



Planning

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Client:

Dr Abdulrahman Saadeddin

Springwoods,

The Warren, Caversham, RG4 7TQ

Erection of extensions and outdoor seating area.

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CIL | Enforcement | Land Promotion | Planning | Sequential Tests | Viability

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/D/24/3345579

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is produced to support a planning application for the erection of extensions and outdoor seating area at Springwoods, The Warren, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7LQ.
- 1.2 This planning statement will cover the background to the application and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council. It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies and other material considerations. The conclusion reached is that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.
- 1.3 In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate planning application forms and ownership certificate, duly signed and completed, and supporting documents prepared by RG Concept, Bonney Architecture, Geosmart and Roavr Group, comprising:
- Ground and First Floor Plans
 - Proposed Plans
 - Landscaping Plan
 - Elevational Plans
 - Drainage Plans
 - Flood Risk Assessment
 - Ecology Assessment
 - Arboricultural Assessment
- 1.4 The relevant application fee will be submitted by the applicant separately.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site comprises a 5 bedroom, 3 bathroom detached dwelling, to the south side of The Warren, backing onto the River Thames, a protected habitat and a Major Landscape Feature.
- 2.2 The dwelling has an existing garage/outbuilding at street level which can accommodate 3 off-road parking spaces.
- 2.3 The ground level drops dramatically behind the garage and only the roof top can be seen from the street level. The property has existing extensions on either side, a single storey extension to the east and a 1.5 storey extension to the west side.
- 2.4 There is one TPO tree at the rear of the plot and the site sits within Flood Zone 3.



3. Planning History

- 3.1 920828 - Extension to bedroom and a new dining room - Granted.
- 3.2 PL/24/1281 - Erection of a two-storey rear extension to include a first floor balcony, extension of the eastern single storey area, a front two storey extension on the existing porch, and an upward extension of the existing western extension as well as alterations to the hard and soft landscaping. – Refused – 27.02.25

4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121).
- 4.2 Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:
- 4.3 **Use and Amount:** The proposed use is for extensions and an outdoor seating area.

- 4.4 **Layout and Scale:** The proposal looks to create an open plan living area to the ground floor to the rear, with glass offering a view of the River Thames and rooflights allowing for ample daylight and sunlight.
- 4.5 **Landscaping:** Landscaping proposals are detailed on the supporting plans.
- 4.6 This arrangement seeks to make the most efficient use of the site whilst working within the level changes across the site.
- 4.7 **Appearance:** The proposal will comprise majority grey brick to the ground floor element, with a light grey render to the first floor and dark grey brick to the roofing as well as vertical strips of aluminium offering a modern appearance and seeking to enhance the current fenestration.
- 4.8 **Access & Parking:** The proposal will not result in any changes to the existing access arrangements whereby a garage/outbuilding at road level can accommodate 3 off road parking spaces.

5. Policy Assessment

- 5.1 **National Guidance:** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application.
- 5.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that "*Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way*" and "*at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible*".

- 5.3 Paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- 5.4 Paragraph 131 identifies 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”*, whilst paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to *“outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”*
- 5.5 The National Design Guide builds on the above, and clarifies that *“well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use”* (para 109).
- 5.6 **Principle of Development:** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance, the Development Plan comprises the following documents:
- Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)
- 5.7 The application site falls within the Settlement Boundary where there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

5.8 No concerns were raised in regard to the principle of development as part of application ref. PL/24/1281. As such, the principle of extensions is considered acceptable.

5.9 **Character and Appearance of the Area:** The Warren comprises a row of dwellings backing onto the River Thames of a mixed character typically set in spacious plots with large rear gardens. Dwellings along The Warren have a great variation in scale, design and fenestration, with more modern looking properties comprising a grey and white rendering such as nos. 137 and 139 to the north west, and more traditional style red brick dwellings such as Leighton Hall to the south east. Given this, the proposal presents an opportunity to bring a new modern lease of life to one of the more outdated dwellings along The Warren, being sympathetic to both its immediate neighbours as well as the wider street scene.

5.10 Policy CC7 states that all development must be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located. The various components of development form, including:

- Layout: urban structure and urban grain;
- Landscape;
- Scale: height and massing; and
- Architectural detail and materials

5.11 It is considered that dwellings within the streetscape benefit from large plot sizes as well as being separated by boundary features and distance.

5.12 As such, the proposal has been designed in such a way as to not be unacceptably out of keeping or appear unduly disproportionate in the

context of its plot or with respect to neighbouring dwellings. Although the dwelling would appear larger than its immediate neighbours, the proposal would reflect the style and scale of other dwellings within the area, including notably larger and more modern dwellings such as 137 and 139 The Warren, something which was found to be acceptable in recent appeal ref: APP/N1730/D/24/3345579 (**Appendix 1**).

- 5.13 As part of application ref. PL/24/1281, the scale of the extension was scaled back. This was then deemed acceptable.
- 5.14 The site is identified as falling within a Major Landscape Feature (MLF) Area given its proximity to the River Thames. Policy EN11 states that Reading's waterspaces will be protected and enhanced and states that there will be no impact on the functions and setting of any watercourse and its associated character.
- 5.15 The proposal seeks to enhance existing landscaping through a landscaping scheme to the rear garden in the closest proximity to the watercourse, it is considered that this will have no significant impacts upon the character of function of the River Thames and as such is in accordance with Policy EN11.
- 5.16 Policy EN13 states that planning permission will not be granted for any development that would detract from the character and appearance of an MLF. The scheme has been sensitively designed to respect the distinct character of the River Thames and retains access from the rear garden to the waterfront.
- 5.17 Refusal Reason 2 of application ref. PL/24/1281 largely focuses on the impact of the previous scheme on the Major Landscape Feature. The Officer Report of the previous application discusses this in more detail stating that *'the proposal includes extensive areas of works within the rear garden involving terracing and paving of the majority*

of the rear garden area. The case officer requested that these are significantly scaled down or removed in their entirety from the proposal, which was then amended to include a 10m long area of relief from the riverbank to the hard surfaced areas of the garden. This is not considered sufficient or acceptable for a number of reasons.'

5.18 As part of this application, the outdoor seating area has been significantly further scaled back, wrapping more around the area immediately adjacent to the property itself.

5.19 It is considered that due to the design changes, the impact of the proposed development on the Major Landscape Feature is now considered acceptable. As such, Refusal Reason 2 of PL/24/1281 is considered to have been addressed.

5.20 **Residential Amenity:** Policy CC8 states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties in terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development
- Harm to outlook;
- Noise and disturbance
- Artificial lighting

5.21 The proposal has been designed to afford maximum daylight and sunlight to future occupants through the use of glass throughout the

property as well as the proposed balcony extension to the rear, affording views over the River Thames.

- 5.22 The site as existing benefits from mature boundary treatment as shown in Figure 1, offering screening from neighbouring dwellings protecting both the host dwelling and neighbouring dwellings from any potential overlooking or privacy concerns. The landscaping scheme proposes to retain all existing boundary treatments as has been demonstrated by the Arboricultural Impact Assessment.



Photographic plate showing the rear garden boundary. (ROAVR, 2024)

Figure 1 – Photograph showing mature boundary screening as taken from the Arboricultural Impact Assessment

- 5.23 The proposal is therefore found to be in accordance with Policy CC8, having minimal impacts upon the residential amenity of neighbouring occupants, and affording ample amenity space to future occupants.

- 5.24 **Trees and Landscaping:** An Arboricultural Impact Assessment by Roavr Group is submitted as part of the application. It is noted that as part of application ref. PL/24/1281, Refusal Reason 1 related to the impact of the proposal on trees.
- 5.25 The previous officer report noted that *'the hard surface also encroaches into the root protection areas of a number of the existing trees on site. The submitted arboricultural assessment appears to indicate the unacceptability of the proposal by comment or the unfeasible tree retention by lack of detailed impact assessment. The report supports the concern for the development, and no information has been submitted to demonstrate how these concerns will be mitigated or avoided. As such, the proposal has failed to demonstrate that there will be no risk to existing trees resulting from the proposed development.'*
- 5.26 As part of this application, the applicant has engaged further with a arboricultural specialist to amend the design of the scheme to address these matters.
- 5.27 Firstly, the outdoor seating area has been significantly scaled back as part of this application, removing a large amount of hard standing that was present in the previous scheme.
- 5.28 The outdoor seating area is now proposed to be made from decking. The tree report discusses the proposed scheme on T1, T2 and T3 and outlines how mitigation and protection measures can be put in place in order to make the impact on trees acceptable. These can be controlled by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.29 For the reasons detailed above, the arboricultural concerns raised by application ref. PL/24/1281 have been addressed.

- 5.30 **Transport and Parking:** The proposal will maintain existing access and parking arrangements, offering 3 parking spaces in excess of the parking standards as set out in the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD.
- 5.31 **Ecology:** A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is submitted alongside this application. The appraisal demonstrates that the proposals are unlikely to have any significant ecological impacts. Furthermore, whilst the proposal is not required to demonstrate Biodiversity Net Gain due to the householder exemption that exists in national policy.
- 5.32 It is important to consider refusal Reason 1 of application ref. PL/24/1281 also considered the ecological impact of the previous scheme. The officer report for the previous application stated that *'the site is a priority habitat (NPPF 2024) with a number of existing trees within the garden. The plans do not demonstrate how the development will enhance the wildlife corridor or achieve a net gain for biodiversity. In a riverside context such as this one, enhancements should specifically focus on improving the river corridor. However, the landscaping plans and 'photo' within, that the proposals introduce a length of wall and hardstanding ('development) along the edge of the River Thames.'*
- 5.33 In response to the Council's previous concerns, the applicant has removed the wall and hardstanding at the edge of the River Thames.
- 5.34 An updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Roavr Group is also included as part of the application and outlined a number of measures that can be controlled by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission including bird and amphibian boxes, the planting of new hedgerow and trees. These biodiversity measures can be secured by condition, allowing the proposal to accord with Policy EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network. This allows the proposal to

accord with the policy objectives of improving the river corridor and green networks that exist within this space.

- 5.35 The measures outlined below are considered to address the ecological concerns raised as part of application ref. PL/24/1281.
- 5.36 **Cycle Provision:** The proposal does not seek to alter the existing provision for cycle parking.
- 5.37 **Refuse Provision:** The proposal does not seek to alter the existing refuse storage area.
- 5.38 **Drainage and SuDS:** The site falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3, it is not considered that any additional Drainage measures are required to be demonstrated.
- 5.39 Refusal Reason 3 of application ref. PL/24/1281 related to drainage.
- 5.40 The Officer report for the previous application states that *'concern has been raised by the public with regards to the submitted flood risk assessment (FRA), and its accuracy. The site is known to flood frequently; however, this was not accounted for in the assessment as the flood events are not categorised as significant by the Environment Agency. Regardless of this, the concern remains with regards to the extensive areas of hard surfacing and their effect on the runoff of flood water, especially to neighbouring residential plots. The mitigation measures identified in the submitted FRA are also not identified on the submitted plans and the proposal fails to demonstrate how the design has adopted and responded to its own FRA findings. As such, the proposal fails to adequately assess the flood risk to the site, and the impact of the proposal, specifically the areas of hardstanding, on the flood risk to neighbouring sites through run off.'*

- 5.41 As part of this re-submission – an amended Flood Risk Assessment and additional drainage plans have been prepared as part of the application to address the Council’s previous concerns. The report suggests a number of mitigation measures that can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.42 As detailed elsewhere in this report, the outdoor seating area has been significantly scaled back with the lower sections of the garden remaining as existing – maintaining the existing drainage conditions.
- 5.43 In addition to this, flood defence measures have been detailed on the proposed plans and elevations including:
- Hard flooring throughout ground floor
 - Use of lime plaster internally or moisture resistant plasterboard
 - Utilities to be installed above predicted flood levels
 - Communication infrastructure protected by water tight ducts
- 5.44 In addition to this, a Floor Flow Measures plan has been provided in support of the application. This outlines how in the event of a major flooding event, measures such as the opening of doors/windows can be implemented allowing a flow of water through the building, reducing stress on the structure as a whole. The mitigation measures detailed in the report and on the new plans can be secured by condition in the event of a grant of planning permission.
- 5.45 Lastly, concerns were raised by the Council as part of application ref. PL/24/1281 that the flood risk assessment did not take into account a sufficient number of flooding events, specifically in January 2024. As part of this submission, the report has been updated to capture further flood events.

- 5.46 For the reasons detailed above, Refusal Reason 3 of application ref. PL/24/1281 is considered to have been addressed.
- 5.47 **Contamination:** The site is not known to fall within a contaminated land area.
- 5.48 **Archaeology:** The site is not located in area of known Archaeological significance.
- 5.49 **Community Infrastructure Levy:** The relevant CIL forms have been submitted alongside the application.

6. Conclusion

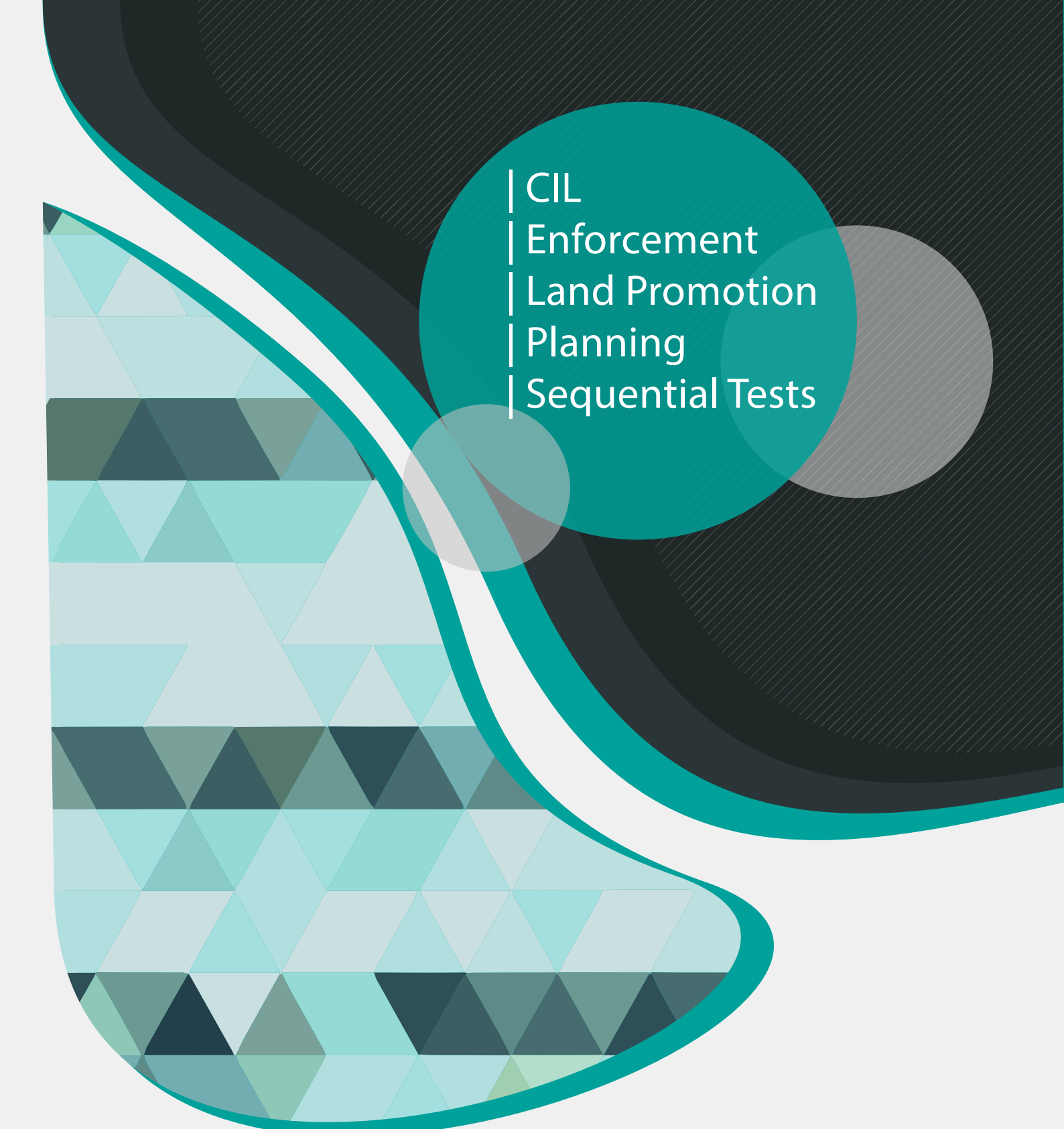
- 6.1 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.
- 6.2 Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in section 5 of this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would create a more attractive dwelling through the provision of extensions without adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents. The proposed scheme has taken on board the comments raised by the Council as part of application ref. PL/24/1281 and provided further information/amended details in respect of these concerns, allowing them to be overcome.
- 6.3 It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

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