

Land at 82 / 86 London Road and Rear of 1a Alexandra Road, Reading

Planning Statement

ON BEHALF OF ERLEIGH INVESTMENTS LTD

March 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Nexus Planning on behalf of Erleigh Investments Ltd ('the Applicant'), in support of an application for permission in principle (PiP) (the first stage through the permission in principle route), submitted to Reading Borough Council ('the Council') for the development of land at 82/86 London Road and rear of 1a Alexandra Road, Reading ('the Site').

1.2 The description of the development is as follows:

- 'Stage 1 permission in principle for up to 9 residential dwellings'

Planning Considerations

1.3 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) explains the approach to be taken with a PiP application:

*"The permission in principle consent route is an alternative way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development which separates the consideration of matters of principle for proposed development from the technical detail of the development. The permission in principle consent route has 2 stages: the first stage (or permission in principle stage) establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle and the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed."*¹

1.4 The PPG further explains that:

*"Following a grant of permission in principle, the Site must receive a grant of technical details consent before development can proceed."*²

1.5 For a stage 1 PiP application, the scope of consideration is limited to:

- location
- land use
- amount of development

1.6 All other matters, including the mix of units, appearance of building, impact on residential amenities, flood risk / drainage, access and car parking, should be considered at the second 'technical details consent' stage.

1.7 The statutory provisions for the permission in principle consent route are the Town and Country planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 and the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017.

Structure of Planning Statement

1.8 The planning statement is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** – provides a summary of the Site and surrounding area;
- **Section 3** – presents the proposed development;
- **Section 4** – sets out the relevant planning policies and material considerations to a stage 1 PiP application.

¹ Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 58-001-20180615

² Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 58-003-20190615

2. The Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The Site comprises approximately 0.188ha of previously developed, brownfield land, at Nos.82-86 London Road and rear of 1a Alexandra Road. The Site contains two buildings of hotel / aparthotel / flatted residential accommodation. A parking forecourt is situated at the front of the buildings, with two access points onto London Road; and to the rear are other areas of hardstanding used for car parking.
- 2.2 A driveway between the two buildings connects the front and rear of the Site.
- 2.3 The Site lies within the settlement boundary of Reading, outside of the town centre, set within an established residential area. Surrounding development is predominantly residential in character, with a presence of local facilities and amenities within walking distance.

Designations

- 2.4 In terms of planning designations, the Site:
- does not contain any designated heritage assets. However, two Grade II Listed buildings are located 90m to the north west;
 - is located partially within the Alexandra Road Conservation Area to the south-west;
 - does not contain any trees with Tree Preservation Orders, but adjacent trees within the conservation area are protected;
 - is located in Flood Zone 1, at lowest fluvial flood risk;
 - contains a small area at higher risk of surface water flooding;
 - is located within an Article 4 area to remove permitted development rights allowing the conversion of C3 dwellings to C4 small house in multiple occupancy to conserve local character and protect the existing housing stock; and
 - is washed over by an 'Area of Identified Biodiversity Interest' detailed in the Local Plan Policy EN12.
- 2.5 None of the designations listed above would in principle prevent the development of the Site for up to 9 dwellings.

Accessibility

- 2.6 The Site is sustainably located approximately 1.25km to the south east of Reading town centre and within close proximity to a range of services and facilities including the Royal Berkshire Hospital, a number of convenience and food stores (within 330m), Reading Old Cemetery Park (within 370m), and numerous schools including Reading School (380m), Trinity Christian School (200m), Reading College (280m), and The Abbey School (840m).
- 2.7 The Site also benefits from good access to public transport provision, with eight bus stops located within 250m providing regular services to Reading town centre (7 minute journey time), Tilehurst, Caversham and the surrounding residential area. Reading Station is located 1.45km to the north west of the Site and provides connections to London, Manchester, Bristol, Heathrow and Birmingham.

Planning History

- 2.8 According to the Council's website, there are no relevant planning applications on or near to the Site.

3. The Proposed Development

- 3.1 Stage 1 PiP is sought for the construction of development to contain up to 9 dwellings.
- 3.2 The Site is located within the urban area, on previously developed, brownfield land.
- 3.3 The proposed land use is residential, consistent with that of neighbouring properties.
- 3.4 Whilst not a matter for consideration of a stage 1 PiP, the general car parking arrangements for the existing Site would be considered at stage 2.
- 3.5 An existing single storey rear projection to No. 84 would be demolished as part of the proposed development.

4. Relevant Planning Policies

- 4.1 This chapter identifies relevant development plan policies insofar as they are relevant to a stage 1 PiP application for residential development of the Site.
- 4.2 The relevant Development Plan documents comprise:
- Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019)
- 4.3 Planning policies considered relevant to this PiP application are:
- CC1: Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development
 - CC6: Accessibility And The Intensity Of Development
 - CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
 - EN1: Protection And Enhancement Of The Historic Environment
 - H1: Provision Of Housing
 - TR3: Access, Traffic And Highway-Related Matters
- 4.4 The primary 'other material consideration' in relation to this application is the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 ('the Framework').

5. Permission in Principle Assessment

Principle of Development

- 5.1 This stage 1 PiP application is to establish whether the Site is suitable for residential development in principle with consideration only to location, land use and amount of development being proposed. All other matters should be considered at the second 'technical details consent' stage.

Location and Land Use

- 5.2 The Site is located within the urban area and is not subject to any designations that restrict development or protect areas or assets of particular importance. Specifically, the Site is not within an area at higher risk of fluvial flooding. Whilst part of the Site has an area at higher surface water flood risk, the PPG³ is clear that a flood risk sequential test need not be applied where the proposed layout, design and mitigation measures would ensure users would be safe from current and future surface water flood risk.
- 5.3 Paragraph 125 (c) of the Framework gives substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes, and proposals should be approved unless substantial harm would be caused. This reinforces the use of previously developed land in appropriate locations, such as the Site.
- 5.4 With regards to the locational sustainability of the Site, nearby amenities / facilities are within walking and cycling distance, alongside convenient access to public transport. This reduces the reliance on private vehicles for day-to-day use as promoted by the Framework.
- 5.5 The Site is within a highly sustainable location, previously developed, brownfield land, within the settlement boundary and within an area characterised by residential development. The Site is clearly compatible with the surrounding land uses, suitable for residential use in principle.
- 5.6 Whilst the Site is located partially within the Alexandra Road Conservation Area, there is not an in-principle restriction on development in conservation areas, and development must preserve or enhance them. The impact on its setting would be fully addressed at the 'technical details consent' stage having regard to the details of the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of development.

Amount of Development

- 5.7 The next consideration at this first PiP stage is the amount of development proposed on the Site. Under Policy H2, the Site is identified as 'Urban', where indicative densities of 60–120 dwellings per hectare (dph) are anticipated, subject to site-specific considerations. In this context, the surrounding area is characterised by a range of residential building types and scales, including flatted accommodation, aparthotels, and larger residential buildings along London Road.
- 5.8 Having regard to this established pattern of development, up to nine residential units (as apartments) on the Site would not be inconsistent with the prevailing character and context of the area, and would meet the density expectations of Policy H2. The Site has the potential to accommodate up to 9 new residential units, subject to consideration of detailed design at the 'technical details consent' stage.

³ Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 7-027-20220825

- 5.9 Given the Site's good access to local services and bus routes, the proposed development is considered an appropriate amount of development in principle, which would demonstrate an effective and efficient use of land in accordance with national and local policy.

Highways Implications

- 5.10 At this PiP application stage, there are no identified highway matters that should restrict the development of up to nine dwellings on the Site.
- 5.11 Details relating to how appropriate parking and circulation would be achieved on the Site are matter that should be considered at the second 'technical details consent' stage.
- 5.12 Such subsequent consideration of technical details would need to ensure that (i) Policy TR3 which seeks to ensure development provides safe, suitable access without harming traffic flow or the transport network; and (ii) Policy TR5, which seeks to ensure developments follow appropriate parking standards based upon a site's location, are satisfied.

Affordable Housing and S106

- 5.13 Subject to 'technical details consent' being granted, Policy H3 relates to affordable housing whereby development resulting in the net gain of 5-9 residential units will need to provide a financial contribution enabling the equivalent of 20% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough. Subject to matters of financial viability, a legal agreement can be secured at the 'technical details consent' stage.

Matters to be addressed at second 'technical details consent' stage

- 5.14 At this stage, it is necessary to only conclude that the Site is suitable in principle for residential development of up to nine dwellings. Other matters for consideration would be at the second 'technical details consent' stage to include:
- Impact of development on the character and visual amenity of the area, including the setting of the conservation area;
 - Impact on residential amenities of the existing neighbouring properties, in respect of outlook, privacy, daylight and sunlight;
 - Amenities of future occupiers of the Site, in respect of outlook, privacy, available daylight and sunlight, as well as outdoor amenity space;
 - Impact of trees;
 - Impact on ecology and biodiversity;
 - access and car /cycle parking;
 - Refuse storage; and
 - Surface water drainage attenuation.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 In conclusion, development on the Site (of up to nine dwellings) would make appropriate, effective and efficient use of previously developed land, in a highly sustainable location. In compliance with the Framework, the development would positively boost the supply of housing in Reading.
- 6.2 The initial Stage 1 PiP scheme demonstrates no in-principle constraints that would indicate residential development of up to 9 dwellings on the Site could not be achieved.
- 6.3 Other matters would be addressed at the second 'technical details consent' stage.
- 6.4 Having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the Framework, the key benefits of the proposals include the delivery of additional residential units in a sustainable urban location, making efficient use of brownfield land and contributing towards meeting the Borough's identified housing needs.
- 6.5 On this basis, it is considered that PiP should be granted for up to 9 dwellings.

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