

October 2017

Statement of Community Involvement

3-5 Craven Road, Reading

Created for McCarthy & Stone

Contents Page

1. Introduction	2
2. Background.....	3
2.1 Proposal site.....	3
2.2 Proposals.....	3
3. Pre-application Consultation	4
3.1 Statement of Community Involvement.....	4
3.2 Contacting Statutory Bodies	5
3.3 Newsletter.....	5
3.4 Post-paid and 0800 Comment Facility	6
3.5 Review of Feedback	7
4. Post-Application Consultation	8
4.1 On-going Stakeholder Engagement.....	8
4.2 Letters to Interested Parties.....	8
4.3 Media Contact.....	8
5. Appendices	10
• Copy of the update newsletter.....	10
• Copy of the freepost feedback postcard.....	10
• Copy of the press coverage.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 McCarthy & Stone, the UK's leading retirement housebuilder, has acquired an interest in land at 3-5 Craven Road, Reading and is proposing to redevelop the site with high-quality Retirement Living apartments designed for older people in the area.
- 1.2 In **February 2016**, McCarthy & Stone submitted an application for the redevelopment of the site with 39 Retirement Living apartments (Ref: 160355). Following further liaison with Officers, this application was withdrawn. McCarthy & Stone has subsequently developed revised proposals, and these amendments therefore required the submission of a new planning application for the site.
- 1.3 The consultation process included offering one-to-one meetings with neighbouring residents, third party groups and key stakeholders, as well as a public exhibition. These meetings were first held in **October 2015** and then again in **November 2015**.
- 1.4 In **October 2017**, McCarthy & Stone sought to update the community regarding their amended proposal for the site, and offered another chance for local stakeholders, elected councillors, neighbouring residents and representatives of third party groups to meet the team. A newsletter and corresponding cover letter gave details regarding the revised proposals for the site, and the opportunity to give feedback on the amended proposals.
- 1.5 McCarthy & Stone is committed to consulting local stakeholders and the local community with regard to its planning applications. As a result, McCarthy & Stone has a strong track record of consulting and communicating with members of the local community, community groups, local councillors and other relevant third-party stakeholders.
- 1.6 This document has been produced with the aim of clearly and concisely highlighting the community consultation undertaken by McCarthy & Stone in respect of its proposal for the site.
- 1.7 In order to assist with the community consultation and communication, McCarthy & Stone appointed Remarkable Engagement, a specialist communications consultancy, to form part of its wider project team for the proposed redevelopment. McCarthy & Stone carried out extensive consultation regarding its proposals for the site at 3-5 Craven Road.
- 1.8 This document forms an addendum to the SCI for the previously submitted scheme, and includes details regarding the consultation which was undertaken for the revised scheme, and the channels through which interested parties can continue to contact McCarthy & Stone. The SCI for the previously proposed scheme can be found in the Appendices.

2. Background

2.1 Proposal site

- 2.1.1 The proposal site is located at 3-5 Craven Road, Reading. This brownfield site is currently occupied by a building that was formerly part of the hospital and is owned by the Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. The sale of the site is crucial to ensure the NHS has sufficient future funding to allow for the continued improvements and expansion of Children's and Adolescent Mental Health Services in the Reading area.
- 2.1.2 The proposal site is situated a short walk away from the town centre, making it a highly sustainable location for specialist housing for older people.

2.2 Proposals

- 2.2.1 McCarthy & Stone's amended plans propose the introduction of 25 new high-quality Retirement Living apartments comprising of one and two-bedrooms for private sale, including landscaping and car parking. This is a reduction of 14 apartments on the previously submitted proposals.
- 2.2.2 Apartments can be occupied by people aged 60 or over and are provided for outright sale, although the average age of residents upon purchase is 79. The majority of homeowners moving in to our developments already live in the local area.
- 2.2.3 McCarthy & Stone's proposal would provide extensive new landscaping, including attractive communal gardens for residents and new boundary treatments. This will further enhance the proposed development and the character of the local area, while maintaining a high level of screening for the neighbouring properties.

3. Pre-application Consultation

3.1 Statement of Community Involvement

- 3.1.1 McCarthy & Stone has complied with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that *'early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.'*
- 3.1.2 The NPPF also highlights that *'good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.'*
- 3.1.3 Reading Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out that it positively promotes pre-application discussions.
- 3.1.4 Reading Borough Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement in March 2014, pertinent points raised have been included below:

"7.5 Promoters of significant or sensitive development schemes should have regard to the principles set out in section 4 of this SCI. They should pay particular attention to the need to properly plan and resource community involvement exercises. In particular, the following measures should be taken:

- Developers should prepare a project plan for pre-application involvement and consultation to be discussed and agreed with the case officer. The case officer will provide assistance in identifying and providing contact information for local representatives, groups and individuals who should be invited by the applicant to become involved in the proposals. This will include local residential and other property, representatives of community groups, including local Councillors, relevant statutory and non-statutory consultees, statutory undertakers and any other bodies or individuals to which such information is deemed relevant by the local planning authority. Where proposals relate to the historic environment, the developer will be required to consult a number of organisations with interests in these matters.*
- The developer's project plan should include details of the scope of the community involvement including which stakeholders will be engaged, timescales and milestones, materials that will be made available to the community and stakeholders and the venues proposed for holding interactive events. Website development resources should also be highlighted.*
- The project plan should also discuss the need for local authority officer resources as part of the involvement process."*

3.1.5 Government guidance and the Reading Borough Council's SCI encourages pre-application discussions and community involvement. As a result, the public consultation programme had a number of key objectives including:

- To encourage as much input as possible from the local community, including residents, interest groups, councillors and businesses
- To provide the community with a genuine opportunity to provide feedback on the plans
- To allow people to become actively involved in the process
- To identify and address any issues raised by the local community and stakeholders

3.1.6 Therefore, prior to submitting the formal planning application for the site, McCarthy & Stone undertook a programme of community consultation, as outlined in the following documentation.

3.2 Contacting Statutory Bodies

3.2.1 During the pre-application discussions, meetings were sought with planning officers alongside relevant bodies including pre-application meetings. The meetings with officers provided an important opportunity to discuss the draft proposals with officers and receive their feedback on the revised proposals.

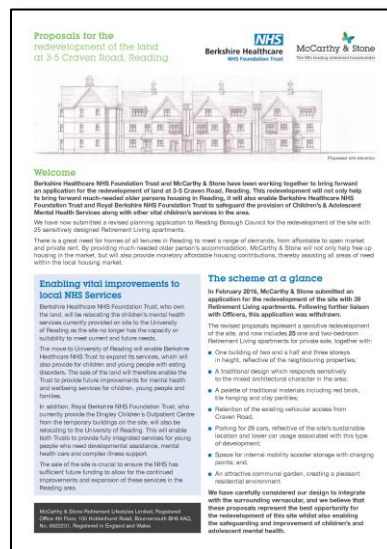
3.3 Newsletter

3.3.1 McCarthy & Stone felt it was important to update the community regarding its revised proposals for the redevelopment of the site. A newsletter, which contained detailed plans for the site and provided information regarding McCarthy & Stone was distributed to around **130** local residents.

3.3.2 Aside from local residents, the following stakeholders have also been sent a copy of the newsletter:

- Relevant Members of Reading Borough Council's Cabinet
- Members of Reading Borough Council's Planning Applications Committee
- Ward Members for Redlands ward of Reading Borough Council
- Members of Dover Town Council
- MP for Reading East
- Reading Health and Wellbeing Board
- Reading Older People's Working Group
- Age UK Reading
- Reading Civic Society
- Redlands and University Area Neighbourhood Action Group
- League of Friends of the Royal Berkshire Hospital

- Reading Borough Council's Executive Director
- Reading Borough Council's Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services
- Reading Borough Council's Director of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services
- Reading Borough Council's Director of Adult Care and Health Services
- Reading Borough Council's Head of Adult Social Care
- Reading Borough Council's Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services
- Reading Borough Council's Head of Safeguarding and Children's Services



An example of the update newsletter

3.3.3 A copy of the update newsletter for Reading can be found in the Appendices.

3.4 Post-paid and 0800 Comment Facility

3.4.1 Access to a freephone telephone enquiry line has been offered to those who wish to find out more about the proposals, or to register their comments via the telephone.

3.4.2 The telephone number used (0800 298 7040) was in operation Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:30am and 5:30pm. A message facility was available outside of these hours, for voicemails to be left and responded to at the earliest opportunity to ensure information was readily available and queries or concerns addressed.

3.4.3 Information was given to callers where possible and, if questions were of a technical nature, these were passed on to project team members.

3.4.4 Postage-paid feedback postcards were issued alongside the newsletter, to encourage feedback.



An example of the feedback cards sent with the newsletter

A copy of the feedback postcard provided with the newsletter can be found in the Appendices.

3.5 Review of Feedback

- 3.6.1 McCarthy & Stone received limited feedback (**5** responses) following its consultation on its previous proposals in **October** and **November 2015**. Typically, McCarthy & Stone receive around 20-30 feedback responses per development in this area. While most of the respondents were supportive of the principle of the provision of this type of specialist housing in the area, due to the small number of responses, it was not possible to identify any recurring issues or concerns.
- 3.6.2 McCarthy & Stone distributed update newsletters to **122** local residents and businesses surrounding the site. To give the local community the opportunity to submit feedback on the proposals, a freepost reply card was distributed alongside the newsletter, and residents were invited to meet with the team should this be of interest on a date that is mutually convenient. McCarthy & Stone will continue to review and consider this feedback until the application is decided.

4. Post-Application Consultation

4.1 On-going Stakeholder Engagement

- 4.1.1 Given the interest shown by residents and stakeholders, McCarthy & Stone will ensure information continually flows through existing channels to interested parties.

4.2 Letters to Interested Parties

- 4.2.1 A letter has been sent to the following groups and individuals informing them that the application has been submitted:

- Relevant Members of Reading Borough Council's Cabinet
- Members of Reading Borough Council's Planning Applications Committee
- Ward Members for Redlands ward of Reading Borough Council
- Members of Dover Town Council
- MP for Reading East
- Reading Health and Wellbeing Board
- Reading Older People's Working Group
- Age UK Reading
- Reading Civic Society
- Redlands and University Area Neighbourhood Action Group
- League of Friends of the Royal Berkshire Hospital
- Reading Borough Council's Executive Director
- Reading Borough Council's Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services
- Reading Borough Council's Director of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services
- Reading Borough Council's Director of Adult Care and Health Services
- Reading Borough Council's Head of Adult Social Care
- Reading Borough Council's Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services
- Reading Borough Council's Head of Safeguarding and Children's Services

- 4.2.2 Those who request further information by telephone, letter or email will be responded to in the most appropriate manner.

4.3 Media Contact

- 4.3.1 To ensure the wider community is aware of the submission of the planning application a detailed press release will be issued to local publications (papers including *Get Reading* and *The Reading Chronicle*) The press release will contain the following information:

- A brief history of the site
- Notification that the application has been submitted
- An overview of the proposals
- Information regarding the consultation which has taken place
- McCarthy & Stone's contact information, including the freephone information line number and the website address

5. Appendices

- Copy of the update newsletter
- Copy of the freepost feedback postcard
- Copy of the SCI for the previously submitted scheme