

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 17 July 2019

Ward: Church

Application No: 190704/REG3

Address: Land Adjacent 72 Wentworth Avenue, Reading, RG2 8JL

Proposal: Construction of 2no. two-bed dwellings and associated parking, landscaping and access.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council

Date Valid: 30/04/2019

Application target decision date: Originally 25/06/19 but an extension of time has been agreed until 27/07/19

26 week date: 29/10/19

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to completion of a unilateral undertaking legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed by the 27th July 2019 (unless the assessing officer on behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agrees to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The legal agreement to secure the following:

- 2 residential unit as an affordable rented housing units in perpetuity

And the following conditions to include:

1. Time Limit - 3 years
2. Approved plans
3. Details (samples and manufacturer details) of all external materials (including brickwork, roof slate, glazing, window frames/cills/surrounds, doors, guttering and downpipes)
4. Pre-commencement construction method statement (including noise & dust)
5. Pre-commencement arboriculture method statement, and implementation
6. Pre-occupation implementation bin storage facility details
7. Pre-occupation implementation of cycle parking details provided
8. Pre-occupation implementation of vehicle parking
9. Construction hours (0800 - 1800 Mon-Fri; 0900-1300 Sat; Not at all on Sunday or public holidays)
10. Pre-commencement hard and soft landscaping details (including manoeuvring areas)
11. Implementation of approved hard and soft landscaping details
12. Landscaping maintenance for five years
13. No burning of waste on site

Informatives:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Highways works
3. Terms and conditions - pre-commencement advice
4. Building Control
5. Party Wall Act
6. CIL
7. No burning of waste on site
8. Unilateral Undertaking Legal Agreement

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a plot of land, which is currently clear of all structures, with concrete hardstanding for the entirety of the site. Based on the Council's records, the site contained 10 garages for previous Council housing on Wentworth Avenue and some properties on Holberton Road. The access to the site is between no's 72 and 74 Wentworth Avenue. The site does not contain a listed building or structure and is not located within a conservation area.
- 1.2 The proposals are being considered at Planning Applications Committee by virtue of being the Council's own (regulation 3) application. The site in relation to the wider urban area is shown below, together with a site photograph and aerial view.



Site Location Plan (application site edged in red)



Site photograph



Aerial view looking north

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the erection of two 2-bedroom dwellings. This will comprise a two storey pair of semi-detached dwellings each with a small front porch, provision of four car parking spaces, bin storage, cycle parking, associated landscaping, and a rear garden for each dwelling. The proposal also includes retention of an existing access right for no. 6 Holberton Road.
- 2.2 Reading Borough Council is the landowner and applicant in this instance, with this being one of a series of sites being brought forward to deliver affordable housing in the Borough.
- 2.3 In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. As per the CIL charging schedule this proposal will attract a charge of £24,904.32 (£168 x the 2019 CIL rate for residential developments). However, the CIL form suggests that the applicant will be seeking social housing relief, which would result in the CIL charge being £0.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

171715/PREAPP - advice sought for proposed development of two x 2 bed dwellings
090477/PREAPP - advice sought for the erection of two flats

4. CONSULTATIONS

i) RBC Transport

- 4.1 There are no transport objections to this application, subject to the following conditions:
 - Pre-commencement construction method statement

- Pre-occupation implementation of bin storage
- Pre-occupation implementation of cycle parking details provided
- Pre-occupation implementation of vehicle parking

ii) RBC Environmental Health - Environmental Protection (EP)

4.2 From an EP perspective, there are concerns regarding potential noise, dust, and bonfires associated with the construction and demolition phase.

4.3 As such, standard construction hours and details of noise/dust reduction measures should be secured via condition and an informative stating that there should be no burning of waste on the site.

iii) Natural environment (trees)

4.4 No objection to the proposed development subject to conditions.

iv) Natural environment (ecology)

4.5 No objections

v) Public consultation

4.6 Notification letters were sent to nearby occupiers on 3/5/19.

One objection has been received, citing accuracy of plans and suitability of access as concerns.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 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'. The application has been assessed against the following policies:

5.2 National

National Planning Policy Framework (2018)
National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.3 RBC Local Development Framework - Core Strategy (2008) (Altered 2015)

CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
CS2 Waste Minimisation
CS7 Design and the Public Realm
CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities
CS14 Provision of housing
CS15 Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix
CS24 Car / Cycle Parking
CS34 Pollution and Water Resources
CS36 Biodiversity and Geology
CS38 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

5.4 Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (Altered 2015)

SD1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- DM1 Adaptation to Climate Change
- DM4 Safeguarding Amenity
- DM5 Housing Mix
- DM6 Affordable Housing
- DM10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters
- DM18 Tree Planting

5.5 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

Affordable Housing SPD (2013)

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011)

5.6 Other relevant documentation

DCLG Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (2015)

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Principle of development
- ii) Design considerations
- iii) Residential amenity
- iv) Transport
- v) Trees, landscaping and ecology
- vi) Other matters

i) Principle of development

6.2 The NPPF states that LPAs should “encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value”. The NPPF definition of ‘previously developed land’ is taken to include the land which was occupied by a permanent structure... and associated fixed surface infrastructure. As such, the development site is considered previously development land

6.3 Therefore, the redevelopment of the site for residential development is acceptable in principle, subject to meeting other development plan policy objectives relating to the main issues identified above.

ii) Design considerations

6.4 The proposal site has no frontage on to Wentworth Avenue, meaning that any proposal for the site would not be visible from the public highway. This does not however preclude the development from needing to respect and respond to the character and appearance of the locality. Due to the layout of Wentworth Avenue, the building line is not uniform and there is no distinctive building type and there are various plot widths and depths. The plot on which the proposal is set is, excluding the access way, of a similar size and depth to that of the surrounding dwellings. The depth of the dwellings, setback from boundaries and site coverage is comparable to the existing dwellings within the area and therefore the proposal is considered to respect the relationship between built form and space around dwellings.

6.5 No details have been submitted regarding proposed materials so a condition is recommended to provide details prior to works beginning above foundation level. Additionally, the extensive area for car parking and manoeuvring has not been detailed at this time so a hard and soft landscaping plan will be required to ensure that this is acceptable and will require submission prior to commencement of development.

iii) **Residential amenity**

6.6 First floor windows in the proposed dwelling would directly overlook adjoining properties 74 & 72 Wentworth Avenue to the front, and 5 & 7 Holberton Road to the rear.

- No 72 is the closest dwelling, however the distance would be approximately 18m, and the angle would not be one which would facilitate direct privacy concerns.
- The relationship between no's 74 and the proposal would be that of a side to back relationship which would not have a detrimental impact on the privacy of that dwelling.
- In relation to the property at no.5 & 7 Holberton Road, the back to back distance from the proposed dwelling would exceed 20m, and be a similar relationship to the existing dwellings.
- It would also have obscure angled overlook to properties on Whitley Wood Road.

6.7 The internal layout of the proposed units is arranged to provide a high standard of living accommodation for future occupiers, with the overall floorspace comfortably exceeding the national space standards. All rooms will be regular in size and shape, providing suitable access to outlook, natural day/sunlight and ventilation. Conveniently located cycle and waste storage facilities are incorporated within the scheme. The distance from the waste storage area to the waste collection point will need to be managed by the future occupants, and is considered acceptable from the Council's waste department. Finally, from an access perspective, level access is possible from the footway, and parking proposed with the scheme is considered acceptable.

6.8 In relation to all nearby occupiers in the area, amenity during the implementation of the permission will be protected via the construction method statement measures recommended to be secured by a pre-commencement condition. In overall terms the proposals are therefore considered to comply with policy DM4.

iv) **Transport**

6.9 As per the Transport Planning observations provided above, the proposals are considered appropriate in all highways and parking regards, the plans appear to illustrate that the existing access conforms to the Councils current standards and then narrows to under 4.1m, as the previous use of the site generated significantly greater vehicle movements than that of the proposed use there would be no detrimental change or impact due to the proposed development. As such transport would have no objection to the retained access being used to facilitate the development as this would be no worse than the previous situation. Subject to conditions relating to: a construction method statement; cycle parking; waste storage; and vehicle parking provision, transport officers are satisfied that the proposal is acceptable in this regard.

v) **Trees, landscaping and ecology**

- 6.10 The Site Plan plots the mature Oak at 5 Holberton Road. This tree is shown to be retained, as one would expect given it is off-site, but does not provide its Root Protection Area. The houses will be outside this, however ground work will be required to convert the existing hard landscaping into soft landscaping (proposed lawn area). An Arboricultural Method Statement will be required to deal with tree protection and required ground works within its RPA.
- 6.11 Specialist officers have considered the proposals from an ecology perspective and are satisfied with the proposals. This is subject to a number of conditions to secure more details of the landscaping/biodiversity proposals and to protect wildlife during the construction stage.

vi) **Other matters**

- 6.11 Sustainability - The applicant has not provided any specific information relating to sustainable design and construction. As the proposed development is to be a new build, it is expected that a condition ensuring compliancy with policies CS1 and DM1 could be met; therefore the development is considered acceptable in this regard.
- 6.12 Legal Agreement - Given the nature of the land ownership (as specified in the introduction section above) a unilateral undertaking (rather than a Section 106) legal agreement will be drafted. This will secure the unit as affordable rented accommodation. It is considered that the obligation would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that it would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 6.13 Equality - 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, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of the Legal Agreement.

Drawings & documents submitted:

Drawing No: 5004159-800 Location plan
Drawing No: 5004159-801 Illustrative site plan
Drawing No: 5004159-803 Site sections AA & BB
Drawing No: 5004159-802 Proposed plan & Elevations
Design and access statement

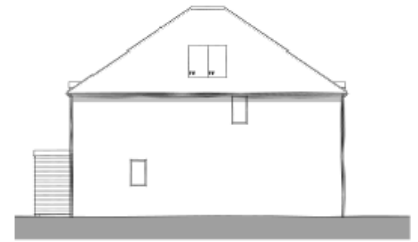
Case Officer: Anthony Scholes

Proposal plans



Front Elevation

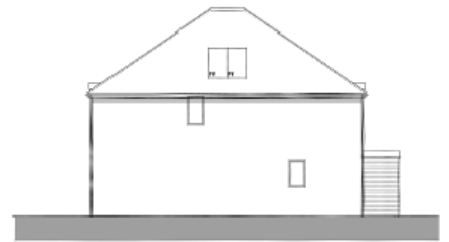
Materials:
Roof: Plain Clay Tiles to be selected
Walls: Collected wall stock bricks
Furniture: Selected conventional windows and french doors colour to be confirmed.



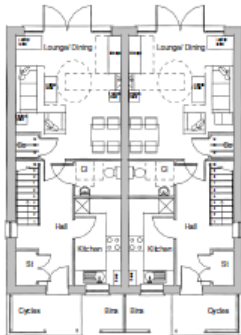
RHS Elevation



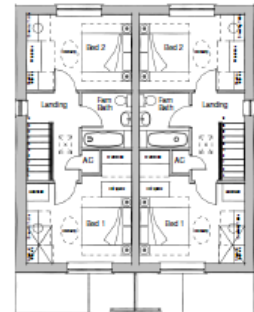
Rear Elevation



LHS Elevation



Ground Floor



First Floor