COMMITTEE REPORTBY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICESREADING BOROUGH COUNCILITEM NO. 12PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 May 2018

Ward: Norcot App No.: 161507/OUT Address: 2-6 Water Road and 158 Dee Road Proposal: Demolition of 4 existing dwelling houses 2,4,6 Water Road and 158 Dee Road and erection of 6 no.4 bedroom and 5 no. 3 bedroom dwellings and car parking. Applicant: Mrs K Fielden Date validated: 15 September 16 Major Application: 13 week target and 26 weeks target extended - now to 30 July 2018.

#### RECOMMENDATION

**GRANT** Full Planning Permission, subject to conditions and informatives and subject to the satisfactory completion of a S.106 legal agreement or **REFUSE** permission should the legal agreement not be completed by 2018 unless a later date is agreed by the Head of Planning, Development & Regulatory Services,

#### The Section 106 Legal Agreement to secure the following:

At least 2 of the dwellings to be secured as affordable housing and £75,000 to be paid towards providing affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough. Houses to be provided before 6<sup>th</sup> private house sold and payment made before first occupation of any private house. Default financial payment towards off-site affordable housing should units on site not be acquired by RSL.

### CONDITIONS TO INCLUDE

- 1. TL2 Outline time limit reserved matters
- 2. TL3 Outline time limit commencement
- 3. TL6 Outline details of reserved matters (Landscaping).
- 4. AP1 The standard approved plans condition
- 5. AP2 The standard submission of plans as reserved matters
- 6. M2 The standard materials to be approved condition
- 7. L8 Landscape reserved matters condition
- 8. L9 The standard tree protection
- 9. L10 Landscape boundaries condition to include retention of boundary adjacent to no.8 Water Road.
- 10. PD2 No additional windows (in side elevations)
- 11. CO1 Construction/demolition standard hours
- 12. CO2 Construction Method Statement
- 13. CO3 Establishing if site is contaminated
- 14. CO5 Remediation to be implemented if contamination found
- 15. CO6 To cover new contamination being identified
- 16. CO7 Noise and dust controlled during construction
- 17. CO8 No Bonfires allowed
- 18. SU1 Pre-commencement sustainable drainage details
- 19. SU2 Sustainable Drainage completed in accordance with the submitted and approved details.
- 20. DC1 Vehicle parking provided and retained in accordance with approved plans
- 21. DC2 Vehicle access provided and retained in accordance with approved plans
- 22. DC6 Bin storage provided and retained in accordance with approved plans

### INFORMATIVES TO INCLUDE

- 1. The applicant is advised that the development lies adjacent to a potentially contaminated site (former brick kiln). Due to the nature of the historic land use there is the potential of contaminated land being present. The developer must be aware that any ground or enabling works may bring receptors into contact with the aforementioned contaminants. The developer may wish to satisfy themselves that the details of the construction proposals take the necessary account of the possibility of contaminants from that source.
- 2. IF1 Positive and Proactive Working approval
- 3. IF2 Pre-commencement conditions
- 4. IF4 S106
- 5. IF5 Terms
- 6. IF7 Complaints about construction
- 7. I11 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises four existing dwellings. 2 and 4 Water Road are Victorian properties, and 6 Water Road is understood to date from the early 1900s. 158 Dee Road is a post war property.
- 1.2 The site is located adjacent to the junction of Dee Road, Water Road and Grovelands Road. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of dwelling houses and flats. The Dee Park Regeneration Area is located on the far side of Dee Road.



### 2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The outline proposal seeks permission to demolish the existing properties and erect 11 dwellings (6 no.4 bedroom and 5 no 3 bedroom dwellings). The original submission was for 12 no. 4 bed houses. All matters apart from landscaping are to be determined at this stage. Access to 8 of the dwellings will be taken from Water Road, at a distance of approximately 42 metres from the junction of Water Road, Dee Road and Grovelands Road. 3 of the dwellings will be accessed from Dee Road, at a distance of 37 metres from the junction. Proposed Drawings & Documents: 100.PL1B Typical layouts 2 x 4 Bedroom house 100.PL2A Side elevation 3 Bedroom house 100.PL.3B Typical layouts 2 x 3 Bedroom house 100.PL4B Main elevations 4x4 Bedroom House 100.PL5A Layout plans, corner 4 Bedroom Semi detached 100.EL6A Elevations 4 Bedroom corner house 100.EL1E Site elevational sections sheet 1 100.EL2F Site elevational sections sheet 2 500.SP1 Site plan existing 500.RP3 Site plan environmental 3037.LD.1 Rev G Site layout landscape and drainage Visuals of proposed scheme 1-5 Design and Access statement **ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY - SJA TREES** ECOLOGY SITE REPORT Stage 1 and 2 **VIABILITY STUDY - CONFIDENTIAL** 

Amended CIL information form providing for an estimated payment of around £64,000 with the final figure subject to the usual reliefs or exemptions, such as for affordable housing, set out in the CIL Regulations.

### 3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 10-02105-PREAPP Pre-application advice for proposed redevelopment of existing properties to provide 7 x 4-bedroom houses and 8 x 3 bedroom houses. Observations sent.
- 141022/FUL. Demolition of 4 houses and erection of 2 No. three bedroom and 12 No. four bedroom houses with associated landscaping, parking and access. Withdrawn.

### 4. CONSULTATIONS

### 4.1 Statutory:

No statutory consultations were required given the nature of the application.

- 4.2 Non-statutory:
  - RBC Transport Development Control

The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. Typically these areas are within 400m of a Reading Buses high frequency 'Premier Route', which provides high quality bus routes to and from Reading town centre and other local centre facilities.

The application site is located within close proximity to premier bus route 15 with frequent bus services every 30 minutes that run to and from the town centre. The site is, therefore, accessible to good public transport links, town centre services and employment areas.

In accordance with the adopted SPD, the development would be required to provide a parking provision of 2 spaces per 3/4 bedroom dwellings equating to 22 parking spaces in total. The proposed layout provides the required

number of parking spaces to the correct dimensions of 2.4m wide x 4.8m long with a 6m forecourt depth.

Access to the existing properties is taken in the form of several dropped crossings located on Water Road and Dee Road. This is to be revised so that one shared access point is provided from Dee Road and one shared access point is provided on Water Road.

Visibility splays and sight lines allow traffic on the minor road to see cyclists, vehicles and pedestrians on the main road. Visibility splays have been illustrated on the General Site Plan (Revision G) but the splays have not been illustrated correctly as is not measured along the nearside kerb line of the main arm. Therefore, I have undertaken my own assessment.

The required visibility can be achieved although it is evident that the visibility splay goes across third party land which provides access to no.8 Water Road. The applicant has confirmed that the boundary walls will be a maximum of 600 mm high which will ensure that adequate sight lines are maintained. No landscaping is proposed within the visibility splay which will ensure that the visibility from the access is maintained.

It has been confirmed that the 2 dwellings fronting onto Dee Road will utilise existing dropped crossing onto Dee Road. No street furniture or lamp columns will need to be relocated. The existing dropped kerb on the corner of Dee Road/Water Road will be stopped up and the verge reinstated to the satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority.

It is indicated that refuse collection will take place on-street as per the current arrangements. The location and size of the stores has been based on the Waste management guidelines. The stores are fitted with horizontal split sliding sectional shutters to avoid opening doors out onto the footway.

In accordance with the SPD, each dwelling should be provided with 2 cycle parking spaces which can be provided within a garden store for each property. However, I am happy to deal with this by way of condition.

- RBC Environmental Health:
  - The applicant is advised that the development lies adjacent to the site of an historic brick works, which has the potential to have caused contaminated land and the proposed development is a sensitive land use. Conditions were recommended to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.
- Even though this outline planning application reserves landscaping to be approved at a later stage advice from the Natural Environment Team was sought:

The development site is located in a prominent location at the three-way junction of Water Road with Dee Road and Grovelands Road. This is visually a very open and green highway junction with wide verges and lawn areas on all sides and development set well back from the highway.

On the approach from Grovelands Road, trees form a prominent feature of the landscape both to the front of the dwellings and as a backdrop to the existing houses where the mature tree cover of Lousehill Copse is visible part of the identified Wooded Ridgeline of West Reading and a designated Major Landscape Feature. Planning policy CS37: Major Landscape Features and Strategic Open Space states that 'Planning permission will not be granted for any development that would detract from the character or appearance of areas designated as a Major Landscape Feature'.

The mature tree cover to the rear of the existing properties which is currently visible above and between the gaps between dwellings, enhances the treed suburban residential character of the local area. The continuous terraced block of development and increased ridgeline of the proposed new dwellings will block far reaching views of the mature tree cover to the rear of the site. This height and density of the proposed development will be detrimental to the verdant and open and comparably spacious street character which is enhanced by the views of mature trees growing in the wider landscape. This application proposes the removal of all trees within the site with very limited opportunity for substantial new planting. Although new planting is proposed, trees are unlikely to establish well in a hard landscaped area or where they do survive it is likely future occupants will want them to be removed where they cause damage to hard surfaces or become a nuisance to parked cars from leaf drop, mildew or bird droppings.

The front of the site would be almost completely laid with hard standing for parking and access with bin stores immediately adjacent to the highway. The loss of grass and soft landscaped garden areas at the front will increase the sense of overdevelopment in the site when viewed from the public highway to the detriment of the wider landscape. Without adequate provision for new planting and areas of soft landscaping to the front of the site this harm will be permanent. The site is within a 10% or less canopy cover area as defined in our Tree Strategy and as such landscaping, incorporating trees, should be an integral part of any proposal.

The most significant trees on site are two Leyland Cypress and two Silver Birch. Although I accept the Leyland Cypress are not the most desirable trees for many residential properties, the Silver birch are healthy trees of good form and I would not want to see them felled in order to improve the development potential of the site.

My colleague Sarah Hanson, expressed concern during consideration of an earlier application ref. 141022 about works within the RPAs of the two Birch on the frontage of 6 Water Road as she also felt these were two good, prominent trees.

A TPO was therefore served on Tuesday 4th October in order to protect these two Silver Birch - TPO No. 20/16. The TPO will ensure the trees cannot be felled in order to overcome any tree related objections to this application and can also be used to ensure any tree protection measures can be rigorously enforced if planning permission is granted to develop the site in the future with the trees retained.

Officer note: The proposed development layout has been amended to address these and other concerns. Comments on the amended layout are:

I can confirm that the plan addresses the points discussed with the arb consultant and therefore I have no objection to the proposal subject to recommended conditions and informatives. I would like to see the tree protective fencing extended as far as is feasible to protect future landscape areas, as recommended in BS 5837:2012.

### 4.3 Public consultation:

47 properties were consulted by neighbour consultation letter. A site notice was displayed. 3 objections to the original application were received. They are identical letters raising the following:

- Objectors are under the impression that 2, 4 and 6 Water Road are listed buildings.
- Proposal will create additional traffic.
- Proposal could create dangerous traffic conditions.
- Proposal could generate noise.
- Proposal could result in loss of privacy to neighbours.
- Development will be out of keeping with its surroundings.

A further consultation was undertaken following the receipt of the amended plans. 5 objections were received, 3 from previous objectors using the same letter to raise the same concerns and two new ones from the bungalows behind the property raising concerns about the impact on their outlook and privacy.

#### 5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

5.1 <u>National Planning Policy Framework</u>

Part 4 - Promoting sustainable transport Part 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes Part 7 - Requiring good design Part 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### 5.2 <u>Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy</u>

CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development) CS7 (Design and the Public Realm) CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix) CS16 (Affordable Housing) CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking) CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology) CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

5.3 <u>Sites and Detailed Policies Document</u>

SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)DM5 (Housing Mix)DM6 (Affordable Housing)DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)

DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters) DM18 (Tree Planting)

### 5.4 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Planning Obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Supplementary Planning Guidance).
- Parking Standards and Design (Supplementary Planning Document).
- Affordable Housing SPD

### 6. APPRAISAL

#### Main Issues

The main issues are:

- i. Principle of redevelopment
- ii. Visual impact of the proposal
- iii. Residential amenity of neighbours and new occupiers
- iv. Trees
- v. Transport
- vi. Affordable Housing
- vii. Other matters

#### i. Principle of redevelopment

6.1 The application site lies within a suburban area of Reading and in a location relatively well served by amenities and on a bus route. None of the properties on site are listed and while they do have some merit in terms of their appearance the 4 dwellings on this c.3ha site make inefficient use (14 dwellings per hectare) of this sustainable site. The proposed scheme of 11 houses comprising 2 pairs of semi-detached houses and a terrace of 7 houses will give a density of 38 dwellings per hectare. This is still in the lower end of the range of target densities for accessible urban areas contained in Core Strategy CS15. However, Policy DM5 supports new housing provision of units larger than 3 bedrooms and all of the dwellings will meet this. The redevelopment of the site for additional residential development is therefore considered acceptable in principle and the rest of this report assesses the proposal against other material considerations.

### ii. Visual impact of the proposal

6.2 Whilst this is an outline planning application, appearance is one of the reserved matters sought for approval at this stage. It is therefore considered appropriate for the LPA to satisfy itself that an acceptable design is likely to be achieved.

6.3 The site is currently occupied by 4 dwellings. 158 Dee Road is a 1970s property that is of no particular merit. 2 and 4 Water Road are a pair of Victorian properties with gables facing the junction. These properties are highly prominent, particularly in views along Grovelands Road. 6 Water Road is a large detached Edwardian property but less prominent than numbers 2 and 4.

6.4 The Council's Conservation consultant has confirmed that, whilst they have some merit, the three Water Road properties are not of sufficient quality to warrant inclusion on the Council's List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures. Nonetheless, they do make a positive contribution to the character of the area and therefore any replacement should be of a good design which takes the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area.

6.5 The plans submitted for application 141022/FUL proposed three storey buildings in two terraces of four houses along Water Road, and two pairs of semidetached houses along Dee Road. Whilst terraced and semi-detached properties are common in the area, officers considered that these dwellings would fail to integrate with the surrounding built form in terms of the built up coverage of each plot and building heights. The application proposed that the houses would be finished with a cream clay composite at ground floor level, with coloured render at first floor level and wooden boarding at second floor level. This palate of materials was considered to be an inappropriate contrast to the traditional brick of surrounding buildings. The design was considered to be confused, and of a low quality, and this was one of the reasons for refusing this application.

6.6 Plans originally submitted for the present application proposed a terrace of 8 x 3 storey dwellings on Water Road, a pair of 3 storey dwellings facing directly toward the junction and a pair of 3 storey dwellings on Dee Road. The second floor would be located within the roofspace, with rendered gables front and back. The roof would be in the form of a gambrel (a symmetrical two-sided roof with two slopes on each side, often known as a 'Dutch Roof'). Officers were concerned that these plans failed to overcome the concerns identified during the previous application, and that the proposal would still fail to integrate with the surrounding area.

6.7 After a number of iterations amended plans have been received reducing the number of proposed dwellings to 11 and introducing a mix of sizes which is considered acceptable.



Proposed



Existing

6.8 The design of the existing houses on Dee Road uses relatively shallow roofs and the proposed houses on Dee Road will be taller than those on Dee Road. However, the new houses will be at a lower level than the existing houses which will allow this difference in height to not be particularly pronounced.

## iii. Residential amenity of neighbours and new occupiers

6.9 The proposed houses will be set further back from Water Road than the existing properties. Their rear elevations will be positioned approximately 7.2 metres beyond the existing rear wall of 6 Water Road. However, the side boundary of 14 Water Road is approximately 10.2 metres from the new houses, on the far side of the access to 8 and 10 Water Road. Therefore the proposal will not have a detrimental impact on occupants of number 14 as a result of loss of light or being overbearing.

6.10 There is a significant planted screen on the boundary between No.8 and the application site and there are no side windows in the north east elevation of 8 Water Road. The potential for loss of privacy caused by overlooking from rear facing windows in the new dwellings is therefore reduced with these new windows being at least 10 metres from the boundary with No. 8.

6.11 The proposed Dee Road dwellings will be sited closer to 156 Dee Road than the current property at 158. However, the only windows in the flank wall of 156 Dee Road facing the application site are obscure glazed so the rooms they serve are unlikely to be habitable. The proposed houses would not extend significantly beyond the rear of no 156. The proposal is therefore not considered to have a detrimental impact on the occupants of this property in terms of loss of light or being overbearing.

6.12 The amenity space for the proposed dwellings range in size from 44 square metres to over 90 square metres so not all meet the basic size standards expected. However, this is balanced against the provision of landscaping and off road parking at the front of the site, which is why the plots have been pushed back into the site, and officers consider the gardens to be large enough to allow a reasonable level of amenity for future residents. It is also relevant that Prospect Park lies a short distance away at the top of Water Road.

6.13 The internal layout of the proposed dwellings, and the room sizes, are of an acceptable size. The dwellings will provide a good quality of accommodation.

6.14 Officers conclude that the proposal is not in conflict with the aims of Policy DM4 in terms of safeguarding the amenities of existing and future residents.

# iv. Trees

6.15 The development site is located in a prominent location at the three-way junction of Water Road with Dee Road and Grovelands Road. This is visually a very open and green highway junction with wide verges and lawn areas on all sides and development set well back from the highway.

6.16 The Consultant Arboriculturalist drew attention to the mature tree cover to the rear of the existing properties and the potential for character to be harmed by a tall continuous terraced block of development. The amended scheme has reduced the length of the terrace from 34 metres to 29 metres and dropped the height of the dwellings by one metre. In accordance with the serving of the TPO on the two Silver Birches on the frontage the layout now retains both of these trees and more planting is proposed. It can now be confirmed that the proposal adequately addresses the landscaping protection and enhancement policies.

## v. Transport

6.17 The Transport Strategy officer (see comments above) has confirmed that the access arrangements for the new houses are acceptable and comply with our policies and guidance. Conditions are recommended to deal with matters of detail.



## v. Affordable Housing

6.18 Officers have negotiated with the applicant over how the development could remain viable and still make an acceptable affordable housing offer. Notwithstanding that the original offer was nil the negotiated outcome is that 2 of the houses (2 x 3 bed units on Dee Road) will be offered as affordable housing to a Registered Social Landlord and £75,000 will be paid to go towards providing affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough. Officers can confirm that this formula is policy compliant and will be secured with a S106 Agreement. This agreement will also include a default clause to secure finance in lieu of the 2 dwellings should an RSL (or the Council) not show interest in acquiring the units.

### vi. Other Matters

# 6.10 Equalities impact assessment

In determining this application the Committee is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application.

In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

### 7. CONCLUSION

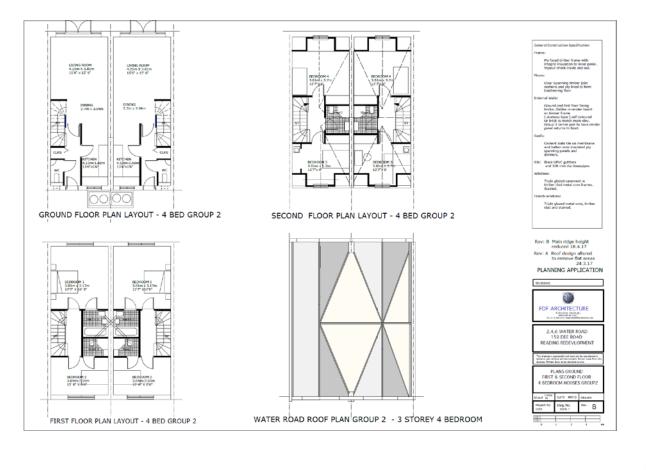
The proposed residential redevelopment is considered to comply with the relevant Development Plan Policies as assessed above. It is therefore recommended that

approval be granted, subject to the completion of a S106 Agreement and the recommended planning conditions.

Case Officer: Julie Williams

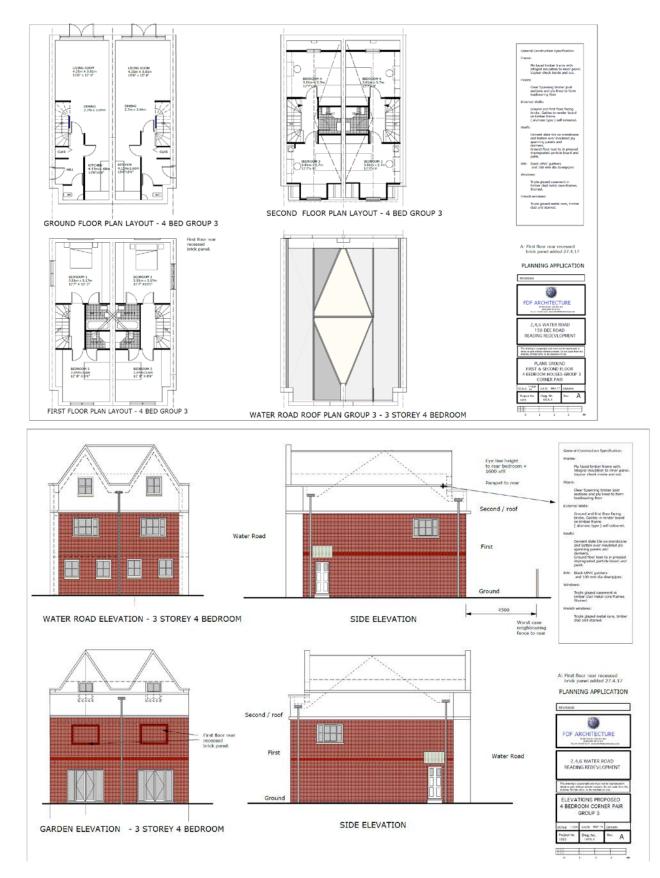


Three Bedroom units in mid terrace and proposed facing Dee Road





End blocks of terrace



Pair of 4 Bedroom corner units facing onto roundabout



Elevations



VIEW 1A FROM NORTH

VIEW 2 FROM SOUTH

VIEW 3A FROM EAST

2,4,6 WATER ROAD 158 DEE ROAD READING RG30 AERIAL VIEWS OF PROPOSALS