



Outline Planning Application for
Residential Redevelopment to provide
A Maximum of 18 Units

Land at Colliers Way,
Tilehurst,
Reading
RG30 2QS

**Planning, Design & Access
Statement**

September 2017

Rev A

jsa

jsa architects



Architecture



Planning



Energy

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Part I: The Site Introduction

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1.1 The following Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of an Outline Planning Application made by The Cardiff Property PLC for the residential redevelopment of a vacant site at Colliers Way in Tilehurst.

1.2 The Outline Planning Application proposes the provision of up to 18 new residential apartments with access provided from Kirton Close. All other matters are reserved, however, indicative elevation and site plan drawings have been provided for illustrative purposes only.

1.3 A key objective of the proposal is to improve this problem area of Tilehurst which currently suffers from antisocial behaviour, fly-tipping and dumping and currently creates a fear of crime exacerbated by the site being overgrown and 'hidden' behind existing properties with a distinct lack of natural surveillance.

1.4 The development will provide an important windfall housing contribution to this part of Reading, making efficient and effective use of this highly sustainable brownfield site which is supported by the key objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

1.5 The format of this statement has been developed in accordance with DCLG Circular 01/2006 and the recently updated guidance on information requirements and validation (April 2010). This statement has also been prepared with regard to the guidance provided by CABE 'Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them' (2006).

1.6 The proposed development has given particular consideration to the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), the Reading Borough Council Core Strategy (2008 with Alteration 2015) and relevant supplementary planning documents.



Aerial view looking North towards the Application Site

1.7 This statement should be read alongside the supporting Ecological Survey (prepared by ECOSA), the Transport Statement inclusive of access proposals (prepared by PBA); a Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Analysis (prepared by ROAVR) and a Phase 1 Contaminated Land Assessment (prepared by the Brownfield Consultancy).

Part I: The Site Site Context

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2.1 The application site is irregularly shaped and measures approximately 0.3ha in area. The site is positioned at the east end of Colliers Way, to the rear of Thorpe House, an existing flatted residential building. The site is located to the north of Kirton Close and to the south of Waverley Road. The site is not associated with Thorpe House and is under separate ownership.

2.2 The application site is not identified on the Council's Proposals Map for any particular use, however, it falls within the defined settlement boundary and is considered to constitute previously developed land.

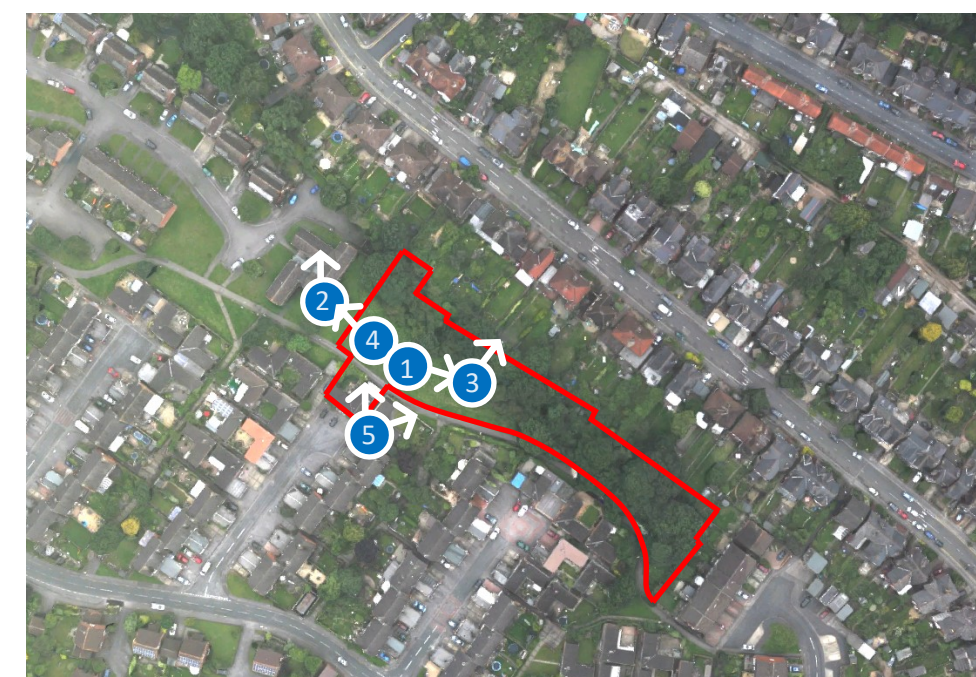
2.3 Historically, the land has been used as a brick and tile works, including housing associated kilns and chalk pits. Evidence of these workings is present in the form of a steep embankment which runs along the northern boundary of the site, fading as it extends to the east.

2.4 In more recent years, however, the site has become overgrown, disused, a dumping ground for waste and rubbish and unfortunately has now become a harbour for crime and anti-social behaviour.

2.5 The site currently comprises waste land, occupied by undergrowth including some dense brambles and tree coverage. Several of the more mature trees are currently protected by way of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) located along the northern site boundary.

2.6 Pedestrian access to the site is currently provided off Colliers Way to the east, with a footpath running along the entire southern boundary of the site linking between Colliers Way and Windrush Way to the west.

2.7 The footpath also links to Kirton Close and Verney Mews to the south via undesirable alleyways linking between existing dwellings. Vehicular access is not currently provided to the site, however, the access via Colliers Way has sufficient width to facilitate vehicular access, currently only used by vehicles for maintenance purposes.



OS Extract with key to photographs

Part I: The Site Local Context

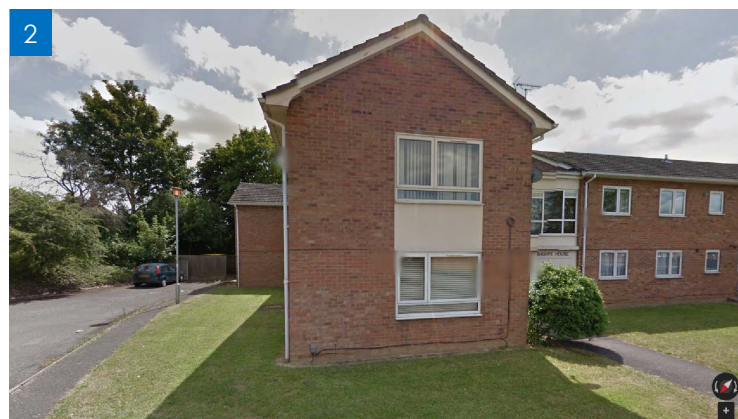
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3.1 The application site is located within an established residential area of Reading characterised by unusual 'L-shaped' bungalows, two storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings and flats. Within the immediate context of the site, the character is defined by the backs of the bungalows along Kirton Close and Verney Mews and the large two-storey flatted building to the east along Colliers Way known as Thorpe House.

3.2 The architecture within the general locality is rather utilitarian in character, lacking any distinct architectural merit nor any particular local distinctiveness that might be said to otherwise positively contribute to the quality of the built environment.

3.3 The local area is considered to be very sustainably located for residential use, on the periphery of Reading town centre. The site is within close proximity to two frequent premier bus routes to and from the town centre area that have 30 and 15 minute frequency respectively. The town centre benefits from a great western mainline and a railway station with direct links to Newbury to the west, Oxford to the north and London Paddington to the east.

3.4 More locally, the site is within walking distance of many shops and services including those at Prospect Park (0.7 miles to the south) which includes a large Asda superstore. The site also benefits from many convenience shops, hot food takeaways and services along Oxford Rd (0.5 miles to the north) within good walking distance including those at Reading Retail Park.



Oblique aerial view of site looking north



Part II: The Proposal
Planning History & Pre-Application Submission

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4.1 The application site has no relevant planning history, recent or historic, within the context of the current application proposal.

4.2 The applicant originally sought pre-application advice in respect of a residential development scheme on the site in 2013 (LPA Ref: 131179/PREAPP) . The scheme proposed a total 8 dwellings with a mix of 6 x 3 bed houses and 2 x 4 bed houses. The scheme proposed two banks of 4 x houses arranged back to back.

4.3 Formal written response was received in February 2014 (LPA Ref: 141179/PREAPP) which confirmed that although the site is not formally designated for any particular purpose, the Council consider that it currently provides a contribution to the visual amenity, biodiversity and ecological value of the area and as such residential redevelopment would likely be resisted.

4.4 Furthermore, the Council considered that the vehicular access proposed, which was via the side of Thorpe House, was insufficient in width and conflicted with the footpath, The design and layout was also not supported and the proposal failed to incorporate any soft landscaping in terms of vegetation. Other issues included (i) the potential ecological impacts; (ii) the level of amenity space proposed for the dwellings; (iii) ensuring the proposal did not cause detriment to neighboring amenity and (iv) ensuring that crime and security was appropriately addressed.

4.5 The Council also advised that as there are several trees on the site which are protected by way of a Tree Preservation Order, any proposal for the site would need to incorporate measures to ensure the retention and protection of these trees.

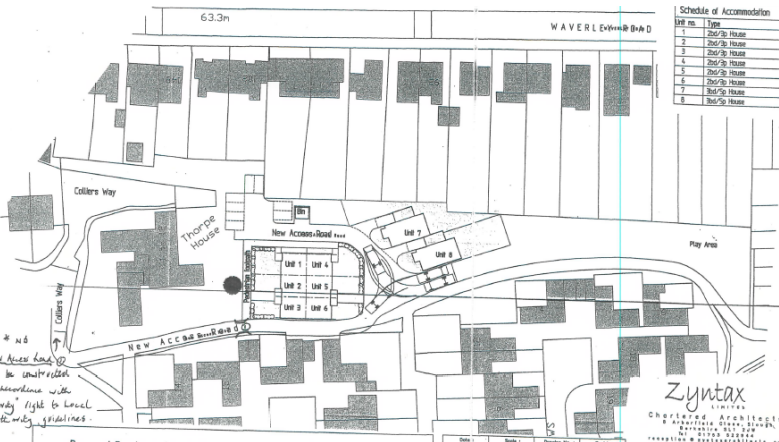
4.6 Following over two years of further disuse, the applicant sought professional planning advice from JSA which culminated in the submission of a revised pre-application advice request in July 2016. The revised proposal was prepared with the benefit of the earlier Officers' advice and sought to respond to the issues raised through the provision of an alternative scheme proposal.

4.7 The pre-application proposal comprised a single flatted block containing 15 units (10 x 2 bed and 5 x 1 bed) with two options for access; (1) via a new shared surface from Colliers Way and (2) a new access from Kirton Close achieved through the demolition of an existing bungalow.

4.8 Written feedback was received from the Planning Officer (Stephen Vigor) on 25th August 2017 (LPA Ref: 161305/PREAPP). The main points of the feedback considered the following:

- ◆ The area is characterised by two-storey development and at 2.5 stories the proposal would likely appear incongruous and isolated;
- ◆ The illustrative building contained a large crown roof which was considered to appear bulky and would contrast unsympathetically with the simple less prominent forms of Thorpe House;
- ◆ The 21 parking spaces indicated was considered to be insufficient, instead requiring 28 spaces for the quantum and mix proposed;
- ◆ In terms of access, Option 1 was considered to be unacceptable in terms of pedestrian safety and was considered to be contrived and not good design. Concerns were raised with Option 2 in relation to pedestrian safety due to the interface with the existing footpath;
- ◆ The design and massing of the building combined with a heavily glazed frontage was considered to result in the “perceived loss of privacy” although no actual loss of privacy.
- ◆ The proposal was also considered to likely be overbearing upon the gardens of the dwellings on Kirton Close and Verney Mews;
- ◆ The impact upon the protected trees would need to be demonstrated.

4.9 Whilst many of the issues raised by the Council can be addressed through design changes. An issue raised by the Council was, however, that the site was considered to be ‘open space’. Whilst the Council recognised that the site is not designated as open space on the adopted proposals map, nor provides public open space due to its private ownership, the Officer advised that, in his opinion, the proposal must comply with policy CS28 which confirms that “*development proposals that will result in the loss of open space or jeopardise its use or enjoyment will not be permitted*”. On this basis, and through subsequent email correspondence, the Council confirmed that they would be unlikely to support any residential development on the site for this main reason (N.B. the matter of open space is explored in detail within this statement).



Extract from 2013 pre-app submission ref: 141179/PREAPP



Extract from 2016 pre-app submission ref: 161305/PREAPP
Option 1 - above, Option 2 - below



Part II: The Proposal
Planning History

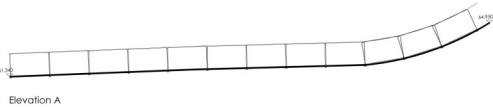
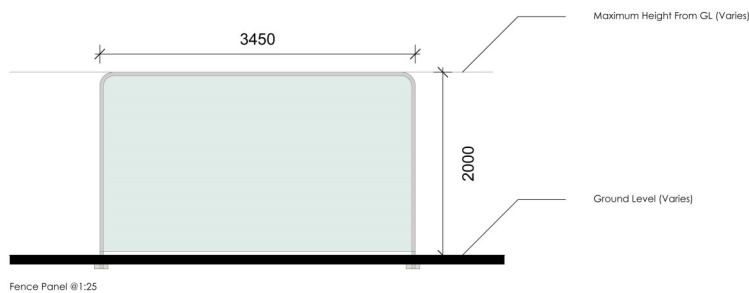
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5.1 Due to the ongoing problems relating to crime and antisocial behavior, most recently repeated fly-tipping incidents, the applicant submitted a Certificate of Lawfulness in November 2017 for the erection of a 2m high security fence around the perimeter of the site (LPA ref: 162105). This application was approved on 1st February 2017.

5.2 Accordingly, this Certificate of Lawfulness effectively confirmed that the erection of any wall, fence or enclosure of up to 2m high round the perimeter of the site is lawful.

5.3 The type of fence proposed with the application, however, was a 2m high metal security fence affixed to submerged footings. The fence would be fitted with a standard screening.

5.4 Accordingly, should the alternative use of the site proposed as part of this Outline Planning Application fail to be secured, the applicant will have no option but to hoard off the site permanently with security fencing. The intention would be to use a fully screened fencing solution as approved to prevent views into the site which might otherwise serve to attract people to break into the site to fly-tip or conduct other antisocial or potential illegal activities.



Extract from CLPUD Ref: 162105

Part II: The Proposal Planning Policy Framework

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6.1 The planning policy context for the site is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) and the Reading Borough Local Development Framework which comprises the Reading Borough Core Strategy (January 2008, altered January 2015), the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (October 2012, altered January 2015) and the relevant SPDs.

National Policy

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 requires LPA's to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide at least five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements.

6.3 The NPPF introduces a clear emphasis on delivering new housing with para 49 confirming that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Furthermore, Para 17 introduces 12 core planning principles which includes encouraging the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land).

6.4 Significant weight is therefore given to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and decision takers are now required to take a proactive approach to applications for housing, looking for **solutions rather than problems** and decision-takers at every level should seek to **approve applications for sustainable development wherever possible** in accordance with para 187 (our emphasis added).

Local Policy

6.5 We understand that Reading Borough Council are currently working on their New Local Plan, however, the policies of the plan are not yet available and are therefore of no relevance to this application. The relevant extant policies are considered to be as follows:

6.6 In relation to sustainable construction and design, Core Strategy Policy CS1 confirms that proposals for the construction of new buildings will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

6.7 Policy CS4 relates to accessibility and the intensity of development and confirms that the scale and density of development within the Borough should be related to its level of accessibility of walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities.

6.8 Policy CS6 of the Core Strategy confirms that residential development proposals will generally not be permitted on sites which fall outside of the defined settlement boundary as defined on the Proposals Map. The Proposals Map confirms that the site falls within the defined settlement boundary.

6.9 Core Strategy Policy CS14 relates to housing provision and confirms that provision will be made for at least 572 new dwellings per annum for the period 2006-2016 and 521 new dwellings per annum for the period 2016-2026. This provision should be made up of development on, inter alia, small previously developed sites.

6.10 Policy CS15 relates to location, accessibility, density and housing mix. This confirms that the appropriate density and mix of residential development within the Borough will be informed by: (i) an assessment of the characteristics, including the mix of uses of the area in which it is located; (ii) its current and future level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, as defined in Policy CS4; (iii) the need to achieve high quality design in accordance with Policy CS7; and (iv) the need to minimise environmental impacts, including detrimental impacts on the amenities of adjoining occupiers. This Policy continues to state that net densities of below 30 dwellings per hectare will not be acceptable. In accessible sub-urban locations, the Council will seek a density of 30-35 dwellings per hectare. In Urban locations, the Council will seek a density of 40-75 dwellings per hectare.

6.11 Policy DM5 of the Sites and Detailed Policies provides further guidance regarding housing mix and confirms that on new developments for 10 or more dwellings outside the central area and defined district and local centres, the Council will generally require over 50% of dwellings to be 3 bedrooms or more. The Council will also require the majority of dwellings will be in the form of houses rather than flats, having regard to all other material considerations. All new-build dwellings in any location should also be built to 'Lifetime Homes' standards, having regard to all other material considerations.

6.12 Policy CS16 and DM6 relate to affordable housing and confirms that the Council will require affordable housing provision at 30% of the total number of dwellings for all developments of 10 units or more. Where proposals fall short of the policy target as a result of viability considerations, an open-book approach will be taken and the onus will be on the developer/ landowner to clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower affordable housing contribution.

6.13 In respect of design, Core Strategy Policy CS7 confirms that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form will be assessed to ensure that the development proposed makes a positive contribution to the urban design objectives.

6.14 All new development should make provision for open space through appropriate on or off-site provision, or through contributions towards the provision or improvement of leisure or recreational facilities, including open space, in accordance with Policy CS29. On sites proposing less than 50 dwellings, new open space provision, improvements or enhancements will be sought appropriate contributions.

6.15 In addition to this, Site and Detailed Policies Document Policy DM10 confirms that dwellings should be provided with functional private or communal open space that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. Houses should be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens.

6.16 The supporting text of this Policy provides minimum provisions for private or communal outdoor space for new flatted residential development outside Reading and confirms that 25sqm of outdoor space should be provided per unit for 1-2 bedroom flats.

6.17 Policy DM4 relates to safeguarding amenity and states that development should not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties, in terms of: - (i) privacy and overlooking, (ii) access to sunlight and daylight, (iii) visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development, (iv) noise and disturbance, (v) artificial lighting, (vi) vibration, (vii) dust and fumes, (viii) smell or (ix) crime and safety. This policy continues to state that a back-to-back distance of 20 metres between dwellings is usually considered appropriate, although the circumstances on individual sites may enable dwellings to be closer without a detrimental effect of privacy.

6.18 Policy CS5 relates to inclusive access and confirms that all buildings should be located, sited and designed to provide suitable access to, into and within, its facilities for all potential users, including disabled person, so that they can use them safely and easily.

Part II: The Proposal
Constraints and Opportunities

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7.1 Constraints

- ◆ Current lack of vehicular access;
- ◆ Change in levels across the site, specifically the embankment along the northern boundary;
- ◆ Need to respect existing neighbouring dwellings including the flats at Thorpe House;
- ◆ Need to consider the use / boundary treatment of the wider site (land to the east) to avoid the creation of 'problem areas'.

7.2 Opportunities

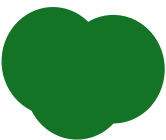
- ◆ Extremely sustainable brownfield site within the developed area of Reading ideal for residential redevelopment;
- ◆ The redevelopment would bring a redundant area of waste land back into sustainable economic use;
- ◆ Clear opportunity to resolve a problem area (crime and antisocial behavior) to significant wider benefit of the community;
- ◆ Opportunity to improve the visual appearance of this currently overgrown and littered site;
- ◆ Good public transport links;
- ◆ Excellent walking links to shops and services;
- ◆ Excellent road links;
- ◆ Opportunity to enhance natural surveillance and improve community cohesion.;
- ◆ Opportunity to provide additional housing to help meet the Councils ongoing housing land requirement. Specifically, the provision of much needed flats which are more affordable at market rates.



Existing Building



Existing Garden Area



Existing Vegetation



Primary Views



Sensitive Edges



Sun path



Site Access



Existing
Hard Standing



Neighbourhood

8

8.1 The application site historically comprised part of a former brick and tile kiln works and chalk quarry which occupied a large area in this part of Tilehurst. Despite the surrounding land later being redeveloped, this small parcel of land remained in private ownership and its alternative use was not explored.

8.2 The site is therefore considered to be previously developed land (brownfield) and falls within the established settlement boundary as defined by the Councils adopted Proposals Map. The site is designated for no other purpose and accordingly the principle of development is considered to be acceptable and actively supported by the provisions of the NPPF.

8.3 The most recent pre-application feedback confirmed that, in the opinion of the Officer, the site should be considered against Policy CS28 of the Core Strategy. Policy CS28 states:

“Development proposals that will result in the loss of open space or jeopardise its use or enjoyment by the public will not be permitted. In exceptional circumstances, development may be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that replacement open space, to a similar standard, can be provided at an accessible location close by, or that improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space. The quality of existing open space should not be eroded by insensitive development on adjoining land.”

8.4 Whilst the emphasis of the policy clearly relates to publicly accessible land, the supporting text in paragraph 9.10 of the Core Strategy confirms that the policy relates to all open space, both public or privately owned.

8.5 Paragraph 9.11 confirms that exceptionally, where a proposal involves losing open space, **compensation improvements could be made to existing open space** (our emphasis added) in the area. This is taken to include the remainder of a site being developed.

8.6 It is the applicants case that the site is private land over which there is no public right of access. As such the land serves no physical contribution as ‘open space’ within the spirit of Policy CS28. Whilst some subjective contribution could be argued in regard to visual amenity, equally the same can be said in terms of visual detriment, noting the overgrown nature of the site and its frequent littering and fly-tipping.

8.7 Moreover, both the fear of crime and the actual fact that the site is currently a harbour for anti-social behaviour and crime is a significant material planning consideration that must be given due weight. The site is evidently uninviting, particularly during evening hours and after dark, with many local residents avoiding the footpath. Even during daytime hours, anti-social loitering often occurs within the trees and bushes on the site, questioning the use of the site for substance / alcohol abuse and antisocial behaviour, creating fear of using the footpath and for many local residents who reside nearby.

8.8 Notwithstanding this, the applicant is willing to allow the eastern section of the site to become a managed area of public amenity land, with managed planting, park benches and, if desirable, a small children's play area. This could even be adopted by the Council if preferable. In this regard, even when applying Policy CS28, the proposal can be said to comply due to the offered improvements in accordance with paragraph 9.11.

Part II: The Proposal

Principle of Development (Open space)

8.9 The fallback option for the site is a strong material consideration which, at present, will be to erect a 2m high metal security fence around the perimeter of the site as approved under the recent Certificate of Lawfulness (LPA ref: 16/2105).

8.10 This has become necessary due to the consistent expense that the applicant has endured over many years in having to clear up fly-tipping. Most of these incidences were raised by the Council who require the land owner to take action themselves and so will be on the Councils records. Furthermore, as a considerate land owner, the applicant cannot allow the antisocial behaviour, fear or crime and actual crime to continue on this private land holding.

8.11 Accordingly, if the LPA is unwilling to support the principle of redevelopment on this site, the applicant will have no choice but to cordon the whole site off with security fencing, extinguishing any sense of visual or public amenity use of the site. Naturally, the applicant would rather work with the Council to provide a better use for the site which would also enhance the contribution that the site makes in terms of open space by providing the eastern part of the site as public amenity space and / or a children's play area.

8.12 In light of these material circumstance including (i) the current limited or nil contribution made by the land; (ii) the crime and antisocial behaviour issues that affect the site resulting in very real impacts upon the local community; (iii) the fallback option of cordoning off the site with security fencing; and (iv) the offer of making the remainder of the site public open space, given the presumption in favour of sustainable development, it is considered that the Council should be supportive of the proposed residential redevelopment of the west half of the site in principle.

Part II: The Proposal

Use, Amount, Layout and Scale

Use and Amount

9.1 This application proposes the residential redevelopment of the land at Colliers Way to provide in a new flatted development.

9.2 This outline application proposal does not propose a specific quantum of development but indicates a maximum of 18 units. The precise quantum will be the subject of a reserved matters application, however, drawings are provided which show an indication of the residential redevelopment and how up to 18 units could be achieved.

9.3 The application site falls within the developed area of Tilehurst wherein the residential reuse of previously developed sites is considered to be acceptable in principle.

9.4 The urban grain of the this part of Tilehurst is extremely varied, even within the immediate context of the site. Flatted development is, however, prevalent, particularly along Colliers Way and therefore the proposed reuse of the site for flats can be said to be in keeping with the character of the area.

9.5 It is envisaged that the proposal would deliver a mix of units, predominantly 1 and 2 bed units.

Layout and Scale

9.6 Whilst all matters are reserved, an indicative layout has been provided to show how a residential redevelopment for flats might work on the site. Readers should note that this is for illustrative purposes only. It is only the principle of development and access arrangements that are being considered as part of this Outline application.

9.7 This application assumes that development would be located on the western half of the site, fronting to the south, with the rear aspect of the units backing onto the rear gardens of the dwellings along Waverley Road. This allows the east half of the site to become a managed landscaped public amenity space.

9.8 Access would be provided from Kirton Close, relying upon the demolition of 16 Kirton Close. A secondary option for access exists along the pedestrian footpath from Colliers Way to the west. Whilst two options exist, the precise access arrangement would form part of a reserved matters application. Access and parking are considered in more detail within Section 12 of this statement.



Illustrative Site Plan Extract

Part II: The Proposal Appearance

10.1 The applicant recognises the need to provide a high quality design led solution which contributes to the character and appearance of the area.

10.2 At this stage the application is Outline only with all matters reserved except access. The precise quantum, size, scale, design and appearance are not therefore under consideration and will form part of a Reserved Matters application.

10.3 For illustrative purposes only, a sketch design for an indicative flatted scheme has been put forward which shows a potential design solution. The indicative street elevation suggests a two storey building which, in appearance, visualises as a terrace or mews of dwellings with low eaves and ridge heights.

10.4 All new units would be designed to avoid any direct overlooking and achieve appropriate levels of daylight, sunlight and outlook. This would be achieved through design, internal room layouts and the appropriate use of privacy screens and obscure glazing.

10.5 The design would use a restrained local palette of materials drawing upon local examples and reflecting any locally distinctive features of merit.



Illustrative Elevation Extract

Part II: The Proposal Landscape and Ecology

Ecology

11.1 This Outline planning application is supported by a Preliminary Ecology Appraisal prepared by ECOSA.

11.2 The results of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal have identified that no further ecological surveys are required at the site and recommendations are provided with regards to mitigation and enhancement measures which will allow the proposals to accord with relevant planning policies.

11.3 Details of these mitigation measures will accompany a Reserved Matters application given that a design solution is required to incorporate some of the measures, however, the applicant is in agreement with measures suggested and commits to their future incorporation.

11.4 No significant effects are anticipated on local designated sites and recommendations have been given to reduce impacts on ecology in accordance with Policy CS36 of the Core Strategy.

11.5 ECOSA have confirmed that subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures suggested, the development will result in no residual negative ecological effect and that in fact a positive effect is likely.

Landscaping

11.6 The landscaping scheme put forwards for the site will depend upon the final design and therefore this will form part of a reserved matters application.

11.7 The illustrative site plan indicates that the surrounding land will be properly landscaped and managed.

11.8 The wider site, specifically the land to the east, is offered to become open managed public amenity space. The applicant is willing to consider the transfer of this land to the Local Authority as part of a legal agreement should this be desirable.

11.9 Furthermore, the eastern most part of the site could offer an ideal opportunity to deliver a children's play area, again subject to the desirability of the Local Authority.



Illustrative Hard and Soft Landscaping



Illustrative Children's Plan Area

Part II: The Proposal
Access and Sustainability

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Access and Parking

12.1 Following the recommendations of professional transport consultants, Peter Brett Associates, a safe means of access has been designed that would meet requisite highway safety standards. The proposed access would form a continuation of Kirton Close, terminating at the application site. The new access would adopt a 'home zone' approach, with a shared surface to act as a natural traffic calming measure.

12.2 An optional access remains from the west, along the route of the existing pedestrian footpath. Whilst the use of traffic calming measures and a 'home-zone' approach could facilitate a safe access via this route, earlier pre-application discussions indicated that this was not the Councils preferred option for accessing the site. Accordingly, this Outline application currently proposes access via Kirton Close.

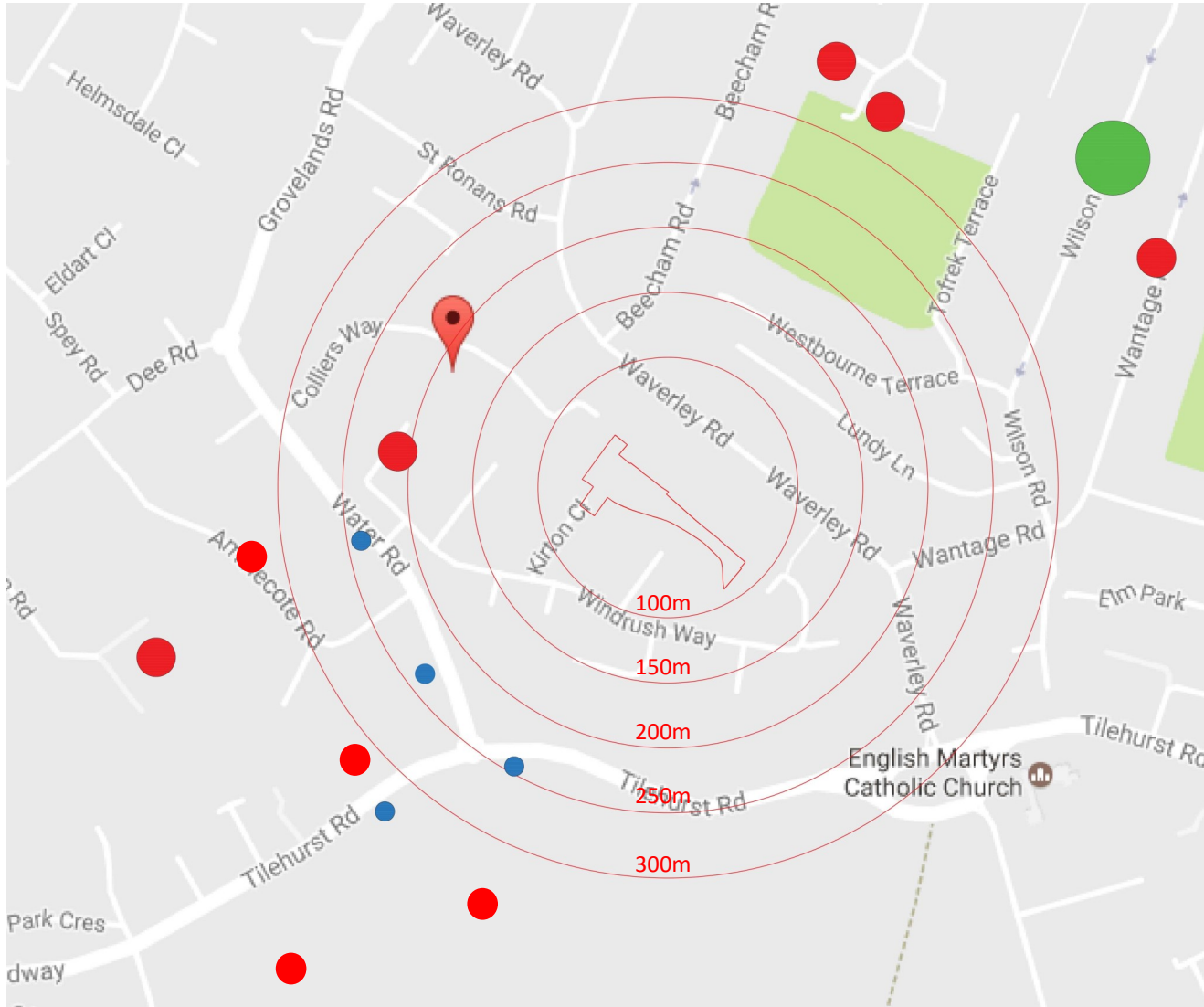
12.3 At the intersection with the existing public footpath which runs along the southern boundary of the site, traffic and pedestrian calming measures can be used to enhance safety. Such measures could include pedestrian chicanes, give way signs and road markings to offer path users priority and speed humps.

12.4 The supporting Transport Statement prepared by PBA demonstrates the proposed access arrangements in detail including requisite visibility splays and vehicle tracking. The interface with the footpath is shown as a dropped kerb with tactile paving.

12.5 The application proposes 18 car parking spaces which the Transport Report confirms as being within the maximum standards set out by RBC and concludes therefore that the parking provision would be acceptable.

12.6 In relation to cycle parking, the proposal indicates a minimum of 18 secure spaces.

12.7 In conclusion, PBA consider that in light of the findings set out in the Transport Report and the existing conditions of the site, the development is considered feasible and deliverable in transport terms.



● Community Facilities ● Bus Stops ● Schools

Sustainability

12.7 As explored in the earlier sections of this statement, the site occupies a highly sustainable location with exemplary links to local shop, services and community facilities.

12.2 Furthermore, the site benefits from good public transport links with nearby bus stops which serve routes into Reading town centre and Reading Railway Station. The site location therefore minimises private car dependency and maximises the potential to use more sustainable modes of transport.

Part II: The Proposal

Open Space

13.1 This application proposes the creation of up to 18 new residential apartments. Whilst only an Outline planning application, landscape enhancements are indicated as part of the proposed development, however, it is anticipated that precise details including hard and soft landscaping proposals would form part of the Reserved Matters application or be subject to planning conditions.

13.2 During the pre-application stage of this project, Officer's indicated that they were of the opinion that the site represented 'open space' and therefore the proposal should be considered within in accordance with Policy CS28. Whilst this matter has been addressed in Section 8 (Principle of Development) of this statement, further information is provided below, particularly in regard to existing / alternative provision.

Open Space

13.3 The primary matter in this regard is that the applicant does not agree that the site represents formal 'open space' within the context of Policy CS28. The site (i) is not identified on the Councils adopted policies map as open space, (ii) falls entirely within a private ownership and (iii) benefits from an extant Lawful Development Certificate for the erection of a 2m high perimeter fence. Accordingly, it cannot be reasonably said to serve as 'open space' within the context of this planning policy, the intention of which is clearly to safeguard public open space. Indeed, the policy explicitly states that development proposals will be resisted which "*result in the loss of open space or jeopardise its use or enjoyment by the public*" (our emphasis added). Clearly, therefore, the insinuation is that for the purposes of the policy, 'open space' by definition serves a public use or enjoyment function.

13.4 Whilst it is acknowledged that paragraph 9.10 of the Core Strategy states that the policy relates to all open space in the Borough; public or privately owned, it is considered that weight must be applied to the loss of open space in accordance with the policy itself. Thus, weight should be applied relative to the public function that the land serves.

13.5 In this regard, there is no dispute that the application site is private land over which the public have no right of access or use. Accordingly, the site serves no physical / functional 'use' to the public as open space.

13.6 As such, the only 'enjoyment' that the public could derive from the land would be visual. Whilst it is acknowledged that previously the site would have offered some visual enjoyment due to the fact that it had been managed and maintained as green space (grass, shrubs, trees, undergrowth, etc), as set out within the earlier sections of this report, the maintenance costs of the land is burdensome and no longer financially sustainable.

13.7 Coupled with the liability and social issues associated from the unauthorised use (often for antisocial behaviour, illegal activities and fly-tipping) it has now become necessary to cease the maintenance of the land and secure the site by erecting a 2m high covered security fence, anchored to the ground along the boundary. It is therefore a significant material consideration that the site will be hoarded off using a screened security fence, thus limiting any visual enjoyment that the site would otherwise offer members of the public.

Public Detriment

13.8 The second matter of importance is that due consideration must be given to the public detriment currently caused by the site. As discussed within the earlier sections of this report, the site occupies a secluded area to the rear of dwellings which suffers limited natural surveillance. As such, the site suffers from being a harbour to crime and antisocial behaviour including being frequented by littering and fly-tipping. As such, the site causes significant detriment to the public enjoyment of the adjacent footpath, creating an uninviting area, particularly during evening and night-time hours, which is often avoided by many local residents. Accordingly, the limited enjoyment provided to the public by way of visual amenity is considered to be outweighed by the public and social detriment caused at present by the site.

Alternative Provision

13.9 Paragraph 9.11 of Policy CS28 confirms that exceptionally, "*where a development proposal involves losing open space, appropriate replacement space should be provided where it is easily accessible to the people most affected by the lost space. Alternatively, compensating improvements could be made to existing open space in the area.*"

13.10 The applicant is willing to allow the eastern section of the site, which is currently unusable for development purposes, to become a managed area of public amenity land, with managed planting, park benches and, if desirable, a small children's play area.

13.11 If deemed necessary / desirable, the applicant would welcome this provision of this part of the site as publicly accessible land with associated facilities being secured via planning conditions requiring the details of the scheme to be considered as part of a Reserved Matters Application. These facilities can thereafter be secured as deemed appropriate by the Council.

Part II: The Proposal
Open Space (continued)

14

Existing Alternative Provision

14.1 In addition to the considerations set out within the previous section of this statement, within the context of Policy CS28, it is appropriate to consider the existing provision of open space within the locality of the site.

14.2 The diagram (right) indicates that the local area is extremely well served by open space most of which, unlike the application site, is public open space, fully accessible and usable by the local community.

14.3 In particular, Colliers Way benefits from a good level of visual amenity landscaping which we also understand to be publicly accessible land. Unlike the application site, these areas are appropriately placed, creating an attractive public realm along the frontage of the highway (diagram refs 3 & 4).

14.4 With regard to usable public open space, the site is a short walk from Prospect Park to the south (ref: 1) which is a very large natural parkland containing managed community facilities. The site is also a short walk from Kensington Park to the east (ref: 2).

14.5 Within the slightly wider context, the site benefits from many other areas of public open space as indicated on the diagram *right*.

14.6 Accordingly, it is considered the the site is exceptionally served by existing alternative public open space.



- 1 - Prospect Park - Less than 500m - Public Open Space
- 2 - Kensington Park - Less than 500m - Public Open Space
- 3 - Colliers Way - Less than 10m - Publicly Accessible Visual Amenity
- 4 - Water Rd / Groveland Rd - 200m - Visual Amenity Land
- 5 - Wilson Primary School - Less than 500m - Visual Amenity Only
- 6 - Parkland at Brockley Cl - Less than 1km - Public Open Space
- 7 - McIlroy Park – Less than 1.5km - Public Open Space
- 8 - Woodland - Circa 600m - Visual Amenity / Some Public Access

Part II: The Proposal

Sustainable Drainage

Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDs)

15.1 The proposed water run off from roofs will be collected using rainwater drainage goods and discharged using an on site soakaway. The site benefits from a chalk substrate which offers excellent on site surface water drainage potential. Similarly, surface water runoff from driveways and parking areas will also be discharged to an on site soak away.

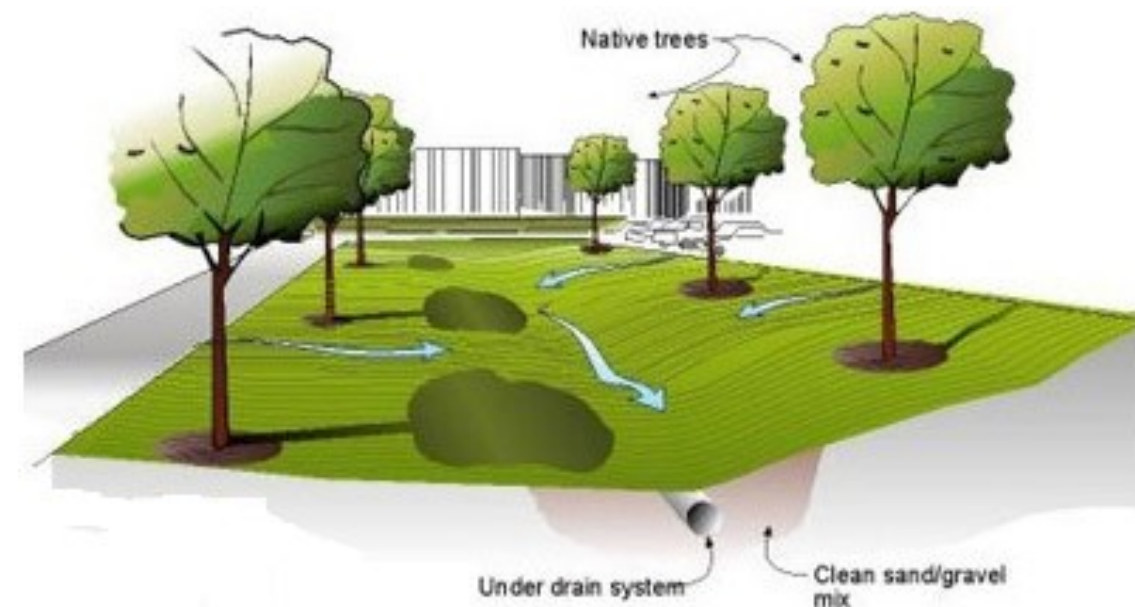
15.2 Hard surfaced area will generally be surfaced with either porous materials or permeable block paving to minimise surface water runoff. Tree, shrub and border planting will also be used to maximise drainage and water absorption.

15.3 The application is supported by a Contaminated Land Assessment (prepared by The Brownfield Consultancy) which reveals no contamination concerns that would otherwise preclude traditional SuDs solutions and / or on site infiltration. Equally, no extraordinary measures will be required (such as capping layers) that might otherwise affect drainage systems.

15.4 It is anticipated that the controlled flow of clean surface water from the site will therefore be through infiltration and sewer discharge will therefore not be required.

15.5 The precise details of the SuDs management system will ultimately depend upon the design of the development which are matters that will be assessed as part of the Reserved Matters Application. As part of these Reserved Matters, a full Management Plan will be provided.

15.6 Importantly, it is clear that the site can incorporate usual SuDs techniques including the use of soakaways which should provide the Lead Drainage Consultant satisfaction that the a drainage scheme can be designed to support any future detailed development proposals on the site.



Part II: The Proposal

Sustainability and Efficiency

16.1 The application proposes up to 18 new apartments within a bespoke building, designed to create the visual appearance of individual dwellings.

16.2 Clean materials including recycled aggregates will be used wherever possible and sourced from local suppliers.

16.3 Where possible, excavations and transportation of the materials off site will be minimised to reduce vehicle movements.

16.4 The building fabric will be designed to meet the requirements of current Building Regulations and Government legislation in regard to achieving requisite thermal efficiency and energy conservation standards.

16.5 It is envisaged that, in the interests of sustainable construction, the buildings will have timber framed structures. The timber used will be obtained from sustainable sources. All other timber products i.e. Staircases, kitchen units, doors, skirtings and architraves will be accompanied by 'Chain of custody' documentation, to be provided by suppliers.

16.6 The proposed dwellings will be designed with a best endeavours approach to "Lifetime Homes" standards. Naturally this will be subject to detailed design during Reserved Matters.

16.7 The site represents a highly sustainable location for new residential development with excellent public transport links including bus stops only a short walk away on Water Road which provides bus routes to Reading West Railway Station and Reading Town Centre.

16.8 The site is also within 1 mile of Reading West Railway Station, therefore, within close walking and cycling distance. This station provides links into London Paddington.

16.9 Schools and shopping facilities and other community facilities are within a few minutes walk of the site and a several public parks are also within close proximity providing recreation and children's play.



Part II: The Proposal

Conclusion

17.1 This Statement has set out in detail the rationale of the proposal in the context of the current Development Plan policy and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

17.2 The Statement has described how the pre-application feedback, site opportunities and constraints, and the planning history have influenced the proposal and the rationale for the site.

17.3 The site is considered to represent an underused and currently vacant piece of private brownfield land within the developed envelope of Tilehurst.

17.4 The application proposal would therefore constitute sustainable development, making more efficient and effective use of a redundant site, which is actively supported by both the Development Plan and the NPPF.

17.5 This Outline application seeks to establish the principle of residential redevelopment and the site access only. All other issues save for access will form part of a subsequent Reserved Matters application.

17.6 For the reasons above, the proposal is considered to be fully in accordance with the NPPF (2012), and the Reading Borough Local Development Framework which comprises the Reading Borough Core Strategy (January 2008, altered January 2015), the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (October 2012, altered January 2015) and the relevant SPDs.