

READING PARK STATION

PROOF OF EVIDENCE ON BEHALF OF THE APPELLANT IN RELATION TO DESIGN MATTERS

MR ROY COLLADO RIBA MBA ARB MR IAI

PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE: APP/E0345/W/21/3289748

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL PLANNING REFERENCE: 200328/OUT

MARCH 2022

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This proof of evidence is prepared on behalf of the Appellant and in relation to architectural matters.
- 1.2. It therefore addresses deemed Reasons for Refusal:
  - 1 – Scale, height and massing (in collaboration with Mr Matthew Chard of Barton Willmore and Dr Chris Miele of Montague Evans)
  - 2 – Tall buildings (in collaboration with Mr Matthew Chard of Barton Willmore and Dr Chris Miele of Montague Evans)
  - 4 – the North – South link
  - 6 – Public realm
  - 10 – Public open space
- 1.3. Section 1 of my PoE sets out my background and experience of some 30 years. I am the founding partner of Collado Collins Architects, a now established practice started in 2004, and with a focus on residential lead mixed use developments most frequently located in areas of sensitivity and change. Current examples of our work include the consent and delivery of c2000 homes in Welwyn Garden City, where new levels of density adjacent to the train station are envisaged, the Bath Press site, where we secured consent for 250 dwellings adjacent to the World Heritage site, and the re development of the former Gas Works site in Reading where we secured [permission for a high density housing project adjacent to existing low rise residential stock.
- 1.4. I have developed my expertise as an architect through experience over the last 20 years in particular, through leading many of our complex projects through planning and consultation, through constant internal design review within our practice, and through working with design Review Panels on most of our projects. This includes my role as member and frequent chair of the Design Review Panel for the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The majority of our projects are successfully negotiated through planning as a result of our willingness to engage with all parties toward a positive outcome for all.
- 1.5. I have been involved with this project since its instruction in 2017, and have remained involved throughout conversations and meetings with the local authority, Hermes, and the general public.
- 1.6. Our team has worked closely throughout this process with a wide range of advisors, in particular townscape and heritage, transport and landscape/public realm, who's work has informed our design development.

- 1.7. This application is for Outline approval based upon parameter plans and design codes. In order to illustrate one possible example of how an architectural solution might be developed within these parameters and codes, we have developed an illustrative scheme. This scheme includes detailed work by a landscape consultant, daylight consultant and transport consultants. Our commentary on any detailed questions with regards to these topics will be with reference to those consultants, who's work we have relied upon in the development of our own.
- 1.8. My main evidence focuses on our assessment and understanding of those planning policies and guidance notes that relate to this site, alongside an assessment of the existing site and wider town centre as it is, and more importantly, as it is emerging through other redevelopment sites and permissions. It is clear that the policy direction for this site, supported by recent planning consents close to the site, are combining to create a general increase in scale and density, with the station at the heart of the proposals.
- 1.9. The second part of my evidence explores the constraints of the existing site, both within and beyond the red line, and how these might be considered against policy, and the opportunities that the successful re development of this site might deliver to Reading. I then expand upon this analysis, combined with consultation change and feedback, to show an illustrative scheme which allows the assessment of a 'real' series of buildings and spaces, albeit we are not seeking approval for this illustrative scheme. We have based the illustrative scheme on the maximum parameters for which permission is sought on the basis that anything smaller will inevitably be acceptable if the illustrative scheme is deemed acceptable
- 1.10. In exploring the massing and composition of the project, we have worked closely with Mr Chard and Mr Miele throughout. The relationship of our massing upon the wider townscape of Reading is dealt with by them within their respective proofs, and with our landscape team in developing the appropriate spaces, zones, and disposition between and around the buildings to ensure that the right provision is made within the parameter plans for high quality public realm. Of particular importance is the location and scale of the N-S link.
- 1.11. I summaries my PoE with a commentary against para 130 of the NPF which sets out the criteria for assessing planning decisions, and offer a comment against each of the 5 criteria noted.

- 1.12. I believe that our work can be seen to demonstrate a thorough understanding of place and of the guiding principles within the policies that attach to this site. We have crafted a scheme in response to these policies and set in place a series of parameters and design codes that it obeys, thereby demonstrating that the Design Codes and Parameters are capable of delivering a high quality proposal.

**Mr Roy Collado**

**Director**

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**Date: xx**

