



109b Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7UD

**Design & Access Statement**

Retrospective Full Planning

May 2023

Figure 1: Photographic Analysis



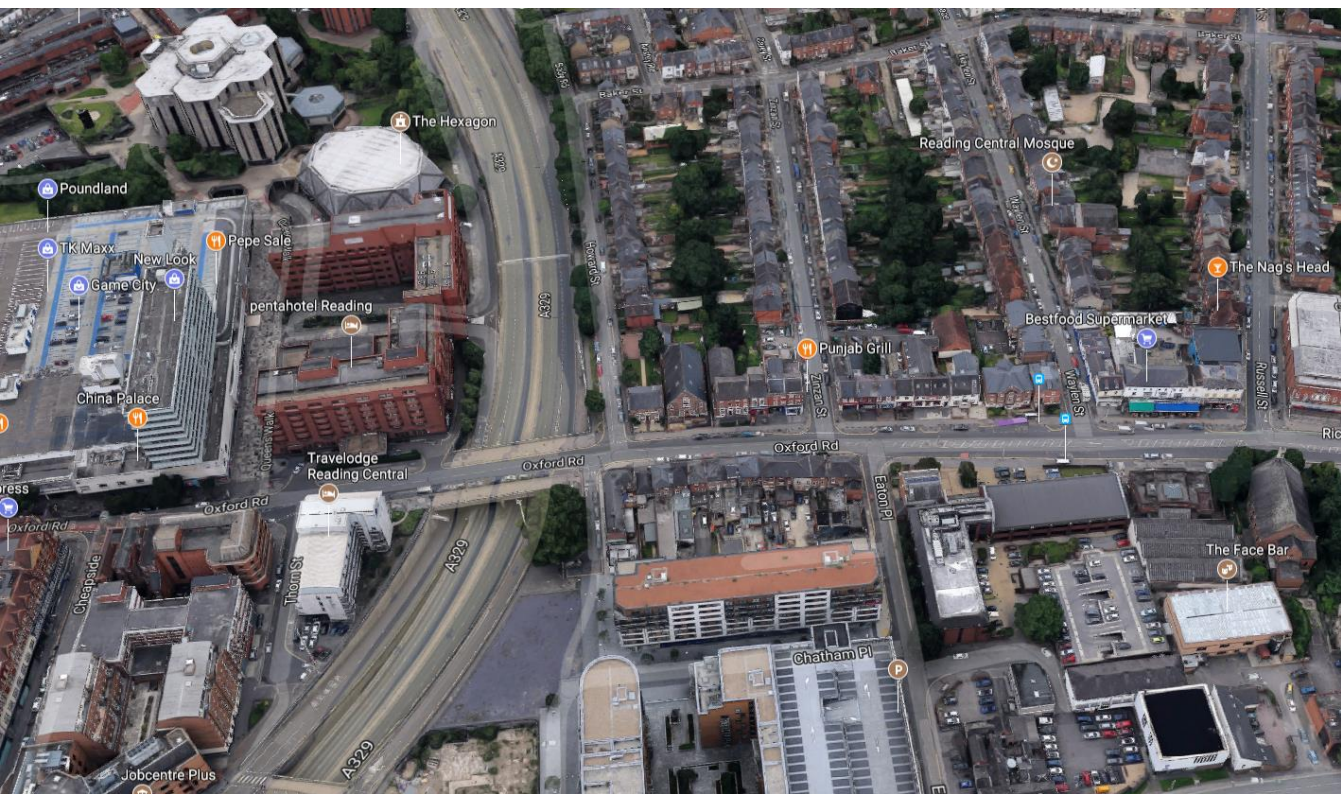
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Figure 2: Site Location



Figure 3: Location



## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Aims

This architectural design & access document has been prepared by Architecture & Interior Design as part of a retrospective full planning application on behalf of our client for the change of use from Sui Generis (Betting shop) to E(b) Restaurant with ancillary Sui Generis takeaway and canopy extraction to the rear of the property.

### 1.2 Design Ethos

The design approach can be summarised as follows:

- To bring a redundant building back to use.
- To provide customers with an elegant style dining experience with modern fixtures and fittings throughout.
- The design should incorporate various aspects of sustainable design and look to new technologies and the local workforce.

### 1.3 Location

The application site is located in Reading on the main Oxford Road leading towards Broad Street and into the city centre.

The site benefits from public transport with bus services operating on Oxford Road and Broad Street, leading throughout Reading and towards the city centre which is walking distance away.

The site is ideally located for the proposed change of use being within a prime city centre location as part of the Oxford Road Conservation area

The site is a corner building on Oxford road and Zinzan Street.

### 1.4 Existing Site

The site sits within a busy and prime area of Reading with many public and private facilities available locally such as educational, retail, restaurant/takeaway and high street businesses.

The building in question was previously used as a betting shop operating as Ladbrokes, and was vacant for a number of years. Visually and structurally the building is in good condition

The front entrance from Oxford Road is positioned at an angle and part open access from Zinzan Street.

### 1.5 Proposal

The proposal is for the retrospective change of use from Sui Generis (Betting shop) to E(b) Restaurant with ancillary Sui Generis takeaway and canopy extraction to the rear of the property through the rear exit door.

The proposed change of use helped to create an elegant and welcoming dining experience within a prime city centre location for diners to eat healthy grilled food.

The proposed changes improve the aesthetical appearance of the building internally and externally, with large glazed windows that bring light into the space and attracts customers, giving views in and views out.

2.0 History

Reading is a large, historically important town in Berkshire, England, of which it is the county town.

It is located in the Thames Valley at the confluence of the River Thames and River Kennet, and on both the Great Western Main Line railway and the M4 motorway. Reading is 75 miles (121 km) east of Bristol, 25 miles (40 km) south of Oxford, 42 miles (68 km) west of London, 17 miles (27 km) north of Basingstoke, 13 miles (21 km) south-west of Maidenhead and 20 miles (32 km) east of Newbury.

The first evidence for Reading as a settlement dates from the 8th century. It was an important trading and ecclesiastical centre in the medieval period, as the site of Reading Abbey, one of the richest monasteries of medieval England with strong royal connections, of which the 12th century abbey gateway and significant ruins remain.

By 1525, Reading was the largest town in Berkshire, and tax returns show that Reading was the 10th largest town in England when measured by taxable wealth. By 1611, it had a population of over 5000 and had grown rich on its trade in cloth. The town was seriously affected by the English Civil War, with a major siege and loss of trade, and played a pivotal role in the Revolution of 1688, with that revolution's only significant military action fought on the streets of the town.

Reading is an important commercial centre in the Thames Valley and Southern England. The town hosts the headquarters of several British companies and the UK offices of foreign multinationals, as well as being a major retail centre. Whilst located close enough to London to be sometimes regarded as part of the London commuter belt, Reading is a net inward destination for commuters. During the morning peak period, there are some 30,000 inward arrivals in the town, compared to 24,000 departures.

Major companies BG Group, ING Direct, Microsoft, Oracle Hibu (formerly Yell Group),have their headquarters in Reading. The insurance company Prudential has an administration centre in the town.PepsiCo and Wrigley have offices. Reading has a significant historical involvement in the information technology industry, largely as a result of the early presence in the town of sites of International Computers Limited and Digital. Other technology companies with a significant presence in the town include Access IS, Agilent Technologies, Cisco, Ericsson, Symantec, Verizon Business,and Commvault These companies are distributed around Reading or just outside the borough boundary, some in business parks including Thames Valley Park in nearby Earley, Green Park Business Park and Arlington Business Park.

2.1 Heritage statement

The Oxford Road was one of the earliest roads out of Reading to the east, being the primary conduit to Pangbourne and Oxford south of the River Thames. East of the intersection of Russell Street, the Oxford Road was called Oxford Street until at least the mid- 1850s but this had been changed by the 1870s.

Today, the Oxford Road in Reading is well known for its vibrant multi-cultural array of shops lining an active pedestrian and vehicular traffic route. It is also plagued by a self- defeating reputation as a somewhat rough area that decades of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) have given it. The “broken window theory” in townscapes has proven itself true along the road in many patches.

Despite these factors, the underlying historic fabric remains strongly visible, and in grasping an understanding of the story of Reading as its population progressed west of town, no street can tell this story better than the vibrant Oxford Road.

The history of the modern build-up of this medieval route is seen in the first instance by the many impressive stands of terraced Georgian housing along the route. This early Georgian infill of the route can be very clearly seen starting from the town end next to the IDR bridge and running clear to Argyle Street in the west.

There are several long terraces of listed buildings dating to the early 19c, notably at 149-177 Oxford Road, 187-193, 195-197,197-203 and Prospect Terrace at 237 – 247 Oxford Road (including 2 Lorne Street) along the south side of the street. All are in poor to moderate condition with several being converted to shop fronts at their bases.

The Georgian houses and terraces line the route largely of red brick with a noted grand stand of stuccoed villas at nos. 197-203. Notable are the single houses at 101 and 104 Oxford Road. Amazingly, most of the listed Georgians still retain original windows and doors. Some brick walls onto pavements in front of these properties (notably at 149-153) need attention and re-pointing but are original.

With the creation of Waylen Street and Zinzan Street in the latter 1830s to 1840s, the two-story shops had completely filled in between Russell Street and Howard by the early 1850s. The history of shops to provide wares to the local residents west of town, has always been a feature of the road and the shops there now are today’s generation of that tradition. Their frontages, today, however, lack respect to the age and history of the properties. A more unified appearance could raise the profile of the area and increase profitability for many of the shops. Poor and irregular street frontages do not help.

There is an enormous amount of brick that went into the building of the Oxford Road. Much of it is red brick, with the majority of the shop front properties being overpainted usually in white. (Source: Castle Hill & Russell Street Conservation Area Review)

The proposed change of use will be beneficial for the area providing healthy grilled food within a prime city centre location.

Figure 4: Site surroundings

**Western Edge**



**Northern Edge**



**Eastern Edge**



**Southern Edge**



Figure 5: Previous planning applications

| Figure 1 – ?????? |                                                                                                                                                                   |                     |                                        |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------|
| App. No.:         | 101133                                                                                                                                                            | Site Address:       | 109b Oxford Road<br>Reading<br>RG1 7UD |
| Description:      | Externally illuminated fascia sign to Oxford Road and Zinzan Street shopfronts and externally illuminated projecting sign fronting Oxford Road                    |                     |                                        |
| Received Date:    | 08/10/2018                                                                                                                                                        | Decision Sent Date: | 20/12/2018                             |
|                   |                                                                                                                                                                   | Decision Date:      | 20/12/2018                             |
| App. No.:         | 181785                                                                                                                                                            | Site Address:       | 109b Oxford Road<br>Reading<br>RG1 7UD |
| Description:      | Application for discharge of conditions 3,4 and 9 of planning permission 180273.                                                                                  |                     |                                        |
| Received Date:    | 11/10/2018                                                                                                                                                        | Decision Sent Date: | 23/01/2019                             |
|                   |                                                                                                                                                                   | Decision Date:      | 23/01/2019                             |
| App. No.:         | 960109                                                                                                                                                            | Site Address:       | 109b Oxford Road<br>Reading<br>RG1 7UD |
| Description:      | Alteration of existing shop front.                                                                                                                                |                     |                                        |
| Received Date:    | 08/11/1996                                                                                                                                                        | Decision Sent Date: | 14/01/1997                             |
|                   |                                                                                                                                                                   | Decision Date:      | 14/01/1997                             |
| App. No.:         | 200142                                                                                                                                                            | Site Address:       | 109b Oxford Road<br>Reading<br>RG1 7UD |
| Description:      | Change of use from Sui Generis (betting shop) to Class E restaurant with ancillary Sui Generis takeaway and replacement shopfront (Part retrospective)            |                     |                                        |
| Received Date:    | 29/01/2020                                                                                                                                                        | Decision Sent Date: | 30/03/2022                             |
|                   |                                                                                                                                                                   | Decision Date:      | 30/03/2022                             |
| App. No.:         | 171961                                                                                                                                                            | Site Address:       | 109b Oxford Road<br>Reading<br>RG1 7UD |
| Description:      | Change of use from sui generis to A3/A5 restaurant with ancillary takeaway.                                                                                       |                     |                                        |
| Received Date:    | 06/11/2017                                                                                                                                                        | Decision Sent Date: | 21/12/2017                             |
|                   |                                                                                                                                                                   | Decision Date:      | 21/12/2017                             |
| App. No.:         | 220567                                                                                                                                                            | Site Address:       | 109B Oxford Road<br>Reading<br>RG1 7UD |
| Description:      | Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary A5 takeaway and replacement shopfront (Part retrospective)                          |                     |                                        |
| Received Date:    | 14/04/2022                                                                                                                                                        | Decision Sent Date: | 30/03/2023                             |
|                   |                                                                                                                                                                   | Decision Date:      | 30/03/2023                             |
| App. No.:         | 180273                                                                                                                                                            | Site Address:       | 109b Oxford Road<br>Reading<br>RG1 7UD |
| Description:      | Amended Description: Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary takeaway and replacement shopfront (revised elevation details) |                     |                                        |
| Received Date:    | 12/02/2018                                                                                                                                                        | Decision Sent Date: | 01/06/2018                             |
|                   |                                                                                                                                                                   | Decision Date:      | 01/06/2018                             |
| Results: 1 to 7   |                                                                                                                                                                   |                     |                                        |

3.0 Planning Guidance

3.1 Planning History

For previous planning history, please see figure 5 to the left.

4.0 Proposed Development

4.1 Design Concept

The internal layout on the ground floor was altered to provide a suitable dinning layout for customers, with facilities to create longevity and sustainability to the building.

4.2 Use

The site was used as a Sui Generis Betting shop which was vacant for many years; the proposed retrospective change of use to E(b) Restaurant with ancillary Sui Generis takeaway provides healthy grilled food to the community something which was required in the area as part of a healthy lifestyle.

4.3 Amount

The amount of development on the site that is considered appropriate was arrived at by examining and responding to the following issues:

- Urban design and size of the blocks in the area.
- Ensuring the public and private realms are clearly defined and works with the existing context.

4.4 Layout and Scale

The internal layout on the ground floor was altered to provide the best setting for a restaurant with dining space, kitchen preparation and disabled toilet facility.

The proposed changes regenerated the building to a modern standard to attract customers.

4.5 Appearance and Materials

Internally the layout of the ground floor was changed to suit the proposed change of use. The materials used were of a high standard and quality to create a quality dining experience.

4.6 Opening hours

Mon - Fri: 11.00am – 11.00pm  
Sat - Sun: 11.00am – 11.00pm

4.7 Staff

The restaurant employs 6 no full time staff and 3 no. part time staff

4.8 Access

Bus routes serve the surrounding local area and therefore the application site is within short reach by public paid transport. The closest bus route is located on Oxford Road which is approx. 1 minute walk from the site.

Reading central railway station and reading West are both approximately 10 minutes walking distance away from the site, leading throughout reading and to other cities.

As the internal site is level there will be no difficulties in providing pedestrian access. The property is accessed via Oxford Road. The entrance to the front of the property is level with the external pedestrian footpath; should any wheelchair users require access, would not be a problem for them.

**4.9      Parking**

The site is located close to the city centre and is easily reachable by car and public transport, with bus stops and railway station close by and also with paid car parking nearby.

**Conclusion**

The proposal is for the retrospective change of use from Sui Generis (Betting shop) to E(b) Restaurant with ancillary Sui Generis takeaway and canopy extraction to the rear of the property through the rear exit door.

The ground floor restaurant / takeaway will continue to be economically viable for the local area as it is well populated with a mix use of buildings, from retail to restaurants in a well-populated city centre location

The restaurant provides a family friendly dining experience with family seating areas and healthy grilled food, as part of the new healthy style of living, something which was limited in the area and is very successful.

Being located close to city centre, the site is close to many attraction sites and retail businesses.

The changes fit within the existing building fabric, improved the aesthetical appearance of the building, and attracts customers while at the same time offers a modern interior and exterior appearance that sits comfortably within its context.

The changes to the existing building are very successful in this vicinity which only adds as a positive project to help bring up the surrounding area. We feel that all the requirements have been met and give a positive result to this proposal.