

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Kentwood

App No: 220190/REG

Address: Various Addresses, 5 Bramshaw Road, Reading, RG30 6AT

Proposal: Property improvement works and Thermal efficiency upgrades to 31 RBC properties. Works to each property will consist of fitting new External Wall insulation, new triple glazed windows and doors, minor roof adaptations, fitting of Air Source Heat pumps, central heating upgrades and associated works. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Addresses include 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 42, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 83, 87, 89 Bramshaw Road. 1, 4, 8 Wimborne Gardens. 158 Thirlmere Ave. 13 Ringwood Road. 61 Lyndhurst Road. 67 Lyndhurst Road. (Part Retrospective)

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Date validated: 11/02/2022

Target Date: 08/04/2022

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions and informatives

Conditions to include

1. Approved plans
2. Materials - as specified
3. Locations and specifications of proposed Air Source Heat Pumps as approved and ongoing maintenance

Informatives to include:

1. Terms and conditions
2. Positive and Proactive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The proposed works are exterior alterations and repair works to terraced and semi-detached houses along Bramshaw Road, Wimborne Gardens, Thirlmere Avenue and Ringwood Road. All properties are located on the Old Norcot Estate, which has a mix of similarly designed terraced rows and semi-detached residential dwellings, constructed in the mid-1920s.
- 1.2 The houses are built using a mixture of brick and block with a narrow cavity. The external walls have a traditional cement mortar and pebble dash render, with the exception of 158 Thirlmere Avenue which consists of red brick external walls. The main roofs are pitched with a double roman style tile. Windows and rear doors are double glazed uPVC.
- 1.3 The properties identified within this application are failing or near the end of their practical life expectancy. This project seeks to improve the thermal efficiency of the properties as well as perform replacement works. The external wall insulation (EWI) system proposed is a key component of this project and aims to improve thermal efficiency through conserving fuel and

power, enabling Reading Borough Council to work towards a Zero Carbon target by 2030.

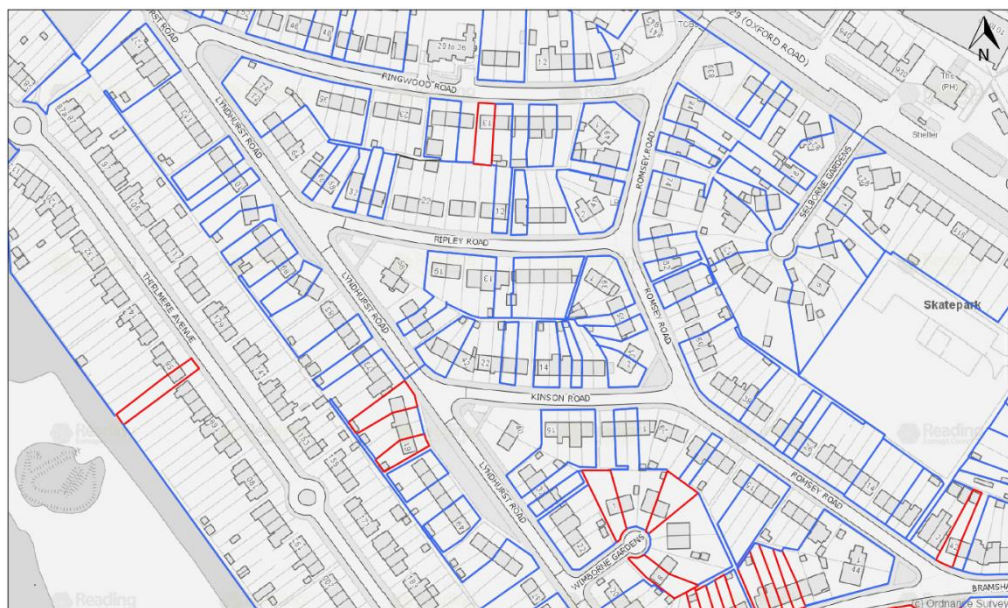
- 1.4 At the time of writing this report, some works to the properties have commenced that do not require planning permission. The works which are the subject of this application cannot commence until the new windows are installed. The application is referred to Committee owing to it being for works to Council owned (Regulation 3) property.

Site Location Plan 1



NOTE: The areas outlined in red on the above plan are where the groups of houses, which are the subject of this planning application, are located. The multiple blue lines in the area indicate the extent of Council ownerships in the area.

Site Location Plan 2



NOTE: The areas outlined in red on the above plan are where the groups of houses, which are the subject of this planning application, are located. The multiple blue lines in the area indicate the extent of Council ownerships in the area.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The development proposes alterations to include 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 42, 50, 51, 54, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 64, 66, 83, 87, 89 Bramshaw Road; 1, 4, 8 Wimborne Gardens; 158 Thirlmere Ave; 13 Ringwood Road; 61 Lyndhurst Road and 67 Lyndhurst Road.

The following works are confirmed by the planning case officer to be within the criteria for being permitted development:

- Installation of triple glazed uPVC windows
- Renewal of flat roof coverings
- Structural repairs (External)
- Renewal of pitched roof tiles
- The fitting of Air Source Heat pumps to the side of properties. These would likely be considered Permitted Development provided they comply with the relevant criteria in terms of size, location and standards.

- 2.2 However, the following works have been confirmed to require planning permission to be granted:

- External Wall Insulation (EWI) Systems
- Extension of roof overhangs to gable ends or dormer style roofs to allow for EWI to be fitted under new soffit.

3. PLANS AND DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED:

The following plans and documents were received on 11th February 2022:

- Location Plan 1 (Including Council owned properties demonstrated in blue)
- Location Plan 2 (Including Council owned properties demonstrated in blue)
- Site Plan - 5 to 28 Bramshaw Road
- Site Plan - 42 to 66 Bramshaw Road
- Site Plan - 50 to 89 Bramshaw Road
- Site Plan - 13 Ringwood Road
- Site Plan - 1 to 8 Wimborne Gardens
- Site Plan - 158 Thirlmere Avenue and 61 to 67 Lyndhurst Road
- Existing Elevations - PM/01-8 BRAM
- Existing Elevations - PM/01-8 WIM
- Existing Elevations - PM/01-6 BRAM
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-8 BRAM
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-8 WIM
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-6 BRAM
- Retained Window and Sill (Flush Frame) - EWI System with PPC Aluminium Oversill - W-RET-P-003 Rev 1
- Overhanging Eaves - Ventilated Soffit Board (1) - RFS002A
- PermaRock Silicone^{Ultra} K & R Finishes - Datasheet

The following plans and documents were received on 10th March 2022:

- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-8 BRAM (amended to include Air Source Heat Pumps on all elevations)
- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-8 WIM (amended to include Air Source Heat Pumps on all elevations)

- Proposed Elevations - PM/02-6 BRAM (amended to include Air Source Heat Pumps on all elevations)
- Ecodan Heating - f8cb4445
- PUZ-WM50VHA(-BS) Ecodan R32 Monobloc Air Source Heat Pump Data Sheet
- Reading Borough Council Requirements for Heat Pump Installation

The following plans and documents were received on 16th March 2022:

- PUZ-WM85VAA(-BS) Ecodan R32 Monobloc Air Source Heat Pump Data Sheet

4. PLANNING HISTORY

210904 - Works consist of property improvements and upgrades of Thermal efficiency measures to dwellings detailed below. All properties located on the Old Norcot Estate, Reading. Phase 1 addresses to include:- 35, 37, 39, 41, 43 Bramshaw Road RG30 6AT 69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AS 377 & 379 Norcot Road, RG30 6AB. Works will see the existing render overclad with a new external wall insulation system, replacement of new triple glazed windows, minor roof adaptations and associated works (Part Retrospective) (Amended Description). - Application Permitted on 10/09/2021 (Committee Decision)

The site photos of application 210904 are provided in appendix 3 of this report to provide a visual representation of the end result of the development proposed under this application. Please note that Air Source Heat Pumps were not proposed under application 210904.

5. CONSULTATIONS

Internal Consultations

5.1 *Environmental Protection*

Concerns have been raised by the Environmental Protection Team with regards to noise arising from the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP). Further information has been requested as to the exact location of the ASHPs to determine the impact of any noise generated on neighbouring residents.

Public consultation

5.2 The following neighbouring owners and occupiers were consulted by letter:

6 Bramshaw Road	53 Bramshaw Road
7 Bramshaw Road	57 Bramshaw Road
9 Bramshaw Road	58 Bramshaw Road
13 Bramshaw Road	62 Bramshaw Road
14 Bramshaw Road	63 Bramshaw Road
21 Bramshaw Road	81 Bramshaw Road
22 Bramshaw Road	7 Kinson Road
25 Bramshaw Road	9 Kinson Road
29 Bramshaw Road	11 Kinson Road
30 Bramshaw Road	6 Lyndhurst Road
40 Bramshaw Road	8 Lyndhurst Road
48 Bramshaw Road	10 Lyndhurst Road
52 Bramshaw Road	12 Lyndhurst Road

22 Lyndhurst Road	16 Ripley Road
24 Lyndhurst Road	1 Rockbourne Gardens
26 Lyndhurst Road	14 Rockbourne Gardens
28 Lyndhurst Road	The Kiln, 16A Romany Lane
30 Lyndhurst Road	2 Romsey Road
59 Lyndhurst Road	7 Romsey Road
63 Lyndhurst Road	5 Romsey Road
65 Lyndhurst Road	11 Romsey Road
69 Lyndhurst Road	19 Romsey Road
337 Norcot Road	21 Romsey Road
339 Norcot Road	23 Romsey Road
343 Norcot Road	25 Romsey Road
345 Norcot Road	27 Romsey Road
367 Norcot Road	155 Thirlmere Avenue
369 Norcot Road	156 Thirlmere Avenue
373 Norcot Road	157 Thirlmere Avenue
375 Norcot Road	159 Thirlmere Avenue
387 Norcot Road	160 Thirlmere Avenue
389 Norcot Road	163 Thirlmere Avenue
395 Norcot Road	165 Thirlmere Avenue
397 Norcot Road	2 Wimborne Gardens
399 Norcot Road	3 Wimborne Gardens
11 Ringwood Road	5 Wimborne Gardens
15 Ringwood Road	7 Wimborne Gardens
14 Ripley Road	

Eight site notices were erected on 24th February 2022, expiring on 17th March 2022. No responses have been received.

6. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

6.1 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'.

6.2 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3 Adaptation to Climate Change

CC4 Decentralised Energy

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (Adopted December 2019)

7. APPRAISAL

7.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Principle of Development
- ii) Design
- iii) Safeguarding Amenity

i) Principle of Development

7.2 The proposed works seek to refurbish and improve the thermal performance of these properties for the benefit of the occupiers. As mentioned above some of the changes fall within the definition of 'development' (section 55 of the Town & Country Planning Act) as building operations (section 55 (1A) (d), also bearing in mind 55 (2) a(ii) and the change in appearance of the existing material beneath).

7.3 The proposed finished insulation system would have a depth of 115mm from the existing cement render. This will alter the character and appearance of the buildings beyond simply a change in render colour. The depth of the proposed render has the potential to alter the external appearance of window openings, doorframes, and result in the loss of eaves.

7.4 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that "plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development". For decision making, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

7.5 As referred to in the Planning Statement submitted for this application, Reading Borough Council is committed to working towards achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030. As per paragraph 4.7 of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019), heat loss can be prevented by applying high levels of insulation to the roof, walls and floors. Heat loss from windows can be further reduced through double or triple glazing. The works proposed by this application aim to maximise energy efficiency by reducing heat loss from the building envelope. Therefore, the proposed development aligns with the principles of policy CC3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, which seeks existing development to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change through building improvements.

7.6 The application also proposes a decentralised energy solution in the form of Air Source Heat Pumps. Therefore, the proposed development is subject to Policy CC4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. Paragraph 4.1.15 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that Air Source or ground source heat pumps should be considered in the first instance, as these methods are less carbon intensive than Combined Heat and Power (CHP). The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019) expands on this further and states that in general Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP) should be investigated as a priority over Air Source Heat Pumps, as GSHPs enable greater seasonal efficiencies. This however normally applies for new developments, whereas this application seeks thermal efficiency improvements to existing dwellings. Therefore, the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps are acceptable.

ii) Design

- 7.7 The properties subject to this application are two storey terraced rows of houses and semi-detached pairs. The appearance of these properties previously was the same as others in the area being pebble-dash render, brown roof tiles, PVC windows, and brick porch arches.
- 7.8 The external wall insulation has been selected to improve energy efficiency at the respective properties. The colour of the render finish is different from the predominantly pebble-dash render character of the surrounding area, however it is considered that the new render coating and natural white colour selected is not harmful to the appearance of the application properties or the surrounding area. See appendix 2 for photos of existing properties, and appendix 3 for properties that have benefited from the development under application 210904.
- 7.9 The render and finish at the depth that has been proposed/implemented will alter the appearance of openings and eaves to the affected properties, resulting in extended eaves and deep window reveals when compared to unaltered neighbouring properties. The proposed adapted roofline is not considered a significant change or harmful to the character and appearance of the proposal sites or the surrounding area.
- 7.10 The proposed replacement of the existing uPVC windows with triple glazed uPVC windows are considered like for like, whilst again improving energy efficiency to these dwellings. The roof adaptations proposed are for the eaves to be extended to accommodate the depth of the render.
- 7.11 It is noted that there will be a loss in some of the detailing of some of the properties. The loss of such features is not considered harmful in this instance due to the inherent benefits of the proposed works and varying character of the surrounding area. The resultant appearance of the dwellings would not look out of place within the surrounding area, particularly given the presence of the works done to the dwellings under application 210904.
- 7.12 It is acknowledged that these improvement works are also proposed to more isolated dwellings and not part of a cluster, for instance 158 Thirlmere Avenue and 13 Ringwood Road. The area surrounding 158 Thirlmere Avenue consists of terraced rows with a mix of red brick walls and painted brickwork. The proposed changes to the appearance of 158 Thirlmere Avenue will not be intrusive to the street scene. This is also considered the case for 13 Ringwood Road.
- 7.13 With regards to the long-term care and maintenance of the external wall insulation; information has been provided detailing procedures for ongoing inspections and maintenance. This includes instructions for cleaning the render, as well as attaching fixtures and fittings to the render.
- 7.14 The Air Source Heat Pumps proposed are small and compact in stature, at 1m in height, 0.5m in depth and width of 1m (0.5m³). These small units will be located either to the side or rear of the respective property, as a result the inclusion of these units is not considered harmful to the character and appearance street scene or host dwelling.

7.15 Overall, in terms of the appearance of the refurbished and altered properties along Bramshaw Road, Wimborne Gardens, Thirlmere Avenue and Ringwood Road the changes are considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policy CC7.

iii) Safeguarding Amenity

7.16 The physical alterations are not considered to harm the living conditions of neighbours within the surrounding area. This is largely due to the nature and scale of the works proposed. The works are not considered to harm the outlook from neighbouring properties or appear visually dominant.

7.17 Concerns have been raised from the Environmental Protection Team as to the impact of noise arising from the Air Source Heat Pumps on neighbouring properties. A data sheet has been provided for the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps which states that the sound pressure level at 1m is 45dBA. The Air Source Heat Pump proposed has been revised from a model that previously generate a sound pressure level at 1m of 47dBA. It is also confirmed within the Tender Specification that the Air Source Heat Pumps will sit on antivibration FIX-IT FOOT or equivalent when mounting the units.

7.18 Whilst the sound pressure level is relatively low, there is a concern of a cumulative impact of the noise arising from the units based on the number of units proposed. Especially where units are proposed to numerous dwellings along Bramshaw Road. It is therefore considered appropriate to confirm the exact locations of the proposed ASHP units to ensure that the impact of any noise is minimised.

7.19 The location of the ASHP units as demonstrated on the proposed plans and elevations is to the side and rear of each dwelling at the ground floor. Further information has been requested as to the exact location of each ASHP and noise mitigation to assess its potential impact on neighbouring properties and officers advise that it would be reasonable to request this as a planning condition which will also secure the maintenance of the ASHP to prevent nuisance.

7.20 Overall, the development is considered to result in a betterment for existing and future occupiers at the dwellings subject to the works proposed within this application. It is noted that reveals of windows at the proposal sites are deeper as a result of the external wall insulation, however, the additional depth is not considered to result in a harmful loss of light or harm to outlook for occupiers.

7.21 Therefore, the proposed works are considered in accordance with policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, subject to the details of the locations of the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps for each dwelling being provided and approved via condition. Should more details be provided before the Committee meeting on 30/03/2022, they will be provided in an update report.

8. Equality

8.1 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age and disability. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups

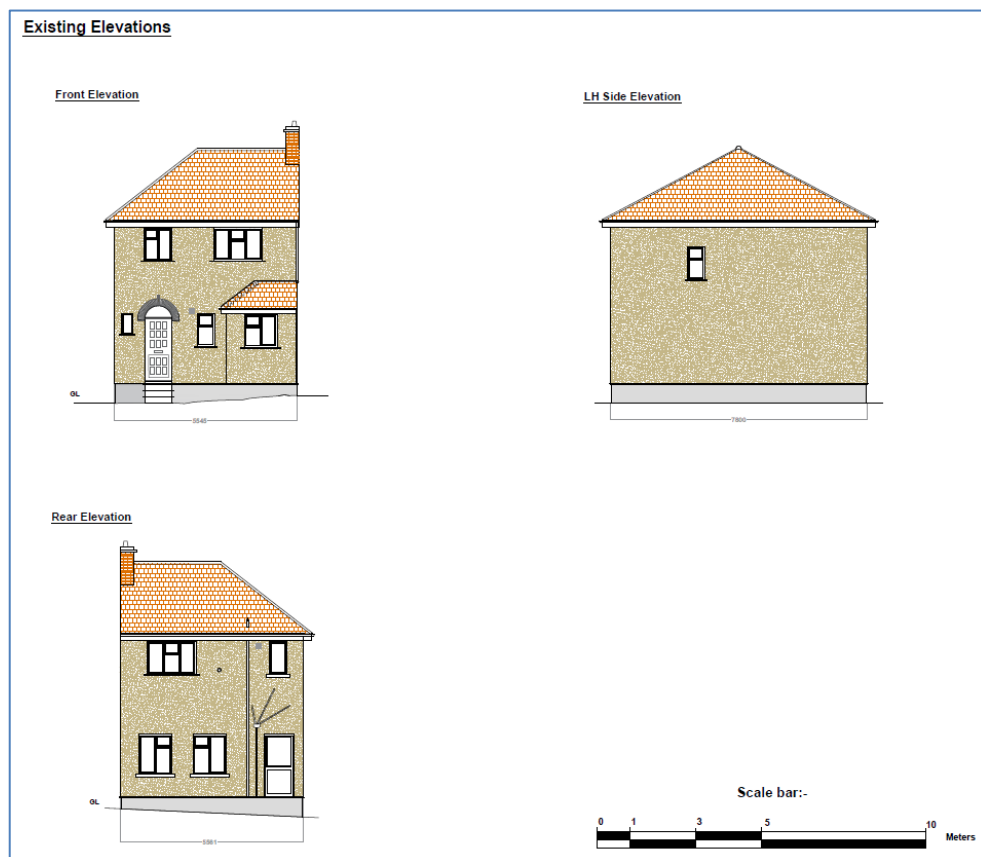
have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 In addition to being accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4, CC7 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, the development is considered to suitably improve the thermal efficiency of the respective Council owned properties, whilst not harming the character and appearance of the properties or the area. It can be concluded that the inherent benefits of the proposal by improving energy efficiency at these properties, as part of the Council's commitment to its Climate Emergency declaration, is considered to weigh heavily in favour of this development.

Case Officer: David Brett

Appendix 1: Plans



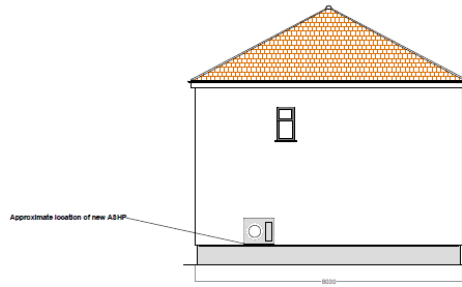
Existing Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 5 Bramshaw Road) is found at the following addresses:- 7, 11, 23, 27, 51, 55, 59, 61, 83, 87 & 89 Bramshaw Road, Reading.

Proposed Elevations

Front Elevation



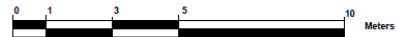
LH Side Elevation



Rear Elevation



Scale bar:-



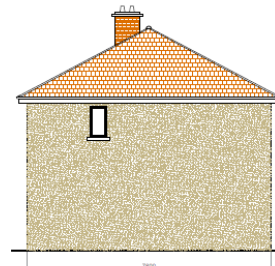
Proposed Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 5 Bramshaw Road) is found at the following addresses:- 7, 11, 23, 27, 51, 55, 59, 61, 83, 87 & 89 Bramshaw Road, Reading.

Existing Elevations

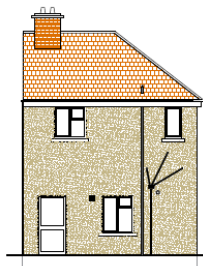
Front Elevation



Side Elevation



Rear Elevation

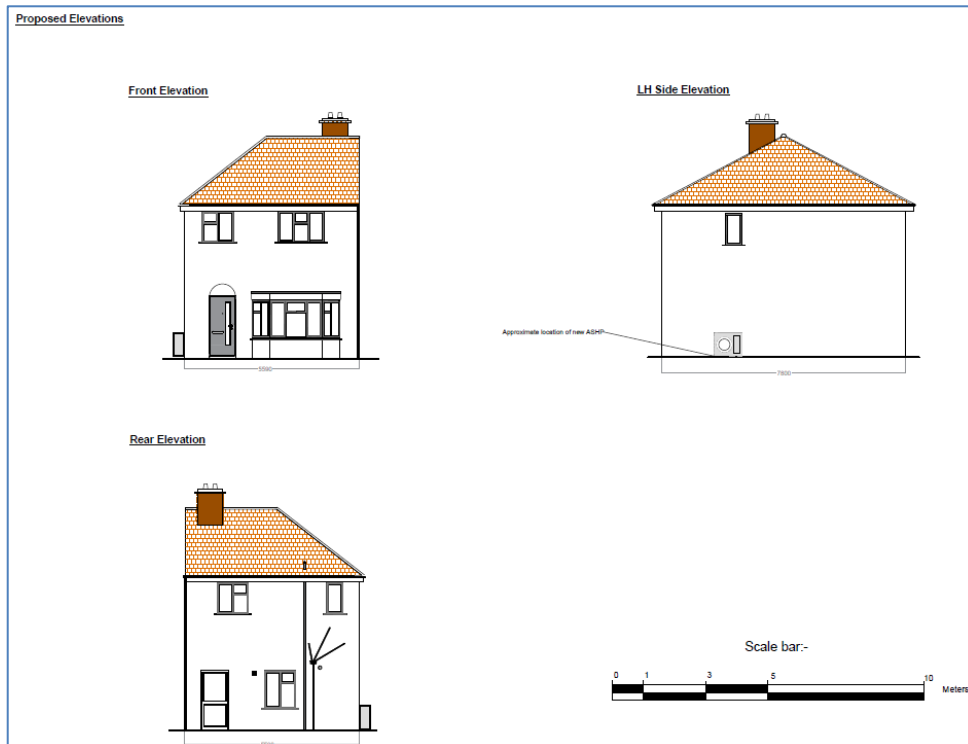


Scale bar:-



Existing Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 8 Bramshaw Road) is found at the following addresses:- 10, 12, 24, 26, 28, 40, 42, 50, 54, 56, 60, 64, 66 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AT,

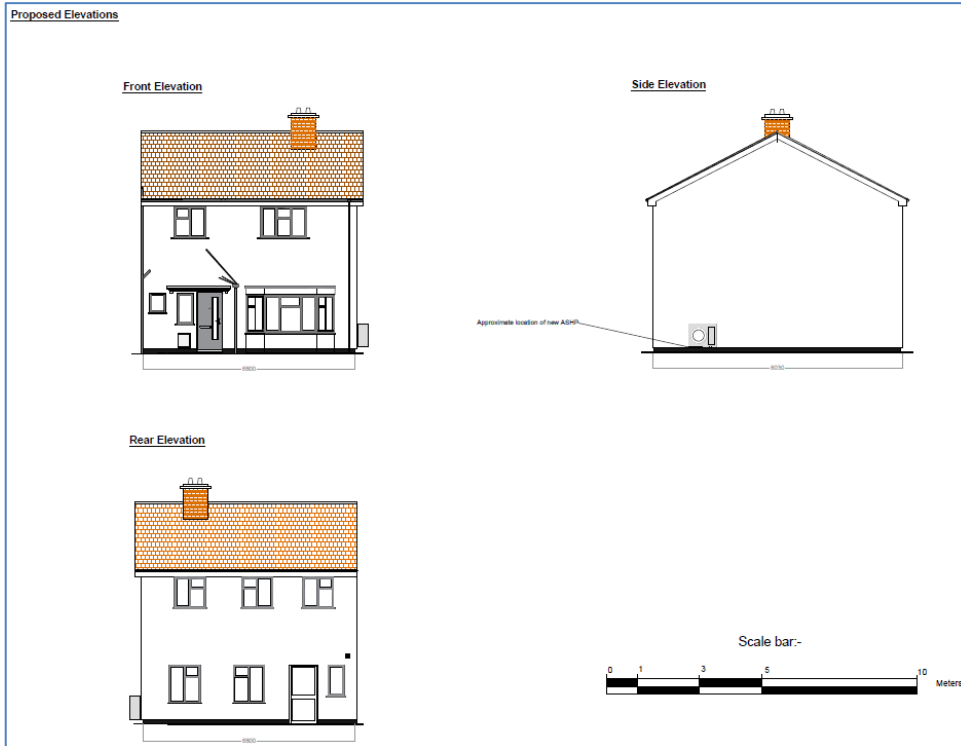
158 Thirlmere Road, RG30 6XJ and 13 Ringwood Road, Reading RG31 6TY



Proposed Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 8 Bramshaw Road) is found at the following addresses:- 10, 12, 24, 26, 28, 40, 42, 50, 54, 56, 60, 64, 66 Bramshaw Road, RG30 6AT, 158 Thirlmere Road, RG30 6XJ and 13 Ringwood Road, Reading RG31 6TY



Existing Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 8 Wimborne Gardens) is found at the following addresses:- 1 & 4 Wimborne Gardens, Reading.



Proposed Elevations - Of the 31 properties the style of property shown (for no. 8 Wimborne Gardens) is found at the following addresses:- 1 & 4 Wimborne Gardens, Reading.

Appendix 2: Typical Site photos taken by Case Officer on 24/02/2022.





Appendix 3: Site photos taken by Case Officer on 18/08/2021 of completed Phase 1 properties (Planning Application 210904).



69, 71, 73, 75 Bramshaw Road
Site Photo taken on 18/08/2021



35, 37, 39, 41, 43 Bramshaw Road
Site Photo taken on 18/08/2021