



June 2025

Design & Access and Planning Statement

PROPOSAL: Demolish existing pool house and construct a new detached dwelling

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Design and Access Statement and Planning Justification Report has been prepared in support of a full planning application for a detached, two-storey 4-bedroom dwelling on land to the rear of 4 Manor House Court. The site, currently owned by the grandmother of the applicant comprises previously developed domestic curtilage that is fully enclosed and currently occupied by redundant outbuildings and hardstanding. The proposal seeks to make efficient use of underutilised brownfield land within the settlement boundary of Reading, in accordance with policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan and the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The applicant, who has been involved in the design process will build the house as a self-build project as his future private home. This design and access and planning statement should be read in conjunction with the following additional documents submitted

- Air Quality Statement
- Preliminary Roost Assessment
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment Map
- CIL Form
- Plans:

-24035PL01D LOCATION PLAN
-24035PL02D- BLOCK PLAN
-24035PL03D EXISTING AND PROPOSED SITEPLANS
-24035PL06D PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS
-24035PL07D PROPOSED ELEVATIONS
-24035PL08D EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS FLOOR PLANS
-24035PL09D EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS ELEVATIONS

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PLANNING CONTEXT AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The site lies within the defined settlement boundary of Reading and is situated in a well-established residential area. The relevant policies from the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted November 2019) include:

- Policy H1: Delivery of Housing
- Policy H2: Density and Efficient Use of Land
- Policy H3: Affordable Housing



- Policy H5: Standards for New Housing
- Policy H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- Policy H11: Development of Private Residential Gardens
- Policy CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- Policy CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- Policy CC1 and CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy TR5: Car and Cycle Parking Standards

The site is not located within a conservation area, is outside of flood zones 2 and 3, and does not fall within a designated heritage setting. There are no protected trees or ecological constraints present on the site.

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site measures approximately 320m² and is accessed via an existing rear lane that serves Tuns Hill Cottages. It is bounded on all sides by brick walls and lies directly behind No. 4 Manor House Court. Currently, the site is entirely paved and contains three outbuildings: a 93m² former pool house, a 31.1m² workshop, and an 11.5m² shed, all of which are in poor condition and no longer in active use. There are no soft landscape features, trees, or biodiversity assets present. The land has previously served as part of the extended domestic curtilage to No. 4.

The site constitutes both previously developed and residential land without constituting backland development, indeed it will continue the line of the existing properties to the north side of Tuns Hill Cottages.



Site areal view

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4. DESIGN RATIONALE LAYOUT, AMOUNT & SCALE

The proposal is for a medium sized two-storey detached family home with a gross internal area of 142m². The layout includes four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a lounge, kitchen/dining area, utility room, and WC. The building footprint is 84.6m² and allows for high-quality private garden space to the front, parking to the east side and 1m buffer to the western boundary.

The design reflects the established character of the area, with a setback position relative to Tuns Hill Cottages and a side-to-side ridge orientation, in line with the neighbouring properties at 18–35 Tuns Hill Cottages. Externally, the house will feature red brick walls, a **plain** tile roof, and white-painted timber windows — materials that are consistent with the local vernacular.

No dormers are proposed, helping to preserve a simple and coherent roofscape. The ridge and eaves heights (7.9m and 5.1m respectively) are appropriate to the neighbouring properties along the north side of Tuns Hill Cottages.

The proposed dwelling will largely occupy the footprint of the existing pool building, but with a 3.1m setback from the front boundary. Its front-to-rear depth is 10.7m, making it slightly shorter than the neighbouring property's approximate 11.7m depth. Although the house is detached and wider than some surrounding buildings, the plot is comfortably sized, and the scheme does not represent overdevelopment. An alternative proposal for two dwellings on this site was discounted due to inadequate provision for parking, amenity space, and separation.

The building is carefully positioned towards the western boundary to avoid overlooking issues with No. 14 Tuns Hill Cottages.

4A. ROOM AREAS SCHEDULE – NATIONAL SPACE STANDARDS COMPLIANT

Kitchen / dining 31.2m²

Living Room 26.6m²

Bedroom 1 15.7m² 2 Person

Bedroom 2 11.1m² 1 Person

Bedroom 1 12.8m² 2 Person

Bedroom 1 7.8m² 1 Person

Whole dwelling 142m²

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The proposed dwelling surpasses the overall area requirement for a 4bed/6person dwelling of 106m². The double bedrooms surpass the 11.5m² requirement and the single bedrooms surpass the requirement for 7.5m² floor area. Bedroom widths and storage are also all comfortably surpassed.

5. PRIVATE AMENITY SPACE

The proposal includes a high-quality 130m² private rear garden laid mostly to lawn with space for the usual residential garden amenities. There is an additional 24m² garden amenity space to the front as well as the drive offering a further 84m². This exceeds the buildings external footprint area of 84m² and the internal floor area of 142m².

6. NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

The proposal complies fully with Policy CC8 regarding protection of amenity from loss of privacy, overbearing form, or overshadowing.

The dwelling has been carefully designed to avoid impact on adjacent properties. Boundary walls are retained on all sides, and window placement ensures no direct overlooking of neighbouring dwellings, particularly Nos. 18 and 14 Tuns Hill Cottages and 25 Church Road. The host property (No. 4 Manor House Court) lies to the north and is within the applicant family's ownership.

Specifically there are no first floor windows looking west towards the properties of No.18 Tuns Hill Cottages or 25 Church Road which are 10m and 24m distant respectively. Although there is a property opposite: No.14 Tuns Hill Cottages, they are not directly opposite. No.14 will face the proposed drive and the proposed dwelling will face the land and carport to the west side.

The first-floor windows to the north elevation of No.14, shown below, comprise of a window over the stairs to the west and a high-level window over a solid balcony door to the bedroom. Neither of these will cause overlooking and will be on a diagonal line of over 9m.

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PHILIP WADGE
ARCHITECTURE



Current north elevation of No. 14 opposite the proposed drive

7. ACCESS

Access to the site is via the existing site access onto the gravel lane part of Tuns Hill Cottages. The proposed layout includes two off-street parking spaces (each 2.5m x 5.0m) on a permeable paved driveway, along with a 7kW electric vehicle charging point, in full compliance with Policy TR5



Looking East along Tuns Hill Cottages and the existing site access gates

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The existing access onto Tuns Hill Cottages, which comprises of a made highway portion and unmade drive like lane at its eastern end, this is an existing situation. The eastern exit onto Church Road is via a dropped kerb indicating a drive like entrance. The proposed access for the new house is via the unmade drive/lane onto the highway network to the west, which overlaps the western boundary of the site by approx. 3.5m.

This is the same situation as the two semi-detached properties opposite (nos.14 & 15 Tuns Hill Cottages) constructed less than 20 years ago. The addition of one dwelling will not add any material increase in traffic movements and is a very sustainable location.

Secure cycle storage in the form of a lockable shed (1.8x2.4m) and screened bin stores are also integrated into the front of the plot.

Dwelling access

The proposal meets the requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings in accordance with the building regulations with a level threshold entrance and accessible hard standing areas.

8. LANDSCAPING AND BIODIVERSITY

The current site is fully hard-paved and supports no trees or natural habitat. The pool building B1 and shed B2, which are to be demolished as part of the application have both been assessed for Bats and the Preliminary Roost Assessment concludes:

“The proposed development involves the demolition of B1 and B2 at ‘land behind’ 4 Manor House Court, both of which have been confirmed to offer negligible bat roosting potential.”

The proposal introduces over 100m² of soft landscaping, including lawns and new tree planting (Rowan) at the front and rear. This results in biodiversity gain, although as a self-builder application is exempt from BNG requirements.

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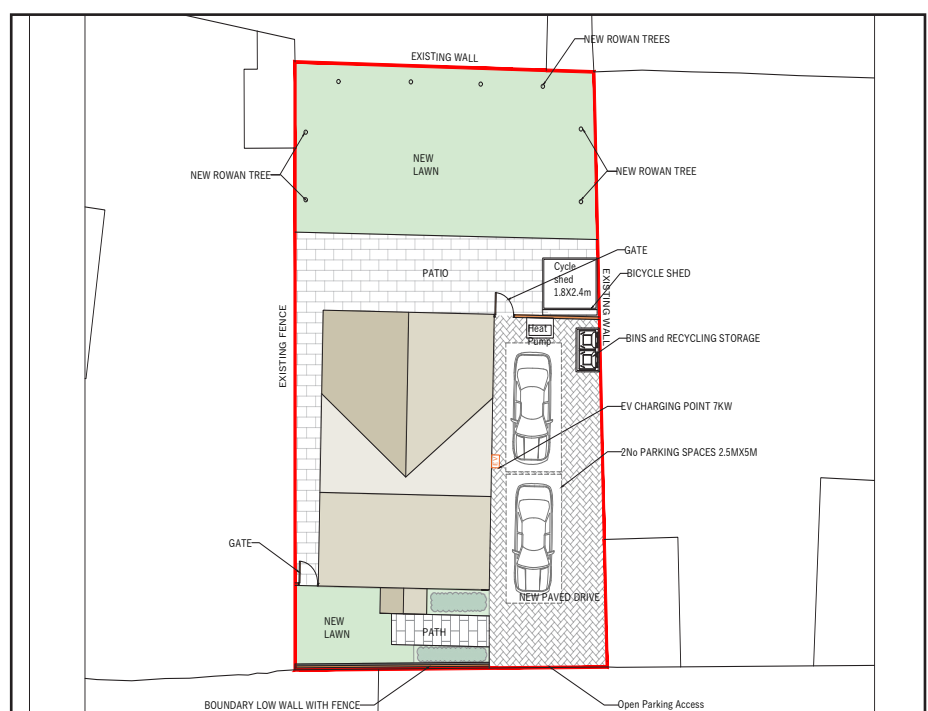
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9. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Water efficiency

According to Policy H5, all new-build housing in Reading is required to achieve water neutrality where possible. At a minimum, all water fittings and appliances within new-build housing should comply with the 'optional' standard outlined in Table 2.2 Part G of the Building Regulations. This standard mandates a fittings approach that limits water consumption to 110 litres per person per day. This will be achieved by use of water efficient fixtures.

Carbon Emissions and Compliance with Local and National Policy

Reading Borough Council previously set local emissions standards for new dwellings within its Local Plan, aiming to achieve a 19% reduction in carbon emissions over Part L 2013. However, these local requirements have effectively been superseded by the national uplift to Building Regulations introduced in June 2022, which now mandate a 31% reduction in emissions over the same 2013 baseline.

This proposal will be fully compliant with the latest Building Regulations (Approved Document Part L 2021), thereby exceeding the former local policy target and supporting the Council's overarching sustainability objectives.

The specific requirement for TER/BER calculations using latest SAP10 software, compliant with latest building regulations is an absolute requirement for any new home in England and Wales, the latest As-built certification requires photographic evidence of construction on site built as plan.

The proposed house will meet the requirements by exceeding insulation requirements (already stringent) and use of low-carbon technologies including air-source heat pump shown on the site plan.

Sustainable Transport

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging: Provision is included for an EV charging point, supporting low-emission vehicle use.

Public Transport Accessibility: The property is well-connected to local bus services, reducing reliance on private car use:

Tun Hills Bus Stop (Wokingham Road) – A 2-minute walk from the site, served by routes 4, 4A and 17, providing frequent services to Reading town centre, Wokingham and Bracknell.

St Peter's Church Bus Stop (Church Road) – A 3-minute walk, served

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by routes 17A and 17C offering additional connections to Reading and surrounding residential areas.

Pedestrian access is good with footpaths linking the site with the rest of Reading and the surrounding neighbourhood.

Cycle Provision, Secure cycle storage is provided facilitating occupants to cycle to nearby facilities using the existing road and cycle path infrastructure.

10. PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The proposed development represents sustainable infill within the Reading settlement boundary and constitutes the re-use of previously developed garden land replacing a dilapidated and unused swimming pool building. The proposal makes good use of the site available and without amounting to overdevelopment.

The amount and density of the proposed development is right for the site, it does not constitute overdevelopment of the site, but nevertheless will contribute to RBC housing supply. Latest targets have been raised from 689 to 825 dwellings per year and targeting previously developed land and infill developments within the borough.

The proposal will use existing access, that is currently gated, opening onto a gravel drive/lane before opening onto the public highway.

It delivers a high-quality, family-sized dwelling that respects local character, adds biodiversity, and maintains neighbour amenity.

The proposals and its location are regarded as highly sustainable without causing any impact on existing wildlife or biodiversity which is largely absent from the site currently.

The proposal is policy-compliant in terms of access, scale, parking, and layout. It directly supports Policies H1, H2, CC8, and TR5, and meets the design and climate adaptation requirements of the Local Plan and the NPPF. For these reasons, planning permission is respectfully sought.

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