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The Savills logo, featuring the word "savills" in a red, lowercase, sans-serif font, set against a yellow rectangular background.

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Dear Sir / Madam,

Former John Lewis Depot, Letcombe Street, Reading (also known as JLP Mill Lane) – Submission of Full Planning Application

On behalf of our client, John Lewis Partnership (JLP) BTR Ltd, we hereby submit a full planning application at the former John Lewis Depot, Letcombe Street, Reading, RG1 2HN (also known as JLP Mill Lane) for:

“Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site comprising erection of a new building for up to 215 build to rent residential dwellings (Use Class C3) together with flexible commercial / community space (Use Class E/F1/F2), residents’ facilities, landscaping, public realm, amenity space, cycle parking and disabled car parking.”

John Lewis Partnership (JLP)

JLP is the UK’s largest employee-owned business, operating two of Britain’s best-loved retail businesses – John Lewis and Waitrose. Founded over 100 years ago, the company has been built on a vision to ensure a better way of doing business by benefitting its Partners, customers, suppliers and the communities in which JLP operates.

As JLP’s retail business has expanded over many years, it has grown a sizable property portfolio of shops, warehouses and previously developed land. By transforming some of its underutilised, brownfield sites, it has the opportunity to both upgrade some of its stores and provide much-needed homes, including as much affordable housing as is commercially viable, in the communities it serves. Many of JLP’s stores and land holdings are close to transport links and amenities - and the Partnership believes it has a social responsibility to make as best use of these sites as possible, to play a role in addressing the housing crisis facing the UK.

The Build to Rent (BTR) homes proposed will be purpose-built for renters, owned, developed and managed by JLP for the long term, which means it’s in JLP’s interest to deliver high-quality buildings that are thoughtfully designed with long term maintainability and appearance at the forefront. Residents would rent directly from a trusted business, providing them with greater certainty around areas such as quality, service, community and security of tenure.

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Context

The application site at Letcombe Street, Reading currently accommodates a warehouse building with customer collection facilities, ancillary car park and servicing area. However, the use of the existing building became surplus to requirements as a customer collection centre in 2021, with its functions having been transferred to the John Lewis department store at Broad Street, Reading.

The site comprises brownfield land located within the designated Reading Central Area within close proximity to key local services and facilities within the town centre. The redevelopment and intensification of brownfield land in sustainable locations, such as the Site, is explicitly encouraged in both national and local planning policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) and Reading Local Plan (2019). The recently-published draft NPPF (July 2024) further supports the need for increased housing delivery and development of brownfield land. The Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU): Consultation on Scope and Content (Regulation 18) (November 2023) identifies the Site as a potential allocation for 'around 200 build-to-rent dwellings' (ref. Cen 3).

The proposed development seeks to deliver high-quality build-to-rent dwellings in line with the provisions of the draft LPPU (Regulation 18) (November 2023), adopted Local Plan (2019), local supplementary planning guidance and national planning guidance. The submitted proposals have evolved and been informed by positive pre-application discussions held with RBC (via a Planning Performance Agreement (dated August 2023)), review by Design South East (January 2024) and ongoing detailed engagement with the local community. The proposals have also been developed with careful consideration to a range of matters, including but not limited to, heritage and townscape, daylight / sunlight, energy and sustainability, landscape, arboriculture, ecology, transport, noise and air quality.

The submitted planning application demonstrates the clear and substantial benefits of the proposed development, including: provision of a mix of sustainable, high quality, community-integrated new rental homes to support local needs in Reading; provision of a range of residents' facilities (including flexible work from home spaces, gym / fitness studio and communal lounge and dining areas); a flexible commercial / community space to support local businesses and groups; new landscaped spaces, public realm improvements and significant Biodiversity Net Gain; sustainable travel opportunities; local economic benefits (including construction jobs, an increase in household spend, and public sector revenues) and a long-term Social Value programme for the benefit of both the new and existing communities.

It is therefore clear that the submitted planning application should be considered favourably.

Planning Application Submission

Please find enclosed the following documents which comprise the planning application:

- Completed planning application form;
- Completed CIL Additional Information form;
- Application drawings, prepared by Carey Jones Chapman Tolcher (CJCT):
 - Site Location Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0150);
 - Existing Site Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0120);
 - Existing Site Topography (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0130);
 - Existing Ground Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-00-DR-A-0121);
 - Existing Mezzanine Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-01-DR-A-0122);

- Existing Elevations (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0170);
- Proposed Site Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0100);
- Proposed Site Topography (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0110);
- Proposed Ground Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-00-DR-A-0200);
- Proposed 1st Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-01-DR-A-0201);
- Proposed 2nd Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-02-DR-A-0202);
- Proposed 3rd Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-03-DR-A-0203);
- Proposed 4th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-04-DR-A-0204);
- Proposed 5th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-05-DR-A-0205);
- Proposed 6th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-06-DR-A-0206);
- Proposed 7th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-07-DR-A-0207);
- Proposed 8th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-08-DR-A-0208);
- Proposed 9th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-09-DR-A-0209);
- Proposed 10th Floor Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-10-DR-A-0210);
- Proposed Roof Plan (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-RF-DR-A-0211);
- Proposed North Elevation (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0700);
- Proposed South Elevation (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0701);
- Proposed East Elevation (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0702);
- Proposed West Elevation (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0703);
- Proposed Section AA (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0600);
- Proposed Section BB (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0601);
- Proposed Section CC (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0602);
- Proposed Section DD (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0603);
- Typical Core B Parapet Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0500);
- Typical Core A Parapet Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0501);
- Typical Core B Rear Parapet Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0502);
- Typical Core C Parapet Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0503);
- Typical Access Deck Condition (ref. 08278-CJA-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-0504);
- Schedule of Residential Net & Gross Floor Areas, prepared by CJCT;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (including Tree Constraints Plan, Tree Survey and Tree Protection Plan), prepared by AECOM;
- Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, prepared by RPS;
- Air Quality Assessment, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Air Quality Mitigation Plan, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, prepared by AECOM;
- Construction Management Plan, prepared by Graham Construction;
- Daylight and Sunlight Assessment: Internal Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Report, prepared by GIA;
- Daylight and Sunlight Assessment: Impact on Neighbouring Properties Report, prepared by GIA;
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by CJCT;
- Economic Benefits Assessment, prepared by Savills;
- Energy Statement, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- External Lighting Assessment (including External Lighting Design), prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Fire Statement: Gateway One, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Fire Statement: Qualitative Design Review, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, prepared by Fairhurst;
- Framework Residential Travel Plan, prepared by Glanville;

- Heritage, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment, prepared by Montagu Evans;
- Landscape drawings, prepared by Camlins:
 - General Arrangement – Existing Condition Plan (ref. SY743-000-0000);
 - General Arrangement – Public Realm and Landscape (ref. SY743-000-0001);
 - General Arrangement – Overall Landscape (ref. SY743-000-0002);
 - General Arrangement – Landscape Levels (ref. SY743-000-0011);
 - General Arrangement – Areas of Hard Surfaces (ref. SY743-000-0021);
 - General Arrangement – Boundary Treatments, Edges, Steps and Walls (ref. SY743-000-0031);
 - General Arrangement – Growing Medium Formation (ref. SY743-000-0041);
 - General Arrangement – Tree Planting Plan (ref. SY743-000-0051);
 - General Arrangement – Planting Strategy (ref. SY743-000-0061);
 - General Arrangement – Furniture and Fixtures (ref. SY743-000-0071);
- Landscape Strategy, prepared by Camlins;
- Landscape and Ecology Management Plan, prepared by AECOM;
- Noise Impact Assessment, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Operational Waste Management Strategy, prepared by SLR;
- Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessment, prepared by Ramboll;
- Planning Statement, prepared by Savills;
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment, prepared by AECOM;
- Social Value Strategy, prepared by Savills;
- Statement of Community Involvement, prepared by Cratus;
- Sustainability Statement, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Transport Assessment, prepared by Glanville;
- Utilities Assessment, prepared by Hoare Lea;
- Viability Assessment, prepared by DS2; and
- Wind and Microclimate Assessment, prepared by AECOM.

Payment of the appropriate planning application fee is being made separately alongside this submission via the Planning Portal.

I trust that you will find the application in order and I look forward to receiving confirmation that it has been validated. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully



Jonathan Sebbage BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
Associate