

55 Vastern Road, Reading, RG1 8QT

Statement of Common Ground
between
Berkeley Homes (Oxford and Chiltern) Ltd and Reading Borough Council
Application Reference: 200188
Appeal Reference: APP/E0345/W/21/3276463

Affordable Housing and Noise Addendum

Appellant Reference: 28876/A5/P10c
LPA Reference: 200188

September 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In respect of affordable housing, this Addendum to the Statement of Common Ground (ASoCG) has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Berkeley Homes (Oxford & Chiltern) Ltd (hereafter referred to as 'the Appellant') and was submitted to the Local Planning Authority Reading Borough Council ('RBC') on 23rd September 2021. In respect of noise, this ASoCG has been prepared by RBC and was submitted to the Appellant on 24th September 2021. The ASoCG (signed by both the Appellant and RBC) is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 28th September 2021. It is to be read in parallel with the SoCG signed on 17th September 2021 in respect of the planning appeal at 55 Vastern Road, Reading (APP/E0345/W/21/3276463).
- 1.2 The Appellant and RBC have continued to engage following the agreement of the main SoCG and have agreed further matters in respect of affordable housing, specifically the benchmark land value, developer profit and proforma for the deferred contributions mechanism. For clarity, paragraphs 2.1 – 2.6 below simply repeat paragraphs 7.39 – 7.44 of the SoCG completed on 17th September 2021.
- 1.3 In respect of noise matters, one of the matters of uncommon ground within the original SoCG is removed. This is following further review of the case by RBC.
- 1.4 The parties shall continue discussions with the aim of agreeing further matters of common ground where possible. For example, discussions are presently on-going in respect of possible alterations to paragraph 7.123 on noise matters. If appropriate, as a result of these discussions, a further separate Addendum to the SoCG will be agreed specifying any further matters of common ground.

2.0 Affordable Housing

- 2.1 At the outset of the planning application the Appellant did not propose any on-site affordable housing, with the proposal entirely comprising market housing. This was supported by a viability assessment which sought to confirm that the site could not support any affordable housing. During the application the Appellant introduced on-site affordable housing, comprising 43 (20.57%) on-site affordable housing units (19 affordable rent and 24 shared ownership). At appeal stage the proposal comprises 0 (0%) on-site affordable units, in line with the originally submitted application, and 209 (100%) market housing units, with a review mechanism as required by RBC's Affordable Housing SPD.
- 2.2 A viability assessment of the development has been undertaken by the Appellant and was submitted as part of the Planning Application.
- 2.3 The viability appraisal was prepared in line with current practice including the NPPF Viability Guidance (Updated May 2019) and the now superseded RBC Affordable Housing SPD (July 2013).
- 2.4 The submitted appraisal uses a Land Cost based on an Existing Use Value, plus a premium for the office premises, as presented in the formal valuation by Romans. The valuation was informed by market advice provided by Savills and build costs information provided by Fulkers.
- 2.5 On the basis of the submitted viability assessment and the work of the Council's own consultants it is agreed that the development cannot viably provide any affordable housing at this point in time.
- 2.6 It is agreed that the section 106 agreement should contain a planning deferred contributions mechanism, for if the viability of the scheme improves at a future point in time, in line with the RBC Affordable Housing SPD 2021.
- 2.7 It is agreed that the basis for the deferred contributions mechanism will be reassessed on the actual costs and values at the point in time when the viability reassessment is triggered, which is presently subject to discussion between the parties, in accordance with the future section 106 agreement.
- 2.8 It is agreed that the Benchmark Land Value for the deferred contributions mechanism will be £6,500,000 and the developer profit will be set at 17.5% of Gross Development Value.

- 2.9 It is agreed that proforma for the deferred contributions mechanism will be undertaken in accordance with the proforma attached to the section 106 agreement which is based on an Argus appraisal.
- 2.10 In light of the above parameter matters now being agreed between the parties, subject to these matters duly being included as above within the yet to be submitted final draft of the s106 legal agreement (due by 12th October 2021), and this also including satisfactory trigger points for the viability reassessment (presently being discussed), this would resolve all matters raised within the Council's Affordable Housing Statement of Case by Andrew Jones of BPS Surveyors. Accordingly, no Proofs of Evidence on Affordable Housing matters will be submitted by either the Appellant or the Council, subject to the above matters being duly included within the yet to be submitted final draft of the s106 legal agreement, due by 12th October 2021.

3.0 NOISE

- 3.1 Paragraph 8.17 of the matters of uncommon ground is, following further consideration by RBC, no longer a matter of uncommon ground and is therefore omitted. This paragraph is, for completeness, marked by a strikethrough below:

~~8.17 Whether the assessment of internal noise levels should be undertaken with the windows open, closed or both open and closed.~~

- 3.2 Accordingly, there are two remaining noise paragraphs in the matters of uncommon ground. For ease of future reference, the paragraph numbers remain unchanged, meaning there is no longer a paragraph 8.17. The two unaltered paragraphs (8.16 and 8.18) are specified below as the noise matters of uncommon ground:

Noise

8.16 Whether the development appropriately addresses and mitigates noise associated with the SSE site to the east to enable the provision of a suitable quality of accommodation for all future occupiers.

8.18 The use of British Standard 4142: 2014 to assess the internal noise levels within the dwellings.

4.0 DECLARATIONS

4.1 The above matters have been agreed by RBC and the Appellant.

Signed and dated on behalf of Reading Borough Council

Jonathan Markwell

Date 28/09/2021

Jonathan Markwell, Principal Planning Officer, Reading Borough Council

Signed and dated on behalf of the Appellant



Date 28/09/2021

Kim Cohen, Partner, Barton Willmore