

PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS, AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AND AIR QUALITY STATEMENT

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR ERECTION OF 2X 4 BEDROOM SEMI-
DETACHED DWELLINGS, ACCESS AND PARKING.**

4 COPSE AVENUE, READING, RG4 6LX

ON BEHALF OF: MR N PATEL

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

Prepared by: Mr. Nick Kirby BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Pegasus Group

Pegasus House | Querns Business Centre | Whitworth Road | Cirencester | Gloucestershire | GL7 1RT

T 01285 641717 | **F** 01285 642348 | **W** www.pegasuspg.co.uk

Birmingham | Bracknell | Bristol | Cambridge | Cirencester | East Midlands | Leeds | Liverpool | London | Manchester

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

CONTENTS:

	Page No:
INTRODUCTION	1
SITE DESCRIPTION	2
PROPOSAL	4
POLICY ASSESSMENT	6
CONCLUSION	13

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the proposed erection of 2 semi-detached dwellings at number 4 Copse Avenue, Reading.
- 1.2 This statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will summarise the relevant planning policies and assess the proposal in light of these policies. The conclusion reached is that national planning policies and the Development Plan support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and the following plans and documents:
- Site Location Plan
 - Site Layout
 - Existing & Proposed Plans (of existing dwelling)
 - Existing & Proposed Elevations (of existing dwellings)
 - Proposed Elevations & Plans (of new dwellings)
- 1.4 Payment of £770 which forms the relevant planning application fee will be sent to the Council under separate cover.

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 Number 4 Copse Avenue is a detached chalet bungalow located at the end of a cul-de-sac. The property has an attached single storey garage, and a larger private rear garden located to the west of the property which adjoins residential development in Overton Drive.
- 2.2 The surrounding area is residential, with gardens of the Henley Road properties to the south backing onto the length of the south of the site. The Henley Road properties are a mix of single, 1½ and two storey height, whilst the Overton Drive properties are 2 to 2½ storeys in both detached and semi-detached layouts.
- 2.3 Images of the surrounding area are included below for information:



Copse Avenue – Site Entrance



Overton Drive



Henley Road

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Regarding the requirements of Circular 01/2006 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:

Use and Amount

- 3.2 The proposal is the construction of a pair of 4 bedroom semi-detached dwellings.

Layout and Scale

- 3.3 The proposed dwellings would be sited to the west of number 4 and would be oriented in an east-west direction facing towards the existing dwelling. Rear gardens would extend to the west in their current linear arrangement toward Overton Drive.
- 3.4 The development would be 2½ storeys in height, and would reflect the scale proportions of the other properties nearby, as depicted in the images above.
- 3.5 Internally, the accommodation has been laid out to maximise the internal space and light afforded, with full length patio doors to maximise daylight into the room, and an open plan layout to maximise internal circulation space, and light into the room. The bathroom window is proposed on the side elevation to provide natural light, whilst being obscurely glazed for privacy purposes to both the host dwelling and the adjacent properties in Copse Avenue.
- 3.6 Externally, the dwellings would benefit from a significant plot size, with long rear gardens to the west. The amenity space would be ample for the proposed dwellings.

Landscaping

- 3.7 The property boundaries would be screened with 1.8m close board fencing which would reflect the use of similar materials elsewhere in the street scene, and the existing site boundaries, whilst providing security and screening to the private rear garden space. The submitted site plan shows that the siting of the dwellings allows for soft landscaping to be introduced to the front, side and rear garden in the form of select native planting and trees.

Appearance

- 3.8 The character of the area is residential, featuring housing of varying design and appearance. The proposed dwellings utilise materials such as brick and dark tiled roof which is a feature of the surrounding dwellings. Materials can be controlled by condition to ensure they complemented the colour of materials of the adjacent dwellings.

Parking and Access

- 3.9 The existing access for number 4 would be utilised for both the existing dwelling and proposed dwellings. Each dwelling will have a total of two car parking spaces.

4. POLICY ASSESSMENT

National Planning Policy

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is relevant to the consideration of the application. Some weight also needs to be given to the content of the Ministerial Statement, 'Planning for Growth', issued in March 2011.
- 4.2 The 'Golden Thread' running through the centre of guidance within the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 186 and 187 of the NPPF state that *"Local Planning Authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development"* and *"Local Planning Authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible."*
- 4.3 Paragraph 49 adds further support stating that *"Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development"*. Consequently, the approach to the development of the application site for housing is favourable given its sustainable settlement designation. Development of the site would realise environmental benefits through reducing pressure on wider Countryside and Green Belt locations for development and providing dwellings of modern standards of environmental performance.
- 4.4 Paragraph 17 of the NPPF comments that planning shall *"...contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value..."* For clarification, the application site is not subject to any international, national, regional or local designations with regards to its quality character or amenity value. Development of the site would positively address the Borough's housing demand within a sustainable location of lesser environmental value than parts of the Borough with amenity designations.
- 4.5 Finally, paragraph 56 identifies that *"Good design...is indivisible from good planning"* although Local Authorities should not *"attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes as they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles"* (paragraph 60). The proposed scale and use of

materials, as outlined in section 3 above, has been designed based on the existing characteristics of properties in the surrounding vicinity.

- 4.6 The Ministerial Statement for Growth, published on the 23rd March 2011 outlines that the *"Government's clear expectation is that the answer to development and growth should wherever possible be 'yes', except where this would compromise the key sustainable development principles set out in national planning policy"*. The NPPF at paragraph 8 clarifies sustainable development principles as economic, social and environmental, with examples at paragraph 9 including *"widening the choice of high quality homes"*. As detailed above, the site is located within a settlement designation where development is acceptable in principle. The proposal provides clear social benefits through the provision of dwellings suitable for occupation by families, at modern sustainable construction standards. Consequently, the proposal would not compromise sustainability objectives.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.7 The Core Strategy and the Sites and Detailed Policies Document form the Development Plan for Reading Borough Council.

Principle

- 4.8 The application site is located within the settlement boundary as defined by Core Strategy policy CS6, where residential development is appropriate. The Council's LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document also supports the development of residential gardens in principle, at policy DM11. The proposal is considered to accord with the aims of these policies in this respect.

Character of the Area

- 4.9 The Council's pre-app advice concluded that the proposed development location amounted to 'tandem' development in accordance with the Sites and Detailed Policies Document, as it has no frontage and is accessed by a private drive alongside the front dwelling.
- 4.10 It is considered that the proposed plot sizes would be comparable to those found in the surrounding area. In addition, the scale and footprint of the development

has been revised since the pre-application, in order that each dwelling might sit more comfortably on their plots, with spacious gaps to each side boundary.

- 4.11 The orientation of the dwelling to the east, ensures it retains a positive surveillance of the frontage areas, and positively addresses the access point from Copse Avenue. The long rear gardens, running adjacent to the Overton Drive dwellings would retain the same relationship as existing.

Residential Amenity

- 4.12 It is considered that the garden areas proposed to both retained number 4 and the two proposed dwellings, would be of ample size to provide adequate amenity space for the residential occupiers, in accordance with policy DM10 of the SDPD. All dwellings have spacious internal space providing a sufficient living environment.
- 4.13 The properties are situated gable-to-gable and thus do not raise any amenity issues such as privacy or loss of light. The proposed dwellings are located sufficient distance away from the existing dwelling which does not have any side windows at the first floor, and therefore does not cause any privacy issues.

Parking, Cycle and Refuse Provision

- 4.14 The proposed development would be accessed via the drive for the existing property, which will be widened to 4.1m. The access at the entry point will also be realigned with the existing kerb alignment of Copse Avenue. A bin storage/collection area is located as per the submitted plans adjacent to the highway, for collection as part of the normal council service.
- 4.15 The site is located within parking zone 3; a secondary core area. Typically, these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities. In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 2 parking spaces for a 3+ bedroom development. In accordance with this standard, the site plan demonstrates that 2 spaces are proposed for each of the proposed dwellings, whilst 2 spaces are retained for the existing 2 bed chalet bungalow at number 4. This is considered to accord with the Borough's parking standards.

In addition to parking provision, cycle provision is provided for each of the proposed dwellings within the sheds in the rear gardens. Such provision would be secure and lockable, in accordance with the SPD. There is sufficient space to accommodate refuse storage.

Sustainability

- 4.16 In accordance with Sites and Detailed Policy Document policy DM1, development should incorporate sustainable construction methods. This is supported by national guidance in paragraph 17 of the NPPF which states that planning should *"support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate."* The more recently published Written Ministerial Statement of 25th March 2015 states:

"Housing standards: streamlining the system

New homes need to be high quality, accessible and sustainable. To achieve this, the government has created a new approach for the setting of technical standards for new housing. This rationalises the many differing existing standards into a simpler, streamlined system which will reduce burdens and help bring forward much needed new homes.

The new system will comprise new additional optional Building Regulations on water and access, and a new national space standard (hereafter referred to as "the new national technical standards"). This system complements the existing set of Building Regulations, which are mandatory.

To implement this new regime, this written ministerial statement sets out the government's new national planning policy on the setting of technical standards for new dwellings. This statement should be taken into account in applying the National Planning Policy Framework, and in particular the policies on local standards or requirements at paragraphs 95, 174, and 177, in both plan making and decision-taking."

The Minister acknowledged that the best mechanism for controlling building standards was through Building Control and not Planning.

- 4.17 In addition to the Ministerial Statement, subsequent alterations to the NPPG (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 56-002-20160519 Revision date: 19 05 2016) makes it clear that:

"Local planning authorities have the option to set additional technical requirements exceeding the minimum standards required by Building Regulations

in respect of access and water, and an optional nationally described space standard. Local planning authorities will need to gather evidence to determine whether there is a need for additional standards in their area, and justify setting appropriate policies in their Local Plans.

4.18 The above is amplified by Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 56-001-20150327:

Revision date: 27 03 2015, which states:

"The government has created a new approach for the setting of technical standards for new housing. This rationalises the many differing existing standards into a simpler, streamlined system which will reduce burdens and help bring forward much needed new homes. The government set out its policy on the application of these standards in decision taking and plan making in a [written ministerial statement](#), which also withdraws the Code for Sustainable Homes [aside from legacy cases](#)".

4.19 One option for Councils is set out in Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 56-014-20150327 Revision date: 27 03 2015;

"All new homes already have to meet the mandatory national standard set out in the Building Regulations (of 125 litres/person/day). Where there is a clear local need, local planning authorities can set out [Local Plan](#) policies requiring new dwellings to meet the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day".

4.20 The following measures are put forward as demonstration of environmental improvement:

- a) Natural lighting to all habitable rooms
- b) Reduced internal water consumption through the incorporation of water efficient sanitary fittings, including low flow toilets and water efficient taps for wash basins.
- c) On-plot refuse and recycling facilities to be provided to work with the existing waste and recycling collection service
- d) Secure cycle provision within the curtilage to encourage sustainable modes of transport
- e) 'A' rated electrical appliances and energy saving light fittings throughout
- f) 'A' rated double glazed windows with trickle vents to improve natural ventilation

- 4.21 The above measures are considered to comply with the requirements of policy DM1 and the WMS.

Affordable Housing

- 4.22 Sites and Detailed Policies Document, Policy DM6 sets out that on sites of 1-4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the borough. The required financial contribution would equal 5% of the GDV of the scheme. The applicant is willing to enter into a section 106 legal agreement to secure such contributions and will await Officer's advice in this regard.

Air Quality

- 4.23 The application site lies within the Air Quality Management Area for Henley Road, albeit it is right on the very edge of the area, as addressed by policy DM19. The applicant is willing to incorporate such measures as controlled via planning condition. Such measures might include the planting of species recognised for their air quality mitigation benefits. Air pollutants are emitted by sources and are removed from the atmosphere by sinks. There are various sinks processes including transformation in the atmosphere (chemical conversion of one pollutant to another), wet deposition to surfaces via precipitation and dry deposition to surfaces. Trees and other vegetation are amongst these surfaces.
- 4.24 For gaseous atmospheric pollutants, the primary route for removal by trees is uptake through stomata. The gases diffuse into intercellular spaces, react with inner-leaf surfaces or are absorbed by water within the plant to form acids. The greatest air quality effects on NO_x concentrations are in daylight hours in the in-leaf season during photosynthesis and transpiration. This implies that evergreen trees are more beneficial in removing gaseous atmospheric pollutants than deciduous trees.
- 4.25 Airborne particles are most effectively removed by trees via interception with the various surfaces of the plant. Some particles can be absorbed into the tree, although most particles which are intercepted are retained on the plant surface. Intercepted particles are often re-suspended as they are washed off the plant surfaces by rain or fall to the ground with leaves and twigs. The removal of airborne particles, therefore, occurs throughout the day and night regardless of

whether the tree is transpiring, and occurs throughout the year as particles are intercepted by all surfaces of the plant including leaves, bark and branches. Fast-growing evergreen trees are reported to be highly effective at removing airborne particulates.

- 4.26 Trees also emit volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and, in the presence of NO_x, can contribute to the production of particulate matter and ozone downwind of the trees. As a successful mitigation measure, the local improvements in air quality associated with the planting scheme would need to more than offset the downwind deterioration. Another factor to consider is that VOC emissions are dependent on temperature and, since trees generally lower air temperatures, increased tree cover can result in lower overall VOC emissions and, consequently, ozone levels in urban areas. It is therefore proposed that a planting scheme to mitigate air quality, be secured by planning condition.

Trees

- 4.27 There are no significant trees within the site, or protected trees within or in the vicinity of the site. One nearby tree is located just outwith the southern boundary; however, this will not be impacted upon as a result of the proposal.

CIL Charging Schedule

- 4.28 The proposal development would result in the creation of 2 new residential dwellings. The appropriate CIL forms have been completed and submitted with the application, to secure financial mitigation against Borough Infrastructure affected by the proposed development.

Construction Management Plan

- 4.29 Pre-application comments suggested that a construction method statement would be required in order to ensure that the construction process would not have an adverse effect on the amenities of neighbouring residents. It is requested that this be applied as a pre-commencement condition for the Planning Authority's approval.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The application site is in a sustainable location, close to local amenities with good transport links. The proposed development would provide 2X 3-bedroom family dwellings in a sustainable location. The proposed development will not have an appreciable impact on the character and appearance of the area.
- 5.2 The proposed dwellings would be of a sufficient size and arrangement to provide adequate internal space to future residents and would not result in any undue noise or disturbance to neighbouring properties.
- 5.3 In summary, it is considered that the proposed development would make a valuable contribution to family sized residential accommodation as well as boosting the supply of housing in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.
- 5.4 It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted for the proposed development.

