Planning Design and Access Statement for Phase 4 of Estate Improvement Project at the Norcot Estate.

Lyndhurst Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6UG.

On behalf of Reading Borough Council.

Date: September 2024 | Pegasus Ref: P24-1958

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Document Management.

Version	Date	Author	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for revision
V1	September 2024	DG	FS	-
V2	September 2024	DG		Internal Review
V3	September 2024	DG		

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1. Introduction

1.1. Pegasus Group have been instructed by Reading Borough Council to prepare a Planning, Design and Access Statement for Phase 4 of the of estate improvement project at Nos. 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 13, 19, 20, 23, 37, 39, 45 and 47 Lyndhurst Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6UG. The description of development is:

> *"Retrospective application for Phase 4 of Estate Improvement Project including; installation of triple glazed uPVC windows; renewal of flat roof coverings; external structural repairs; renewal of pitched roof tiles; installation of air source heat pumps; and installation of external wall insulation"*

1.2. The application is retrospective as the works was completed in November 2023.

1.3. The purpose of this Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) is to set out the planning case for the Proposed Development and assesses the proposals against the provisions of both local and national planning policy. The issues relevant to the assessment of the application proposal are set out in this PDAS. The subsequent sections of this Statement are divided into: -

- Section 2: Site Context and Background - This section contains a description of the application Site and its environs.
- Section 3: Planning History – Provides the previous planning history for the site and other relevant planning applications.
- Section 4: Planning Policy - The planning policy context for the Site includes both national policy guidance and the statutory Development Plan. Brief explanations of the key policies pertaining to the development proposal is contained within this section.
- Section 5: Design – This section provides details of the design including existing and proposed materials.
- Section 6: Access - This section provides details of the access to and from the site.
- Section 7: Planning Assessment - This provides consideration of the overall planning balance.
- Section 8: Conclusion – Concluding comments.

2. Site Context and Background

2.1. The properties are located along the southeastern portion of Lyndhurst Road, Tilehurst, Reading. The area is characterised primarily of residential dwellings, with McIlroy Park located to the west of the site.

2.2. The external appearance of the dwellings, prior to the works, along the street differs from house to house with some pebble dash properties and some finished in painted render.

2.3. The site is not located within a Conservation Area.

2.4. The works were required as several elements of the properties are nearing the end of their life expectancy. The works have also improved the thermal efficiency of the properties by upgrading the windows, installing external insulation and installing air source heat pumps. This aligns with the Council's commitment to the Climate Emergency declaration.

3. Planning History

3.1. The first phase of the improvement works was completed in Spring 2021 and included 11 properties on the Old Norcot Estate. Phase 2 was completed in late 2022. Phase 3 was completed in 2023.

3.2. The Planning Applications for each phase can be seen below:

Phase 1 (App ref. 210904)

3.3. The description of development for the first phase was:

> *"Works consist of property improvements and upgrades of Thermal efficiency measures to dwellings detailed below. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Phase 1 addresses to include:- 35, 37, 39, 41, 43 Bramshaw Road RG30 6AT 69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AS 377 & 379 Norcot Road, RG30 6AB. Works will see the existing render overclad with a new external wall insulation system, replacement of new triple glazed windows, minor roof adaptionsand associated works (Part Retrospective) (Amended Description)."*

3.4. The Officer Report confirmed that the following works were considered permitted development:

- Installation of triple glazed uPVC windows
- Renewal of flat roof coverings
- Structural repairs (External)
- Renewal of pitched roof tiles

3.5. The application was approved 24 June 2021.

Phase 2 (App ref. 220190)

3.6. The description of development for the second phase was:

> *"Property improvement works and Thermal efficiency upgrades to 31 RBC properties. Works to each property will consist of fitting new External Wall insulation, new triple glazed windows and doors, minor roof adaptions, fitting of Air Source Heat pumps, central heating upgrades and associated works. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Addresses include 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 42, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 83, 87, 89 Bramshaw Road. 1, 4, 8 Wimborne Gardens. 158 Thirlmere Ave. 13 Ringwood Road. 61 Lyndhurst Road. 67 Lyndhurst Road. (Part Retrospective)"*

3.7. The application was approved 11 February 2022.

Phase 3 (App ref. 221800)

3.8. The description of development for the third phase was:

"Property improvement works and Thermal efficiency upgrades to 22 RBC properties. Works to each property will consist of fitting new External Wall insulation, new triple glazed windows and doors, minor roof adaptions, fitting of Air Source Heat pumps, central heating upgrades and associated works. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Addresses include:- 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 13 Rockbourne Gardens, RG30 6AU. 2, 4, 7, 8, 10 and 11 Cranbourne Gardens, RG30 6TS. 6, 11, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26 Ripley Road, RG306UD. (Part retrospective) (Amended description)"

3.9. The application was approved 29 June 2023.

3.10. For all of the above applications it was considered that the works were in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3, CC7 and H9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, and that the developments were considered to suitably improve the thermal efficiency of the respective Council owned properties, whilst not harming the character and appearance of the properties or the area. The Case Officer also considered that the proposals aim to improve energy efficiency at the properties were part of the Council's commitment to the Climate Emergency declaration. This weighed heavily in favour of the development.

4. Planning Policy

4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023)

4.2. **Paragraph 131** of the NPPF states that:

> *"The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve."*

4.3. **Paragraph 164** of the NPPF states that:

> *"In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights)."*

Local Planning Policy

4.4. The Reading Borough Council's Development Plan consists of the Local Plan, and the accompanying Proposals Map, adopted November 2019.

4.5. The relevant policies from the Local Plan are listed below:

4.6. **CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Developmen**t – The policy reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

4.7. **CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction** – The redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, 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.

4.8. **CC3 Adaption to Climate Change** – All developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change.

4.9. **CC7 Design and the Public Realm** – 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.

4.10. **CC8 Safeguarding Amenity** - Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties.

4.11. **H9 House Extensions and Ancillary Accommodation** - An extension to a house or other householder development will be acceptable where it:

- *Respects the character and appearance of the house in terms of scale, location, materials and design;*
- *Respects the character and pattern of neighbouring properties and appearance of the street as a whole in terms of scale, location, materials and design, the arrangement of doors, windows and other principal architectural features and any important existing building line;*
- *Does not present an overbearing impact on neighbours or a large blank façade to public areas; and*
- *Does not result in a loss of biodiversity within gardens.*

4.12. In addition to the Local Plan, the following Supplementary Planning Documents are relevant to the proposal:

- **Design Guide to House Extensions SPD** (Adopted March 2021)
- **Sustainable Design and Construction SPD** (Adopted December 2019)

5. Planning, Design and Access Assessment

Design

5.1. The proposed works aim to improve the thermal efficiency of the properties, as well as enhance the local area with new render finishes. The conservation of fuel and power will enable Reading Borough Council to work towards a Zero Carbon target by 2030.

5.2. The existing properties are predominantly 3 bed semi-detached and terraced houses, constructed in the mid 1920's. The proposed works to the properties include:

- Installation of triple glazed uPVC windows
- Renewal of flat roof coverings
- Structural repairs (External)
- Renewal of pitched roof tiles
- The fitting of Air Source Heat pumps to the side of properties.
- External Wall Insulation (EWI) Systems (which may include extensions of roof overhangs to gable ends or dormer style roofs to allow for EWI to be fitted, although from a review of the proposed plans, no changes to the roofs are proposed)

5.3. The existing white plastic double glazed uPVC windows reached the end of lifespan and are were replaced by triple glazed uPVC windows with a similar white plastic frame. This will not change the external design or character of the properties but will improve the thermal efficiency.

5.4. The front and rear doors of each property have been replaced. The existing front doors materials varies across the properties. The replacement front doors are to be Permadoor GRP Plantherm Total with low E float glass part glazed, with colours ranging from grey, black, white and blue. The existing rear doors are double glazed uPVC units with white frames and are replaced with Permadoor GRP Plantherm Total double glazed in frame colour white.

5.5. The replacement doors will provide a uniform door design across the properties and will be of a high quality, ensuring the character and appearance of the area is not harmed.

5.6. The flat roofs are renewed and are a like for like renewal. Due to the nature and scale of the changes these do not have any impact of the external design or character of the properties.

5.7. Structural repairs of the properties are carried out during the project. These include crack stitching using helibar or similar, patch mortar repairs and preparation of existing render prior to new EWI being fitted.

5.8. Renewals of the pitched roofs are also included. The roof tiles match the existing roof tiles and will not impact on the design or character of the properties.

5.9. New central heating systems to include Mitsubishi EcoDan 5KW air source heat pumps to be fitted to the rear or side elevations of each property. New cylinders, radiators and

associated central heating works internally. Gas central heating to be de-commissioned and removed.

5.10. The existing external render of the properties are dated with sections cracking and spalled. All properties have been finished in pebble dash render. This will improve the external appearance of the properties.

5.11. External Wall Insulation system is Permarock (K finish) Silicone Ultra rendering over dense mineral fibre insulation meeting class A1 fire rating and 0.29w/mk required under the Building Regulations. Depth of insulation and overall system to be less than 115mm. Colour is natural white and is a through colour system to reduce the need for maintenance, decoration and fading. The EWI will improve the thermal efficiency of each property and will also improve the overall design of the properties and the character of the area.

5.12. Overall, the design improvements to the properties are considered acceptable and in accordance with policies CC7 and H9.

Access

5.13. Due to the scale and nature of the development it is considered that there is no change in pedestrian or highway access to the properties.

Planning Assessment

5.14. The majority of the works are considered to fall within the definition of permitted development. These include:

1. Installation of triple glazed uPVC windows
2. Renewal of flat roof coverings
3. Structural repairs (External)
4. Renewal of pitched roof tiles
5. Installation of air source heat pumps to the rear of the properties
6. Installation of front and rear doors

5.15. Works numbered 1-4 and 6 were considered permitted development in application ref. 210904/REG. Installation of heat pumps to the rear of properties are permitted development under Class G of Part 14 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

5.16. Notwithstanding this, these elements have been included within the application for completeness. Specification sheets have been provided with the application setting out the details and noise outputs for the ASHPs. Additionally, a Noise Impact Assessment of the Air Source Heat Pumps demonstrates that there will be no noise impacts on residential amenity of the neighbouring properties. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policy CC8 of the Local Plan.

5.17. The installation of the EWI system falls within the definition of 'development' (section 55 of the Town & Country Planning Act) as building operations (section 55 (1A) (d), also bearing in mind 55 (2) a(ii) and the change in appearance of the existing material beneath).

5.18. The finish of the EWI system is natural white and is placed on the existing pebble dash render which is dated with sections cracking and spalled. This results in an improvement of the overall design of the properties and would improve the overall character of the area.

5.19. The finish of the EWI system has a depth of 115mm from the existing render of the properties. Minor changes to the window openings, door frames and eaves are likely, but the external finish will improve the overall design of the properties.

5.20. Reading Borough Council is committed to working towards achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030 since declaring a Climate Emergency. Also, paragraph 4.7 of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019) states heat loss can be prevented by applying high levels of insulation to the roof, walls and floors. Heat loss from windows can be further reduced through double or triple glazing.

5.21. The proposal therefore accords with the Reading Borough Council's Climate Strategy and Policies CC2 and CC3 of the Reading Borough Council's Local Plan which seeks to ensure sustainable design and construction and to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change through building improvements.

6. Conclusion

6.1. This application is for Phase 4 of Reading Borough Council's improvement works to properties located along Lyndhurst Road. The application is a retrospective application as the works have been carried out.

6.2. The design of the improvement works will have a positive impact on the design of the properties and an overall improvement of the character of the area.

6.3. The works also improves the thermal efficiency of the properties, which aligns with Reading Borough Council's Climate Strategy and their target to reach Net Zero by 2030.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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