

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

Sequential Test

June 2018

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1 Introduction

1. 1 This Sequential test has been prepared in support of a planning application for the erection of 9 dwellings to the rear of 209-219 Henley Road, Caversham.
1. 2 The site lies partially within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3; however, no proposed residential development lies within Flood Zones 2 or 3.
1. 3 Therefore, in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG there is a requirement to demonstrate compliance with the Sequential Test to identify that there are no reasonable available sites in areas with a lower probability of flooding that would be appropriate to the type of development proposed.
1. 4 The structure of this report is the same as that submitted for the adjacent site and which has been deemed acceptable.

2 The Site

Site Description

- 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 The site 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 consisted of a three storey block of development to the front and three storey semi-detached properties to the rear. The current proposals mimic 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 Context

Planning Policy Context

- 2. 6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 which established a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- 2. 7 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.
- 2. 8 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.
- 2. 9 The NPPF also sets out the need to 'boost significantly' the supply of housing land and this is complimentary to the ethos of planning for positive growth which is the golden thread running through the document.
- 2. 10 The NPPF sets out that the development plan should be the starting point for decision making, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Para-

graph 17 of the NPPF 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

2. 11 The Council's current planning policy context of relevance to this site is contained within the Core Strategy (January 2008, altered January 2015) and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document October 2012, altered January 2015). Policies of relevance 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
 - DM10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
 - DM11: Development of Private residential Gardens
2. 12 Other relevant documents for these proposals include:
- Revised Parking Standards and Design (October 2011)
 - Affordable Housing SPD (January 2013)
2. 13 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.
2. 14 The southern part of the site lies within Flood Zone 2 and 3 of Berry Brook which is runs along the southern boundary.

3 Sequential Test

3. 1 The application site is located in a highly sustainable location close to Reading town centre and within walking distance of the local facilities and services within Caversham. The site is wholly in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in all levels of planning policy.
3. 2 Planning policy at all levels contains an over-riding objective to maximise the development of previously developed land within the urban area and therefore this sequential test considers sites within the urban area of Reading.

Site search

3. 3 The Council published a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (November 2017). The assessment in this study considers those available sites within the HELAA. These sites are appropriate for consideration as they are a list of 'available sites as required for consideration in the Sequential Test.
3. 4 The table overleaf identifies the sites set out in this document that are considered in the context of this sequential test.

Criteria

3. 5 The proposals are for 9 dwellings which are located in Flood Zone 1 with garden areas and decking only lying within Flood Zone 2 as shown in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment. The site is available for delivery now. Furthermore, the site's location along Henley Road is a sustainable one with good access to public transport services and local facilities.
3. 6 A sequentially preferable site must be located in located flood zone 1 but other considerations for alternative suitable sites include:
 - In a similarly sustainable location
 - Able to accommodate between 7-11 dwellings
 - Be available for development; any sites under construction are excluded.

Site Analysis

3. 7 The table on the following pages summarises those sites within Reading Borough Council that have been assessed as part of this sequential test as being comparable sites having regard to the criteria listed above. The table identifies that a majority of these sites are not available for development due to being under construction or completed.

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3. 8 Of the 6 sites listed below, 2 are identified as being comparable with the application site in terms of site size and characteristics. The following paragraphs consider these sites further.
3. 9 Warwick House, Warwick Road site has recently been granted planning consent (April 2018). This current application is for housing for vulnerable or disabled people to meet a specific need for this type of accommodation in Reading. There is no indication that the site will not be developed for this use and, therefore, because it will provide housing for a specific section of the community it is not considered to be a suitable alternative site.
3. 10 The site to the rear of 305-313 Oxford Road is identified in the Local Plan as allocation SA8c. There is currently no evidence to suggest it has been redeveloped for housing despite the current allocation for residential use. However, for the reasons discussed below this is not considered to be sufficient as an alternative site for the proposed development.

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment

3. 11 The Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (May 2017) concluded as follows:

"There is capacity to provide 15,260 dwellings from 2013 to 2036 in Reading Borough. When considered against identified need, this means there is a shortfall of 944 homes up to 2036"

3. 12 This assessment identified that there were not sufficient available sites within the Borough when a constraint of flood zones is applied. The assessment in Section 5 identifies that the Council have also considered sites within Flood Zone 3 to meet the housing need and the conclusion is:

"...there are not sufficient sites to meet the objectively assessed need for housing in Reading on sites in Flood Zones 1 and 2. It is therefore likely that the sequential test for sites in Flood Zone 3 would be passed."

3. 13 The report identified that even allowing for sites in Flood Zone 3 this would not meet the Borough's housing need.

Summary

3. 14 Considering this analysis, there is, therefore, no suitable alternative sites in a sequentially preferable location. The redevelopment of this site would, therefore, meet the sequential test.

Site Address	Status and Capacity	Characteristics and Constraints	Conclusions
84 Watlington Street	Outstanding Planning Permission (111073) 10 dwellings	In a Conservation Area Reading Town Centre Flood Zone 1	More sustainable location in town centre, more sensitive historic location, currently under construction so not available as an alternative site.
83-85 London Street	Outstanding Planning Permission (141720) 11 dwellings	Reading Town Centre Flood Zone 1	Conversion of existing property for residential development. Site has now been converted and is not available as an alternative site.
1a Upper Redlands Road	Outstanding Planning Permission (150890) 10 dwellings	Located on Whiteknights Campus Flood Zone 1	Redevelopment of site for staff accommodation, currently under construction so not available as an alternative site
Warwick House, Warwick Road	Outstanding Planning Permission (151407) 10 dwellings	Flood Zone 1	Possible alternative site (see detailed analysis above)
Rear of 305-313 Oxford Road	Local Plan Commitment SA8c 11 dwellings	Flood Zone 1	Possible alternative site (see detailed analysis above)
21 Caversham Road	Outstanding Planning Permission (110628) 11 dwellings	Located in the West Side Opportunity Area Reading Central Area Office Core Area Flood Zone 1	Site already developed for residential use.

	Initials	Date
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