



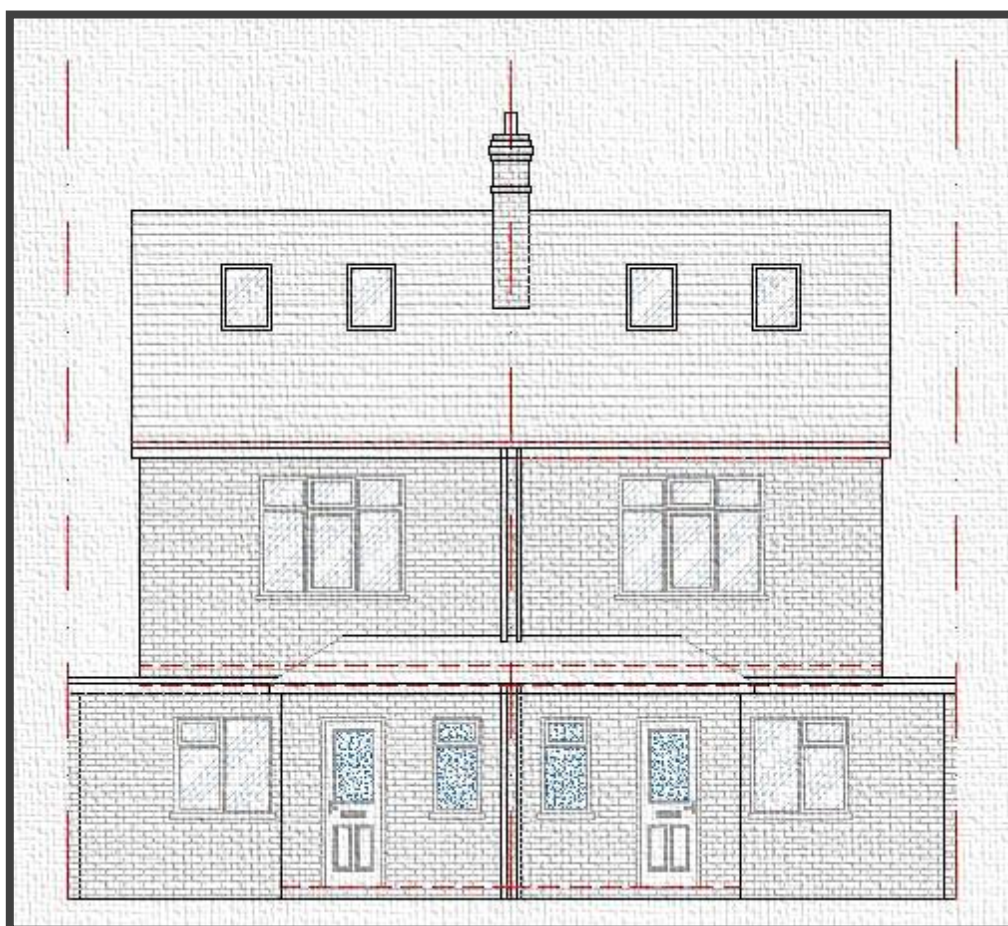
24-26 Wantage Road, Reading, RG30 2SE

**Proposed erection of 2no. semi-detached dwellings following demolition of
the existing garages.**

Planning Statement

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1. Introduction

1.1. Preface

This planning statement has been prepared in support of a Full application for the proposed erection of 2no. semi-detached dwellings at 24-26 Wantage Road in Reading.

The following statement covers the subject and information required for submission as set National Planning Policy Framework and Reading Borough Local Plan documents. This document will outline the application site history and the design strategy for the proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.

1.2. Site Location



Aerial photograph





Bird's eye photograph (front)



Bird's eye photograph (rear)



1.3. Site Description

The application site is located at the back of nos. 24-26 Wantage Road, on the eastern side of Wilson Road, within the boundaries of the Reading. The application site contains 2x garages with grass areas at the back, located opposite of a group of semi-detached and terraced properties of residential use and adjacent to two storey detached dwelling. The application site includes two detached garages, measuring circa 2.5m by 5.0m with a 2.3m high ridge, dual pitched roofs. The site is partially surrounded by close-boarded fence, covered with concrete hardstanding and it generally appears of a low-quality in comparison with the neighbouring residential properties.

The cluster of properties on the opposite, western side of the road, both terraced and semi-detached are considered relatively cohesive and unified in terms of their scale, design and building line within their groups.

It is noted that properties in the surrounding area, on the eastern side of the road and in wider perspective as well, contain residential use however of a very mixed design and more diverse appearance. Adjacent to the application site there are residential buildings (2 or 2.5 storeys) mixed with traditional semi-detached dwellings, single storey garages, school, place of worship. The adjacent dwellings contain various sizes of plots and heights. Wilson and Wantage Road are linked with Oxford Road, containing wide range of services within walking distance, therefore as a whole the surrounding area is considered to be sustainable location and relatively mixed in terms of type, scale and design of the properties. The landscaping is very sporadic, in a form of marginal front soft landscaping with ornamental trees or low hedges. Majority of the properties rely on on-street parking with a few semi-detached properties, which include parking at the front driveway, off-street.

Summarising, within the closest proximity from the application property, there are numerous of buildings, diverse in terms of their:

- type (terraced; semi-detached; detached; traditional small scale outbuildings);
- height of 2-2.5 storey high;
- fenestration and architectural details;
- roof forms (angle, design, ridge/eaves height);
- scale/footprint/volume;
- landscaping;
- front driveways;
- boundary treatment.

The variety of design within the surroundings of the site is presented on below photographs.

















1.4. Planning history

Relevant planning history on the application site summarised below:

Reference	Proposal	Decision
161760	Construction of 2 Semi-detached houses at the rear of 24-26 Wantage Road with access from Wilson Road	Approved 26 Sept 2018
191239	Application for removal or variation of condition 2 following grant of planning permission. (Application no 161760)	Approved 29 Oct 2019
220032	Construction of 2 semi-detached houses at the rear of 24-26 Wantage Road with access from Wilson Road	Refused and Dismissed at Appeal 10 Jan 2023
231627	Construction of 3 bedroom dwelling at the rear of 24-26 Wantage Road with access from Wilson Road.	Refused 2 July 2024
PL/24/1712	Pre-application advice for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of a pair of semi- detached dwellings with associated parking.	Advice given – acceptable in principle, subject to revisions. 13th March 2025

PL/24/1712 - Pre-application advice for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of a pair of semi- detached dwellings with associated parking – main conclusions:

- Acceptable in general in this location as a garden development;
- Necessary to provide revised appearance with a more traditional and in keeping design;
- Minimize the impact upon neighbours;
- Provide adequate rear private amenity space.

220032 - Construction of 2 semi-detached houses at the rear of 24-26 Wantage Road with access from Wilson Road – main conclusions:

- Acceptable in general in this location as a garden development:
 - *‘pair of dwellings is this location would not adversely impact upon character and appearance of the area’;*
 - *(...) the proposed development would not lead to an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposed development, in this regard, would comply with the design requirements of Policies CC7, H2 and H11 of the LP, which require new housing development on garden land to reinforce and harmonise with the established character of the street and positively contribute to the character and quality of the environment through good design and materials.’*

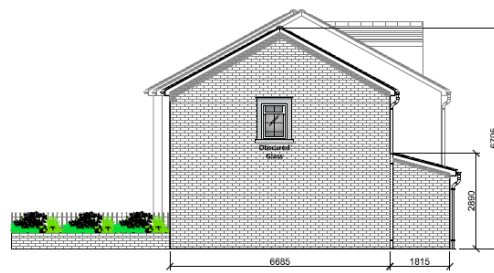


In addition to the above, relevant planning history adjacent to the application site would include application 160180 at 2 Factory Place, Wilson Road, Reading, RG30 2GU for the erection of 3x 2-bedroom terraced houses (use class C3). This proposal represents a more compact development with shorter plots for each house. Plans and the photograph of this relevant proposal are presented below.



01

Proposed Front Elevation 01
Scale 1:100

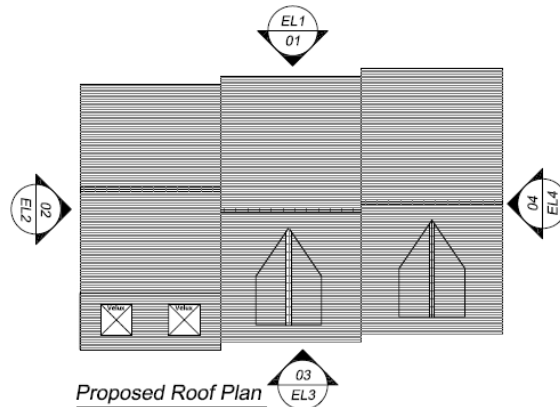
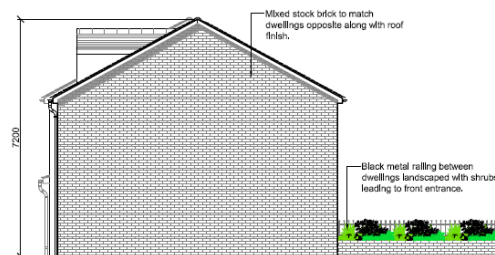


02

Proposed Side Elevation 02
Scale 1:100



Proposed Ground Plan
Scale 1:100



Proposed Roof Plan
Scale 1:100



Proposed First Plan
Scale 1:100



Proposed Second Plan
Scale 1:100





2. Planning Policy

2.1. NPPF

Achieving Sustainable Development

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF emphasises that *“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”* and expands that in the paragraph 9, that it *“has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive:*

- *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being;*



- *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”.*

Furthermore, a decision-making in favour of sustainable development is strengthened and its significant weight is confirmed in paragraph 39, which states that *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.*

Residential redevelopment location

Paragraph 73 of the NPPF encourages to prioritise small development sites with regards to housing land provision and it emphasises that *“Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:*

- *identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare;*
- *support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes”.*

Furthermore, an effective use of land is significantly highlighted in paragraph 123, which says that development and decisions should *“promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.”*

Paragraph 125 and encourages Local Planning Authorities to:

- *“give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;*
- *promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available*



sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure”.

Paragraph 129 in the ‘Achieving appropriate densities’ part of NPPF, emphasizes that *“Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:*

- a. the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
- b. local market conditions and viability;*
- c. the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
- d. the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
- e. the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.”*

Housing Quality and Design

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that the *“creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”* and 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”.*

Furthermore, NPPF paragraph 133 emphasizes an important role of the design codes and guides, which should *“provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design”* and that *“their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified”.*

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF comprises a list, in terms of what decisions should ensure with regards to proposed developments, inter alia:

- *“function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*



- *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.*

Delivering a decent level of design quality is comprised in paragraph 139 - *“Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design”.*

2.2. Local Development Framework (November 2019)

Residential redevelopment location

The proposed dwellings would be accommodated within the settlement boundaries for Reading. Local Plan Policy H11 ‘*Development of private residential gardens*’ includes rules which apply for the successful new development in residential private amenity spaces. The most important and relevant (for the purpose of this application) aspects of the proposed residential development quality appraisal are:

1. Positive contribution to the character of the area;
2. Adequate size, dimensions, spacing, setting, landscaping and highways impact;
3. Appropriate access;
4. No tandem development;
5. Minimising of exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas;
6. Neighbours impact (light, privacy, noise, safety);
7. Family-sized housing;
8. Appropriate impact upon the biodiversity and green network;
9. The proposal does not prejudice the satisfactory development of a wider area.

Local Plan Policy H14 states that *“There is scope for some of Reading’s suburban residential areas to undergo renewal and regeneration that would achieve the following aims:*

- *Improve the local built environment;*
- *Improve and modernise the housing stock; and*



- *Deliver additional homes.”*

Policy H14 then continues that *“Where development would fulfil the above aims, it would generally be supported, subject to other policies in this plan and provided that:*

- *Any loss of undeveloped land would be outweighed by a qualitative improvement in open and green space and by the benefits of development to the community as a whole;*
- *Buildings and features that make a positive contribution to the area’s character are retained;*
- *There would be adequate community facilities to serve the resulting community; and*
- *There would not be an unacceptable impact on the highway network as a result of loss of parking areas or garages.”*

Effectively, due to residential character of the proposed development in the current application, Local Plan confirms a clear assumption in favour of such redevelopment, from private amenity space use and ancillary garage, as described in this statement. Besides major development locations, small-scale housing development has been strengthened in Paragraph 4.4.108 states that *“...there may still be opportunities for smaller scale regeneration, renewal and reconfiguration of some of Reading’s suburban areas. The principle of this is generally to be welcomed, and the policy aims to provide support to such proposals where they do not result in unacceptable impacts on the existing area.”*

Accessibility

Number of Local Plan Policies relate to sustainable development, such as CC6 ‘Accessibility and the intensity of development’ part, which emphasises importance of sustainable location of development – *“The scale and density of development will be related to its level of accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities, with the densest and largest scale development taking place in the most accessible locations. Unless it can be demonstrated that the accessibility of a site is to be significantly upgraded, for example, by providing high quality pedestrian routes or providing access to good public transport services, any new development must be at a scale, density and intensity appropriate to that level of accessibility.”*

Policy CC6 explains in paragraph 4.1.25 that *“...primary locations for new development will be those accessible by walking and cycling to a wide range of employment, services and facilities, leisure, education and health facilities, or which are accessible by walking to routes/stops of frequent public transport services that provide easy access to the aforementioned uses”*. Paragraphs 4.1.27 continues that good level of accessibility means - *“to be that within 400m of a defined centre with a good range of facilities by pedestrian routes, and within 400m by pedestrian routes of a bus stop served by a service with a frequency of better than one bus every 20 minutes in each direction within daytime hours (7.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m.).”*



The general health targets, accompanying appropriately located developments, mentioned in the explanation of this policy include:

- *“increased physical activity;*
- *decreased incidences of cardiovascular disease and obesity;*
- *reduced levels of stress caused by traffic noise and congestion;*
- *fewer cases of lung or heart disease associated with poor air quality;*
- *proximity to healthcare services;*
- *access to open space for recreation”.*

Design Quality

Policy CC7 states that *“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. The various components of development form, including:*

- *Layout: urban structure and urban grain;*
- *Landscape;*
- *Density and mix;*
- *Scale: height and massing; and*
- *Architectural detail and materials”.*

The above components are linked with the subsequently highlighted urban design objectives, which should be enhanced by the proposals, inter alia:

- *“Character - a place with its own identity and sense of place;*
- *Continuity and enclosure;*
- *Quality of the public realm and provision of green infrastructure and landscaping;*
- *Ease of movement and permeability;*
- *Legibility - clear image and easy to understand;*
- *Adaptability – capable of adaptation over time;*
- *Diversity – meets a wide range of needs”.*

In addition, CC7 summarizes and encourages to ensure that proposed developments:

- *“Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;*
- *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;*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces, the inclusion of public art and appropriate materials and landscaping.”*

3. Appraisal

3.1. General concept

The overall aim of the proposal is to make efficient use of the existing site and its assets, by proposing to create a 2x semi-detached dwellings of high-quality, in keeping design and sustainability, through the above proposal. It must be noted that the proposal would improve the existing poor quality area and propose more efficient use and functional layout.

The application property is characterized with a location within Reading settlement boundaries, which is relatively mixed in terms of the design or scale, where such residential development is acceptable in principle.

3.2. Impact on the Character of the Area

The proposal contains a pair of semi-detached buildings with allocated parking spaces for each unit. The proposed development would be characterised with:

- high-quality design;
- in keeping materials including matching brickwork and UPVC fenestration;
- dual pitched main roof forms, sympathetic in relation to the adjacent buildings;
- Pitched or crown roofs on the ground floor level – sympathetic with adjacent semi-detached houses;
- appropriate height, which would result in acceptable scale increase of the residential unit;
- front entrance and layout arrangement, compliant with the character of this part of Wilson Road streetscene;
- side car ports – similar to adjacent dwellings.

The proposal would amend the arrangement of the front elevation and retain single entrance to the building, which in combination with redesigned site layout, would be considered as a clear visual improvement, as it would provide a compact and neat design of the residential development. It is therefore considered that the overall frontage appearance and streetscene would be significantly



enhanced, in particular that the site is exposed and clearly visible within the area. The frontage would benefit from a more functionally organised arrangement, suitable for this scale of development.

In general, it is considered that the project includes an in keeping external appearance, which would reflect the character of the area, but also upgraded to a high-quality design and standard of living internally and that such arrangement would provide more family units, which are in a high level of demand in Reading.

3.3. Impact on neighbours

Loss of Light and Overbearing

Due to the proposed main building's situation, reasonable overall scale on the ground and upper levels and provision of sufficient separation distances combined with adequate projection beyond the rear elevation lines from the neighbouring properties, no adverse changes to current overbearing and overshadowing arrangement would be considered to arise.

It must be noted that rear ground floor openings of the adjacent property to the south serve as non-habitable accommodation, therefore no detrimental overshadowing would occur.

Overlooking

The proposal would introduce additional windows to the front and rear on ground and first floor level, however due to adequate separation distances, no loss of privacy would occur. Also, additional dormers would be proposed on the second storey level facing the rear, however it would be considered that no adverse alteration to the current overlooking arrangement would arise as well, with no unacceptable impact upon the adjacent occupiers' amenity, as a sufficient separation of circa 21-22m would be provided from the back elevations of adjacent properties. The side elevation upper-level windows would serve bathrooms and they would be obscure glazed and non-openable up to 1.7m above the finished floor level.

Noise

The proposal would also entail a high quality solution in terms of insulation between units, in accordance with Approved Document E - Resistance to the passage of sound (amended 2015). This internal improvement would result in reduced noise disturbance and higher quality of the living environment. It is considered that the activity on site would be typical for residential units.

3.4. Transport, parking and access

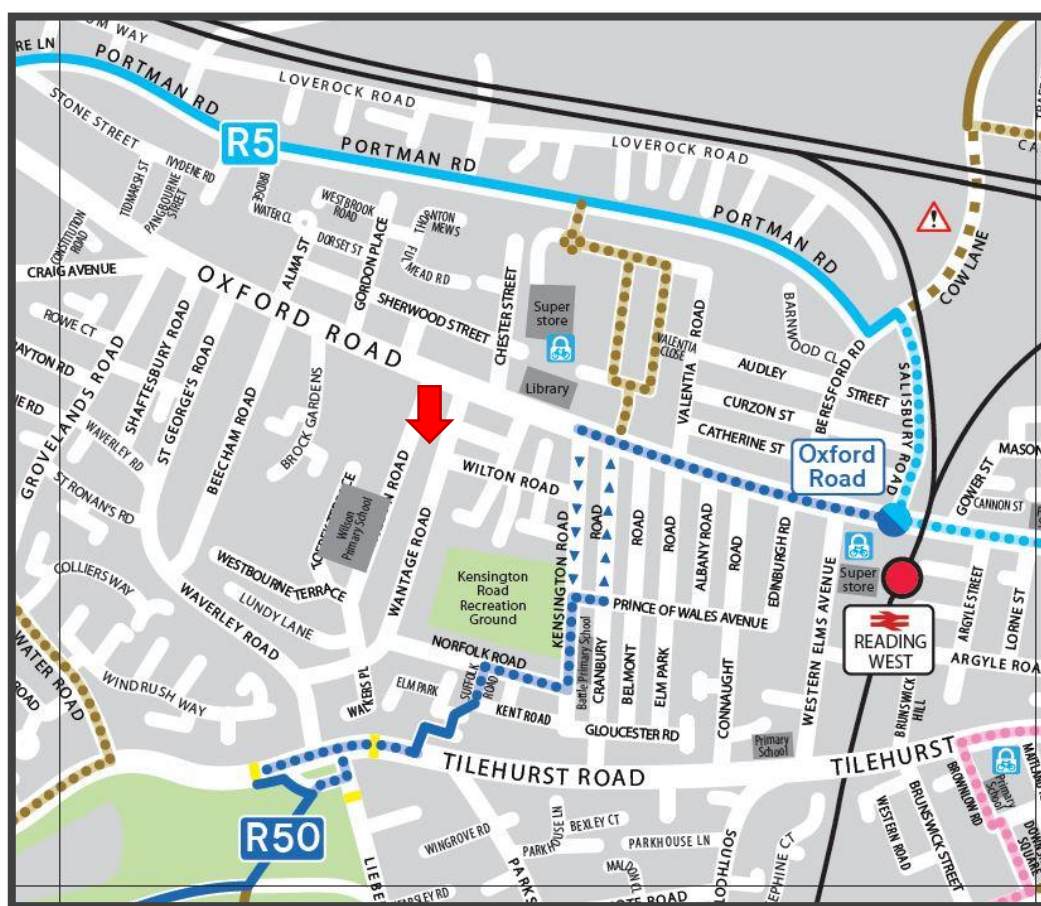
The proposed site is located in the settlements of Reading, on the eastern side of Wilson Road. The application site is considered to be highly sustainable, thanks to close proximity from the local services



along Oxford Road (around 1-2min walk), also given that the application property benefits from an extensive bus service including numerous routes with frequent links to other parts of Reading and surrounding areas, towns and villages. Furthermore, Reading West Train Station is located around 800m (13min walk) to the east.

The application property is sited well connected with roads which also provide vehicle access to the A329 and links with the M4 for towards the east to London and Wales to the west. The broad road networks around the site also provide huge choice and possibilities of cycle routes and walking paths in and around the area. As per the 'Cycle routes network map', the application site is conveniently located in close vicinity from the Town Centre, R50 and R5 routes, which easily link the application site with surrounding areas in every direction.

There are also easily accessible local amenities along shopping parades along Oxford Road and surrounding areas in this part of Reading. All of these locations include wide range of services such as grocery shops, churches, temples, pharmacy, cafes, pubs, educational facilities, hospitals or nurseries. Range of services located within walking distance from the application site, makes it highly appropriate and sustainable for a new semi-detached pair of dwellings.



Cycle routes network map



The proposal would contain suitably located and accessed at the back cycle storage for the property, which would improve functionality of the property. It would include sufficient space for 2x bikes per dwelling.

An adequate refuse storage space for the occupiers would be retained at the front, for general waste and recycling. Such arrangement is typical in the surrounding area, where the bins are located at the front of the properties.

The proposed development would benefit from an off-street parking for vehicles within the car ports – 1x space per dwelling. Thanks to a highly sustainable location, close to the extensive range of services, the proposal would be considered acceptable and uncontroversial with regards to this aspect.

3.5. Sustainability

It is considered that the application site is within an existing settlement, conveniently located in a residential area with favourable access to community facilities, employment areas, open space and necessary services. Furthermore, it is considered that sustainability of the proposed residential buildings, in compliance with the relevant Local Plan Policies and NPPF, would be also significantly improved due to numerous aspects:

- Reducing air permeability to the minimum consistent with health requirements;
- Design that will reduce thermal bridging;
- Highest possible level of insulation of hot water pipes and hot water storage vessels, walls, roof and floors;
- Double glazing;
- Fitting the house minimum B rated appliances (washing machine, dishwasher etc.);
- Permeable paving where applicable;
- Recycling of waste and site waste management plan, to ensure materials arising in the construction process are recycled;
- Energy efficient internal and external lighting;
- Sustainable Drainage Solutions strategy applied.

3.6. Private Outdoor Amenity Space

It is acknowledged that currently the proposal comprises a sufficient outdoor amenity space within its residential curtilage for typical outdoor activities and garden paraphernalia. Each of the proposed dwelling would contain a circa 55.0m² private rear amenity space of around 10.0m in length, which would provide reasonable and spacious outdoor amenity area



Notwithstanding the above, the application site is located within close proximity of numerous green public spaces, accessible within walking distance. All recreational areas are of high quality, large and offering extensive activities (various sports, playgrounds, activity centres or green open grass areas), such as:

- Kensington Park;
- Prospect Park;
- Portman Road Park;
- Lousehill Copse.

3.7. Internal Amenity Space

Each of the proposed dwellings would include an internal space of circa 101.0m², sufficient and appropriate for a 2-bedroom dwelling with study on 3 levels. The layout provides appropriate level of privacy and living quality, due to appropriate internal ground, first and second floor arrangement. It is confirmed, that the proposed dwelling would comply with the 'Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard' adopted by Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2015 (minimum 90.0m² for a three storey, 3-bedroom dwellings). The proposal would be considered to successfully meet requirements in terms of minimum height, storage area, bedrooms internal area, accordingly with the Technical housing standards.

3.8. Landscaping and Tree Impact

The proposed development would be designed to minimize the impact upon the existing landscaping and it is proposed to provide additional soft landscaping to the front of the application site, which would provide some level of mitigation, therefore the impact would be uncontentious in this instance. Furthermore, an additional species would be planted within the garden area, enriching the landscaping within the site. No TPOs are on site or within close vicinity.

3.9. Biodiversity

The proposed development would be designed to provide adequate biodiversity benefits on site, by proposing additional planting around the site and within the garden in order to increase level of variety of plants species in the area, which would introduce an adequate mitigation of the proposed scheme with regards to this aspect. It is considered that the proposed development would achieve new native soft landscaping, wildflowers, hedgerows, shrubs and effectively it would result in a clear and demonstrable biodiversity net gain on site. Adequate BNG report and calculations have been submitted along within the application.



8. Conclusion

In summary, it is considered that wide range of positive features and enhanced aspects provided by the proposed development would significantly outweigh any impact, caused by the above scheme. By virtue of the scale and nature of the proposed development, it is considered that it would comply with the relevant parts of NPPF, Reading BC Local Plan, therefore we kindly appeal, to approve the submitted application.

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