



PLANNING STATEMENT

Installation of 5no. new pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates around the site.

Branagh Court, Reading, RG30 2QX



- 1.1 UPP Architects & Town Planners have been instructed by the applicant, Branagh Court Management Company Ltd, to prepare a supporting statement in respect of a full planning application at the site known as Branagh Court, Reading, RG30 2QX. This planning statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying architectural plans.
- 1.2 The proposal for the site seeks to install 5no. new pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates around the site.
- 1.3 This document provides details of the proposed scheme and will demonstrate that the proposal is in accordance with planning policy and guidance at national and local levels.

2. The Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site relates to a large five storey block of flats centred around a central courtyard which is used for parking. The property benefits from two street frontages on Oxford Road and Constitution Hill. The existing flatted development is obscured, in part, by mature landscaping which softens the impact of this brick built building when viewed from the public realm.
- 2.2 The development site is located in an area of mixed use with commercial and residential properties in the immediate locality. The existing dwellings on the street comprise a mix of single-family dwelling houses and flatted developments. The wider area is of mixed character.
- 2.3 The site is located outside of the Green Belt, any Conservation Area or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site is located within Flood Zone 1 which has a low probability of flooding. The property is not listed nor are there any listed buildings located in the surrounding area.



3. Relevant Planning History

Application Site:

- 3.1 There is no relevant planning history for this site.

4. The Proposal

- 4.1 The proposal seeks to provide 5no. new pedestrian and vehicular entrance gates around the site.
- 4.2 The site is very exposed at the moment by virtue of the fact that there are five different entry points from the street into the site both through pedestrian and vehicular accesses. As such, the proposal is seeking to improve the safety of its residents through the creation of these new entrance gates and railings.
- 4.3 The gates and railings will be modest in height and design to maintain views through the site and ensure that they do not become overbearing in appearance.

5. Planning Policy

- 5.1 The Local Development Framework for the application is as follows:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Reading Local Plan (2019)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised on 5 September 2023. This is a key part of the Government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, and to promote sustainable growth.
- 5.3 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities ... being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this”. The NPPF retains a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This applies unless any adverse impacts of a development would 'significantly and demonstrably' outweigh the benefits.
- 5.4 The determination of planning applications is made mindful of Central Government advice and the Local Plan for the area. It is recognised that Local Planning Authorities must determine applications in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and that the planning system does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against another.

Reading Local Plan (2019)

- 5.5 Policy CC1 in relation to the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development states “A positive approach to considering development proposals will be taken that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Where appropriate, the Council will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible.”
- 5.6 Policy CC7 relating to Design and the Public Realm states that developments should “Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; Address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable

access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily”.

6. Policy Considerations

Principle of Development

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The proposal is seeking to install gates and railings to an existing building and is not creating a new use or increasing the number of residential dwellings on site. As the proposal is an ancillary development to the existing flatted development it is not anticipated that there will be an issue with the principle of development from a planning perspective.

Design

- 6.2 The proposed development has been designed to provide a high-quality development that will enhance the character of the area and will not compromise the quality of the existing built form. The proposed gates and railings have been kept to a minimum in terms of height and size so that they do not appear overly dominant. Similarly, the gates and railings are seeking to use the existing brick built structures as much as possible to ensure there is no additional unnecessary clutter or built form.
- 6.3 New gates and railings will be installed in the pedestrian and vehicular access areas around the site. The gates will either open inwards in the site or will be sliding vehicular gates so that they do not compromise pedestrian or highways safety.

- 6.4 In terms of materiality, the gates and railings will be black painted metal railings with defined spacing between the railings to maintain views through the site and ensure that they do not appear overly prominent from a street scene perspective. Their design and height has been kept to a minimum for the exact same reason.
- 6.5 Given the size and siting of the railings as well as their materiality, it is not considered that they would compromise the aesthetics of the existing building or wider locality.

Neighbouring Amenity

- 6.6 As part of any planning application, it is important to ensure development proposals will not have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity with regards to light, outlook or increased sense of enclosure.
- 6.7 The scheme has been designed to minimise the potential impact on the amenity of existing and neighbouring residents. The proposed gates and railings will be located away from the windows of any habitable rooms. The railings and gates will be low in height and scale and the spacing between the railings will allow views through them to be maintained. Given their size, siting and distance to residential dwellings it is not anticipated that the proposals will have an adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.
- 6.8 It is also worth noting that the main reason for installing the gates is to improve safety and reduce the fear of crime within the development. The gates will act as a deterrent against potential crime which will ultimately improve safety in the area to the benefit of residents in Branagh Court and the wider vicinity.

7. Conclusion



- 7.1 It has been demonstrated that the principle of development, the installation of metal gates and railings is likely to be acceptable given that it is an ancillary development to an existing use.
- 7.2 The proposal has been designed in a sensitive way and would not dominate the character and appearance of the street scene. It has also been demonstrated that neighbouring amenity will be safeguarded at all times and the proposal will reduce the fear of safety for residents in Branagh Court.
- 7.3 In view of the above, it is anticipated that the proposal is compliant with national and local planning policies.