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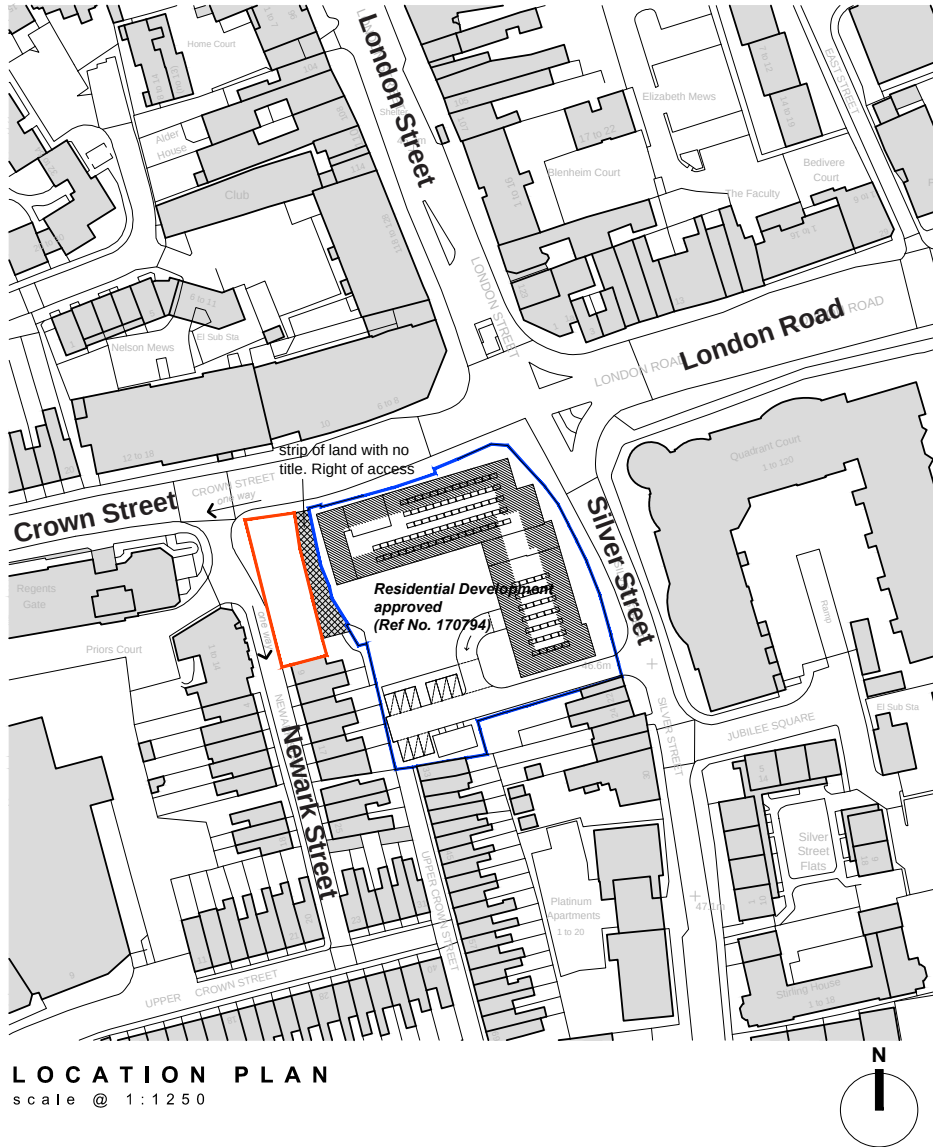
This Design & Access Statement supports a planning application proposal for a residential development of 9 new market and affordable dwellings on land on the corner of Crown Street and Newark Street. The proposal for C3 residential will provide much needed dwellings in Reading.

The application site is located to the immediate west of a site (Land on the corner of Crown Street and Silver Street) that recently received planning permission for 80 market and affordable dwellings (application ref: 170794). This proposal takes its architectural cues both from this approved scheme and its Newark Street neighbours to assimilate it into its context.

The scheme now submitted has been revised to address the concerns and recommendations of the planning officer arising from a pre-application submission earlier this year. The scheme was discussed at a meeting with Stephen Vigar (SV) at Reading BC offices on 1st February 2018. His concerns were subsequently summarised in an email to the applicant's agents (JPPC) on the same day. The salient issues were as follows:

- Scale/ bulk to be reduced as the scheme turns from the more urban Crown Street into the more domestic character of Newark Street. It was suggested that this change occurs from the southern edge of the Crown St end staircase.
- To aid with the overall scale/ height reduction, SV agreed with RBC Transport that the scheme could be 'car-free'
- Future residents to have direct access to the gardens of the adjacent Silver Street proposal

This statement commences with a description of the application site and its local context, then outlines the design strategies given the site constraints and opportunities. Finally the statement explains the design proposals in terms of its functional, technical and visual rationale. The proposals are detailed on the project drawings and documentation prepared by the full project team.



Location Plan @ 1:1250 (@A3)

Corner of Crown St & Newark St, Reading: Residential Development for Thomas Homes Ltd

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

The application site is located to the south of the town centre within the Reading Central Area. It forms a secondary urban street corner onto the busy east-west thoroughfare of Crown Street to the north and Newark Street to the West. Both of these highways are one way streets running east-west and north-south respectively.

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Aerial View from the south

The application site is rectangular with an area of 370m² and its topography is essentially level. The site is currently scrubland with no existing buildings or particular features of note. The highway pavement runs parallel with the front line of the site (onto Crown Street) and then returns around the corner into Newark Street, first broadening at the intersection and then tapering to nothing approximately halfway along the Newark Street frontage. There is only a pavement on the other/western side of Newark Street.

Corner of Crown St & Newark St, Reading: Residential Development for Thomas Homes Ltd

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View of site (yellow-shaded in centre) and adjacent Silver Street site (grey-hoarded beyond) from the east along Crown Street



View of site (timber-fenced) from opposite side of Crown Street with access 'gap' between application site and Silver Street site (left) clearly visibly



View looking south along accessway to rear of No 9 Newark Street



View of west side of application site with Newark Street terrace to right. Note; tapering and termination of pavement on application site side of road

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View from Newark Street looking north to Crown Street frontage



View looking south along Newark Street with application site (left) and 1-14 Priors Court (right)

The surrounding context is diverse in height, scale and character and comprises a mix of residential, commercial and retail uses:

To the north of the site, on the other side of Crown St, to the east there is a six storey student housing block with retail at ground floor (*Crown House*). Beyond this block to the west is a further residential block (*12-18 Crown St*) of five storeys reducing to four storeys as it terminates adjacent the two storey end terrace house of 20 Crown St. Much of the area around the end of London/ Crown Street is retail at ground floor with residential or commercial space on upper levels

To the east of the site is a large corner plot that has been recently approved for 80 new dwellings under ref 170794. The scale of the proposal varies from 6 stories reducing to four stories adjacent this application site. The approved proposal is raised at ground level to allow for a semi-submerged basement car park. This approved site and the application sites are separated by a narrow track giving right of access to the rear of the Newark St terraces. The strip of land has now ownership title.

To the immediate south of the site is the two storey gable end and gardens of Victorian terraced housing (*9 Newark St*). The frontage of the terraces on the east side of Newark Street is set back by approx 2m from the highway edge and there is no footpath. the street and front gardens are bounded by a low brick wall and metal railings. A similar setback is present on the western side of the street, opposite the site, but there is a footpath on that side. There is also parallel parking provision on-street.

Opposite and to the west of the site and on Newark St, there is a more recent three storey block of apartments (*1-14 Priors Court*). A raised three storey commercial building (*Regents Gate*) fronts onto Crown St to the north of Priors Court.

Red brick walling tends to predominate in this part of Reading on both historic and modern properties including the Newark Street terraces, Priors Court and Regents Gate. There are, however, a variety of other materials also used particularly



Modern development to the west of Regents Gate, illustrating material diversity

on more recent buildings surrounding the site:

Buff brickwork is the main material used at *Quadrant Court* on Silver Street but red brick is also used.

Red/orange terracotta vertical panels are used on *Crown House*, and these are divided by large panels of render, a material which also features largely at *12-18 Crown St*. A number of older properties, including those at *7-11 London Road* are also finished in render/ stucco

Secondary materials used in the immediate locality include timber boarding (at *12-18 Crown St*), zinc cladding on the corner of *Crown House* and fibre cement panels, or similar, including on the stair enclosure at Priors Court.



View of 12-18 Crown Street development opposite site with adjacent historic terraced housing beyond

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View of Quadrant Court, Silver Street



View of 12-18 Crown Street, with Crown House on corner beyond



View of Regents Gate from east



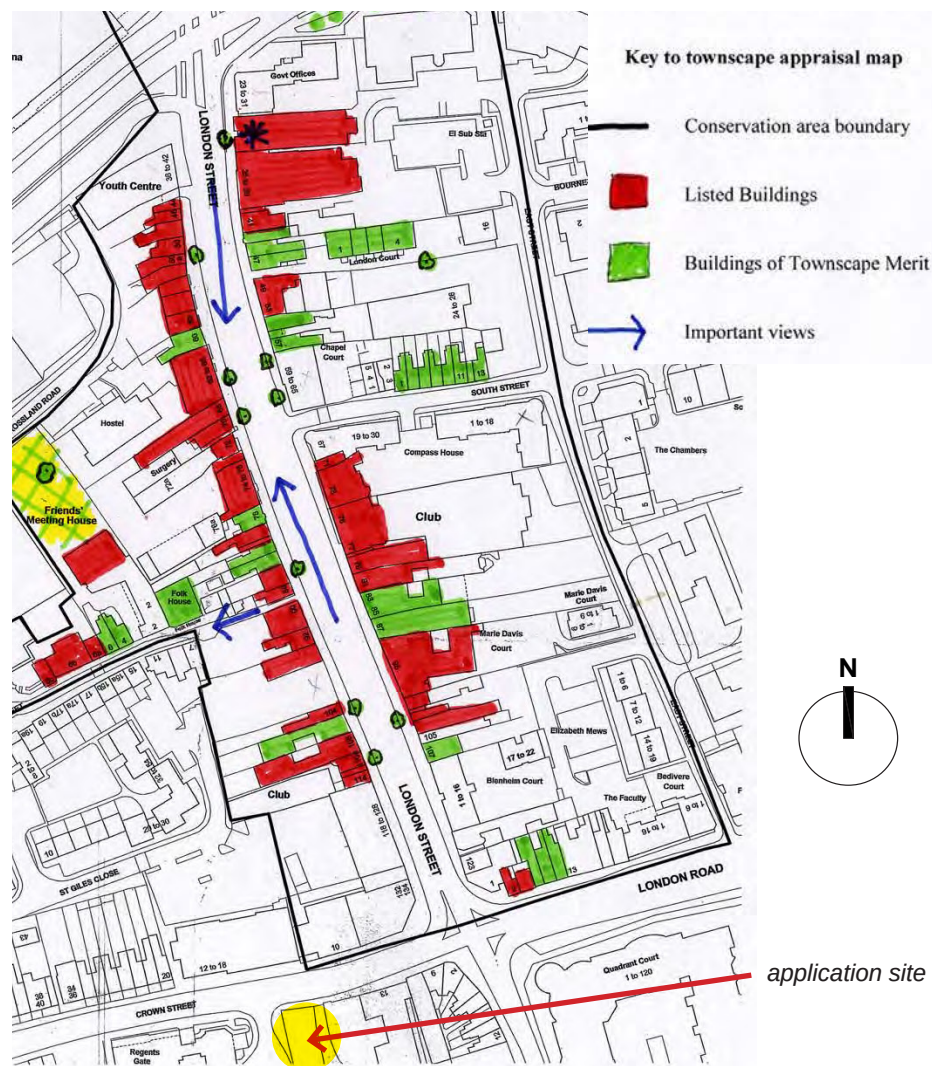
View of Crown Street/ Silver Street junction

Corner of Crown St & Newark St, Reading: Residential Development for Thomas Homes Ltd

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Extract from Market Place/ London Street Conservation Area Map, NTS

(from Reading Borough Council's Market Place/ London Street Conservation Area Appraisal)

Corner of Crown St & Newark St, Reading: Residential Development for Thomas Homes Ltd

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The site itself is not covered by any heritage designations. The southern edge of the Market Place/ London Street Conservation Area (CA) is on the north side of Crown St/ London Road. Within this CA are the six storey Crown House opposite the site, the listed buildings of 3 and 5 London Road and adjacent to these are 7-11 London Road which are noted as Buildings of Townscape Merit.

The western edge of the Kendrick Conservation Area terminates to the east of Quadrant House. There is one other listed building close to the site, namely 30 Silver St, formerly the Rising Sun Temperance Tavern.

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Perspective view of proposal from the north-west

Site Constraints and Challenges

- Consideration to proximity of edge of Market Place/ London St Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings and their settings
- Land use and density: development proposals to ensure an efficient and appropriate use of land, relative to the existing context and planning policy allocation limitations. Consider proposals in light of recently approved scheme
- Scale of the development, including building heights and massing, should be appropriate to the surrounding context. This varies in scale between the more urban Crown St and the more domestic scale of Newark Street.
- Amenities of adjacent and nearby residents to be safeguarded. Ensure new development does not have an overbearing effect on, overlook or significantly block light to adjoining properties
- Particular site constraints: frontage onto primary thoroughfare

Site Opportunities and Design Aims

- Local distinctiveness: design of development to reinforce the existing character and appearance of the locality
- Quality design: proposals to connect to and integrate with the surrounding area. The design of the development should relate in terms of scale, form and appearance of the locality
- Built form: to be designed to reinforce the public/ private realms
- Public realm: provide clear boundaries between public and private space; create clear routes; avoid 'hidden' spaces and ensure good surveillance to reduce opportunities for crime
- Site orientation: exploit size, nature and orientation of site wherever possible to optimize solar gain and aid energy efficiency.
- Inclusive access: proposed development to be accessible to all members of the community. Design to provide suitable means of access, parking and facilities for people with disabilities
- Car free development: to maintain active frontages and ensure development viability whilst maintaining appropriate scale



Perspective view of principal corner, from the west, on Crown Street



Perspective view of Crown Street frontage in context, from the east

The proposal is for a total of 9 residential apartments with 8 for sale on the open market and one affordable dwelling.

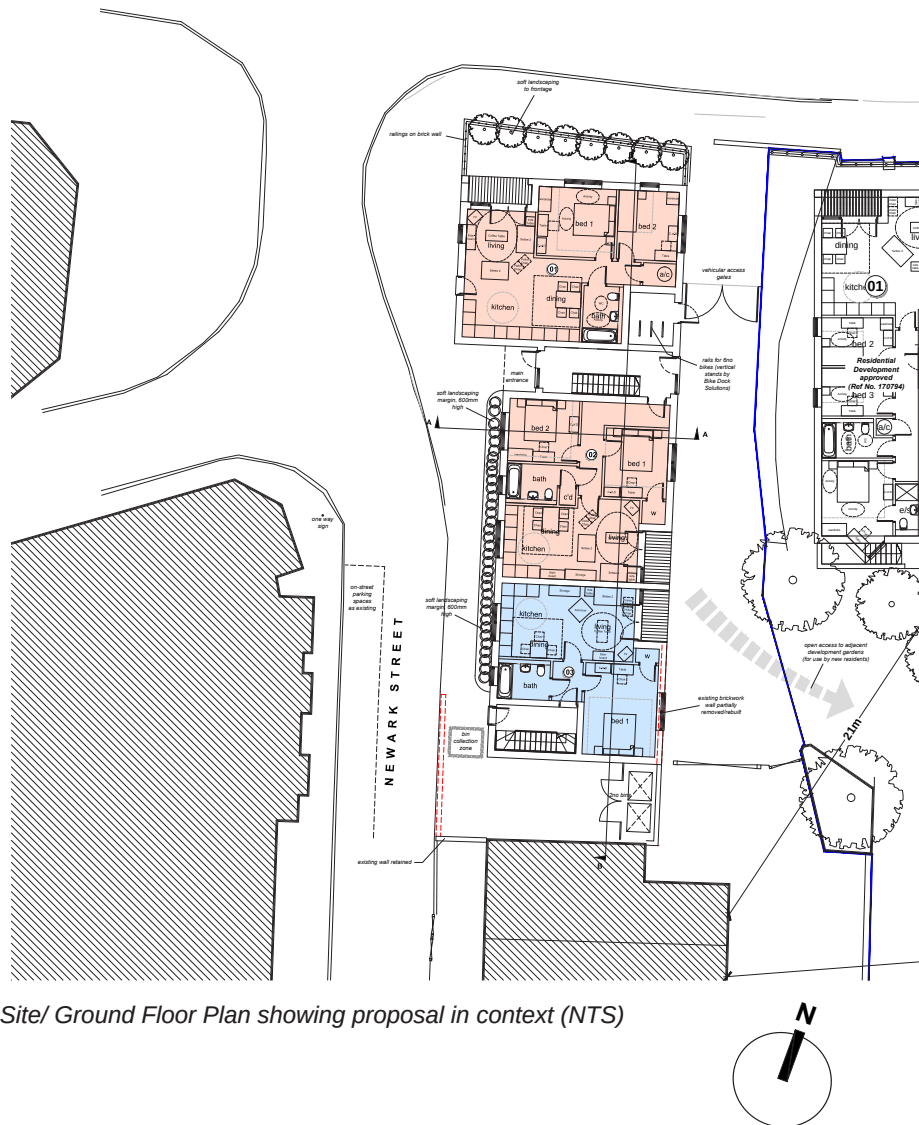
The housing mix is made up of 2x 1-beds and 7x 2-beds. A detailed Schedule of Areas is included in Appendix 1 of this document, for information.

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Site/ Ground Floor Plan showing proposal in context (NTS)

The proposal occupies much of its rectangular footprint but is set back from the notional line of the Crown Street back of pavement by 2-3 metres to follow the line of the recently approved application to the immediate east of the site; this setback allows for an area of soft landscaping and continues the treatment incorporated on the adjacent site. On Newark Street, the proposal generally follows the setback line of the existing terrace row, but steps out by a further 2 metres within the widened pavement area at the northern end to form a strong corner addressing both Newark Street and Crown Street.

At this northern end there is a single flat at ground floor level which addresses both Crown Street and Newark Street. There are two staircases within the proposal - one is located to the immediate south of the frontage flat and there is a second staircase at its southern end. Together with the ground floor flat, which has its own dedicated entrance, there are 3 entrances onto Newark Street which help to animate the street scene. Between the two staircases there are two flats at ground floor with windows onto Newark Street, thus providing natural surveillance.

The block terminates just under four metres from the end of the Newark Street terrace providing breathing space between the new and existing. A secure bin store and cycle store can be accessed externally by all occupants. Future residents will also have private rear access to the landscaped court of the neighbouring development at Silver Street.



Crown Street/ North Elevation (NTS)

On the Crown Street frontage, the proposal is a full 4 storeys high which is slightly lower in height than the adjacent proposal to the east which is also four storeys of residential accommodation but raised by half a storey to accommodate a submerged car park level. The property of Regents Gate to the west of the site (on the Crown Street frontage) is three stories but of greater height due to its increased commercial storey heights and raised ground floor.

As the proposal turns into Newark Street the height of the proposal drops down to three storeys opposite the Priors Court development (which is also 3 storeys) and then down to two storeys as it approaches the Newark Street terrace. The overall height of the duo-pitched proposal at this juncture is broadly in line with the terrace row ridge and eaves height. The scale of the proposal is thus in line with the existing character of both Crown Street and Newark Street.

The form of the proposal on Crown Street follows the flat-roofed form of the approved proposal to the east with each dwelling benefitting from its own private balcony. The reduction in scale within Newark street and the articulation of the overall mass into discrete blocks aids in giving the proposal a more domestic scale, which echoes that of the terrace beyond.



Newark Street/ West Elevation (NTS)

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Aerial view from northwest



Aerial view from southeast



Aerial view from southwest



Aerial view from northeast

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Crown Street Elevation (NTS), showing proposal in context



Newark Street Elevation (NTS), showing proposal in context

Appearance and Materials

The brick bays of the Crown Street vertical elements, which generally stop one storey short of roof level, echo the more domestic scale and width of the older properties whilst also reflecting the elevational strategy used at the approved scheme. One of the more important design features employed on the proposal which contribute to the animated elevational treatment and the varying depth of the proposed facades are the recessed balconies. Every residential unit has the benefit of a balcony giving valuable private outside amenity space, and these have been carefully located to protect the amenities of neighbouring residents.

The proposal will be predominantly finished in a red/orange facing brick in keeping with the character of the area. A grey boarding has been selected to aid in the articulation of the various tower elements and the walls of the uppermost levels onto Crown Street and the urban corner onto Newark Street. A darker grey colour will be carried through to the structural steelwork framing the balconies and most doors/ window frames. The top floor of the flat-roofed element is notionally set back to the same degree as the approved scheme on the neighbouring site; the use of a different material at this level helps to create a more recessive upper floor. The setback is further emphasized by the introduction of a projecting cornice/ sill at the base of the upper floor setback.

Within Newark Street, the three and two storey elements have roof pitches to reflect those of the existing Victorian terrace and are covered in slates.

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Inclusive Access

The following inclusive design strategies have been incorporated into the scheme design and will be developed as the detailed design of the project progresses.

- Entrances into building blocks and individual dwellings (including balconies) will have flush thresholds
- Access within buildings will be designed to accord with Approved Document Part M of the Building Regulations

Car parking provision, bicycle and refuse storage

Refer to Transport Statement for car parking matters and refuse matters and how these are addressed in the proposal.

The proposal will be car-free following the recommendations of the planning officer during pre-application meeting discussions.

Bicycle storage has been calculated at 0.5 bicycles for each of the 1 and 2-bed dwellings in accordance with Reading BC's Parking SPD; this gives a total minimum provision of (4.5) 5 spaces. Bicycles have been located within secure storage facilities at the rear of the building. The side access track will be illuminated using motion detectors.

Bin numbers and storage: these have been calculated in accordance with Reading BC's Waste Management Guidelines for:

- a weekly collection of both Grey/ Landfill and Green/ Recycling bins by privately managed company

The Transport Statement shows a sum total requirement of 2 bins x 1100 litre 4 wheeled flat lid type for both landfill and recycling. Refuse storage has been provided in a discreet area of the site, for ease of disposal and collection. The bin store is covered with secure doors; ventilation will be by means of louvred vents within the doors.

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Landscape and External Works Proposals

Overall landscape and external works proposals will be conditioned.

The strategic proposals illustrated on the plans seek to accommodate and integrate the built development, access and storage within the contextual townscape setting.

Surveillance and security

This is inherently provided by the incorporation of balconies and windows on all primary building faces, both overlooking the street and inner access road. Spaces have been designed to avoid 'hidden' areas and ensure good surveillance to reduce opportunities for crime.

AW/ 27.02.18

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APPENDIX A

- *Schedule of Areas*

Corner of Crown St & Newark St, Reading: Residential Development for Thomas Homes Ltd

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983: Newark Street, Reading
 Rev: C Feb 2018 Planning Application

Planning App'n Issue

Unit #	Level	Type	Sq m	Sq Ft
1	Ground	2 bed/ 3p	63.7	686
2	First	2 bed/ 4p	62.6	674
3	First	1 bed/ 2p	47.9	516
4	First	2 bed/ 4p	68.0	732
5	Second	2 bed/ 4p	62.6	674
6	Second	1 bed/ 2p	47.9	516
7	Second	2 bed/ 4p	68.0	732
8	Third	2 bed/ 4p	62.6	674
9	Third	2 bed/ 4p	68.0	732
Totals			551.3	5,934

Note: Unit 1 is affordable tenure

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