

**COMMITTEE REPORT**  
**BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**  
**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

**Ward:** Peppard  
**App No.:** 190835/FUL  
**Address:** 199-203 Henley Road & Land to rear of 205-207 Henley Road, Caversham  
**Proposal:** Demolition of 199-203 Henley Road and erection of part four, part three and part two storey 82 unit residential care home building (C2 use class) with associated external structures, access from Henley Road, car parking and landscaping  
**Applicant:** Signature Senior Lifestyle Ltd  
**Date valid:** 16.6.2019  
**Major Application - 13-week target decision date:** 17.09.2019  
**Extension of time date:** 30.10.2019

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Subject to:**

- Submission of a suitable Sustainable Drainage Strategy (SuDs) for the development

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed by 30/10/2019 (unless officers on behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The legal agreement to secure the following:

- An Employment Skills and Training Plan (construction and end user phase).
- The adoption of the internal access road
- Use of the development as a C2 care home only

And the following conditions to include (compliance conditions unless otherwise stated):

1. Time Limit - 3 years
2. Approved plans
3. Pre-commencement details of all external materials to be submitted to and approved by the LPA
4. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a Construction Method Statement (also including noise and dust measures)
5. Pre-commencement provision of visibility splays, retention thereafter
6. Pre-commencement submission and approval of tree protection and arboricultural method statement
7. In accordance with approved tree protection and arboricultural method statements details
8. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a hard and soft landscaping scheme
9. In accordance with approved hard and soft landscaping scheme
10. Landscaping maintenance.
11. Pre-commencement submission and approval of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a submitted/approved written scheme of investigation
12. Pre-occupation provision of electric vehicle charging points

13. Pre-occupation vehicle parking spaces provided in accordance with the approved plans
14. Pre-occupation vehicle accesses provided in accordance with the approved plans
15. Pre-occupation cycle parking provided in accordance with the approved plans
16. Pre-occupation bin storage provided in accordance with the approved plans
17. Pre-occupation roads to be provided
18. Access closure with reinstatement
19. In accordance with measures as detailed in the Flood Risk Assessment to include finished floor levels are set no lower than 37.12 metres above Ordnance Datum.
20. Within 6 months of occupation: submission and approval of travel plan
21. Annual submission and approval of travel plan review thereafter
22. No additional windows in side elevations of the building
23. Delivery and Servicing Hours (08:00hrs to 22:00hrs Monday to Saturdays and 10:00hrs to 18:00hrs on Sundays and Bank Holidays)
24. Plant noise assessment to be submitted and approved prior to installation of any mechanical plant equipment
25. In accordance with submitted odour control strategy
26. Pre-commencement submission and approval of survey to establish if site is contaminated
27. Pre-commencement submission and approval of remediation scheme if required
28. Implementation of remediation scheme if required
29. Reporting of Unexpected Contamination
30. Construction and/demolition standard hours (08:00hrs to 18:00hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 09:00hrs to 13:00hrs on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays)
31. Pre-commencement details of ground levels
32. Pre-commencement external lighting scheme to be submitted and approved
33. Pre-occupation provision of all internal communal areas; retention thereafter
34. Pre-commencement BREEAM pre-estimator report to achieve a level of excellent
35. Pre-occupation BREEAM completion certificate
36. Pre-occupation provision of all lifts and retention thereafter
37. All fences within the 1% annual probability flood event with 35% allowance for climate change shall be design to be permeable to floodwater
38. In accordance with submitted energy statement (provision of on-site CHP)

Informatives:

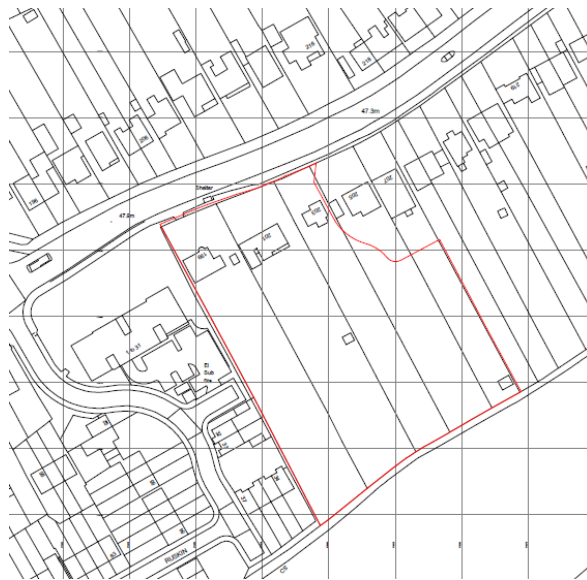
1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. S106 Legal Agreement
3. CIL (not liable)
4. Terms and conditions
5. Building Regulations
6. Clarification over pre-commencement conditions
8. There should be no ground raising within the 1% annual probability (1 in 100) flood extent with a 35% allowance for climate change.
10. S278 Agreement
12. S38 Agreement
13. Dust requirements for CMS
14. Bat Licence required for removal of bat roost

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site, as illustrated on the location plan below, is approximately 0.96 ha. in area and comprises the residential plots of five existing properties set on the southern side of Henley Road. The site is bounded by the existing Ruskin

development to the west and No 209 Henley Road to the east. Opposite the site is a row of substantial detached and semi-detached houses fronting onto Henley Road.

- 1.2 The dwellings on the southern side of Henley Road have a plot depth of approximately 115m. The site slopes down significantly from the front (northern) to the rear (southern) boundary. The area directly to the south is designated in the current Proposals Map as a Major Landscape Feature and contains a Green Link. The Berry Brook lies outside of the southern boundary of the site and results in the application site falling within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3a (towards the southern boundary).
- 1.3 This site has an existing planning permission for 42 residential dwellings (C3) which approved (subject to a section 106 legal agreement) at Planning Applications Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2017 (ref.170959).
- 1.4 A site visit in relation to the current application was undertaken by Members of Planning Applications Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019. The application is on the committee agenda because it is a Major category planning application.



*Site Location Plan*

## **2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of no.s 199-203 Henley Road and the erection of part four, part three and part two storey 82 unit residential care home building (C2 use class) with associated external structures, access from Henley Road, car parking and landscaping.
- 2.2 The proposed care home would provide specialised nursing and dementia care. The development would include a range of on-site communal facilities for residents including a restaurant, lounge, café, library, cinema, salon, spa bathing and therapy space, sensory gardens and outdoor space.
- 2.3 Supporting Information submitted with the application includes:
  - Aether Air Quality Assessment ref. AQ\_assessment/2019/Henley\_Road Version 1.3
  - CgMs Heritage Archaeological Desk Based Assessment ref. 25345/AT

- Jomas Associated Ltd Geo-environmental & Geotechnical Assessment Ground Investigation Report
- Ethos Preliminary Ecological Appraisal V1 April 2019
- Ethos Protected Species Survey ref. V2 September 2019
- Harniss Consulting Energy Strategy Report Rev P2
- CSP Foul and Surface Water Drainage Scheme Report ref. SIG/29 Version 3 April 2019
- PEP Travel Plan April 2019
- PEP Transport Statement April 2019
- Tracy Clarke Arboricultural Planning Report Impact Assessment and Method Statement ref. TCTC-17327-c April 2019
- Edenvale Young Flood Risk Assessment Henley Road Caversham Rev E May 2 2019
- Gerald Eve Planning Statement (including Sequential Test FRA) April 2019
- Sharps Redmore Façade Acoustic Assessment ref. Signature Care Home Henley Road Caversham 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019
- Lexington Communications Statement of Community Involvement April 2019
- Tree Work Specification ref. Henley Road, Caversham
- Harniss Utilities Statement Rev P1
- Harniss Consulting Statement on Controlling Kitchen Odours Rev P1

### 3. **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

#### *Application site*

- 3.1 161842FUL - Demolition of no.s 199-203 Henley Road and erection of 60 dwellings at 199-203 Henley Road and to the rear of 205-207 Henley Road with associated access from Henley Road and landscaping. Refused (18/1/2017)
- 3.2 170959FUL - Demolition of 199-203 Henley Road and erection of 42 dwellings at 199-203 Henley Road and to the rear of 205-207 Henley Road with associated access from Henley Road and landscaping. Granted (S106) (6/6/2018)

#### *Rear of No.199 Henley Road*

- 3.4 04/00239/OUT - Outline application for the erection of 10 x 3 bedroom terraced houses. Withdrawn (11/05/04)
- 3.5 04/00602/OUT - Erection of 8 x 3 bedroom semi-detached houses. Refused (08/07/04).
- 3.6 06/01053/OUT - Outline application for the erection of 7 dwellings, considering the matters of siting and access. Withdrawn (30/10/06).

#### *Nos 205 - 219 Henley Road*

- 3.7 07/00081/FUL - Demolition of Nos.205-219 Henley Road [odd] and the erection of 60 dwelling units and a 60 bed care home. Refused (24/5/07) and dismissed at appeal.

#### *241-251 Henley Road, Caversham*

- 3.8 07/00032/FUL - Demolition of one existing dwelling and erection of fourteen new dwellings with associated infrastructure and car parking. Refused (18/7/2007) and Dismissed at Appeal.

- 3.9 06/00298/FUL - Demolition of six existing dwellings and erection of sixty five new dwellings with associated infrastructure and car parking. Withdrawn (10/07/06).

*98-102 Lower Henley Road And 177-197 Henley Road (Ruskin)*

- 3.10 02/00657/FUL - Proposed residential development comprising of 75 units including access roads and parking. Permitted on appeal (11/10/02) and implemented.

*Land to rear of 209-219 Henley Road*

- 3.11 181102/FUL - Erection of 9 dwellings to the rear of 209-219 Henley Road with access road and associated landscaping - Withdrawn (11/02/2019).

- 3.12 190887/FUL - Erection of 9 dwellings to the rear of 209-219 Henley Road with access road and associated landscaping (resubmission of 181102) - Under Consideration.

#### 4. CONSULTATIONS

##### *Statutory*

- 4.1 **Environment Agency** - The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) confirms that there will be no increase in flood risk as a result of this application. Condition recommended to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the submitted FRA.

##### *Non-statutory*

- 4.2 **RBC Transport** - Recommend conditions to secure pre-commencement submission and approval of a construction method statement and implementation of visibility splays, pre-occupation provision of parking spaces, access, new road, cycle parking, electric vehicle charging points, submission and approval of travel plans and annual review and reinstatement of the existing access to the site. Adoption of the new road to be secured via a section 106 legal agreement.
- 4.3 **RBC Environmental Protection** - Recommend conditions to control delivery hours (0800 to 2200 Monday to Saturday and 1000 to 1800 Sundays and Bank Holidays), submission and approval of a plant noise assessment, implementation of proposed odour controls, submission and approval of further contamination investigation reports and any required remediation works, submission and approval of a construction method statement, control of construction hours (0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday and 0900 to 1300 Saturdays and no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays) and submission and approval of bin store details to ensure appropriate pest control measures.
- 4.4 **RBC Consultant Ecologist** - Comments to follow in update report.
- 4.5 **RBC Natural Environment** - Recommend conditions to secure submission and approval of a final tree protection plan, arboricultural method statement and detailed hard and soft landscaping scheme.
- 4.6 **RBC SUDS Officer** - Comments to follow in update report.

- 4.7 **Berkshire Archaeology** - The site is located within an area of potential for prehistoric remains. Recommend a condition requiring submission, approval and implementation of a written scheme of archaeological investigation.

*Public consultation*

- 4.8 The application was advertised in the local press as a Major development. Three site notices were also posted at the site and properties adjoining the site were notified by letter.

- 4.9 Four letters of objection have been received raising the following points:

- The scale of the development is out of keeping with the locality
- Insufficient car parking for visitors and staff which will increase parking on Henley Road and exacerbate highway safety issues
- Increased traffic from visitors, servicing and staff accessing the site
- The access to the site should be via Ruskin and not Henley Road
- Harm to wildlife in the rear gardens of the Henley Road properties which are to be lost
- Concern that the proposed landscaping will not be delivered to costs (*Officer comment: final landscaping details to be secured by way of condition*)
- The development should not be built on the flood plain
- How will surface water be managed?
- If granted, controls on access and parking for construction vehicles must be applied
- Increased pressure on local doctors' surgeries

- 4.10 One letter of observation has been received raising the following points:

- The proposals are an improvement on the permission granted for residential development on the site.

- 4.11 Three letters of support have been received raising the following points:

- Support provision of local residential nursing, respite and dementia facilities meeting a need in this part of Reading
- Significant landscaping is proposed
- The proposed access from Henley Road would not require additional traffic lights
- Job opportunities for local people
- The existing properties to be demolished have fallen into disrepair

- 4.12 The Applicant submitted a statement of community involvement as part of the application which set out that they also carried out their own public consultation exercise prior to submission of the planning application in form of a door knocking exercise to explain the proposals to local residents and answer any questions.

## **5 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

- 5.1 National and Local Policy  
National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)  
National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

5.2 Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy Document, 2008 (altered 2015)

Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design)  
Policy CS2 (Waste Minimisation)  
Policy CS3 (Social Inclusion and Diversity)  
Policy CS4 (Accessibility and the Intensity of Development)  
Policy CS5 (Inclusive Access)  
Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)  
Policy CS9 (Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities)  
Policy CS14 (Provision of Housing)  
Policy CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix)  
Policy CS17 (Protection of the Existing Housing Stock)  
Policy CS20 (Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy)  
Policy CS22 (Transport Assessments)  
Policy CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)  
Policy CS29 (Provision of Open Space)  
Policy CS30 (Access to Open Space)  
Policy CS31 (Additional and Existing Community Facilities)  
Policy CS33 (Protecting the Historic Environment)  
Policy CS34 (Pollution and Water Resources)  
Policy CS35 (Flooding)  
Policy CS36 (Biodiversity and Geology)  
Policy CS37 (Major Landscape Features)  
Policy CS38 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands)

5.3 Sites and Detailed Policies Document, (SDPD), Adopted 2012 Revised 2015

Policy DM1 (Adaption to Climate Change)  
Policy DM2 (Decentralised Energy)  
Policy DM3 (Infrastructure Planning)  
Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)  
Policy DM5 (Housing Mix)  
Policy DM7 (Accommodation for Vulnerable People)  
Policy DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space)  
Policy DM 11 (Development of Private Residential Garden Land)  
Policy DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters)  
Policy DM16 (Provision of Open Space)  
Policy DM 17 (Green Network)  
Policy DM18 (Tree Planting)

5.4 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents

Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)  
Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)  
Employment, Skills and Training (2013)  
Planning Obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, (Revised 1/4/2015).

Emerging New Local Plan

5.5 The LPA's new Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on Thursday 29th March 2018 and public hearings of the document took place week beginning 25<sup>th</sup> September 2018. Following the examination process, the independent planning inspector submitted their final report on 24th September 2019. Subject to a number of agreed modifications, the Inspector found the Local Plan to be sound and legally compliant. The Local Plan is due to be considered for adoption

at the meeting of Full Council on 4th November 2019. On this basis the emerging policies are considered to carry significant weight.

- 5.6 In the context of the current application the policy direction remains very similar with the large majority of the relevant policies carried forward to the emerging New Local Plan. However the one area where there is a significant change is with regard to sustainability. Emerging Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) of the New Local Plan enhances the BREEAM standards sought for development. This policy now requires that, where possible, all major non-residential development (including care homes such as this application) should meet a BREEAM standard of 'Excellent'.

## **6 APPRAISAL**

- 6.1 The main issues in the consideration of this application are:

- Principle of development
- Flood Risk Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- Highway matters
- Layout, Design and Appearance
- Quality of Accommodation to be provided
- Residential Amenity of neighbours
- Trees, landscaping and ecology
- Other Considerations

### Principle of the Development

- 6.2 The NPPF states that the use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist. The NPPF definition of 'previously developed land' excludes private residential gardens. Therefore, it is clear that the priority for development should be on previously developed land, in particular vacant and derelict sites and buildings. However, that does not mean that the development of private residential garden land is unacceptable in principle rather that, previously developed land should be the first choice for development.
- 6.3 The principle of development of the land for residential purposes was established under the extant planning permission for 42 dwellings ref. 170959/FUL. Policy C17 seeks to prevent loss residential units and land to the Borough's housing stock (this direction is carried forward in emerging Policy H7). The loss of 3 residential properties is considered to be outweighed by the provision of an 82 bed care home to provide residential accommodation for vulnerable people in need of care.
- 6.4 The Council's LDF SDPD Policy DM11 (carried forward as emerging Policy H11) Development of Private Residential Gardens requires that new residential development that involves land within the curtilage of private residential gardens will be acceptable where:
- a) It makes a positive contribution to the character of the area;
  - b) The site is of an adequate size to accommodate the development;
  - c) The proposal has a suitable access;
  - d) The proposal would not lead to an unacceptable tandem development;
  - e) The design minimises the exposure of existing private boundaries to public areas;



- f) It does not cause detrimental impact on residential amenities;
- g) The emphasis is on the provision of family housing;
- h) There is no adverse impact on biodiversity, and
- i) The proposal does not prejudice the development of a wider area.

6.5 Therefore, while the proposed site is not 'previously developed land', the principle of redevelopment could be considered acceptable providing the current proposal meets the criteria outlined above.

6.6 Policies CS31 (Additional and Existing Community Facilities) and DM7 (Accommodation for Vulnerable People) are also of relevance. Policy CS31 states that proposals for new, extended or improved community facilities will be acceptable, particularly where this will involve the co-location of facilities on a single site. Policy DM7 allows development providing specialist accommodation for vulnerable people to address identified needs, including accommodation that enables occupants to live as independently as possible, particularly older people and people with physical disabilities. There is a specified need for new residential care space for frail elderly people. Policy DM7 also sets out the criteria for specialist accommodation that seeks that developments incorporate relevant community facilities. The direction of these two policies is carried forward as emerging policies OU1 and H6.

6.7 The proposal seeks to provide residential care home accommodation under the C2 use classification (Use for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care). The supporting information submitted as part of the application provides details about the nature of the use proposed and states that:

- 'Signature' is one of the leading providers of care home accommodation in the UK and offer high quality care bedroom accommodation which includes specialised nursing and dementia care.
- The proposed development would offer access to a range of communal facilities including restaurant, lounge, café, library, cinema, salon, spa bathing and therapy space. Corridors are wide enough for two wheelchairs to pass, with seating to stop and rest. Three lifts serve the building.
- The proposed care home would be registered within the Care Quality Commission who regulates all health and social care services in England to ensure the highest possible standards of care are achieved.
- 'Signature' also offer bespoke care tailored to the specific needs of individuals including on-site day care, respite care and longer term care support including for those with Alzheimer's and age -related dementia.
- The service offered includes an individual care plan for each resident prepared after an initial assessment and evaluation and constant dialogue with residents and their families to ensure the level of care and support being provided evolves to meet the residents changing needs.
- Residents are able to continue to be registered with their own local doctor. 'Signature' will also enter into a commercial arrangement with a local practice to provide services into the home. This is an efficient way for the doctor to operate, visiting residents in one home rather than travelling around the area.
- The care home would be served by 120 staff in a range of roles, with staggered and flexible shifts on both a full-time and part-time basis. The maximum number of staff on site at any one time is likely to be about 35. The night shift would have the lowest staff levels with up to around 8 staff likely to be on duty. Staff would work on a three-shift pattern with the

busiest period being around Midday. A wide range of people are employed including carers; nurses; housekeepers; managers; cooks; maintenance and sales.

- Significant outside space is proposed to allow for recreational and sensory experiences. Footpaths are suitable for wheelchairs and walking frames, with frequent areas to stop and rest.
- The suites are rented on a monthly licence with the rent varying depending upon the size of room, location and aspect. The rent includes the accommodation; all meals and snacks; housekeeping including laundry; all utility bills; access to all the activities that happen on a daily basis and a basic level of care. Additional care and nursing is charged separately based upon the residents' needs. The exception to this is the specialist dementia area where care and accommodation are combined. Every suite has its own lockable front door and the employees' mentality is that they are visiting someone's home, not the other way around.
- The average age of a resident in a 'Signature' home is approximately 85 years with all requiring some form of care. The average stay is around 2.5 years.
- The vast majority of residents at 'Signature' car homes come from within a 20min drive time radius of the home. If the resident does not already live within the drive time, they usually have a relative that does and would have moved into the area anyway.
- A mini-bus and driver is provided for each home. The primary purpose is for trips out, but they can also be used to transport staff to and from transport nodes.

6.8 Based on the above information with regard to the nature of the proposed car home use, how it would operate and the range and level of care offered, officers are satisfied that the proposed use would fall within the C2 planning use class. It is proposed to secure this use in practice by way of a section 106 legal agreement which will secure a range of matters associated with the proposed use:

- Class C2 use only
- Not to permit any of the accommodation to be sold / disposed of / occupied / otherwise used as Class C3 dwellinghouses at any time
- Each occupier to adhere to the terms of a basic care package, including details of the pre-first occupation 'care assessment' and subsequent 'care plan' and for the assessment/plan to be reviewed annually.
- To provide a copy of a written log of current occupiers and associated details within 10 working days of a written request from the Council.

6.9 The terms of the s106 agreement would ensure that the development could only operate as a Class C2 residential car home use only. It is considered pertinent to specify that the development shall not be occupied/sold/disposed of or otherwise used as Class C3 dwellinghouses at any time given the subtle differences between the two use classes and differing requirements of a Class C3 use. Notably the nature of accommodation proposed would not be considered to offer a standard of residential amenity suitable for C3 use, whilst a C3 use would also be subject to requirements to provide affordable housing (either on-site or by way of a financial contribution towards off-site provision of affordable housing elsewhere within the Borough) unlike the proposed C2 use.

6.10 It is also proposed that the section 106 legal agreement ensures that each of the residents is subject to care package such that the accommodation as proposed is

provided in practice and that residents are in need of some form of care, thereby assisting in ensuring the accommodation is a Class C2 use. The requirement to provide a written log of occupiers and associated details is considered necessary for monitoring purposes and investigation and enforcement matters resulting in the future.

- 6.11 With the above elements secured via legal agreement, it is considered that the nature of the use will be suitably managed. It is noted that there is no prescribed requirement relating to the age of future occupiers. Officers consider that there is no overriding planning policy requirement to restrict the age of occupiers in this instance. More specifically, the February 2016 Strategic Housing Market Assessment demonstrates that housing need exists for specialist accommodation across all age groups. Moreover, it is also considered that officers are applying due regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 by not restricting the age of occupiers in this instance.
- 6.12 The proposed development includes on-site facilities including restaurant, laundry, and staff offices dedicated to residents and staff and as such they are ancillary to the care home use. On this basis the facilities are not required to fulfil the location tests in national and local planning policy.
- 6.13 Subject to the terms of section 106 agreement referred to above the principle of a care home on the site is considered acceptable and would accord with Policies CS31 and DM7. The acceptability of the proposal in the context of Policy DM11 (Development of Private Residential Gardens) and other material planning considerations and relevant planning policies is considered below.

#### Flooding

- 6.14 Policy CS35 (Flooding) seeks that planning permission should not be granted for development in an area identified as being at a high risk of flooding or in any way increase the risks to life and property arising from flooding. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) specifies that care homes have a flood risk vulnerability classification of 'more vulnerable'. A flood risk assessment (FRA) has been submitted as part of the application which sets out that the proposed built form within the development is sited wholly within Flood Zone 1; however the application site contains areas within Flood Zones 2 and 3a in the form of communal landscaped garden area. On the basis that parts of the site are within flood zones 2 and 3a, a flood risk sequential test is necessary.
- 6.15 The flood risk sequential test assesses other potential sites in the Borough with the aim of steering new development to areas at the lowest probability of flooding (Zone 1). The applicant has submitted a Sequential Test to consider sites in the borough that have a lower risk of flooding and has concluded there are no other appropriate sites. The Council's latest 'Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (May 2017) also sets out that 'there are not sufficient sites to meet the objectively assessed need for housing in Reading on sites in Flood Zones 1 and 2' whilst in granting planning permission on the site for the extant consent for 42 C3 dwellings (ref. 170959/FUL) the application was found to have passed the sequential test. Officers are satisfied that the sequential test submitted has satisfactorily considered alternative sites and on this basis, in addition to the extant consent on the site for 42 C3 dwellings, the proposed development is considered to have passed the sequential test.

- 6.16 The NPPG sets out that the flood risk exception test, which requires applications to demonstrate how the sustainability benefits of developments to the community outweigh the flood risk, is not required for 'more vulnerable' use (including housing) in Flood Zone 2. Whilst the application site is partly located within flood zone 3A this is to a very limited extent along the southern boundary and on this basis it is not considered that the exception test is required in this instance. This approach was taken in granting planning permission for the extant consent for 42 C3 dwellings on the site where the exception test was also not considered to be required.
- 6.17 As the required land use tests are considered to be passed in terms of flood risk, the proposed development is also required to be subject to a site specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). An FRA has been submitted by the applicant and reviewed by the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency has confirmed that the FRA has been carried out to an acceptable standard and that they have no objection to the proposed development, subject to conditions in relation to implementation of the development in accordance with the FRA. A condition is also proposed to ensure any fencing erected on site is permeable. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in flood risk terms and to comply with the NPPF and Policy CS35.
- 6.18 Emerging Policy EN18 of the New Local Plan requires details of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) to be provided with all major planning applications. A SuDs scheme has been submitted as part of the application. This is being reviewed by the Local Flood Authority (RBC Transport) and information on this and any additional conditions will be provided in the form of an update report.

### Transport Matters

#### *Access*

- 6.19 Policies DM12 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012, 2015 and CS20 and CS24 of the Core Strategy seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking relates matters relating to development. The direction of these policies is carried forward in emerging Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5 of the New Local Plan with the notable addition of a requirement to provide electric vehicle charging points which is discussed further in this section of the report.
- 6.20 As the site is situated on one of the Borough's Main Transport Corridors, Classified as the A4155, all proposals should comply with Reading Borough Council's Design Guidance for Residential Accesses on to Classified Roads to ensure that the safety and efficiency of the Classified Road network is maintained and enhanced by the design for access to new development.
- 6.21 The proposals consist of the demolition of 199-203 Henley Road and the construction of a new bell mouth access directly onto the Henley Road. As it is likely that this road could also serve additional residential development in the future, the development has been designed with an access road width and junction radii for residential developments for between 50-300 dwellings:
- 6.22 The development site was granted planning permission under reference no.170959 in June 2018 for development of 42 dwellings at nos. 199- 203 Henley Road and on land at the rear of nos. 205-207 Henley Road. The approved site access arrangement from the A4155 Henley Road with a 5.5m wide carriageway and 10m

junction radii is again proposed as part of the new care home development. Pedestrian access is proposed via 1.8m wide footways from the south side of Henley Road along each side of the access road. A secondary pedestrian route is proposed directly from the footway on Henley Road in the north west corner of the site.

- 6.23 Access to the site from the Ruskin residential development to the west of the site was investigated as part of the previous residential scheme; however, the adopted highway extents plan confirms that the end of the adopted road does not meet the site boundary. Therefore, following Highways' review of the accident data along Henley Road and considering that the proposed junction is in excess of the junction spacing stipulated within the Borough's Design Guidance on to Classified Roads, Transport Strategy advises that there are no grounds to object to an additional access onto the Henley Road as approved under the previous application.
- 6.24 The layout provides a natural extension to the access road if future development comes forward on land to the east of the site. The new scheme would include provision of a link up to the eastern site boundary to allow for future development on the adjacent land but the access road/footway should extend to the edge of the site boundary to prevent future development being restricted by third party land ownership. The applicant has submitted an adoption/highway extents plan which clearly demonstrates the area to be adopted (including the turning head up to the site boundary) which would be secured as part of the section 106 legal agreement.
- 6.25 In accordance with the Council's Design Guidance, the maximum gradient on new access roads shall be 10%; however the first 10 metres on approach to a classified road shall be at 4%. These requirements are designed to prevent vehicles stalling on a mild hill start when attempting to pull in to traffic. The applicant has submitted a long section of the proposed access road which confirms the new road would meet this standard, implementation of which is to be secured by way of condition.
- 6.26 'Keep Clear' road markings as per the approved site access under the previous application would also be provided to prevent westbound vehicles on Henley Road from blocking the site access.
- 6.27 In terms of traffic generation, the Transport Statement indicates that the morning shift for staff at the care home would typically commence between 06:00 and 07:30, the afternoon shift at 14:00-15:30 and the night shift between 20:00 and 22:00. Given the timing of shifts the majority of arrivals and departures avoid the local peak traffic periods and the proposals are considered to be acceptable in this respect.
- 6.28 The internal road and car parking layout incorporates a turning head to allow service vehicles including a large refuse collector and delivery lorry to enter and leave the site in a forward gear. Bin storage facilities are proposed near the entrance to the undercroft parking with direct access from the road for wheeling bins. The bin storage area is not very large, however, the applicant has confirmed that they will use a private refuse collection service whereby collections can be arranged more frequently and therefore this is considered to be acceptable. Provision of the bin store is to be secured by way of condition.

#### *Parking*

- 6.29 The site is located within Zone 3, Secondary Core Area, of the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD. In accordance with the adopted SPD, the

development would be required to provide a parking provision of 1 space per FTE staff & 1 space per 4 residents based on the standards for C2 care home use.

- 6.30 The proposed residential care home will provide a 24 hour operation with typically three shifts for care and nursing staff comprising mornings, afternoons and a night shift. The maximum number of staff on site at any one time is likely to be about 35. The night shift would have the lowest staff levels with up to around 8 staff likely to be on duty.
- 6.31 The proposal provides a total of some 39 car parking spaces provided within the development which equates to 0.47 spaces per unit. Some 20 of these would be undercroft spaces and 17 would be provided within the site to the side of the building. Two disabled bays would be provided adjacent to the main care home reception. Based on the maximum number of staff on-site and the proposed number of residents, a maximum provision of 57 spaces should be provided. Therefore, the proposed car parking provision falls below the Council's standards.
- 6.32 To justify a lower parking provision, the Transport Statement has assessed the potential hourly car parking demand at the care home based on the TRICS trip rates data arrivals and departures pattern in each hour. The data indicates that the potential maximum demand plus 10% for flexibility could be for some 37 car spaces in the mid-afternoon period 14:00 to 15:00. This would therefore be accommodated satisfactorily by the 39 car spaces proposed and this level of car parking is considered to be acceptable.
- 6.33 A Travel Plan has also been produced to encourage staff and visitors to travel to the site by sustainable travel modes including walking, cycling, public transport use and car sharing which would help minimise the demand for car parking on the site. One of the measures within the Travel plan includes the promotion of car sharing and a 'guaranteed lift home for staff' that have travelled to work by sustainable means. Submission of a final travel plan for the site and annual review of this plan would be secured by way of conditions.
- 6.34 Dedicated parking bays for the minibuses would be provided off the south side of eastern end of the new access road adjacent to the sub-station. Up to two minibuses would be based on site for transporting residents to and from off-site activities and medical centres.
- 6.35 The Council's Local Transport Plan 3 Strategy 2011 - 2026 includes policies for investing in new infrastructure to improve connections throughout and beyond Reading which include a network of publicly available Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points to encourage and enable low carbon or low energy travel choices for private and public transport. Policy TR5 of the emerging Local Plan also states that *"Within communal car parks for residential or non-residential developments of at least 10 spaces, 10% of spaces should provide an active charging point."* In view of this, the development must provide a minimum of 4no. Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points at time of build. The applicant has agreed to provide the required number of charging points and details of this as well as implementation will be secured by way of conditions.

#### *Cycle Parking*

- 6.36 The Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD identifies minimum cycle parking standards for residential developments including nursing homes. A minimum standard of 1 space per 3 staff should be provided with a covered and

secure area. The application proposes to provide 10 cycle parking spaces for staff in a secure store adjacent to the sub-station. A further four cycle parking spaces for visitors would be provided near the care home entrance. In total the development would provide 14 cycle parking spaces. Staff would be provided with showers, lockers, changing and drying facilities. The level and type of cycle parking provision is considered to be acceptable. Implementation of which will be secured by way of condition.

### *Construction*

- 6.37 A Construction Method Statement is to be submitted and approved before any works commence on-site. Any works affecting the highway would have to comply with the Borough's Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway and works would need to be scheduled with the Council's Street works team prior to commencement on site.
- 6.38 In relation to construction impacts, a Construction Method Statement would be required to be submitted and approved before any works commence on-site.
- 6.39 There are no transport related objections to the proposed development which is considered to accord with policies DM4, DM12, CS20, CS24 and CS34.

### Layout, design and appearance

- 6.40 Policy DM11 requires that residential redevelopments involving residential garden land make a positive contribution to the character of the area in respect of the layout and spacing of the development; the form, height and massing of buildings; materials and appearance; and landscaping and boundary treatments. The application site is also required to be of an adequate size and dimensions to accommodate the development proposed in terms of setting and spacing around buildings, amenity space, landscaping and space for access road and parking. DM11 also seeks that development proposals should not prejudice the development of the wider area. Policy CS7 seeks that the developments should maintain and enhance the character of the area of Reading within which they are located (the direction of this policy is carried forward in emerging Policy CC7)
- 6.41 In terms of general layout, the proposals are very similar to that permitted on the site under the extant consent for 42 x C3 dwellings. In particular the position of the proposed access from Henley Road is the same such that the proposed development would also not preclude future development of the area to the east. The general layout and footprint of the buildings also shows distinct similarities with the approved scheme. The proposed care home would be set out with two horizontal blocks parallel with Henley Road, one to the Henley Road frontage and one further to the rear/middle of the site, which is reflective of the consented footprint of dwellings which approved a block of flats fronting Henley Road and then a row of semi-detached dwellings in a similar position to the rear/middle of the site. The primary difference between the consented C3 and proposed C2 scheme, in terms of layout, is that the two blocks to the front and rear/middle of the site would be connected by a central link element, whereas under the consented scheme the block of flats to the front of the site and the dwellings to the rear were unconnected and this space was taken up by car parking and hardstanding. The rear third of the site towards the southern boundary would be a communal landscaped area, similar to the consented scheme where this area was to be residential gardens.



Consented C3 residential development layout (planning permission ref. 170959)



Proposed C2 care home layout

- 6.42 In terms of massing, the proposed block to the front of the site fronting Henley Road would be three storeys but, as per the consented C3 residential scheme, due to the difference in land levels from the road edge to within the application site, would have a two storey appearance from the road level, in keeping with Ruskin and the surrounding two storey dwellings. This difference in levels is to be retained as part of the proposed development. The ridge height of the central section of



this block is marginally higher than the existing development at Ruskin, but the proposed design incorporates gable roofs sloping away from the boundary such that the top floor of accommodation is contained within the roof space to the flanks of the building. This assists with a subtle transition within the Henley Road street-scene between the Ruskin flatted development to the west and no. 205 Henley Road to the east which is a two storey residential dwelling. The proposed frontage block would retain a 3m separation to the western boundary with the Ruskin block of flats (a building of similar scale and massing) set 11.5m away. A more significant separation of 11.5m would be provided to the eastern boundary with no. 205 Henley Road which would include the width of the new access from Henley Road. The development would be positioned 14m from the side garage of no. 205 and 19m from the dwelling itself.

- 6.43 The overall appearance and palette of materials is traditional with the use of pitched roofs and gabled bays. A mix of red and orange facing brick and red rustic plain tiles is proposed, whilst the pitched and gabled ends of both the north and south wings are proposed to be tile hung to add visual interest when viewed from Henley Road and when leaving the site via the new access road. These traditional features and use of materials are considered reflective of the large detached and semi-detached dwellings surrounding the site as well as the Ruskin development. Combined with the proposed massing of the frontage block, 15m set back and drop in levels down from Henley Road to the application site and separation to the adjacent properties; it is considered that the proposal would integrate satisfactorily with the Henley Road street-scene. When viewed from the rear both from within the application site and adjacent gardens, the southern elevation of the frontage block would - due to the drop in levels across the site as distance from Henley Road increases - appear as a four storey block with the ground floor to be an undercover car park. This again is a similar approach and level of massing to that approved under the extant consent for 42 C3 dwellings and due to the sympathetic design and separation to adjacent buildings is again considered to integrate satisfactorily with the character of the surrounding area.
- 6.44 The proposed care home layout would incorporate a second horizontal block parallel with Henley Road some 70m into the site from the road frontage. This would be three storey block when viewed from the rear (south elevation) but again, due to site levels, would be two storey when viewed from the front and looking into the site from Henley Road (north elevation). This layout and level of massing is also similar to that approved under the planning permission for 42 C3 dwellings, albeit the extant consent was for a row of 12 semi-detached dwellings. Whilst the care home block in this location is a continuous mass compared to the pairs of semi-detached dwellings, the consented dwellings spanned the full width of the site whereas the proposed care home block is of significantly lesser width retaining good separation of 16m and 26m to the flank boundaries. Balconies are proposed to the rear (southern elevation) of this block which would provide views out over the Berry Brook green space to the rear of the site. The proposed rear block, due to the site levels, would not be visible from Henley Road. Whilst visible from within the site and adjacent gardens of surrounding residential dwellings the scale of the proposal is considered to fit comfortably within the site and together with sympathetic design, which would be reflective of the frontage block, is considered to integrate satisfactorily with the character of the surrounding area. Whilst sectional drawings have been provided as part of the application a condition is recommended to ensure site levels details are submitted to and approved by officers prior to the commencement of works.

- 6.45 In terms of massing and built form, the proposed central link element is the main difference between the consented C3 residential scheme. This connecting feature has been design to be modest in scale and whilst containing two floors of accommodation, the link element would present itself as 1 and ½ storeys with the upper floor of accommodation within the roof space facilitated by a series of modest dormer roof projections to both flank elevations roof spaces. Positioned centrally within the site, this link element is considered to integrate satisfactorily within both the front and rear blocks and due to its modest scale. Its central position within the site and significant separation distance to either site boundary is such that this element is not considered to appear unduly prominent and would integrate satisfactorily with the character of the surrounding area.
- 6.46 Hardstanding within the site is in the form of the access road and surface level parking (20 spaces), with a further 20 parking spaces set beneath the frontage block and not visible in the public realm. The majority of the surface level parking is related well to the buildings and would be enclosed between the frontage and rear block such that it would not be readily visible from Henley Road or the public realm. The site layout is also broken up by extensive soft landscaping with trees and vegetation planting. This helps screen and soften the additional built form whilst assisting in maintaining the green character of the large rear gardens to this side of Henley Road. Due to the flood risk constraints of the site, as discussed earlier in this report, the rear third of the site is to be retained as green open space. This enables a number of mature trees to be retained as well as for additional tree and vegetation planting to provide a landscaped communal space for residents and to reduce the appearance of the built form to the open countryside to the south of the site. . In character and appearance terms this area is considered to be a significant benefit of the proposed development.
- 6.47 The scale and position of development within the site, together with extent of hard and soft landscaping is considered to be in accordance with the requirements of Policies CS7 and DM11.

#### Quality of Accommodation for Future Occupiers and Neighbours

- 6.48 Policy DM4 seeks that new developments provide a suitable living environment for future occupiers (the direction of this policy is carried forward in emerging Policy CC8)
- 6.49 For future occupiers of the proposed units, it is considered that a high quality of accommodation will be provided. Each of the proposed rooms offers studio accommodation with a range of room sizes proposed, the majority being between 25m<sup>2</sup> and 32m<sup>2</sup>. All units would be provided with good levels of outlook, daylighting and privacy. The rooms sizes proposed are slightly smaller than the average studio flat and whilst the Local Planning Authority does not have adopted room sizes for care home accommodation, residents would benefit from a wide range of on-site communal facilities including lounge area, cafes, restaurant, cinema, activity rooms, hairdressing salon and open space which would be a significant benefit and contribute to the overall quality of accommodation on offer. The extensive landscaped grounds and communal garden areas are also considered to be a significant benefit of the quality of accommodation on offer. It is considered reasonable to include a condition detailing that all communal areas will be ready for use at the time of first occupation and thereafter retained.

#### Amenity for Nearby Occupiers

- 6.50 Policy DM4 seeks that new developments do not have a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing properties. Policy CS34 seeks that new developments do not result or are subject of adverse impacts from pollution (policy direction carried forward in emerging policy EN16).
- 6.51 Adjacent to the western site boundary at the front of the site is the four storey flatted development within Ruskin. The proposed frontage block would retain an 11m separation with this building. Neither the adjacent Ruskin building nor the proposed frontage block of the care home incorporate any side-facing windows and there is considered to be no adverse impact on these existing neighbouring dwellings in terms of privacy or loss or outlook. This relationship is reflective of that approved under the extant consent for 42 C3 dwellings. The proposed 1½ storey link element of the proposal extends further to the rear within the application site and beyond the rear of the Ruskin Building and runs parallel with the Ruskin building car park. The link element is set more centrally within the application site, 15m from the western boundary and due to its modest scale is not considered to result in any undue overbearing impact. This element does include side-facing windows but at ground and first floor level only and given the separation distances, no undue loss of privacy or overbearing is considered to result.
- 6.52 Towards the rear of the site, an existing pair of three storey semi-detached dwellings abut the western site boundary (no.s 32 and 33 Ruskin). The rear of these dwellings would face the west flank elevation of the rear block of the proposed care home at a distance of 27m with 17m retained to the end of the rear gardens of these properties, which is considered sufficient to prevent overbearing impact. No side-facing windows are proposed to the west flank elevation of the rear block of the proposed development and combined with the separation distances this is considered sufficient to prevent any loss of privacy or overlooking in this respect. This is an improved relationship compared to the extant consent for 42 C3 dwellings, where the dwellings to the rear of the site project to within 13m of the rear elevation of these existing neighbouring dwellings.
- 6.53 To the eastern boundary of the application site the closest adjacent dwelling is no. 205 Henley Road. The frontage block of the proposed development would retain an 11.5m separation to the site boundary, 14m separation to the side garage of no. 205 and 19m to the west flank elevation of the dwelling. This separation distance, across the new access road into the site, is considered sufficient to prevent any undue overbearing impact. Side-facing windows are proposed to the eastern flank elevation of the proposed frontage block at first, second and third floor level, which in each instance would serve activity/dining spaces and not bedrooms within the care home. The proposed separation distance is considered sufficient to prevent any undue overlooking or loss of privacy to no. 205. No. 205 itself incorporates only small secondary windows to the flank elevation and no adverse loss of outlook or daylighting is considered to result.
- 6.54 In terms of the 1 and ½ storey link element, the relationship with the western boundary is similar to that with the eastern boundary in that the element is located centrally within the site (30m from the garden boundary with no. 205) and is modest in scale such that it is not considered to result in any undue overbearing impact, overlooking or loss of privacy.

- 6.55 Windows to the north-facing two storey elevation of the rearmost block of the proposed care home would look towards the rear of no. 205, albeit this would be an angled relationship with the dwelling also set at a higher ground level. The separation distance would be over 35m to the rear elevation of no. 205 and over 20m to the retained rear amenity space of the dwelling such that no undue overlooking or loss of privacy is considered to occur.
- 6.56 In relation to retained amenity space, the rear gardens of the existing dwellings at no.s 205 and 207 are significantly reduced but would be in excess of 10m in depth, and are considered adequate in size and character relative to the host dwellings. The provision of extensive landscaped communal gardens and private balconies for some units is considered to provide a good standard of amenity space for occupiers of the care home. The proposal is therefore considered to satisfactorily accord with Policy DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space).
- 6.57 The range of facilities on offer to residents of the care home is such that there would be regular deliveries to the development. Environmental Protection Officers have raised concern that this may result in noise disturbance to existing and future residential occupiers and therefore delivery hours are recommended to be controlled via condition to take place only between 0800-2200 hours Monday to Saturday and 1000-1800 hours on Sundays and Bank Holidays to avoid early morning and late night hours.
- 6.58 On-site kitchen facilities would also be provided to serve the communal restaurant and café. An odour assessment in relation to kitchen activities and the proposed ventilation and extraction measures has been submitted as part of the application and Environmental Protection Officers have confirmed that the measures proposed would be sufficient to prevent any undue kitchen odours adversely affecting surrounding occupiers. A condition is also proposed ensure that any additional extraction or other plant equipment cannot be installed until a noise assessment has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, to prevent any harmful noise impact to surrounding occupiers.
- 6.59 Land adjacent to the west of the application site is identified as an area of potentially contaminated land and therefore a land contamination assessment has been carried out and submitted by the applicant. This has been reviewed by Environmental Protection Officers who note that the assessment identified asbestos fibres in the soil but did not identify any other contaminants of concern. Conditions are recommended to secure a more detailed assessment so that affected areas can be delineated and to enable effective remediation to take place. This is necessary to ensure that future occupants are not put at undue risk from contamination.
- 6.60 An internal bin store for the proposed development is proposed at ground floor level to the frontage block adjacent to the covered car park. A condition is recommended to require further details of the proposed bin storage area to be submitted to ensure this is designed and managed in a way that prevents vermin and pests accessing the bins.
- 6.61 Conditions are also recommended to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement to ensure existing occupiers are not adversely impact upon by construction noise and dust, while further conditions are proposed to control construction hours (08:00hrs to 18:00hrs Mondays to Fridays, and

09:00hrs to 13:00hrs on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays) and to prevent burning of construction waste on site.

- 6.62 Noise and disturbance from traffic from the proposed development is not considered to result in harm to the amenities of the properties adjoining the application site in terms of highway capacity and safety. As such the proposal is considered to accord with policies DM4 and CS34.

#### Trees, landscaping and ecology

- 6.61 Policy CS36 seeks that developments should retain, protect and incorporate features of biodiversity. Policy CS38 seeks that individual trees, groups of trees hedges and woodlands are protected from removal and Boroughs vegetation cover extended. Policy CS7 seeks that development is of high quality and maintains and enhances the character of the area and notes that landscaping is an important component of development form. Policy DM18 seeks that new development should make provision for tree planting to provide for biodiversity and to contribution to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. (Emerging Policy EN12 continues these themes).
- 6.62 The development site is located adjacent to Henley Road which has been identified as a Tree Corridor (Existing and potential) in the Borough Council's adopted tree strategy and trees within and immediately adjacent to the site boundary are protected under Tree Preservation Order 20/14. The trees subject to a TPO include a Beech tree at the front of the site, a Horse Chestnut to the rear of the existing dwelling at 199 and a Walnut (offsite within Ruskin).
- 6.63 The proposed layout of the care home, with hardstanding restricted to the centre of the site, provides a landscape buffer to the Henley Road and adjacent Ruskin development and allows the retention of protected trees. The proposed layout does require removal of 42 other trees. The majority of these trees (including one category 'B' tree) are small specimens and include many fruit trees. The majority of potentially larger trees within the curtilage are to be retained, including the protected trees on and adjacent to the site.
- 6.64 The applicant has submitted an arboricultural impact assessment and method statement as part of the application which considers most aspects of the proposed development. Further information is sought with regard to the precise tree protection measures to be put in place for certain trees which would be in close proximity to the building and also how certain aspects of the proposed landscaping would be planted in close proximity to the building and hardstanding. Based on the information submitted, the tree officer is satisfied that these additional details can be secured by way of conditions to require final tree protection and arboricultural method statements can be submitted and agreed prior to the commencements of works on site.
- 6.65 To mitigate the number of trees proposed for removal on site, substantial new tree and landscape planting is proposed. This includes the creation of a large sensory garden to the rear of the site, landscaped garden courtyard areas and buffer planting to the side boundaries of the site and to the front between the development and Henley Road. The tree officer is satisfied with the proposed indicative landscaping plan, subject to conditions to secure a detailed planting plans and specifications.

- 6.66 Although altering the existing landscape character of the site, the landscaping proposed is considered to provide sufficient areas of planting in the form of the sensory garden, formal internal landscaping and landscape buffers to adjacent development. These areas will also allow the retention of existing boundary trees including those subject to Tree Preservation Orders. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with policies Policy CS7, Policy CS37, Policy CS38 and Policy DM18.
- 6.67 The application site is located adjacent to the Berry Brook, and an unimproved grassland field which can be described as 'floodplain grazing marsh'. Both floodplain grazing marsh (the adjacent field) and Rivers and Streams (Berry Brook) are UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, (therefore are Priority Habitat as referred to in the NPPF and the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)) are also likely to host a number of rare or notable plant and animal species (e.g. wildfowl and waders, water vole, reptiles, dragonflies, etc.). They therefore receive protection from the adverse impacts of development through both national and local planning policy.
- 6.68 The applicant has submitted an Ecology Report (dated September 2016 Updated February 2017) that contains a Phase 1 habitat survey that has been extended to include an assessment of protected species. The ecology report concludes that the majority of habitat currently occupying the site will be removed to accommodate the development proposals but much of this habitat was assessed as having low-moderate ecological value (eg amenity grassland, introduced shrub, built structures and hard standing). It is noted however that features such as the species-rich hedgerow and the traditional orchard have a high ecological value and the site is used by protected species including roosting bats, reptiles, breeding birds and invertebrates.
- 6.69 Policies DM17 and CS36 seek to protect biodiversity but do not preclude development where it can be demonstrated that developments can contribute to the green network and features provided within the scheme can link into the existing green network. Therefore development must adequately compensate for the loss of these habitats in order to comply with planning policy.
- 6.70 In order to seek to meet the above requirements, the submitted ecology report sets out recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures for ecology on the site. This includes measures to include the retention of the boundary hedgerows, a wildlife buffer to the south of the site to be retained and enhanced including two retained ponds; the planting of 10 trees (apple, plum and pear) to replace an orchard area and enhancement planting of native species to retained hedgerows. Bird and bat boxes and bat bricks are also proposed as well as an external lighting plan to ensure only wildlife friendly lighting is provided. Following the grant of any planning permission, a license application to Natural England would be required to be made to demolish the roost on site, followed by specified mitigation and compensation measures. Measures are also proposed to protect the presence of a badger sett. In relation to reptiles, two reptile hibernacula (underground chambers for hibernating) are to be provided.
- 6.71 The layout of the proposed development, ecological impacts and mitigation/enhancement measures proposed are similar to those agreed under the extant planning permission for residential units on the site. Comments from the Council's Ecological Consultant with respect to the submitted ecological appraisal

and mitigation measures will be provided along with any additional recommended conditions in the form of an update report.

#### Other Considerations

##### *Sustainability*

- 6.72 Policies CS1 and DM1 seek that new development demonstrates how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. Policy DM2 seeks that in addition to meeting the required BREEAM standards, Major developments should consider a form on-site decentralised energy provision. As referred to earlier in this report, emerging Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) of the New Local Plan now carries significant weight and enhances the BREEAM standards sought for development. This policy now requires that, where possible, all major non-residential development (including care homes such as this application) should meet a BREEAM standard of 'Excellent'.
- 6.73 An Energy Statement has been submitted with the application. The Statement proposes the use of an on-site combined heat and power plant (CHP) which would accord with the decentralised energy requirements of Policy DM2. This is to be secured by way of condition. In terms of BREEAM the applicant has submitted a pre-estimator report which sets out that the development would meet a BREEAM standard of 'good'. This is two levels below the desired target level of 'excellent' within the emerging policy (with a level of 'very good' in between) and officers do not consider this to be acceptable. The applicant advises that the submitted pre-estimator has been carried out at a high level and that a better standard is likely to be achievable. The applicant has agreed to a condition to require a more detailed BREEAM pre-estimator report to be submitted and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of the development. The target BREEAM level sought by the condition will be 'excellent'.

##### *Archaeology*

- 6.74 Policy CS33 seeks that areas of historic importance, including archaeology are protected and where appropriate, enhanced. There are potential archaeological implications with the above application as the site is located within an area of potential for Prehistoric remains as identified in the desk-based archaeological assessment submitted as part of the application. This has been reviewed by Berkshire Archaeology who recommends a condition is attached to the planning permission to requiring approval of a written scheme of archaeological investigation to be submitted and approved prior to commencement of works on site to ensure that any archaeological remains within the site are adequately investigated and recorded.

##### *Community Infrastructure Levy*

- 6.75 The Council's Community Infrastructure (CIL) charging schedule sets out that care homes are not liable for CIL.

##### *Employment, Skills and Training*

- 6.76 In accordance with Reading Borough Core Strategy Policies CS9: Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities and CS13: Impact of Employment Development and the Council's SPD 'Employment, Skills and Training' the developer is required

to provide for a Construction Employment and Skills Plan which identifies and promotes employment opportunities generated by the proposed development, or other developments within Reading, for the construction phase of the proposed development. This or an equivalent financial contribution in accordance with the adopted SPD is to be secured within the S106 legal agreement.

#### *Fire Safety*

- 6.77 The applicant has advised that it is proposed that the building would incorporate a sprinkler system and also a smoke extraction system. Such elements would not normally be the subject of planning controls via condition.

#### **Representations**

- 6.78 Issues raised in representation letters from third parties have been addressed within the above report.

#### **Equality**

- 6.79 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, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the current application) that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application.

### **7 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposed development is considered acceptable in principle and in relation to flooding matters and the amended design and layout of the scheme is considered to have an acceptable impact on the character of the area, highway, safety, landscape, ecology and residential amenity. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions and an appropriate S106.

**Case Officer:** Matt Burns

#### **Plans Considered:**

The application is supported by the following documents and plans:

Drawing no.s:

- AA7440-2004 - Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan
  - AA7400-2007 - Proposed Second & Third Floor Plans
  - AA7440-2010 - Proposed Street Elevations
  - AA7440-2011 - Proposed Elevations
  - AA7400-2012 - Proposed Elevations
- Received by the Local Planning Authority on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019

- 101F Landscape Masterplan
- Received by the Local Planning Authority on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019

- AA7440-2003 Rev A - Proposed Site Plan
- AA7400-2005 Rev A - Proposed Ground Floor Plan



- AA7440-2006 Rev A - Proposed First Floor Plan

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019

- 3141.08A - Proposed Site Access and Vertical Alignment
- 2829.13A - Extent of New Residential Road Proposed for Adoption

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Documents ref:

- Aether Air Quality Assessment ref. AQ\_assessment/2019/Henley\_Road Version 1.3
- CgMs Heritage Archaeological Desk Based Assessment ref. 25345/AT
- Jomas Associated Ltd Geo-environmental & Geotechnical Assessment Ground Investigation Report
- Ethos Preliminary Ecological Appraisal V1 April 2019
- Ethos Protected Species Survey ref. V2 September 2019
- Harniss Consulting Energy Strategy Report Rev P2
- CSP Foul and Surface Water Drainage Scheme Report ref. SIG/29 Version 3 April 2019
- PEP Travel Plan April 2019
- PEP Transport Statement April 2019
- Tracy Clarke Arboricultural Planning Report Impact Assessment and Method Statement ref. TCTC-17327-c April 2019
- Edenvale Young Flood Risk Assessment Henley Road Caversham Rev E May 2 2019
- Gerald Eve Planning Statement (including Sequential Test FRA) April 2019
- Sharps Redmore Façade Acoustic Assessment ref. Signature Care Home Henley Road Caversham 30<sup>th</sup> April 2019
- Lexington Communications Statement of Community Involvement April 2019

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019

- Tree Work Specification ref. Henley Road, Caversham

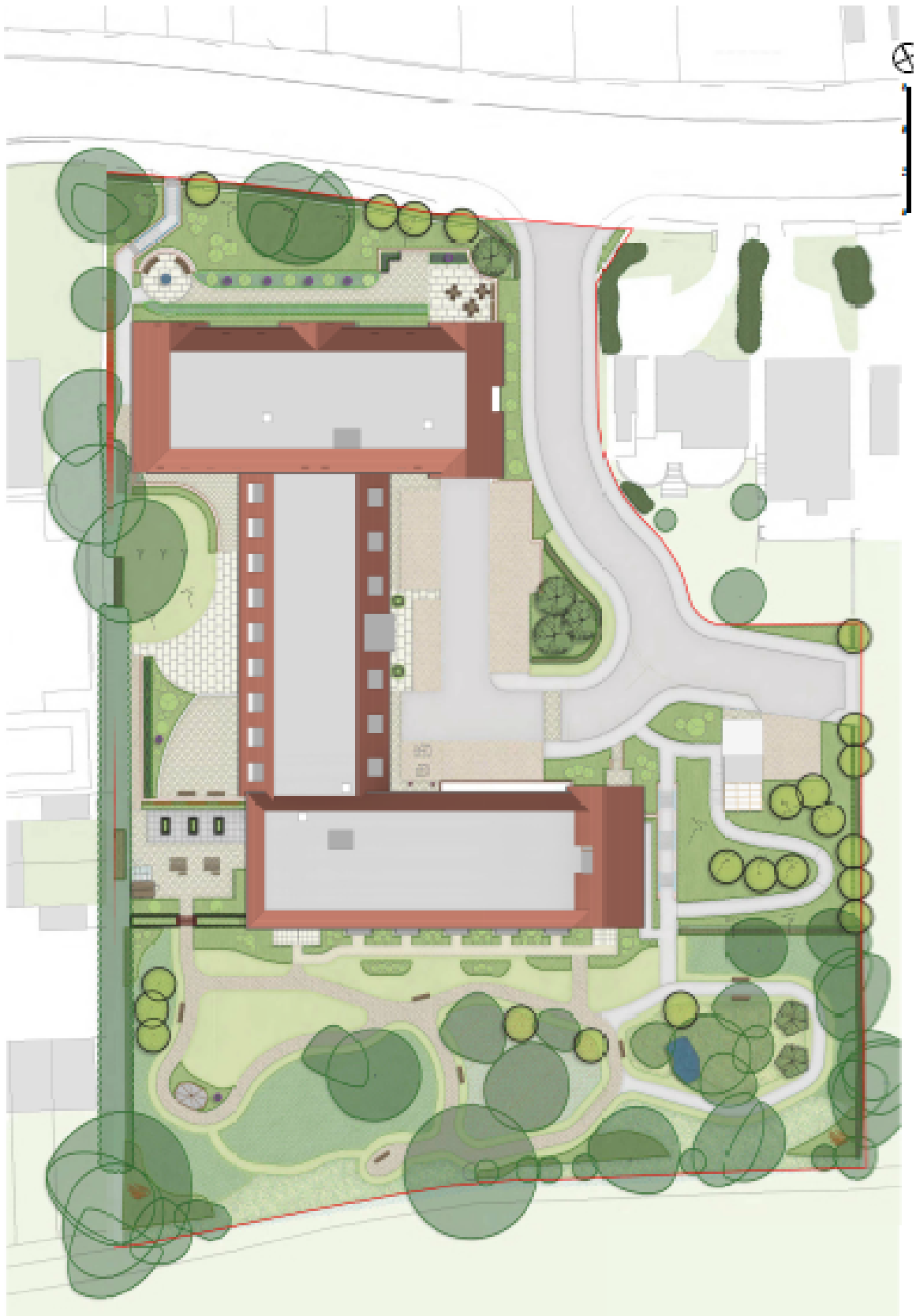
Received on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019

- Harniss Utilities Statement Rev P1

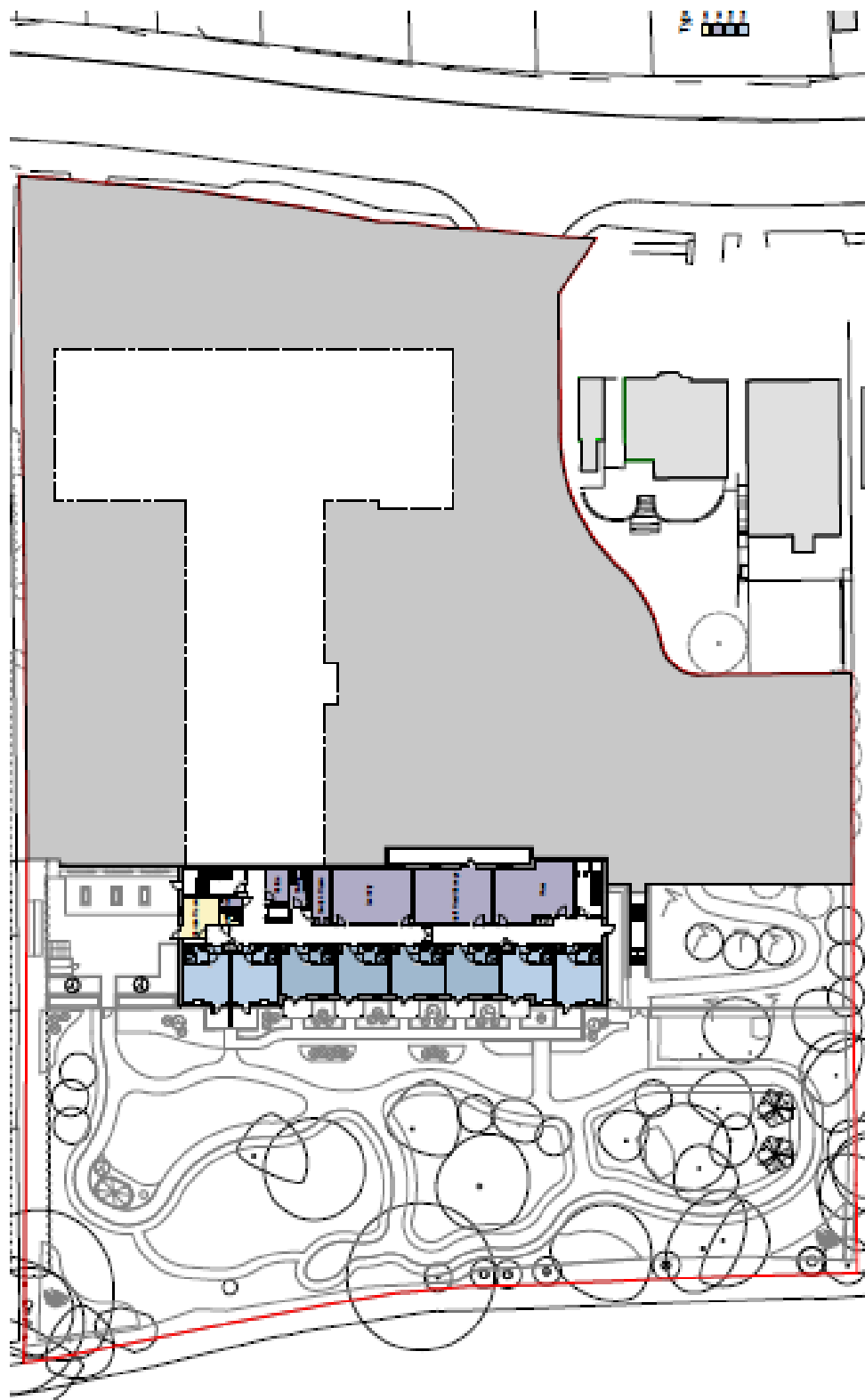
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019

- Harniss Consulting Statement on Controlling Kitchen Odours Rev P1

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019



Proposed Site Plan



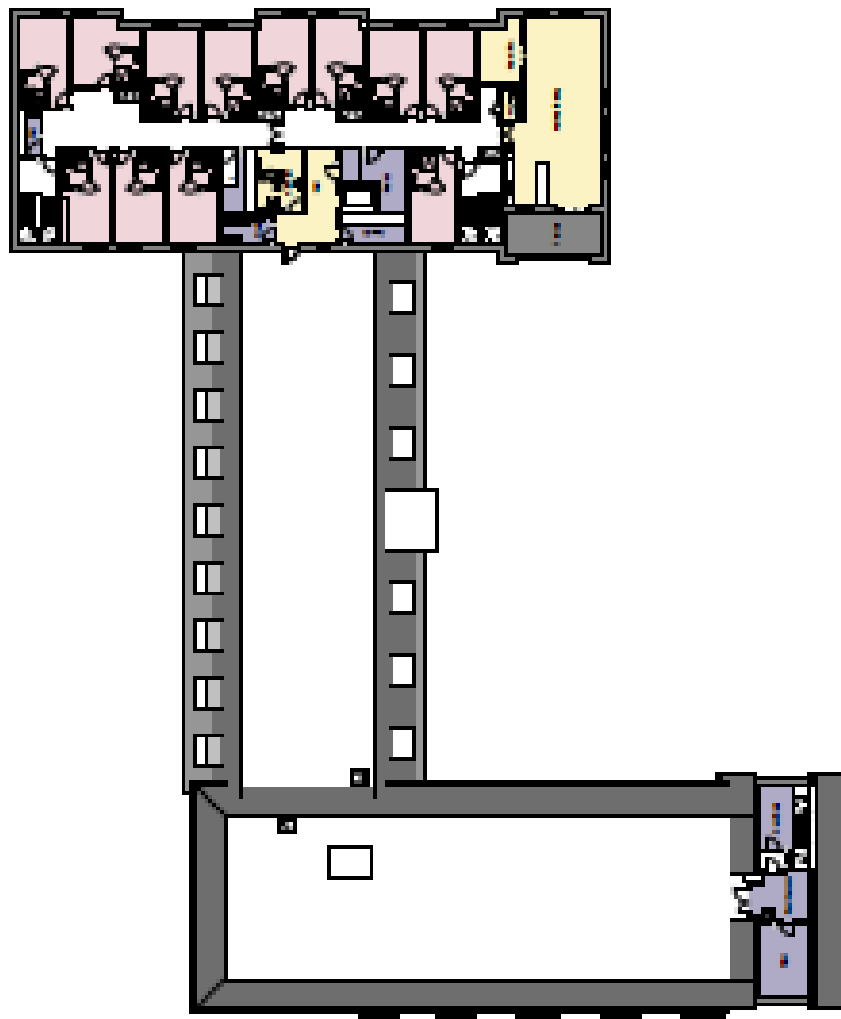
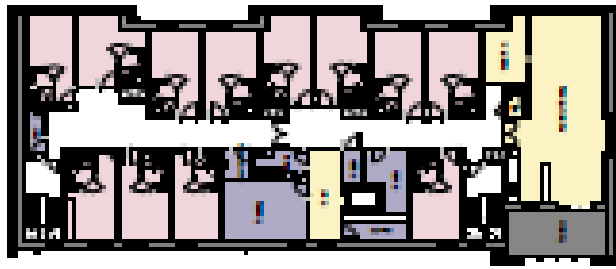
Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

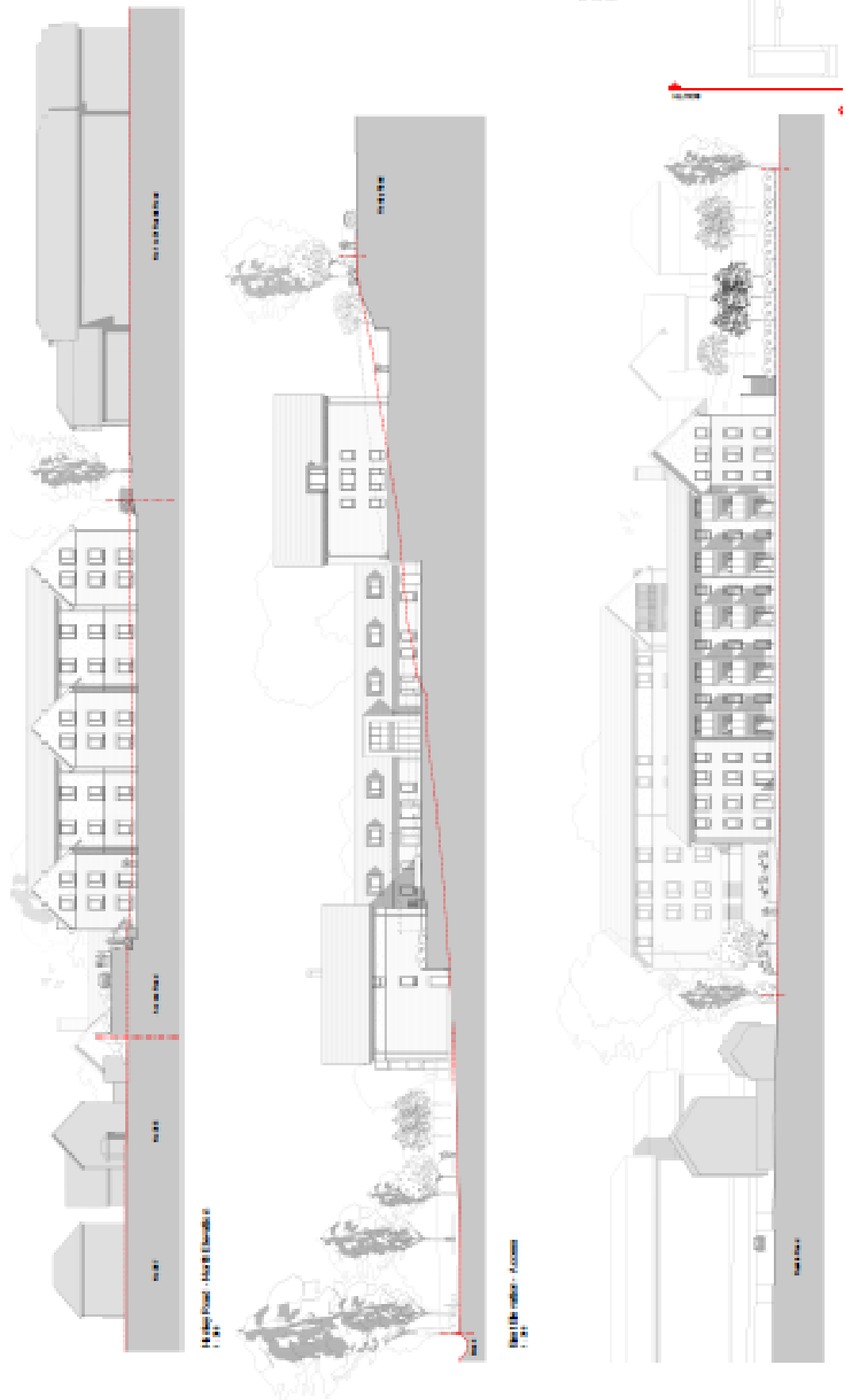


Proposed First Floor Plan

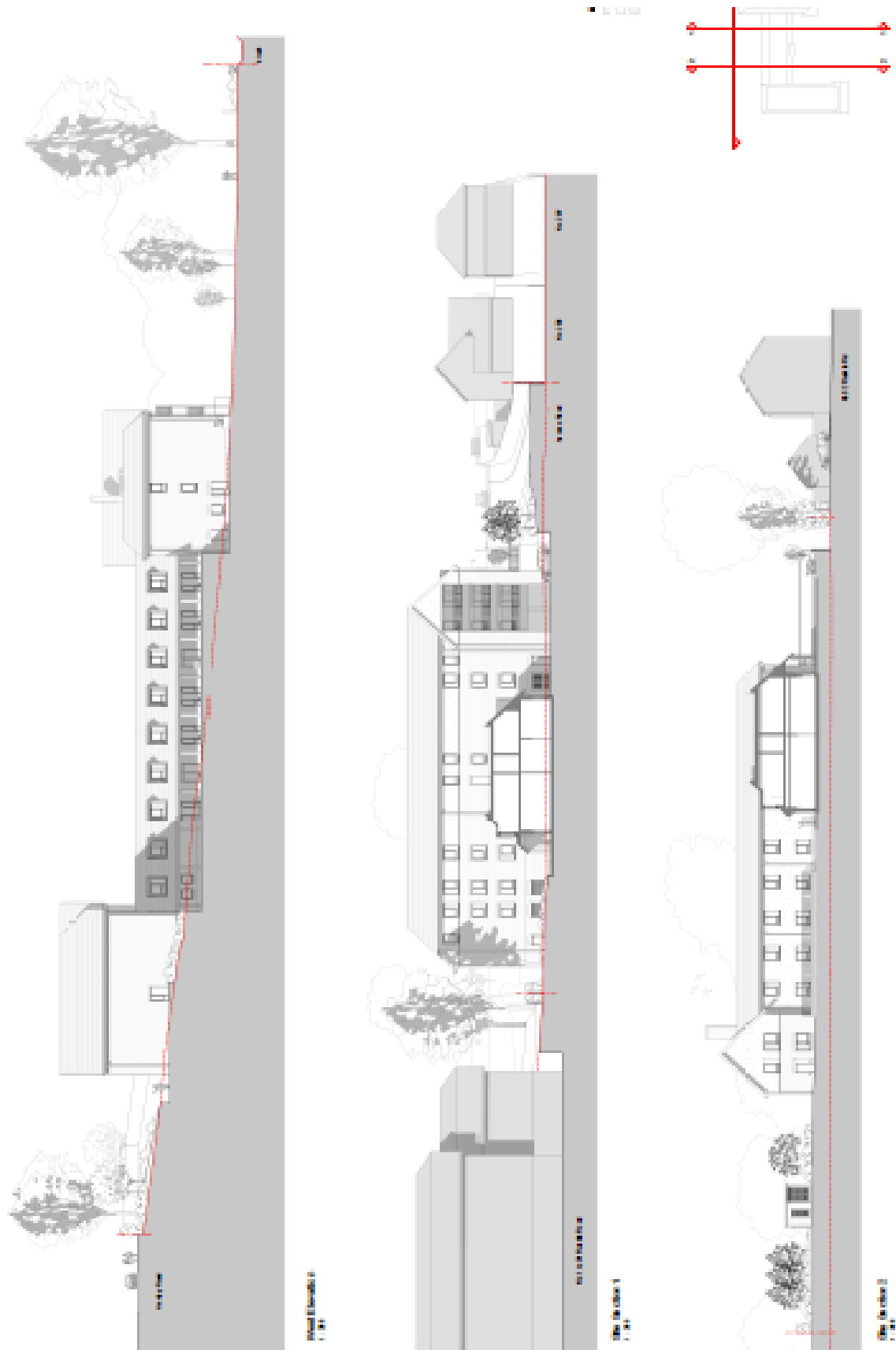


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Proposed Second and Third Floor Plans

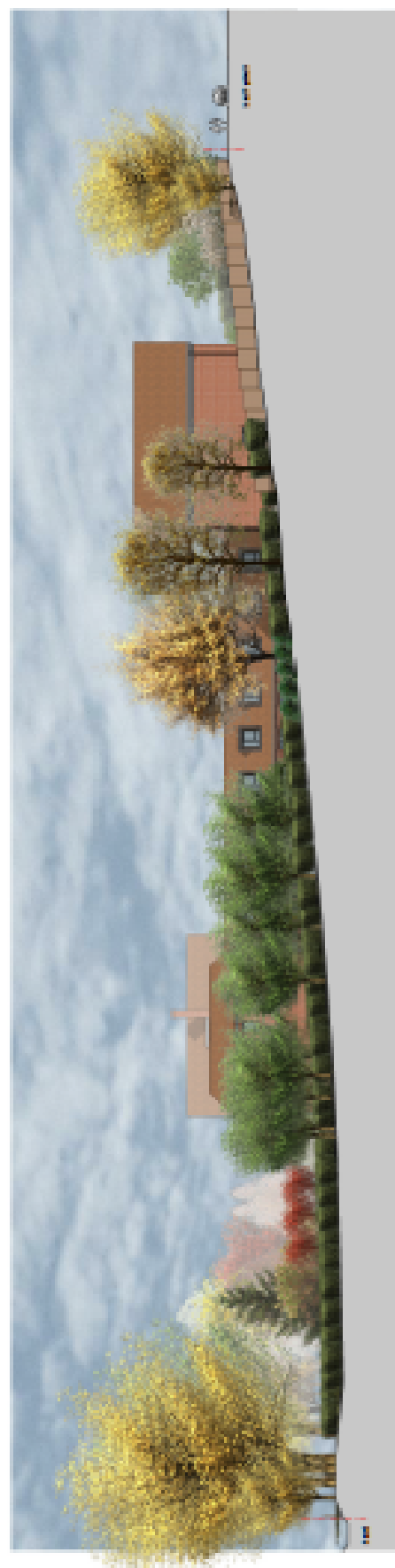
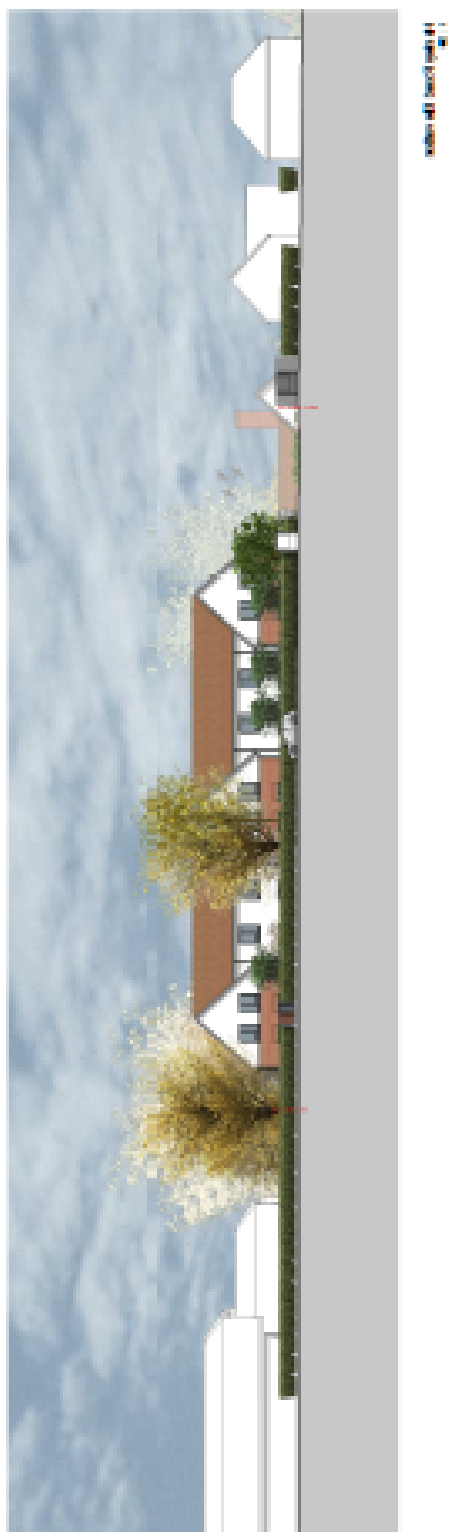


Proposed North East and South Elevations

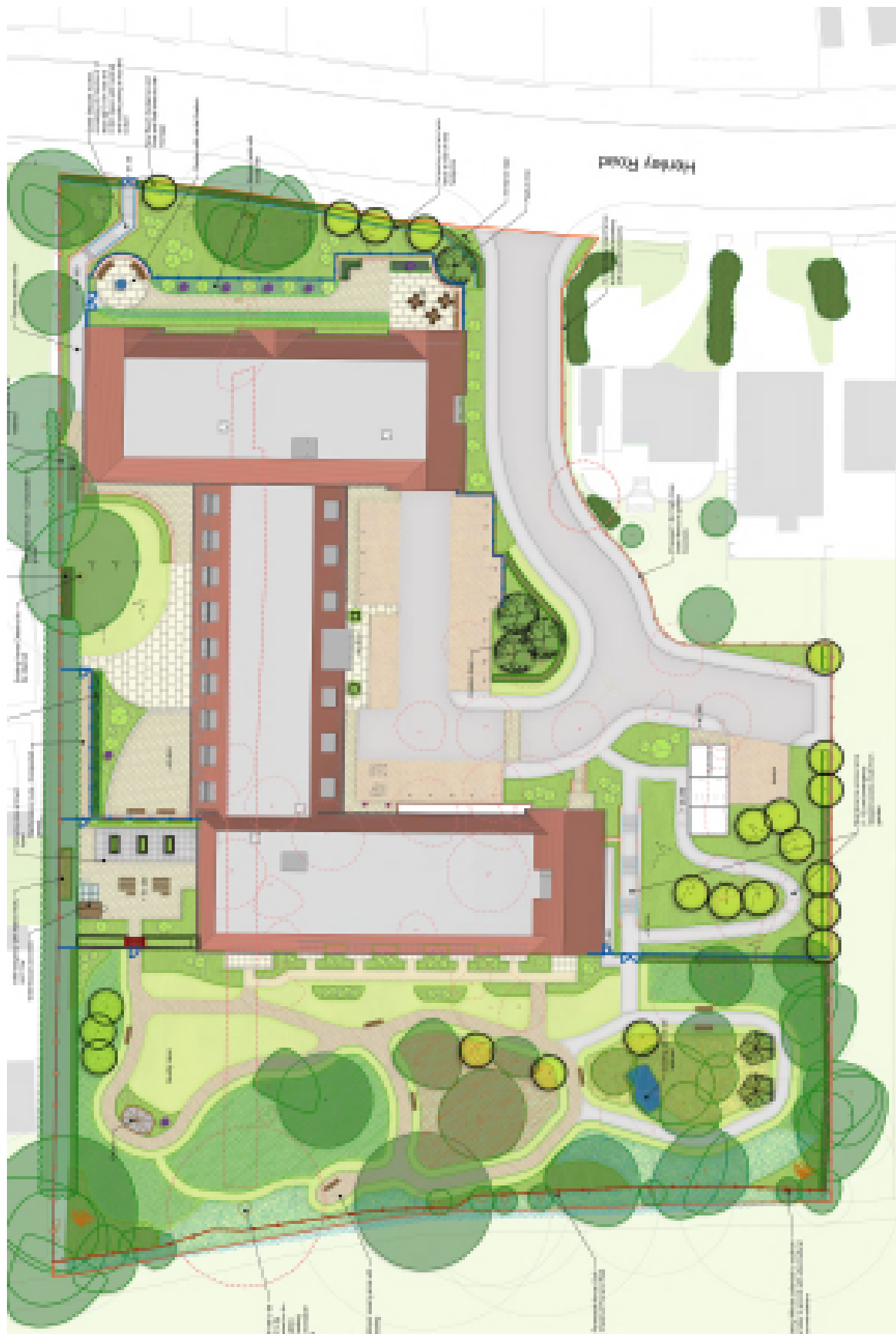


Proposed West Elevation and Site Sections





Proposed Visuals from Henley Road (north) and Ruskin (west)



Proposed Landscaping

