

Design and Access Statement

Land to west of 2 North Street, Reading

Pro Planning Solutions
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Site: Land to west of 2 North Street, Reading

1. Introduction: This application is a resubmission of an application that was previously refused on design and parking grounds, this resubmission will address the issues objections by the council. This design and access statement is to be read in conjunction with the design drawings and the detailed planning application Land to west of 2 North Street for the erection of 2 end terrace dwellings. Currently on the site there is a single storey detached building which was previously used as a yoga/natural therapy centre. The building is currently unused and has been for a long period of time.

1.1 Site Location

The site is located to the north of Reading city centre on North Street, North Street is predominantly a residential street with terraced housing it is off of Prospect Street which has wide variety of uses from residential to commercial. The site is well served by public transport with a number of bus stops on Prospect Street and road connections to the city centre and London and also within a 15 minute walk of Reading train station.

2. Relevant Planning Policies

National:

National Planning Policy Framework

Reading Borough Council – Core Strategy

CS1: Sustainable Construction and Design

CS4: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CS5: Inclusive Access

CS7: Design and the Public Realm

CS14: Provision of Housing

CS15: Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix

CS30: Access to Open Space

3. Proposal of the Development

It is proposed to erect 2 two-bedroom end terrace dwellings both being 2 storey as the rest of the street. It is proposed to have, kitchen, lounge/ dining room on the ground floor and a bathroom and

2 bedrooms on the first floor, the front of the building will also have level access. The proposal also includes sufficient waste storage to the front. This application has been submitted within the context of the widely recognised and growing demand for houses of this size in Reading and indeed Greater London as a whole. It is noted too that such infill developments also represent a more efficient and a more sustainable use of land, such as this, within existing built up areas. The current space used as a derelict building for a yoga centre is currently unused and there is no interest to use the building as is either. The proposal would bring the site back into use and for a use that is in much more viable and required.

There is much demand for housing in the area, policy CS14 in the Reading Core Strategy states the following *“Provision will be made for the completion of an average of at least 477 dwellings for the period 2001-2006, 572 dwellings per annum in the period 2006-2016, and 521 dwellings per annum in the period 2016-2026”*. ‘The proposed change of use will contribute to that supply which also meets policy CS7.

3.1 Design

The properties within the immediate vicinity are similar in size and design therefore the proposed dwelling would fit comfortably within its surroundings by continuation of the existing terrace. The previous application was refused as the properties were set back from the existing building line which was considered to be out of character with the area. This objection has now been addressed by moving the properties forward so they are in line with the existing building lines.

The dwellings have been designed to complement the neighbouring properties and minimise the effect on the street scene and impact on neighbours. Care has been taken with the bulk and massing of the proposed dwellings to ensure that it would not cause harm to the living conditions of neighbouring houses. In this context, the proposed building would not increase in height from existing dwellings to the east to avoid being over dominant. The proposed materials of the frontage and roofing match existing properties on North Street and would have minimal or no impact on the surrounding area.

The dwellings have also been designed to provide sufficient living space according to local standards and facilities such as living room area, bathrooms and kitchens.

The design will also look to meet criteria set out in the lifetime homes standards with regards to accessibility, ensuring that free movement and easy access is achieved for disabled users, as set out in policy CS5. As in line with local policies all works will be carried out using sustainable building methods and accordance with current building regulations (Policy CS1).

3.2 Impact on neighbours

There are no windows on the side elevation, the first floor windows on the front and rear would not cause any further overlooking than the existing situation. The proposal passes the 45 degree test and would not cause any overbearing or loss of light to neighbours. Therefore the proposal would have minimal impact on neighbours.

3.3 Parking & Transport

Although the revised scheme results in the loss of parking spaces to the front it is considered that due to the central location of the property and good links to public transport a lack of parking would not result in adverse impacts. The applicant is also willing to agree to a condition that no parking permits will be issued to the owners/occupiers of these properties.

The site is located in a residential area with established public transport provision. As such the proposal would not likely to result in additional on street car parking or traffic and therefore there is no detriment of highway and pedestrian safety.

The site is well connected to the Reading area with regards to road access, also there a number of bust stops on London Street within a short walking distance which allows good public transport to Reading city centre and surrounding areas, and also a short distance from Reading train station which is in line with policy CS4.

3.4 Landscaping

The rear garden areas will be landscaped (see drawings) to provide amenity space for occupiers of the dwellings.

4. Conclusion

The parcel of land in its current form is derelict and unused space and provides little practical use. The proposed dwellings have been appropriately designed to fit into the existing street scene and area and within an established residential area there are also sufficient local amenities, shops, schools and transport. Granting the site 2 single family dwelling houses would make beneficial use of the site, and be a vast improvement for the location and the neighbouring community.