

OLD TOWN
HEALTH AND WELLBEING
STATEMENT
FEBRUARY 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Health and wellbeing Statement has been submitted to West Berkshire Council, by Lochailort Newbury Ltd (the applicant) in support of a full planning application for the redevelopment of The Kennet Centre, located on Market Street, Bartholomew Street, Market Place, and Cheap Street, Newbury, RG14 5EN (known as Old Town).

1.2 The proposed development is for:

“Full planning permission for the redevelopment of the Kennet Centre comprising the partial demolition of the existing building on site and the development of new residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and ancillary facilities, commercial floorspace (Class E (a, b, c, d, e, f, and g)); access, parking, and cycle parking; landscaping; sustainable energy installations; associated works, and alterations to the retained Vue Cinema and multi storey car park.”

1.3 Further details of the proposed development can be found in the Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement and other planning application submission documents.

Background

1.4 Healthy urban planning aims to promote healthy, successful places for people to live and work in, reducing environmental risks and delivering well designed buildings and urban spaces which will create the conditions for healthy, active lifestyles. In addition to access to healthcare services, a number of other factors are known to influence a person’s health status and lifestyle, including economic, environmental and social conditions. These factors are referred to as the wider or social determinants of health.

1.5 Healthy urban planning seeks to highlight and promote the role of planning to influence these social determinants of health. In many ways, the town planning system already promotes good health, by focussing on sustainable development and travel, enhancing green spaces, reducing pollution and protecting residential amenity. However, healthy urban planning goes further by explicitly recognising the role of planning and by using health issues as a way to promote good planning and design and raise standards. Poorly planned and designed buildings and spaces could deter healthy lifestyles and exacerbate poor physical and mental health, and thus the principles of healthy urban planning apply to both new development and urban regeneration programmes.

1.6 Accordingly, a *Healthy Urban Planning* checklist was developed in 2012 by the National Health Service, Greater London Authority and other bodies, aiming to promote healthy urban planning by ensuring that the health and wellbeing implications of major planning applications can be consistently taken into account. By bringing together planning policy requirements and standards that influence health and wellbeing, the checklist seeks to mainstream health into the planning system.

- 1.7 Local authorities are responsible for a number of regulatory functions, which are separate from planning controls, such as building regulations, traffic regulations, environmental protection and a range of licensing regimes. The checklist refers only to planning controls, although other regulatory controls, particularly environmental protection, food premises licensing and traffic regulations are closely related and required in order to achieve a 'healthy' development.

The benefits of healthy urban planning

- 1.8 Healthy urban planning means good planning and high quality urban design. Good design and good planning can help reduce health care costs over time by preventing ill-health from risks attributed to urban planning, including air pollution, road injuries, worklessness and poor housing. Good design also generates financial, social and environmental value. A well designed 'healthy' development will add economic value by increasing sales and lettings of residential units and producing higher returns on investment.
- 1.9 '*Active Design*' is a key element of healthy urban planning. Design has a crucial role to support activity in buildings and places in response to rising levels of obesity and related chronic diseases. Active Design can influence the design of healthier buildings, streets, and urban spaces, helping to reduce energy consumption, increase sustainability, and be cost effective. Active design can also positively influence mental health and wellbeing.

Policy context

- 1.10 The *National Planning Policy Framework* (December 2023) promotes a collaborative approach to health and planning and states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs (paragraph 135). The supporting online *Planning Practice Guidance* refers to the use of health impact assessment as a useful tool to assess the impacts of development proposals.
- 1.11 Whilst the *Healthy Urban Planning* checklist has not been adopted by West Berkshire Council for forward planning or development management purposes, nonetheless it provides a useful guide for the assessment of the health and wellbeing aspects of a development such as *Old Town*.

Proposed onsite health & wellbeing facilities

- 1.12 As a truly mixed-use redevelopment scheme, Old Town's scale and sustainable town centre location makes it an ideal candidate to incorporate a range of health and wellbeing facilities and amenities.
- 1.13 The development proposes a range of onsite wellbeing facilities for residents living in its *homes* including:
- Community Hub including a concierge, meeting room, kitchen, and meeting room/gym;
 - Communal amenity space;
 - Increased permeability for the town centre thus increasing attractive walking routes;

- Safe designed and landscaped communal courtyards and streets for amenity space;
- Cycle parking and 4 new cycle repair stations scheme to encourage cycling as a healthy active travel mode; and
- 3 new car club cars and electric vehicle charging points.

2.0 THE HEALTHY URBAN PLANNING CHECKLIST

2.1 The checklist is divided into four themes, with each theme containing a number of questions focused on a planning issue. Under each theme there are a number of related health and wellbeing issues many of which are identified in local joint strategic needs assessments and health and wellbeing strategies, such as those related to:

- Obesity and diseases related to physical inactivity and poor diet;
- Excess winter deaths;
- Air and noise pollution;
- Road safety; and
- Social isolation.

Theme	Planning issue	Health and wellbeing issue
1. Healthy housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing design • Accessible housing • Healthy living • Housing mix and affordability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of living space - overcrowding • Unhealthy living environment – daylight, ventilation, noise • Excess deaths due to cold / overheating • Injuries in the home • Mental illness from social isolation and fear of crime
2. Active travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting walking and cycling • Safety • Connectivity • Minimising car use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical inactivity, cardiovascular disease and obesity • Road and traffic injuries • Mental illness from social isolation • Noise and air pollution from traffic
3. Healthy environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction • Air quality • Noise • Contaminated land • Open space • Play space • Biodiversity • Local food growing • Flood risk • Overheating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance and stress caused by construction activity • Poor air quality - lung and heart disease • Disturbance from noisy activities and uses • Health risks from toxicity of contaminated land • Physical inactivity, cardiovascular disease and obesity • Mental health benefits from access to nature and green space and water • Opportunities for food growing – active lifestyles, healthy diet and tackling food poverty • Excess summer deaths due to overheating
4. Vibrant neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare services • Education • Access to social infrastructure • Local employment and healthy workplaces • Access to local food shops • Public buildings and spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to services and health inequalities • Mental illness and poor self-esteem associated with unemployment and poverty • Limited access to healthy food linked to obesity and related diseases • Poor environment leading to physical inactivity • Ill health exacerbated through isolation, lack of social contact and fear of crime

Theme 1: Healthy Housing

		Yes	No	Commentary
A. Healthy design	Does the proposal meet all the standards for daylight, sound insulation, private space and accessible and adaptable dwellings?	✓		Apartments are well-lit, and designed with appropriate noise mitigation. Each apartment will also have a access to a range of outdoor spaces (both private and communal and street).
B. Accessible Housing	Does the proposal provide accessible homes for older or disabled people? Does the proposal ensure that every non-ground floor dwelling is accessible by a lift that can accommodate an ambulance trolley?	✓		All units are accessible. There will be around 10% wheelchair housing in the scheme.
C. Health Living	Does the proposal provide dwellings with adequate internal space, including sufficient storage space and separate kitchen and living spaces? Does the proposal encourage the use of stairs by ensuring that they are well located, attractive and welcoming?	✓		Appropriate levels of internal storage are provided. Secure cycle storage is additionally provided. All stairs are daylight where possible and conveniently located.
D. Housing Mix & Affordability	Does the proposal provide affordable family sized homes?	✓		Affordable residential units are not proposed and the justification is demonstrated in the viability assessment.

Theme 2: Active Travel

		Yes	No	Commentary
A. Promoting Walking & Cycling	Does the proposal promote cycling and walking through measures in a travel plan, including adequate cycle parking and cycle storage?	✓		495 secure cycle parking bays are provided across the site and in the MSCP. The development also proposes 3 public

				cycle repair stations around the site. The sit enhances the permeability for the Town Centre thus encouraging walking.
B. Safety	Does the proposal include traffic management and calming measures and safe and well-lit pedestrian and cycle crossings and routes?	✓		The development's will have safe designed pedestrian streets and are well overlooked. A new cycle lane is proposed on Bartholomew Street.
C. Connectivity	Does the proposal connect public realm and internal routes to local and strategic cycle and walking networks and public transport?	✓		The development will provide an essential and long-overdue pedestrian link between the railway station and bus station/town centre. It will also introduce better east-west permeable connections making the site more legible.
D. Minimising Car Usage	Does the proposal seek to minimise car use by reducing car parking provision, supported by the controlled parking zones, car free development and car clubs?	✓		Three onsite car club cars are proposed. The level of residents' car parking is appropriate to this highly sustainable town centre location. 495 secure cycle parking bays are also provided across the site.

Theme 3: Healthy Environment

		Yes	No	Commentary
A. Construction	Does the proposal minimise construction impacts such as dust, noise, vibration and odours?	✓		This is addressed in the submitted Noise Assessment and Air Quality Assessment. A Construction Management Plan will be conditioned.

B. Air Quality	Does the proposal minimise air pollution caused by traffic and energy facilities?	✓		Emission-free sustainable energy technologies are proposed for heating/cooling and hot water.
C. Noise	Does the proposal minimise the impact of noise caused by traffic and commercial uses through insulation, site layout and landscaping?	✓		The development is not in a noise sensitive location and will not generate undue levels of noise itself, as set out in the submitted Noise Assessment.
D. Open Space	Does the proposal retain or replace existing open space and in areas of deficiency, provide new open or natural space, or improve access to existing spaces? Does the proposal set out how new open space will be managed and maintained?	✓		The site currently has 100% building coverage, whereas the proposed development will have a range of resident amenity spaces and streets in addition to a high-quality public realm. Management of these is set out in the submitted Framework Servicing & Management Plan.
E. Play Space	Does the proposal provide a range of play spaces for children and young people?		✗	An off site S106 contribution to public open space is proposed.
F. Biodiversity	Does the proposal contribute to nature conservation and biodiversity?	✓		A habitat enhancement package is set out in the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment report.
G. Local Food Growing	Does the proposal provide opportunities for food growing, for example by providing allotments, private and community gardens and green roofs?	✓		Communal roof terrace is provided on the flatted parts of the scheme (Edward House and Pellow House). Residents can also grow food on private amenity areas.
H. Flood Risk	Does the proposal reduce surface water flood risk	✓		Blue roofs, rainwater harvesting and

	through sustainable urban drainage techniques, including storing rainwater, use of permeable surfaces and green roofs?			attenuation tanks are proposed as part of the site's SUDS system, as explored in the submitted Drainage Statement.
I. Overheating	Does the design of buildings and spaces avoid internal and external overheating, through use of passive cooling techniques and urban greening?	✓		A ground source heat pump system will provide both heating <i>and</i> cooling without using fossil fuels.

Theme 4: Vibrant Neighbourhoods

		Yes	No	Commentary
A. Health Services	Has the impact on healthcare services been addressed?		✗	Healthcare infrastructure funding falls within the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy
B. Education	Has the impact on primary, secondary and post-19 education been addressed?		✗	Education infrastructure funding falls within the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy
C. Access to Social Infrastructure	Does the proposal contribute to new social infrastructure provision that is accessible, affordable and timely? Have opportunities for multi-use and the co-location of services been explored?	✓		A range of social infrastructure provision is provided on the site. This includes a meeting room and kitchen, and meeting room/gym and concierge who will undertake private management of the site.
D. Local Employment and Healthy Workplaces	Does the proposal include commercial uses and provide opportunities for local employment and training, including temporary construction and permanent 'end-use' jobs? Does the proposal promote the health and wellbeing of future employees by achieving BREEAM health and wellbeing credits?	✓		The applicant will explore a Construction Employment Skills Plan ahead of the construction phase. The commercial space will achieve BREEAM Excellent.

E. Access to Local Food Shops	Does the proposal provide opportunities for local food shops? Does the proposal avoid an over concentration or clustering of hot food takeaways in the local area?	✓	A range of food shops are on the site's doorstep. There is not an over concentration of hot food takeaways in Newbury Town Centre.
F. Public Realm	Does the design of the public realm maximise opportunities for social interaction and connect the proposal with neighbouring communities? Does the proposal allow people with mobility problems or a disability to access buildings and places?		The development will complete the key missing link between the railway station and the town centre/bus station in the form street routes through the site. Level access will be provided throughout and the public realm /courtyards other opportunities for social interaction.

2.2 From this assessment it can be seen that health and wellbeing factors have been extensively taken into account in the mix of uses, masterplanning and detailed design of the development. Enhancement of off-site play facilities will be explored during the planning application process, and the development's relationship with education and healthcare capacity and provision will be dealt with through the mechanism of the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy.

3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 Health and wellbeing factors have been extensively taken into account in the mix of uses, master planning and detailed design of the development.
- 3.2 Residents' health and wellbeing has been catered for through a wide range on **dedicated onsite residents' facilities**, as well as through sustainable transport initiatives and the wealth of existing facilities that are already on the site's doorstep.
- 3.3 The commercial elements of the scheme will achieve **BREEAM Excellent**.
- 3.4 The use of onsite **renewable technology installations** will avoid the burning of fossil fuels on site and thus avoid any harm to local air quality.
- 3.5 In all, the scheme performs well when tested against the NHS' *Healthy Urban Planning Checklist* which demonstrates how health and wellbeing have been given importance throughout the masterplanning and design iteration process.