 2012) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which are powerful material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.4 The NPPF replaced previous Government guidance, as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statement (PPSs).

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 4.5 The NPPF at paragraph 6 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 continues, to state that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental, and that these dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- **An economic role** - contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development

requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;

- **A social role** - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of the present and future generations; and by creating a high quality environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **An environmental role** - contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 4.6 Paragraph 8 makes it clear that those roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependant.

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 4.7 The NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and recognises at paragraph 14 that:

"At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking".

- 4.8 Paragraph 14 also states that:

"For decision-taking this means:

- *Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole;*
 - or*
 - *specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted."*

Core Planning Principles

4.9 Paragraph 17 sets out the Government's Core Planning Principles and states that planning should:

- *"always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
- *take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*
- *support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources;*
- *contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution;*
- *actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable;*
- *take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs."*

Requiring Good Design

4.10 Paragraph 56 states that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, and that:

"Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."

4.11 Paragraph 58 states also that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- *"will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

- *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation; and*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping."*

Reading Core Strategy (2008) (Altered 2015)

4.12 The following policies are considered to be of particular relevance to these proposals:

- CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design
- CS2: Waste Minimisation
- CS3: Social Inclusion and Diversity
- CS5: Inclusive Access
- CS7: Design and the Public Realm
- CS9: Infrastructure Services, Resources and Amenities
- CS14: Provision of Housing
- CS15: Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix
- CS22: Transport Assessments
- CS24: Car/Cycle Parking
- CS29: Provision of Open Space

Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009)

4.13 The application site is located within an area of Reading covered by the AAP. The site being subject to allocation Policy RC4L: Other Opportunity Sites – Corner of Crown Street and Silver Street.

4.14 Policy RC4L states that:

"Corner of Crown Street and Silver Street Residential Development (50-85 dwellings). Development should address the following issues: relationship to Conservation Area, noise impacts, air quality."

4.15 This planning statement along with the DAS and accompanying technical information, consider the identified issues in detail and explain how the scheme has factored such matters into the final layout and design.

4.16 Paragraph 7.4 of the AAP further states that:

“Where dwelling figures are included alongside the allocations, these are intended as a guide. The number of dwellings will ultimately depend on various factors, which need to be addressed at application stage. In line with policy within the RCAAP and Core Strategy, residential development on these allocated sites will be required to contribute to affordable housing, where they fall within the thresholds set out in CS16.”

4.17 Further policies of relevance to this application include:

- RC5: Design in the Centre
- RC6: Definition of the Centre

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

4.18 The policies as listed below are considered to be of particular relevance to this scheme:

- SD1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DM1: Adaptation to Climate Change
- DM3: Infrastructure Planning
- DM4: Safeguarding Amenity
- DM10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters
- DM18: Tree Planting
- DM19: Air Quality

Supplementary Planning Documents

4.19 Sustainable Construction and Design (2011) and Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011) SPDs are considered to be of relevance to the proposals.

5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of residential development

- 5.1 The site is in a sustainable location to the southern edge of the Town Centre and within the 'Reading Central Area'. It is a 300m walk into town and is well served by outbound and inbound bus services. The site is therefore in an accessible and sustainable location. Residents of the development would not be reliant on a private car (the development is proposed as 'car-free') and other transport modes can be encouraged.
- 5.2 Land at Crown Street and Silver Street is allocated for residential development as per Policy RCL4 of the adopted Central Area Action Plan. This parcel of land is the remaining segment of the allocation given Thomas Homes was granted permission on the adjoining site for 80 apartments.
- 5.3 In light of the above considerations it is considered that both the principle and quantum of development proposed complies with Policy RC4L.
- 5.4 The proposals consists of 9 apartments. The mix being 7 x 2 beds and 2 x 1 beds. One of the units will be provided as affordable housing.
- 5.5 The following sections of this statement will demonstrate that the proposed development is sustainable and that there are no adverse impacts associated with the proposed development that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefit of adding to the supply of housing in the Borough of Reading when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

Design, Mix and Character

- 5.6 The accompanying Design and Access Statement that has been submitted in support of the application provides greater detail as to the design rationale for the scheme, having regard to the site's opportunities and constraints and in consultation with the local planning authority.
- 5.7 The layout plans and supporting information demonstrates that the development proposed can be accommodated on the site while incorporating best practice urban design principles; providing future occupiers with a high quality living environment and respecting the character of the surrounding area.
- 5.8 The proposed development has been designed on the basis of the larger Thomas Homes scheme occupying the remainder of the site allocation.
- 5.9 The building largely occupies the rectangular plot it sits within and ranges in height from two to four stories, thus ensuring it is line with the existing character

of both Newark Street and Crown Street.

- 5.10 The form follows that of approval reference: 170794/FUL, incorporating a flat roof form with each unit benefitting from its own private balcony.
- 5.11 The proposal drops down to two storey height adjacent to the terrace row on Newark Street; therefore the proposal is successful in following the character of both Crown and Newark Street.
- 5.12 The massing is broken down by articulating the building into discrete blocks which helps to give the proposal a domestic scale, in turn this would assimilate with the terrace beyond.
- 5.13 At the top floor the building is set back to the same degree as the approved neighbouring scheme; again, by using a different material this helps to create the visual recess.
- 5.14 The development would be predominantly finished in a red/orange facing brick and grey boarding.
- 5.15 It is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in this context and relate well to and complement the existing approved scheme.
- 5.16 The development is proposed to contain a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. Such a mix would be consistent with the NPPF which encourages mixed and balanced communities. The scheme is also compliant with Policy RC9 which expects proposals to contribute towards improving the range of housing accommodation in the Borough. The mix would also complement well the mix of apartments on the remainder of the site allocation.

Affordable Housing

- 5.17 As well as providing market housing the scheme would assist in meeting local housing need through the provision of the full requirement of affordable housing. Policy DM6 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Documents requires that on sites of 5-9 dwellings a 20% provision of on-site affordable housing is required. Provision should be made on site in the first instance with a financial contribution to make up the full requirement.
- 5.18 As proposed, 1 of the 9 units at ground floor (a 2 bedroom apartment) will be affordable and the remaining contribution- for 0.8 of a unit- to be subject of a financial payment. The level of the financial payment is to be agreed following further consultation with the Council's housing officers.
- 5.19 Paragraph 4.4 of the Council's Affordable Housing SPD states that consideration should be given to providing a separate access to the affordable

element of the scheme, to assist in terms of housing management and private sale. The proposed plans provide for a main entrance to the building off Newark Street with 2 of the 3 apartments (including the affordable unit) accessible via their own private access.

- 5.20 The affordable housing provision is therefore compliant with Policy DM6 which, in conjunction with the wider site area, will make a significant and beneficial contribution towards meeting the Borough-wide affordable housing need.

Air Quality

- 5.21 Policy RC4L of the RCAAP requires any development on the application site to consider and address the impact of air quality on proposals.
- 5.22 The application for 80 apartments was supported by an Air Quality Assessment undertaken by Peter Brett Associates and is equally applicable to this section of the site allocation.
- 5.23 The report considered existing air quality and subsequently considered the suitability of the site for residential development, as well as assessing the impact of the construction of the development on air quality in the surrounding area.
- 5.24 The analysis found that the construction works have the potential to create dust, and as such, during construction, recommendations are made for a package of mitigation measures to minimise the risk of elevated PM10 concentrations and dust nuisance to the surrounding area. The assessment concludes that, by incorporating the mitigation measures set out in Section 6.0 of the report, the construction impacts are not considered to be significant.
- 5.25 Furthermore, the analysis considers the predicted NO₂, PM10 and PM2.5 levels and concludes that the air quality across the site is considered to be acceptable for residential use. None of the relevant objectives are predicted to be exceeded and therefore no further mitigation is recommended for the proposed residential use of the site.
- 5.26 The development is therefore considered to comply with Policies RCL4, CS34 and DM19.

Noise

- 5.27 Policy RC4L also requires new development to address noise impacts. As such, a noise assessment was provided as part of application reference: 170794/FUL. This recommended measures to be taken so as to ensure that reasonable standards of peace and quiet can be achieved in the external amenity areas and constructed building.

- 5.28 The analysis measured existing sound levels at the site and considered the amount of sound insulation required within the building envelope to ensure internal target noise levels are achieved.
- 5.29 The results of the noise survey, when calculated using data for double glazing, demonstrate that glazing would be sufficient to ensure noise levels within the apartments are below design noise levels, on the proviso that specialist ventilation units are used.
- 5.30 The development will incorporate these measures and therefore complies with Policies RCL4, DM4 and CS34.

Transport and Access

- 5.31 In support of this scheme a Transport Statement by Glanville has been produced.
- 5.32 The application site is 350 metres south of Reading Town Centre and does not have a vehicular access (a strip of land between the application site and the approved scheme provides a right of way to the rear of some of the properties on Newark Street).
- 5.33 The roads surrounding the site are subject to double yellow lines, prohibiting waiting and loading at any time. Residential roads surrounding the site are controlled by Reading's Parking Permit Zone, restricting parking to permit holders between 8am and 8pm.
- 5.34 The development site is considered to be in a very sustainable location, within walking and cycling distance of a range of services and facilities. Reading train station is within walking distance of the site and numerous bus stops and services are readily available. The highways analysis concludes that a significant proportion of trips to the development will be via sustainable modes of transport.
- 5.35 Pedestrian access to the site will be via new entrances onto footways on Newark Street. Access to the bike storage will be provided to the rear of the building, accessed either through the main entrance or the rear right of way access.
- 5.36 The plans do not propose a vehicular access and, as such, the scheme is submitted on a car-free arrangement. This approach has been discussed with the local authority before submission and it was confirmed this approach would be acceptable given the location and context.
- 5.37 The bin store is located to the bottom end of the development in an accessible point off Newark Street, therefore ensuring waste carrying distances confirm to

Manual for Streets guidance. Refuse collection will be undertaken from the kerbside as is the same for existing properties in the street. Space is provided for 2 bins x 1110 litres 4 wheeled flat lid types one for landfill and one for recycling. Because the site fronts the public highway, it provides easy access for fire tenders etc. from the kerbside.

- 5.38 Cycle parking standards require 0.5 spaces per 1-2 bedroom flat and 1 space per 3 bed flat. This results in a requirement for 6 spaces, which will be provided in a secure/lockable area to the rear of the building. The rails will allow the storage of the bikes vertically on stands by Bike Dock Solutions, details of which (if reasonably required) can be secured by condition.
- 5.39 On the above basis the parking and cycle space arrangements are considered to conform to the guidance contained in the Council's Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011.
- 5.40 The development is therefore considered to comply with Policies CS20, CS24 and DM12.

Contamination

- 5.41 The land exists as vacant scrubland that sits adjacent to a former car wash (now approved for redevelopment).
- 5.42 This scheme is supported by a preliminary risk assessment, undertaken by RSK. The main conclusion of the report finds that the site is unlikely to be classified as 'contaminated land'. As a consequence, the risks associated with the site ownership/usage are also therefore considered to be low.
- 5.43 Given the report concludes that the overall risk to the on-site receptors is low, it is considered that there is a low risk of contamination on the site. Accordingly there should be no significant geo-environmental issues that would prevent the site from being developed for the proposed use.
- 5.44 Therefore, the proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy CS34.

Ecology

- 5.45 The proposals are supported by an updated Ecology Report undertaken by Windrush Ecology. In March 2017, the ecologists were initially appointed to evaluate the habitats present and assessed the potential for the adjoining development land to support protected species, including a bat survey of the existing buildings. The report provided with this submission provides an addendum to further consider this proposal site for its ecological potential.

- 5.46 The site area contains no significant trees or hedges. The area is covered by poor quality scrub and weeds all of which is considered to be of low ecological value and is in the process of being removed to accommodate the construction site for the wider site. When viewed in connection with the larger apartment building, this development can provide further landscaping (with the introduction of new native planting) which will enhance the biodiversity of the site and the area generally.
- 5.47 Further to the above, the updated survey work found no evidence of bats or other protected species.
- 5.48 The report concludes that the site offers no habitat to other protected or notable species, such as reptiles, amphibians or badgers.
- 5.49 As a consequence of the findings, no further survey work is recommended. It is therefore considered that the development complies with Policy CS36.

Archaeology

- 5.50 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF requires that applications should describe the significance of any heritage asset affected by the proposed development and any impact to their setting.
- 5.51 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by CGMS and accompanied Thomas Homes' application on the adjoining part of the site allocation. The WSI presented a detailed methodology of evaluation and was agreed and conditioned by the Council.
- 5.52 Following the granting of planning permission reference: 170794 a detailed on site evaluation was undertaken. This culminated in no evidence of archaeological remains or items of interest.
- 5.53 It is therefore concluded that, given the close association between the two parcels of land, that there are no implications associated with this part of the development site either.

Sustainability

- 5.54 Policy DM1 requires measures to be incorporated within the building to minimise the effects of climate change.
- 5.55 The design principle adopted in the development is to reduce energy demand of the apartments by adopting a 'fabric first' approach. As such, the heat loss elements of the design have been designed such that they exceed minimum performance requirements of Building Regulations.

- 5.56 As discussed in greater detail in the flood risk and drainage section of this statement, the drainage scheme also incorporates SuDS, which, subject to soil infiltration tests, will improve surface water run-off from the site and comply with the requirements of Policy CS34.

Amenity

- 5.57 The scheme has been designed with balconies as an essential element of the private amenity space, with the window/balcony relationship to existing neighbours being in excess of the 20 metre requirement of Policy DM4. Furthermore, it is noted that Policy DM10 states that developments in the Central Reading area will not always be required to comply with external space standards – in this instance the provision of private balcony space for the flats will ensure that appropriate standards are provided for future occupants. In addition, all the properties will be able to make use of the communal garden forming part of the comprehensive development site.
- 5.58 With reference to the Government's nationally described internal space standards all the properties will comfortably achieve the respective standards for the number of bedrooms proposed.
- 5.59 The separation distances with neighbours are comparable to those approved as part of the adjoining scheme. The balconies are recessed into the building facades and would therefore be no closer to neighbours than the proposed windows.
- 5.60 The building will also be sufficiently separated from neighbouring buildings such that it will not be harmful in terms of height or create harmful overbearing impacts. The reducing scale and height of the building as it turns into Newark Street, along with the two storey form projecting no further outwards than the build line to the rear of the terraces, ensures that there will be no harmful overbearing impact.
- 5.61 Provision was made as part of the design (on the western flank wall) in the approved application 170794/FUL to ensure that that the development did not prejudice this proposal coming forward. The development is four storeys on its western flank and this elevation contains four windows in one column. All these windows are high level and to be obscured. The south facing windows in these western end flats were deliberately turned away from the current proposal site. The siting of this proposal is therefore not compromised and neither scheme will unduly impact upon the other.
- 5.62 Furthermore, this proposed scheme has been arranged so that the main bedroom and living space is located to the further side of the building (that facing to Newark Street), thus ensuring there is no unacceptable loss of outlook or loss of light to future occupants.

- 5.63 Existing views across to Crown Street and Silver Street are considered to be acceptable given the distances exceed 20 metres.
- 5.64 The orientation and positioning of openings and amenity space has been carefully designed with particular reference to BRE sunlight requirements to ensure all properties benefit from good natural light levels.
- 5.65 Overall, the scheme is considered to be of a sufficient distance from neighbours to avoid being either overbearing or un-neighbourly from overlooking.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.66 The FRA relating to the adjoining land identifies that the site lies within Flood Zone 1 'low probability' and is therefore classified as having little or no risk of fluvial flooding. The same applies to this application site.
- 5.67 An addendum to the previous FRA is provided with this application, undertaken by Infrastruct CS Ltd. The assessment finds that the fluvial and groundwater flood risk are low.
- 5.68 It is expected that this part of the wider development will also incorporate SuDS and the installation of permeable pavements and soakaways can be incorporated into the design.
- 5.69 As a consequence of the proposed principles of the drainage system, surface water runoff from the development will not increase flood risk; and the incorporation of SuDS will be used to attenuate discharge rates to at least pre-development.
- 5.70 The details of the drainage scheme can be secured by condition.
- 5.71 In terms of foul water drainage, the site is served by an existing public foul sewer. It is proposed to connect to the existing sewer, subject to agreement from Thames Water.
- 5.72 On the above basis it is considered that the scheme can demonstrate a minimised amount and rate of surface water runoff and flood risk, and as such complies with Policies DM1 and CS35.

Landscape and Trees

- 5.73 Soft landscaping will be provided on the setback frontage on Newark Street, as well as along the elevation facing Crown Street. These have been located to allow full development; and to create a sense of place soften the appearance of the building into the landscape. The nature and extent of planting along the

northern elevation follows the theme approved as part of the adjoining development.

- 5.74 Details of the landscaping for the site can be secured in full as part of a planning condition. Suffice to say this will ensure the development successfully integrates with and enhances the local built environment. It is therefore considered that the development proposals address the requirements of Policies CS38 and DM18.

6.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE OVERALL PLANNING BALANCE

- 6.1 The proposal would result in the development of 9 dwellings, which would add to the local housing stock and contribute to the identified need for housing within the area. This would be a significant benefit of the proposal and having regard to the aim of the NPPF, to boost significantly the supply of housing, should be given considerable weight. The land is allocated for residential development and is a sustainable location within Reading Town Centre.
- 6.2 Furthermore, the scheme would make provision for a small but beneficial contribution to affordable housing, in an area where there is a pressing need for affordable homes. Given the aims of the Framework, to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes and create inclusive mixed and balanced communities, including through the provision of affordable housing, this would add further weight as a benefit of this proposal.
- 6.3 The development would be located within good proximity of a number of local services and facilities, with ready access to good transport links. During development and following occupation, the development would have local economic benefits, including in support for existing services.
- 6.4 The development is proposed to be car-free which the highways authority has deemed acceptable in this location.
- 6.5 There are no flooding or drainage constraints. The scheme will incorporate SuDS, which will be improve existing surface water run-off rates.
- 6.6 On biodiversity issues no significant negative ecological impacts have been found, the development is capable of resulting in enhancements to biodiversity.
- 6.7 There would be benefits to the local economy from employment in construction, albeit for a limited period.
- 6.8 Consequently the scheme would have significant social benefits, as well as a number of economic and moderately weighted environmental benefits, which weigh in its favour and contribute to the aim of achieving sustainable

development.

6.9 In terms of Paragraph 7 of the NPPF, the proposals would:

- Fulfil an economic role by helping to ensure that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right place and at the right time to support growth;
- Provide a social role in helping to provide the supply of housing needed to meet the needs of present and future generations in a location that provides accessible local services; and
- Fulfil its environmental obligations through the planned landscaping, which is an integral part of the scheme.

7.12 When assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole there are clear benefits of the scheme. Consequently, the proposal would be sustainable development that would meet the aims of paragraphs 47-49 and 14 of the NPPF and the presumption should be in favour of the grant of planning permission without delay.