

**FORMER E.ON OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, RAYLEIGH
ADDENDUM TO THE DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

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JCN
Design

Support Services

Background

As a result of discussions that followed the formal consultation exercise with regard to the proposed scheme for the redevelopment of the E.On offices and depot to the north of London Road, Rayleigh, a number of changes have been made to the proposed scheme. The revisions are relatively minor and do not alter the character of the proposal or the design principles described in the Design and Access Statement submitted as part of the application for planning permission (dated November 2011).

Use, amount and density

The changes to the proposed scheme include the omission of two dwellings, bringing the total number of new homes proposed down to 101. The accommodation now comprises 10 no. 2 bedroom apartments, 20 no. two bedroom houses, 44 no. three bedroom houses, 13 no. four bedroom houses and 14 no. 5 bedroom houses. The same eleven house type remain in place, maintaining the principle of a design theme and a sense of place through the use of repeating elements, as can be found within the streets immediately to the east of the site. The two points of access are not altered and only a small change to the road layout is required, in the north western corner of the site. With two fewer dwellings across a net site area of 3.0 hectares (7.4 acres), the scheme equates to a density of 33.7 dwellings per hectare (13.6 dwellings per acre).

Concept and built form

The proposed concept remains as described in the Design and Access Statement. Small changes have been made to the built form, most of which can be found to the south of the watercourse that crosses the north eastern corner of the site. A parking courtyard was previously proposed on the edge of the watercourse, against the boundary of the site and to the north of plots 23 to 25, but this has been omitted and the car parking that it contained is now spread across the site, positioned in closer proximity to the homes that it serves. The terrace of houses facing the estate road remain unchanged (plots 20 to 23), but the pair of houses facing the courtyard have been replaced with a single detached house that is served by a private drive, taking advantage of the reduction in the amount of activity and the addition of extra landscaping to the edge of the watercourse.

Moving along the watercourse to the north, the "L"-shaped block of apartments (formerly plots 39 to 44) still serves an important purpose by marking the end of the estate road loop and defining the corner of the street. However, rather than forming a single building, it has been broken into three separate buildings, linked together by car ports containing a pair of parking spaces. As a result, the footprint of the block is bigger and the provision of continuous active frontage increases, with a matching reduction in the amount of car parking forming the edge of the public realm. On the opposite side of the junction, the terrace of seven houses (formerly plots 58 to 64) is reduced to a terrace of four and a semi-detached pair, with parking spaces for plot 58 under a link separating the two buildings. The mass of the buildings is reduced and allows them to act separately as the end stop to the estate road from the south and as a corner turning element in partnership with the apartments. To the south of the junction and in contrast, the three buildings have been linked together in order to provide a more solid form when approached from the north.

Public and private space

The relationship between public and private space throughout the scheme is broadly unchanged, with the changes seeking to reduce the prominence of parked cars within the street scene, rather than changing the definition of the edges of the streets. The constraints imposed on the northern part of the site by easements, the telecommunications mast and the watercourse mean that there are gaps in the street scene and that it is not possible for buildings to define the edges of the street in all areas. Instead, the changes allow more landscaping to be added, helping to define the route through the public realm for visitors and softening the edge of the street. Relocating the car parking from parking courtyards and the edge of the street to more in curtilage positions and directly to the front of the properties also helps to define ownership of the spaces and promotes a sense of ownership.

Scale

The changes to the northern part of the scheme will have relatively little impact on the scale of the proposed development. No buildings will be taller, but some of the buildings will be broken into smaller parts, reducing the mass of the buildings when viewed from the street.

On the frontage to Rayleigh Road, plots 1 and 2 have been swapped so that the 2½ storey properties are positioned flanking the estate road and the built frontage drops to two storeys at the boundary of the site. Plot 1 also includes an additional side window to provide an element of informal surveillance for the open area to the east of the site.

Appearance

No changes are proposed to the character of the scheme, although the changes to the site layout will lead to a revised appearance for some of the buildings – the “L”-shaped block of apartments will appear as three separate elements instead of appearing as one building, for example. The detailing of the buildings and the use of materials are not proposed to be altered, meaning that changes to the appearance of the scheme will be quite limited.

Landscaping

The relocation of car parking away from the edge of the streets and into the curtilage of the properties has created space for more landscaping to be added to the scheme. The landscaping helps to define the edge of the street, encouraging visitors to follow the road and footway, filling spaces where built frontage cannot be provided.

The landscaping is also used to provide a buffer against the watercourse, softening the edge of the channel and blocking views of the proposed flood control device. Individual trees are also positioned so that they break up blocks of car parking on the edges of the streets (outside plots 91 to 97, for example), dividing the spaces into groups of distinct ownership and preventing the edge of the road from being defined by parked cars.



Revised Proposed Development Layout, drawing number BW100-001 revision W.