

4 INVOLVEMENT

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4.1 - CONSULTATION

McCarthy & Stone is committed to consulting the local community regarding this proposed redevelopment of the application site. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Paras 188-191), the applicant has actively sought to engage in pre-application discussions with the local planning authority, local community and where relevant statutory consultees.

The consultation process was undertaken by Remarkable Engagement on behalf of McCarthy & Stone. Residents and Stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide feedback via a number of different channels.

The process took place over a number of months commencing at the end of 2015 which included numerous meetings with local stakeholders and residents before culminating in a public exhibition. The consultation was widely publicised by direct mailings to approximately 2000 households and businesses.

In February 2016, McCarthy and Stone submitted an application for the redevelopment of the site with 39 Retirement Living Apartments (ref:160355). Following

further liaison with Council Officers, this application was subsequently withdrawn, and a revised proposal developed.

In October 2017, McCarthy and Stone sought to update the community regarding the revised proposal via a Newsletter with an opportunity for the community to meet the team.

Consultations:

- One-to-One Meetings: October and November 2015.
- Information newsletter and public exhibition invitation mailed to local stakeholders and residents: 4th November 2015
- Public Exhibition on the 19th November 2015
- Website set up during public consultation and planning process
- Revised proposal Pre-application meeting with LPA: 19th April 2017.
- Newsletter distributed to update the community regarding the revised proposal: October 2017
- Post paid and 0800 free phone comment facility set up: October 2017.

More information regarding these consultations can be found in the Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Remarkable Engagement. This statement will be submitted as a separate document to accompany the planning application.

4.2 - PUBLIC EXHIBITION

A public consultation and exhibition was held on Thursday 10th August 2016 from 3.30pm to 7pm at Waitlington House Trust, 44 Waitlington Street, Reading RG1 4RU. The purpose of the public exhibition was to present the proposals to the wider community and gain additional feedback prior to submitting the original planning application. An invitation newsletter and feedback postcard was distributed to 2000 residents and businesses in the local area advising them of the proposals and inviting them to the exhibition.

The proposals were exhibited with members of the project team present to answer questions from local residents. Feedback forms enabled comments to be made at the exhibition or returned at a later date. This allowed McCarthy & Stone to get an even wider feedback response from the community. Additionally, a website (www.mccarthyandstone-consultation.co.uk/reading) was set up displaying information about the proposals and is being updated throughout the public consultation and planning process. During this consultation, a total of five feedback responses were received. McCarthy & Stone has carefully reviewed all the feedback received to date and, where possible, has evolved the proposals to address the comments raised by the local community.

Welcome to our exhibition

We are McCarthy & Stone. We provide high-quality apartments and services to make later life a happy, healthy and rewarding experience

Our history and vision

Since building our first development in 1977, we have become Britain's leading retirement housebuilder. We have built c. 50,000 apartments in more than 1,000 different locations.

We recognise that getting older presents challenges, so that's why everything we do is built around the needs of our homeowners. From the design of our apartments to our on-site care and support services, the requirements of later living are always at the heart of our mind.

Our exhibition today, displays our initial proposals for building one of our developments in your local area and we look forward to hearing your views.

Thank you for your time.

Life with us

Our Retirement Living developments

Our developments are designed to meet the needs of people in later life. They offer our homeowners an active, independent lifestyle in a safe and secure environment serving the retired people.

Each development is built to 'Lifetime Homes' standards, with step-free access throughout the scheme, and all apartments are adaptable for retirement use. Bedrooms are large, sunny, and easy to use and parking and storage are of an appropriate height.

Apartment can be occupied by single aged 60 or over and are available for outright sale, although the average age of residents upon purchase is 75. The majority of homeowners entering our schemes live in the building area. Homeowners have their own front doors and private patios. They sit in their personal living rooms and they are free to join in community activities within the development or to pursue their own interests on their patios.

Apartment has a high specification of internal finishes to address residents' everyday needs, including a 'kitchenette', lounge, dining and sitting areas, all a central entry system linked to residents' TVs and a good suite allowing friends and relatives to stay overnight if needed.

On-site management and support services are provided by a care-free lifestyle is provided. Fully trained House Managers are based at each scheme and oversee the efficient running of the development, acting as a good neighbour for our residents.

Attractive outdoor spaces

We seek to ensure that all of our developments have high-quality outdoor spaces for our homeowners to enjoy. The images below provide some initial examples of landscaped gardens and patios we have provided in our schemes.

Our developments are designed to blend attractively with their surroundings. We recognise that beautiful gardens and landscaped patios turn a good development into a great one, and we are pleased that many of our schemes have been awarded for their outdoor spaces.

Where possible, existing trees and shrubs will be retained and new plants will be added. We aim to enhance the landscapes of our developments with new planting to improve the overall look of the scheme.

Our own management company will maintain the grounds on behalf of our homeowners to ensure they develop and mature to enhance both the building and the local neighbourhood.

Caring for the environment

A sustainable way of living

We work hard to build environmentally friendly developments, with each scheme meeting high standards of insulation and energy efficiency. In a recent survey, 81% of our homeowners said their heating bills were low compared to their previous property.

Our sites are usually in previously developed land, helping to preserve green fields and undeveloped areas, and developers can also help to reverse this. We select sites that are as close to towns, major shops, facilities and transport links, which means that our homeowners have a reduced reliance on their own cars and a smaller 'carbon footprint'. The few homeowners who do own a car tend not to use it in peak hours, nor on a day-to-day basis.

As a result, the number of car parking spaces is usually lower than in traditional housing and reduces the parking demand experienced by our homeowners. Many sites also tend to help cut costs by using less land and less materials.

We also manage every aspect of the construction process and we look to ensure that our activities have regard to the neighbours and the general public.

Typical apartment layouts

One bedroom Two bedrooms

Retirement Living Development benefits

Housing

81% of our homeowners said their heating bills were low compared to their previous property.

Improved health

64% of our homeowners said they were in better health than when they moved in.

79% of our homeowners said they were in better health than when they moved in.

Green benefits

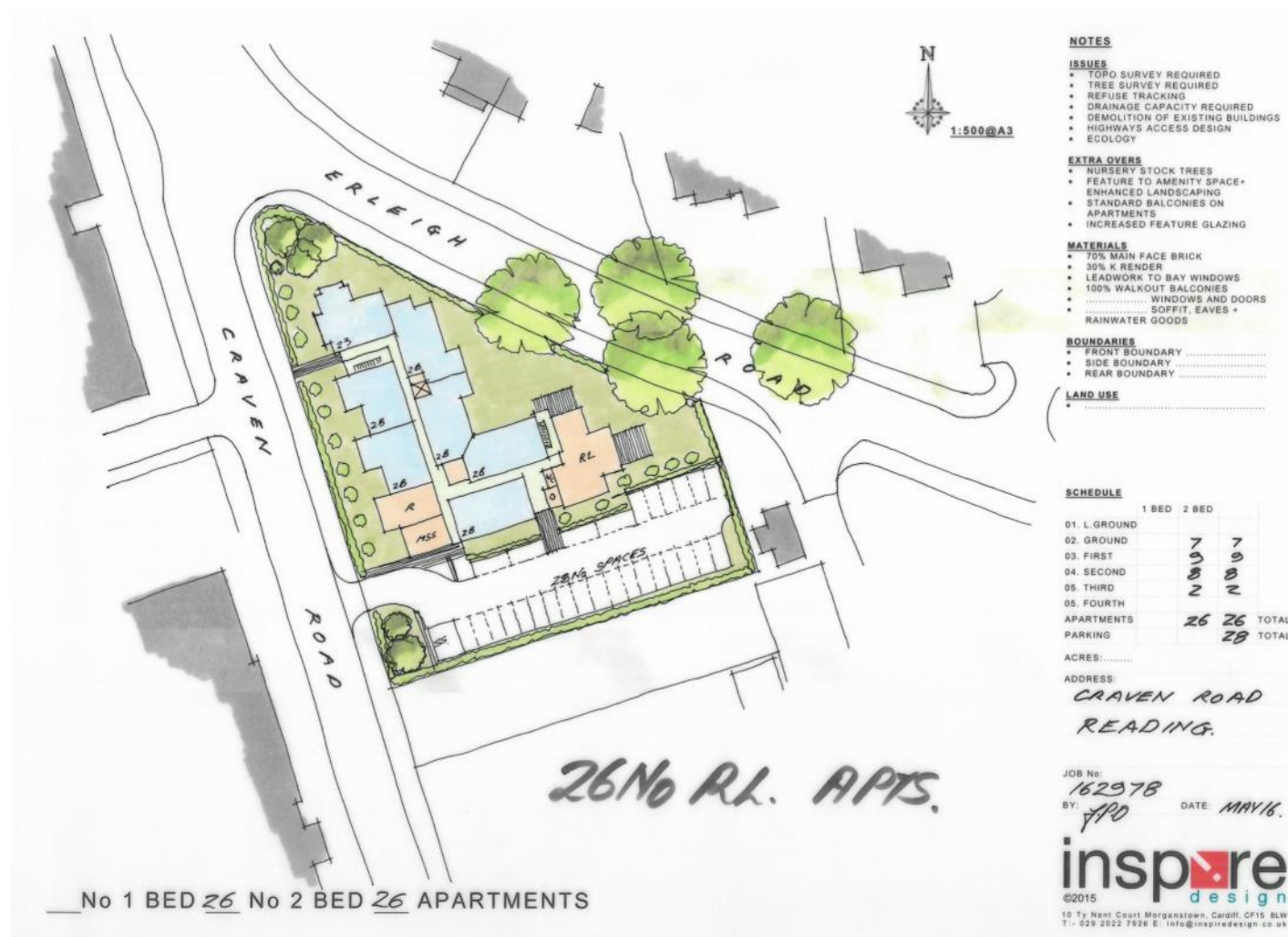
81% of our homeowners said their heating bills were low compared to their previous property.

Economic/Community

81% of our homeowners said their heating bills were low compared to their previous property.

McCarthy & Stone
Later Life. Greater Life.

Typical public exhibition board



Preliminary block plan sketch proposals

4.3 - PRE-APP CONSULTATION

A pre-application meeting was held with Mr Stephen Vigar, Principal Planning Officer, at the Civic Offices of Reading Borough Council on 19th April 2017.

A summary of the points made are as follows:

Planning History

The pre-app meeting follows from a previously withdrawn application for 39 retirement apartments for older persons on the same site

Employment, Skills and Training Plan

A S106 agreement for employment, skills and training plan during the construction phase and could be either a training plan or financial payment in lieu would be acceptable to the applicant. (Core Strategy policy: CS9 and was set out in an adopted SPD.

Affordable Housing Provision

The Council's Valuer would assess the McCarthy and Stone's viability appraisal regarding an affordable housing provision contribution.

Transport

The issue of parking provision and evidence was largely addressed with the revised scheme, as the number of

proposed parking now complies with the Council's required standards. In view of the age of the residents and the urban location with good public transport links reducing the number of spaces could probably be justified. This remains a matter to be agreed with the Highways Authority. Street parking restrictions and parking levels likely to be an issue for committee at this location.

Neighbouring Impact

The impact issue on neighbouring properties seems to be limited to the Gatehouse, No.1 and 1A Erleigh Road. This properties only have a private amenity space at the front of the building. It was noted that the privacy of this space was already being compromised because of overlooking from the adjacent highway pavement.

Loss of Community Facility

BHFT have an overall strategy to consolidated services in fewer locations throughout Reading meaning that certain sites such as Craven Road would be surplus to requirements. There would be no loss of services and indeed likely to be an improvement in clinical services from the services located to the new site.

Loss of Locally Listed Building

The demolition of the existing buildings was discussed

and the Council's preference to retain the existing building.

The NPPF requirements for a balancing exercise weighing the benefits of the proposed scheme against the loss of a non-designated heritage asset was also discussed.

Scale, Height, Layout, Design

The townscape is a mix of character but that the predominant character for this site should be that referenced by the Redlands Conservation Area and the existing buildings at 3 to 5 Craven Road. It was acknowledged that the architectural appearance has started to reference this character of the area, however the proposed scale and height was too much.

The Planning Officer stated that a scale of two and half storeys would be more appropriate, but accepted subject to design and massing that the building could rise to three storeys at the focal point at the corner of Craven Road and Erleigh Road. It was also felt that the length of the Craven Road elevation needed breaking to articulate the mass and suggested the inclusion of a glazed links. The scale of the villas along Craven Road should inform the scale of each section of building.



Preliminary Craven Road sketch proposals



Preliminary Erleigh Road sketch proposals

The palette of materials and details common in the Redlands area was discussed.

It was considered that the landscaped area to the corner point of the site was an important green townscape feature and should be retained, although this could be by replacement landscaping/tree planting.

It was advised that the scheme should include new tree planting on site and not rely on existing street trees. A few larger specimens would be preferred. The existing street tree size and location would have a limiting effect on the site planting. The Planning Officer advised that a financial contribution could be sought towards street trees referencing policy DM18 and the wider public benefits of street trees (in addition to appropriate tree planting on site).

The planning officers comments have been noted and addressed where possible. This information is submitted as part of the planning application and in the analysis of the design in this Design and Access Statement.

4.4 - NEWSLETTER

McCarthy and Stone felt it was important to update the community regarding its revised proposals. A newsletter containing detailed plans for the site and McCarthy and Stone information was distributed to around 130 local residents. A copy was also sent to key stakeholders including members of Reading Borough Council's Cabinet, Directors, Planning Applications Committee, and local Ward members.

Residents and stakeholders were invited to meet the project team to discuss the project and any concerns on a date that is mutually convenient.

Access to a freephone telephone enquiry line was offered for those who wish to find out more about the proposals, or to register their comments. This line was manned from 8:30am to 5:30pm with a voicemail facility outside these hours. Postage-paid feedback postcards were also issued with the newsletter to encourage feedback from local residents.



4.5 - MEDIA CONTACT

To ensure that the wider Reading community is aware of the planning application; a detailed press release will be issued to local papers including Get Reading and The Reading Chronicle. This will include a brief history of the site, planning application notification and information regarding the proposal and consultation which has taken place together with contact information including the freephone number and the website address.

5 DESIGN

5.1 - USE AND AMOUNT

5.2 - LAYOUT - HEIGHT, SCALE AND MASSING –

5.3 - LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

5.4- ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

5.5 - SOCAIL AND ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

5.6 - ACCESSIBILITY



5.1 - USE AND AMOUNT

This application is for the full planning permission to demolish the existing buildings and construct 25 retirement living accommodation units for older people, including communal facilities, parking and associated landscape.

The proposed application site is circa 3,306 m² (0.33ha) / 0.82 acres.

The proposed development includes:

- gross external area of 2,910m²
- 3 one bedroom apartments
- 22 two bedroom apartments
- Refuse and Recycling Store
- Mobility Scooter and Bicycle Store
- Entrance Lobby, Reception and Office
- Guest Suite
- Lift Access
- 28 car parking spaces
- Landscaped gardens and other associated facilities



Application site boundary diagram

5.2 - LAYOUT - HEIGHT, SCALE AND MASSING APPEARANCE

Layout

The site constraints and opportunities diagrams, discussed earlier in this report, led to a concept which informed the final proposed layout. The key points of the proposal are:

- designing building that positively responds and reflects the quality of the context
- responding to scale, proportion and proximity of adjacent buildings and spaces
- responding to key focal points, views and vistas
- Clearly distinguish between private and public space
- use of quality materials and detailing
- create attractive high quality hard and soft landscaping
- retain the existing mature trees and boundary hedges where possible
- maintaining existing boundaries
- providing enough private car parking on site
- providing much needed specialised retirement living accommodation (Use Class C3)



Proposed Site Layout Plan (existing buildings dashed)

Taking these factors into account, the layout has been developed to establish the optimum use for the site.

Circular 01/2006 defines layout as the way in which buildings, roofs and open spaces (both public and private) are provided, placed and oriented in relation to each other and buildings and spaces surrounding the development. The layout of the proposed development is a logical and straightforward response to the constraints of the site and its relationship with neighbouring properties, the local townscape context and the Client's brief. In addition, the layout has evolved to achieve the following:

- to provide an appropriate well designed response for the redevelopment of a brownfield site,
- sympathetic in massing scale and character to the local vernacular, the curtilage listed buildings and the Alexandra Road Conservation Area
- to maximise visual amenity of future residents
- internal and external amenity space for residents
- passive surveillance of the development .
- to establish an architectural framework in line with consultations, aspirations and planning advice, thus providing an appropriate response within the local context.



Proposed Site Layout Plan

The building will be serviced by a car park, which is accessed via Craven Road. The access point has been carefully considered to ensure that the correct visibility splays are achieved for vehicles arriving and leaving the site. The proposed access road is over 4.6m wide to easily allow for simultaneous entry and exit from the car park for the ease of users and to alleviate queuing on Craven Road at peak times. Direct external access is also provided for the mobility scooter and bicycle store.

The building's main entrance is located on the ground floor and can be easily identified by homeowners and visitors alike. Residents and Visitors will enter the building direct from the car park, with a secondary pedestrian shoppers access also available to residents from Craven Road via the circulation stairs.

The recycling and refuse store is located within the main building to the west of the site with direct access to Craven Road. The refuse and recycling store will be maintained by staff as part of the management procedures.

The scheme proposes communal gardens to the frontage and rear which are described in more detail in the Landscape Strategy.



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



Proposed Second Floor Plan

Height, Scale and Massing

The proposal will be contextually appropriate in scale, height and massing taking all of its architectural proportions from the surrounding properties. The scale, height and massing of the building has been influenced by the location and setting of the site constraints and opportunities posed by the immediate and wider context, and sound urban design principles.

Scale is the height, width and length of a building in relationship to its surroundings. As with all developments there are two issues that need to be considered when assessing scale. The first is the primary scale, which is established by the width and height of the proposed building or its primary elements. The other is the secondary scale, which is established by the size and spacing of individual elements that relate to the human interaction with the building, such as doors and windows. Secondary scale is equally as important as primary scale, as it affects the way in which the actual size and primary scale of a building is perceived. For example, a building with a small secondary scale is likely to be perceived as being smaller than a similarly sized building with a large secondary scale.

The development has been conceived as an 'L' shaped

block of accommodation, due to the clear functional requirements that is dictated by the triangular shape of the site, the frontage to Craven Road, neighbouring developments and the preferred orientation.

The mass of the proposal is broken down into domestic size elements that relate well to the surrounding residential areas. The detached and semi-detached villas along Craven Road is sympathetically repeated along the proposed Craven Road (West) Elevation. The assorted roof heights, balconies and projecting elements, all add to the varied articulation that gives the elevation characterisation synonymous with the domestic scale and local architecture.

The secondary scale elements can clearly be read on all elevations, with fenestration that punctuates the facades and reinforces the human scale. The secondary scale is entirely domestic, giving reference to the function and status of the elements themselves, which is appropriate to the context in which the site is set. As such, the number of storeys can clearly be discerned, and at generally 2.5 storeys this can be perceived as an appropriate "domestic" scale, in keeping with nearby properties and the local context as a whole.

The proposal for the corner of Craven Road and Erleigh Road has a 3 storey element with a attic windows in the

gable to provide a focal point at the Northern corner of the site and an anchor for the design. It is acknowledged that the height of the proposed development must respond to the scale, massing and appearance of its neighbours in the streetscape and architectural terms, but also have regard to the wider context.

In the wider context a number of residential buildings on nearby roads are 2.5 and 3 storeys in height, with steeply pitched roofs adding to their overall mass. Scale, height and massing of these buildings are reflective of their use, but are also respectful of the surrounding predominant domestic scale. Likewise, the overall scale, height and massing of the proposal is appropriate to this setting and as such, the building reinforces local architectural character and enhances the area with a considered, contextual response.

Government guidance in "NPPG (Design)" implies that whilst building heights might need to respond to a general pattern of heights in the area and to matters of good neighbourliness, the need to provide higher residential densities to create vitality and make the most of public transport are important considerations too. The proposal achieves this by delivering an appropriate quantity of accommodation, taking into account the considerable constraints of the site.

The design of the proposed apartment building is a careful balance between the achievement of sustainable and environmental criteria and the setting of the buildings within the new proposed landscaping. The mass and scale of the development was also informed by the appropriate capacity of the site and local area.

The following features have been included in the design of the proposed building to respect the local vernacular and character of the Alexandra Road Conservation Area:

- proposed new building adds to the sense of place and local character of the area
- the traditional architectural details in the immediate area have been identified and their interpretation included in the design
- pitched roofs with a central ridge
- full gabled roofs with verges and terracotta ridges
- double roof with valley gutters and parallel ridges to minimise the bulk of the roof
- chimneys have been incorporated into designs
- a greater proportion of solid wall to window in the elevations
- Windows proportions should be slightly taller than wide with small panes of glass



North Elevation



East Elevation

Relationship to Craven Road villas

The design of the proposed building sympathetically reflects the massing of the adjoining Craven Road detached and semi-detached villas. The rhythm of the steep gables and varied roofline is continued in the new development with similar widths and proportions of elements. The proposed development also follows and respects the strong existing building line to Craven Road.

The palette of materials used in the adjoining villas with the three different bricks (soft red, blue/grey and yellow stock) dressed stone, tile hanging and slate roofs with terracotta ridge tiles are also sympathetically reflected. The brickwork details and surface pattern are also repeated to respect the continuation of the street scene.

The proposed design reflects a series of villas with the fenestration and doors repeated to suggest individual villas. The front boundary treatment of railings, walls and hedges also contribute to create the impression of individual villas with front gardens, paths and gates.

How the proposed development successfully fits into the Erleigh and Craven Road architectural context is shown on the selected VVM images on the following page.



Craven Road—West Elevation



South Elevation



Photorealistic Image from Erleigh Road



Photorealistic Image from Craven Road



Photorealistic Image from North



Photorealistic Image from Craven Road

5.3 - LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The Landscape design and strategy has been prepared by the Chartered Landscape Architects, New Leaf Studio. The strategy seeks to:

- Integrate the new development within its surroundings
- maximise the retention of existing vegetation on site to provide an established setting to the new development
- Provide external spaces that encourage people to venture outside by offering a range of environments which will appeal in a variety of weather conditions, i.e. shady spaces for hot sunny days and sheltered sunny positions for bright winter days.
- Planting will be attractive and easy to maintain
- Provide level access to enable maximum usability for residents and visitors
- Retain and enhance boundary treatments to minimise impact on the surrounding properties.



Landscape Proposals Plan

Landscape Drawings

The Landscape Proposals drawing submitted as part of the planning application illustrates the intended layout and general character for the landscape that will surround the proposed building. The distribution of proposed planting and lawns are highlighted in contrast to paths and other hard landscape elements, which are either described within the key or annotated in detail together with proposed boundary treatments. Trees to be retained are accurately represented together with the constraints they impose in terms of their root protection zones. Existing and proposed spot levels are included to help show changes in proposed topography, particularly beneath trees.

Landscape Proposals

The landscape proposals broadly aim to provide a setting for the new building, helping to root it into the site and surrounding area, whilst creating attractive usable garden spaces and outlook for the amenity and enjoyment of the residents who will live here. Views of the new building and site from neighbouring properties and from Craven and Erleigh Road have all been carefully considered as part of the proposals.

Craven Road

Along the Craven Road the design of the new building aims to give the impression of several separate houses with separate entrances facing onto the street frontage. This approach is further emphasised by the layout of the proposed landscape, with separate garden spaces suggested by paths, planting and boundary hedges.

Along the front boundary vertical bar railings will create a continuous fence, with some older sections of railing being refurbished and others replaced or added with new fencing. Two smaller gateways will be provided within this boundary for pedestrian access, framed by brick piers and including vertical bar gates. To the south access for vehicles to and from the carpark will include larger brick piers to frame this entrance, helping to echo local character and detailing along the street.

Behind the railings existing hedges and vegetation are retained where possible, with new sections of Privet and Hornbeam hedge planted to provide continuity to the frontage, again reflecting local character whilst providing a separation between the busy street and the more private spaces beyond, where mixed shrubs and herbaceous planting will provide a colourful year round outlook for residents.

Craven Road and the surrounding streets are made attractive by the presence of trees, both within mature gardens and the highway. In this context and whilst a single street tree may be lost on Craven Road, new trees are to be planted throughout the proposed landscape surrounding the building. Along Craven Road this will include varieties of Lime and Hornbeam, which in the medium to long term will contribute significantly to local character the street scene whilst partly hiding and softening the appearance of the proposed building. Toward the northern end of the site old hedges and shrub planting bounding the site have become overgrown, smothered by ivy and interspersed with numerous self-sown Sycamore and Ash trees.

Proposals will aim to rejuvenate this area, being mostly cleared but key specimen trees and shrubs retained where practicable, with overgrown laurels coppiced to encourage new bushy growth. New planting will be added to augment the space, with boundary railings either be refurbished or added to re-create the more historic boundary treatment facing the road junction.

Erleigh Road

Facing Erleigh Road the existing boundary railings will again be retained and refurbished, with a gate added to provide egress from the site in case of fire. Mixed shrub planting inside of this boundary will be attractive in the street scene but will also grow up to screen views into the site and provide privacy for the amenity of residents.

Further southeast the existing boundary wall will also be retained, being repaired and re-pointed where required. This wall is high enough to screen views from pedestrians and cars into the site, providing privacy to garden spaces behind. Mature Street trees along Erleigh Road are large enough to partly hide the new building in views from nearby houses to the north.

Boundaries to the northeast and southeast are defined by existing 2.0m high brick walls, which are to be repaired and re-pointed where required. These walls provide good screening to views from neighbouring gardens, however the building will also be partly screened by the addition of trees within the carpark.

Building Access

Entry to the proposed building will be via a main entrance off of the carpark, being fully accessible and compliant with part M of the building regulations. A separate entrance is also to be provided on the southeast side of the building with path connecting to Craven Road, again part M compliant.

Garden Spaces

Garden spaces and other areas around the building have also been designed to enable full access, including flush thresholds at all external doorways and shallow gradients throughout to avoid the need for steps and handrails. Related to this, materials for paving and hard landscape have been carefully chosen with the elderly and disabled in mind, being slip resistant and suitable for wheelchair access, with routes for escape in case of a fire are fully accessible.

External Lighting

External lighting around the building will be designed to be functional but as low key as possible, using low energy LED fittings, shielded to direct light down, reducing both glare and light pollution. Recessed brick lights, lighting bollards and discrete wall mounted bulkhead units will all be used to illuminate the entrance, path routes and garden spaces,

Proposed Planting

The proposed planting will generally be detailed to provide year round colour and interest for residents whilst at the same time being easy to maintain. Most areas will be planted with larger plant stock to give an impression of maturity from day one, reinforced by use of larger specimen shrubs in key locations. Species will also be selected to be attractive to wildlife, providing food or shelter to insects and birds that will help improve the value of this site in terms of local biodiversity.

Shrub and Perennial Planting

Evergreen and deciduous shrubs provide structure, scent and seasonal colour to planting beds and soften walls.

Herbaceous perennials add seasonal interest through colour, scent and texture.



5.4- SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

McCarthy & Stone take a holistic approach to sustainability, considering not only environmental but also social and economic sustainability. This approach is taken in both corporate governance and strategy plus in the design of its main product – private sheltered housing developments for the elderly.

Sustainability Reputation

In light of the increasing urgency to address climate change, the depletion of non-renewable fossil fuels and material resources, the Client set up a 'Sustainability Committee' first established in 2001, which has a remit to look beyond the pure environmental issues and a responsibility to integrate holistic sustainable strategies into the business decision-making.

A member of the company's executive board chairs the Client's Sustainability Committee. The committee is continuously reviewing and strengthening the company's sustainability performance and credibility through strong corporate governance and the incorporation of sustainable strategies in company policies. In addition to its initial remit, this committee has now evolved into the Research and Development Committee. This committee

is very active in reviewing and developing efficient ways of achieving best practice in accord with the national sustainability agenda.

The Client has been acknowledged by the WWF as one of UK's top leading house builders, who not only recognise the importance of sustainability issues, but have gone a long way to ensure that this is reflected in their governance, management resources, policies and operational performance.

The Client's corporate governance policies and strategy are disclosed on its website. The policies on this website are complimented by the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) report which details the company's social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Impact on the Environment

Building construction and the use of buildings, especially their space heating, is one of the main contributors to CO² emissions in the UK. Energy conservation, introduction of sustainable transport strategies and incorporation of energy efficient strategies can be one way to play a part in reaching CO² emission reductions while reducing other adverse impacts on the environment.

Public Realm

The proposal has been designed to respect and enhance the setting and acknowledging the location. The scale, height, mass and disposition is appropriate to the wider locality relevant to the context in which the site is set. At the same time, the proposal has been positioned to minimise the impact on any neighbouring properties. The layout of the pavements and spaces achieve a balance between good access into the development and providing interesting and useable spaces considering the testing terrain.

Site Location and Amenities

The site has its main frontage on Craven Road which is within walking distance to the local retail core. It is well positioned for easy access to local services and amenities within the area. This proximity helps to reduce dependence on the private car, thereby reducing pollution from NO_x gases and greenhouse gas emissions. The proximity will also help to encourage social inclusion and enable participation by future residents of the proposal in the community.

Transportations

The site benefits from easy access to public transport facilities, with bus stops located opposite the

development serving the town and the surrounding area. The main train station is in the centre of Reading, only 1.5 miles from the site provides regular services to the railway network and a direct line to Paddington.

The proximity of the development to local amenities has the important benefit of contributing to the reduction of car dependency. A 'Green Transport Plan' will be prepared for future residents in order to inform them of local transport services and home delivery services. Advice will also be included on regional and national transport links. The combination of all these factors effectively reduces the potential for adding to air pollution and increasing vehicular fuel consumption.

Density Development and Diversity

The incorporation of a retirement housing development within the wider residential context presents an opportunity to improve the density of development - a sustainable strategy.

Social-economic Impact

The location and the nature of the proposed development will help to improve the area's social sustainability and its economy.

SUSTAINABLE STRATEGIES IN DESIGN

Site Ecology, Bio-diversity and Landscaping

The proposed landscape strategy plan will provide a sensitively designed scheme, retain existing trees where appropriate, enhance the surroundings and create an appropriate response to the character of the area.

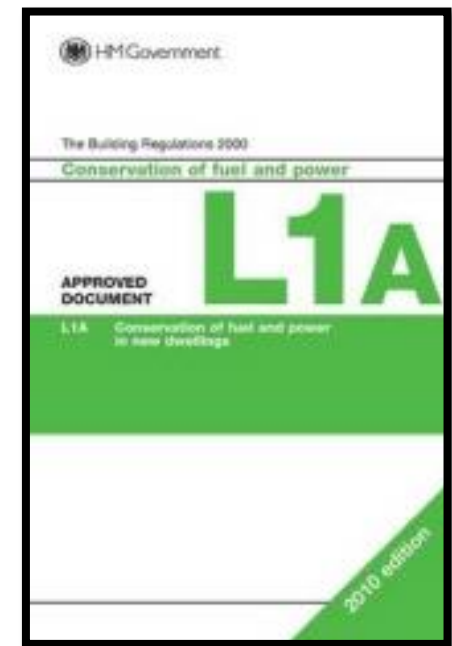
Layout, Orientation, Form and Micro-climatic Factors

Glazing on the south facade provides some solar gain. However, the east and west facade glazing provides a greater area to benefit from solar gain. The layout ensures that most apartments will benefit from direct sunlight at some point during the day. The form of the building has largely been dictated by the triangular shape and topography of the site, functional requirements, site analysis, contextual analysis and historical context.

Energy Efficiency

Each separate habitable room within the apartments will be designed with independent thermal controls as standard. Communal lighting will be linked to daylight and/or movement sensors. All the spaces within each flat will be lit by low energy light fittings, including all the external lighting. Ensuring daylight access to all kitchens

reduces the internal lighting load within individual flats. Good thermal performance will be further achieved by the use of Low-e solar control double-glazing with enhanced thermal insulation. All electrical appliances will be A-rated with the exception of the tumble dryers, as a financially feasible A-rated model is not yet available. Advice on the use of these white goods will be passed onto the homeowners in a handover pack. An energy saving advice leaflet will also be passed on to the homeowners.



Thermal insulation and ventilation will be designed into the building envelope using a specification to achieve a good SAP rating in compliance with Part L of the Buildings Regulations. Combined with a good standard of ventilation and air tightness, this will help to conserve the fuel used to power the building.

Space Heating

All the flats and communal spaces will be highly insulated with high performance glazing.

Compact Form and Embodied Energy

The general use of this goes towards contributing to reducing the embodied energy, the non-renewable energy consumed in the acquisition of raw materials, their processing, manufacture, transportation to site and the construction process. The proposed configuration of apartments linked by a central corridor also reduces the surface area to floor ratio with a corresponding reduction in the space heating energy usage. Furthermore there is some reduction in the effective area over which the building would lose this heat through its fabric. As a result of the building form, maintenance costs are also reduced particularly if there is a comparison with an equivalent number of bed spaces provided in conventional housing. In conclusion the compact form will increase the whole

life value and reduce the life cycle energy use of the proposed scheme.

HCFC's Emissions

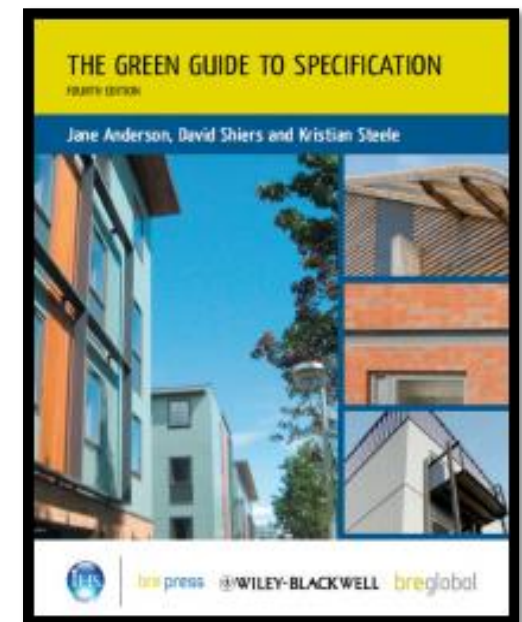
Ozone depleting substances such as HCFC's (hydrochlorofluorocarbons) within the building will be reduced and where possible will not be included in the specification. The standard specification already includes zero ozone depleting insulation types such as 2L2 Super Class O for external walls, Catnic for window lintels, Rockwool mineral fibre for roofs, Acorn polystyrene for floors and foundations and Armaflex for the pipe work.

Water Economy

Dual flush 4-6 litre WCs are specified in each apartment. The individual hot water storage units are located as close as possible to taps so as to minimise the amount of water (and energy) wasted through running the hot tap before hot water is available. Shallow baths reduce water consumption and spray taps incorporate restrictors to reduce flow rates.

Materials

With the exception of timber, most of the materials to be used will be manufactured in the UK and supplied direct or through builder's merchants. These materials will be sourced locally where feasible. All timber to be used in the construction will be sourced from renewable sources with FSC certificates. Nearest-cut lengths will be specified for timber so as to minimise waste. The following building elements will be constructed off-site; concrete floor slabs, concrete stairs, roof trusses.



Transport

The proximity of the proposed development to local amenities has the important benefit of contributing to the reduction of car dependency. A 'Green Transport Plan' will be prepared for future residents in order to inform them of local transport services and home delivery services. The combination of all these factors effectively reduces the potential for adding to air pollution and increasing vehicular fuel consumption.

Durability and Flexibility

The internal space within the apartments is adaptable i.e. the studwork partitions can be easily demounted should future needs change.

Disability

The proposal is designed to allow for ease of access and movement for people with disabilities.

Waste Site Management and Recycling

The proposed development will include refuse and recycling facilities for the project. In addition, McCarthy and Stone encourages suppliers to reduce surplus packaging for materials, fixtures and fittings and seek to minimise the number and effect of deliveries. Wherever

feasible, natural raw materials and products will be used in the construction process. Any packaging such as MDF, wood or plastic wrapping will be reused to protect fragile building elements during the building process such as metallic sinks, porcelain products etc.

Social Needs and Crime Prevention

A handover pack will be provided for the future residents, providing information about their new home including the Green Transport Plan, advice on the energy efficient appliances installed in their homes, addresses and telephone numbers for essential local services, clubs and organisations benefiting the new resident.

Environmental Sustainability

Pre-fabricated concrete products and, most probably, mortar silos, will be used to further reduce on site water use. Fuel use will be minimised during construction by arranging for mains power to be installed as soon as possible. McCarthy and Stone will issue Best Practice Guidelines to site staff on minimising and managing waste together with a system for assessing our waste contractors to emphasise environmental issues as well as regulatory, performance and cost aspects.

Health and Safety

McCarthy and Stone aims to be a good neighbour during the construction process and have a Considerate Construction Policy. This involves minimising noise at unsociable hours and a constant focus on site presentation. The site manager, and the contracts manager for the scheme will be in liaison with the neighbours to ensure that any issues during the construction phase are addressed. Site operatives will be given a health and safety induction before starting construction on site and most site operatives have gone through the health and safety course to obtain their CSCS cards which is a card to certify Health & Safety competence to enter building sites. McCarthy and Stone has a Health and Safety Policy that ensures that issues are addressed on a regular basis at all levels, and have signed up to The Home Builders Federation (HBF) newly established Health & Safety Charter which promotes industry wide improvement. Health and Safety issues are on the agenda at all Board meetings. To promote greater management accountability and year on year improvement in health and safety performance a system of internal fines has been introduced on all construction sites.

Economic Sustainability

The emphasis on local sourcing of effective contactors and sub-contactors who can deliver their services to the construction site on time provides an opportunity to contribute to the economic viability of the local and surrounding areas.

Lighting Assessment

In external areas low level bollard lighting angles light down to where it is most usefully needed, to avoid light pollution, and can be easily located to illuminate paths and parking areas without impacting on residents dwellings. Building lighting is PIR controlled and set to come on from dusk until dawn, providing added security when it is needed, and reducing unnecessary energy usage. All external lighting uses low energy fittings.

Ventilation / Extraction Assessment

Domestic extract fans and ventilation (e.g. to serve kitchens and bathrooms) will be employed within the developments. Extract fans are sited to avoid visual intrusion, and noise/fumes for neighbours.

Noise Impact

The building is set back from the main road and will be partially screened by existing and proposed trees and landscaping. All windows and apartment doors are double glazed to reduce noise disturbance to the residents.

5.5 - ACCESSIBILITY

The development will be occupied by elderly people. While the minimum age for occupation of the retirement living is 60 (with a partner of 55), the average age is 84. As a result, McCarthy & Stone has its own strict criteria regarding the suitability of the location of any development with regards to public transport, shops and services, and within its developments to ensure that all areas are accessible to all the residents. Access to the development has been carefully considered to provide inclusion for all and in consideration of:

1. Supplementary planning guidance 'Inclusive Design and Access for All'
2. Building Regulations (Including Approved Document Part M)
3. British Standards where applicable
4. Lifetime Homes compliant

Please refer to the proposed accessibility plans within this section.

Movement around the Building

The proposed site is ideally located as it is close to the shops providing easy access for groceries and other amenities. There is one main shared pedestrian and vehicular access point and also a shoppers access. The proposal is designed to suit the needs of ambulant disabled people and all of the access points are compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations. The footpaths within the development provide level access and, where necessary, are ramped with a maximum gradient of 1:15.

Movement within the Building

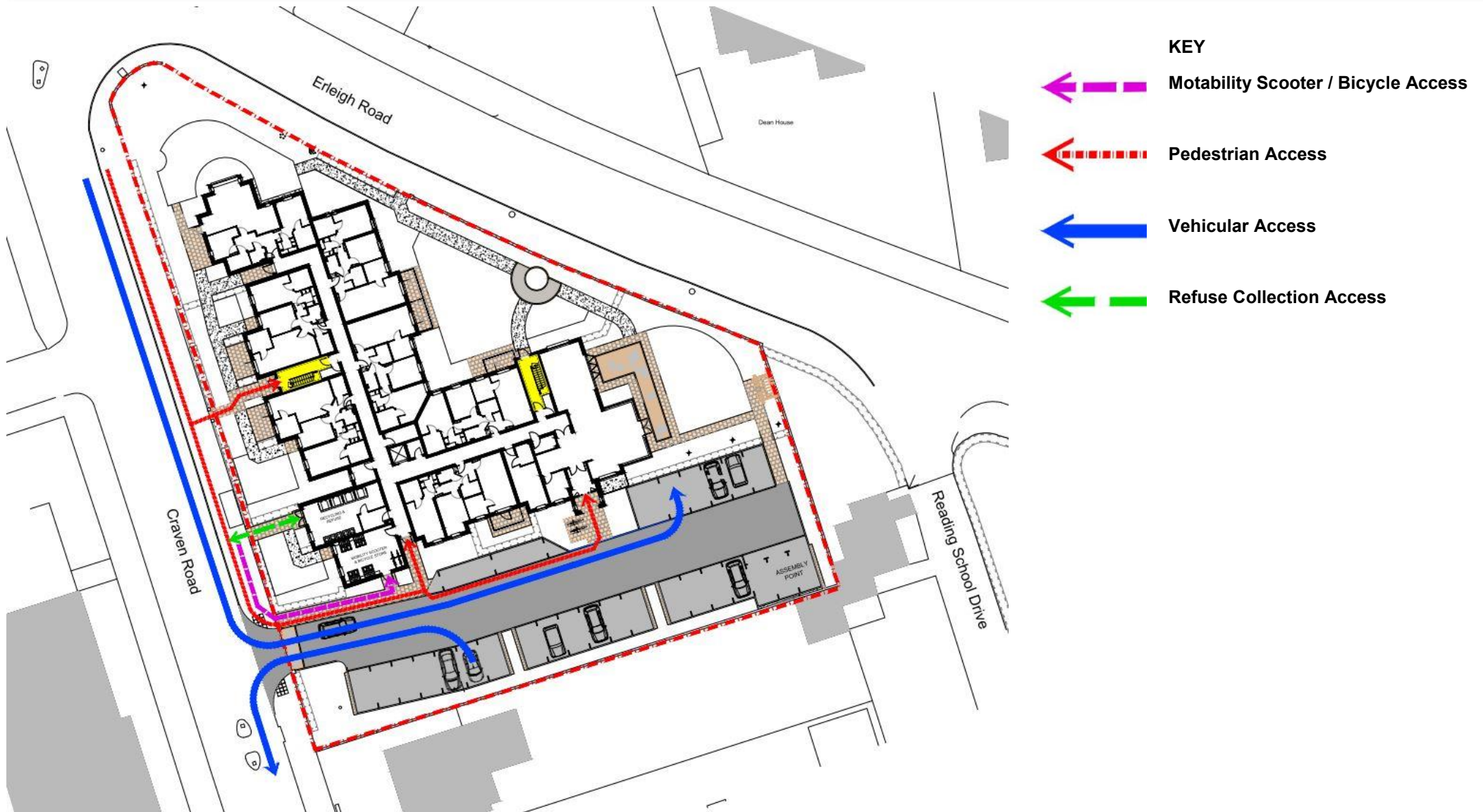
It is an essential feature of retirement living that access within the building is to be achieved without the need for steps. Therefore, level floors will be provided throughout the development.

For this development, access is provided to all floor levels by an 8 person lift, located centrally in the building.

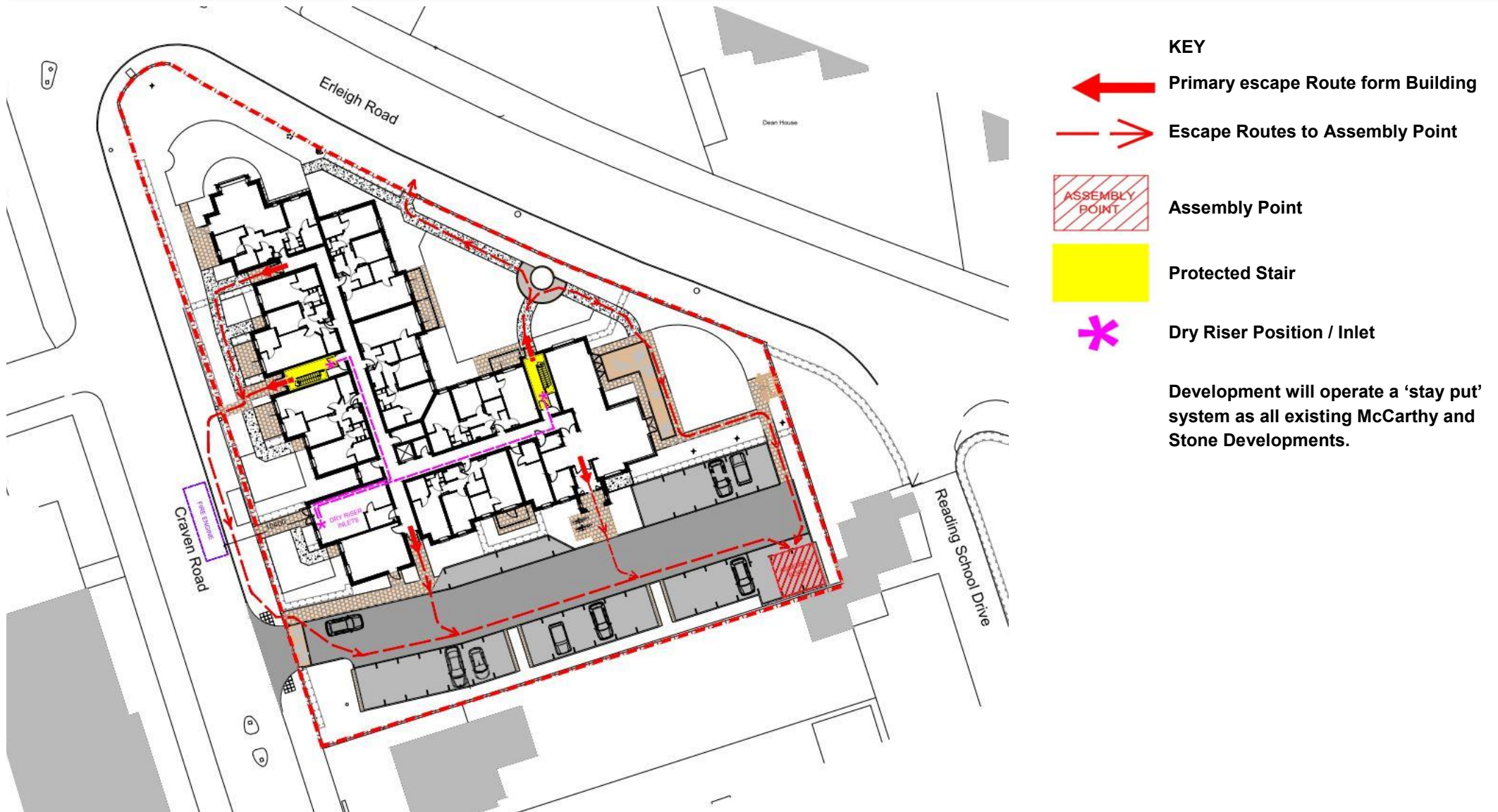
Therefore there will be no need for any resident or visitor to use the staircases. However, the staircases are designed to suit the needs of ambulant disabled people in accordance with the Building Regulations. The entire building is designed to be wheelchair accessible, with level thresholds, wide circulation areas and an accessible lift..

The apartments themselves have door widths sufficient to allow access by wheelchairs and space to manoeuvre within the hall, rooms and shower rooms.

All internal residents communal areas (residents' lounge, reception, mobility scooter store, recycling and refuse store etc.) are located on the ground floor. These are within a short walking distance of the lifts and entrances to ensure easy access for the residents and visitors.



Accessibility Plan: Arriving by Vehicle Mobility Scooter and Foot



Accessibility Plan: Arriving by Vehicle Mobility Scooter and Foot

Refuse and recycling

The facilities for refuse and recycling have been provided within the development. There is a dedicated store near the site entrance containing bins for recycling and refuse. The house manager will be responsible for moving the refuse collection area on refuse collection days. Refuse collection will be from the highway on Craven Road

Residents Accessibility to Amenity Facilities

McCarthy & Stone have a strict criteria regarding the site location of their developments from shops, services and means of public transport. At Craven Road, these are all located within a mile of this development.

Accessibility of Emergency Services

Access for emergency services will be from the Craven Road vehicular entrance. Turning areas are provided within the car parking area.

Fire Evacuation Strategy

Fire exit signs will be specified and placed in the appropriate locations. A comprehensive fire exit strategy will also be drawn up by the management to inform residents of the best exit routes in the event of a fire or flood.

Generally all McCarthy & Stone apartment front doors have a one hour fire resistance and residents are encouraged to stay in their apartments until they are told to move out by the house manager or fire officer in the event of a fire.

The site layout also includes an emergency pedestrian exit gates on the eastern side of the site on Erleigh Road.

Access Diagram

6 SUMMARY



SUMMARY

This statement has set out the key principles which have influenced the detailed design of the scheme. The proposals are practical, honest, sustainable and sensitive to the surrounding area.

Use and Amount

The use of the site and the position of the buildings and open spaces have been explained and justified based on the analysis of the site and surrounding areas. The amount of development proposed has been indicated and the density shown to be appropriate for the site and wider community.

Appearance and Scale

The appearance of the buildings and spaces have been explained and it has been demonstrated that the proposal relates to its surroundings. It has also been evidenced that the scale has been influenced by the existing character of the local area.

Landscape

The hard and soft landscaping has been explained and is shown to be an appropriate response to the scheme and the local environment.

Access

It has been demonstrated that the principles of inclusive design and access for all people have been considered from the outset and informed the development process.



Part Craven Road Colour Elevation