



Town Planning Bureau

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PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Site: 200-202 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 7QJ

Application by: The Thackery Estate

Lead Consultant: Mr Paul S Bottomley

Date: 10th March 2023

Our Ref: URB-555-ST5

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This planning, design and access statement is prepared by Mr Paul S Bottomley BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI of Town Planning Bureau and comprises supporting information in respect of a planning application for the development as described at para 1.2 below.

- Applicant: The Thackery Estate (“the Applicant”).
- Site: 200-202 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 7QJ (“No.200-202” / “the site”).
- LPA: Reading Borough Council (“the Council” / “RBC”).

The Applicant

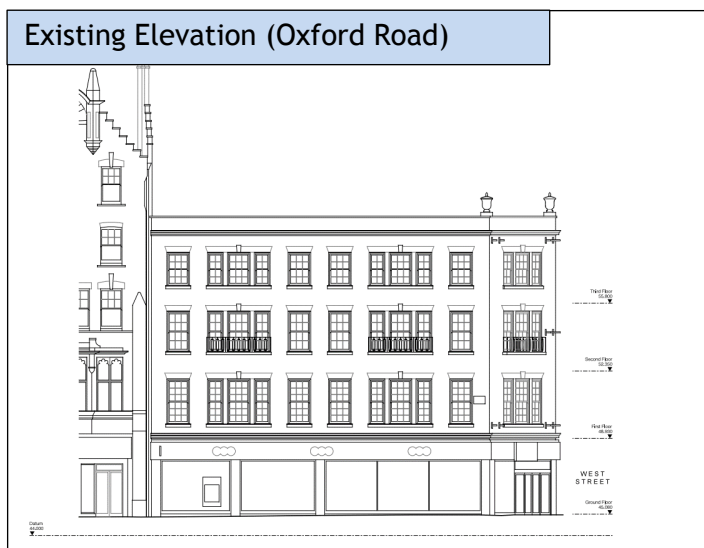
- 1.2 This application is submitted on behalf of The Thackery Estate, a property development and investment company with nearly 60 years’ experience and a nationwide portfolio. The Thackeray Estate has several key land holdings within Reading representing significant investment in the future growth of the Borough. This includes buildings on Friar Street and Queen Victoria Street (phase one and two of the QVS development), which both gained Planning Permission at Reading’s December 2022 Planning Committee. This combination of properties represents a key part of the town centre.
- 1.3 The Applicant has a track record of delivering sensitive, iconic sustainable development across the United Kingdom, with particular experience in the successful reuse and regeneration of town/ city centre sites.

Proposal

- 1.4 Planning permission is sought for the development of a fourth floor and mansard roof extension to the existing TSB bank building. The roof extension will comprise an increased parapet height to create a formal additional storey and a single-storey mansard roof above to facilitate the provision of six self-contained flats. This will provide a balanced and proportionate single-storey mansard.
- 1.5 As advised, the works are to the upper floor/roof, to include a fourth floor and mansard roof extension with the inclusion of new windows in the roof to align with those below and blind windows built into brickwork.
- 1.6 The existing parapet is to be lowered to cornice height to enhance the view of the existing sign. Slate cladding will be used to match mansard roof finish. A living wall will be used to return faces of recess. The brickwork extension will match existing.



- 1.7 The proposals involve the creation of a formal additional storey at fourth-floor level, constructed of matching redbrick and with fenestration pattern and design to match existing, with sash windows. The additional mansard will be slate clad with dormer windows presenting a 'roof-type' language to the top level. The below drawing extract shows the Broad Street elevation of the proposals and the relationship with the adjacent McIlroys Building. The building will be topped with a green roof.
- 1.8 The most convenient way to assess the changes is to directly compare the existing and proposed plans. For note, the first, second and third floors are outside this application as they recently secured prior approval (LPA ref: 220970) to be used as 9 self-contained flats.



200-202 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 7QJ



1.9 As one will note, the existing elevation is extended and the elevation is effectively added on to match the existing. The design is contemporary, however, takes account of the unique evolution and much altered diverse examples of the elevations within Broad Street.

1.10 Below are the comparison of the floorplans, which provide an indicator of the changes to be made to the building.

Existing Elevation (West Street)



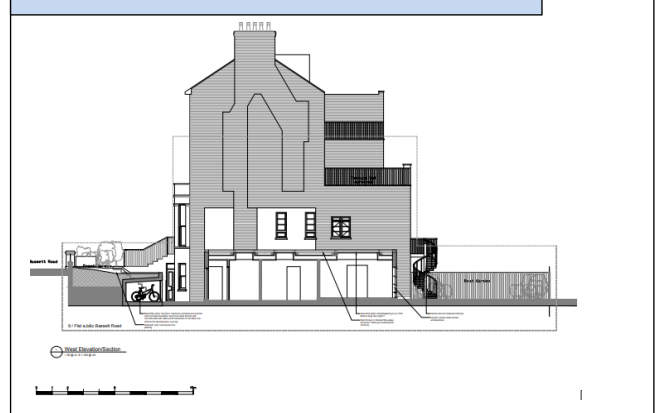
Proposed Elevation (West Street)



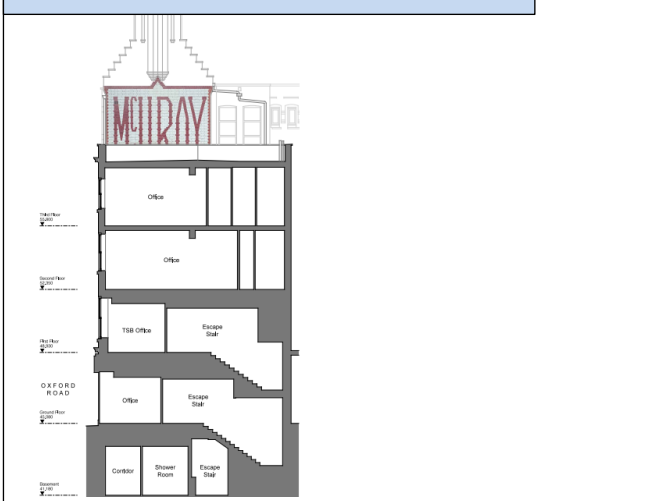
Existing West Elevation/Section



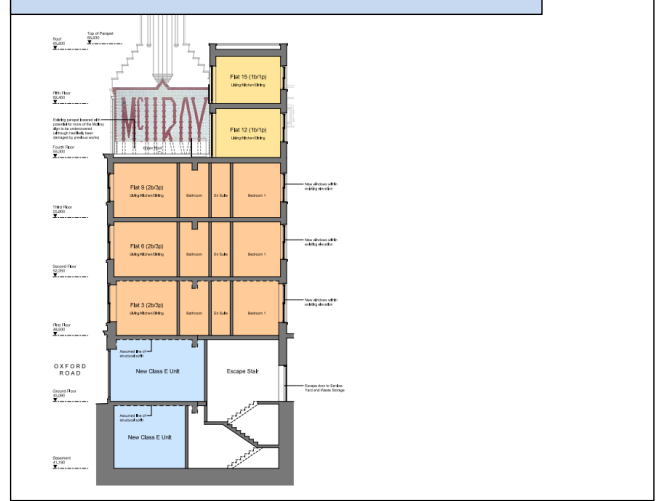
Proposed West Elevation/Section



Existing Section



Proposed Section



2.0 Site Location & Description

Site Location

- 2.1 The application site (“the site”) is located in the centre of Reading. The site comprises the existing five-storey (with basement) building at 200-202 Broad Street, also lesser known as 2-4 Oxford Road, being a prominent corner plot at the four-way junction of Oxford Road, Broad Street, West Street and St Mary’s Butts. This junction represents the gateway to the pedestrianised Broad Street and entrance to the main high-street shopping core of Central Reading.



Current use

- 2.2 Ground floor: occupied by TSB Bank (Class E(c)-Commercial, Business and Service)
- 2.3 First floor: occupied by TSB Bank as back office and meeting rooms un-connected to branch operation. Use Class E (office).
- 2.4 Second floor: Vacant but lawful use is Use Class E (office).
- 2.5 Third floor: Vacant but lawful use is Use Class E (office).

Site Description

- 2.6 The existing building at the site is currently in mixed use, the ground floor and basement are Use Class E(c) (financial services) of the recently amended Use Classes Order, with the ground floor occupied by TSB bank. The basement comprises storage, office space, a staff room and toilets associated with TSB. The first floor is Class E office. The upper floors of the building are largely vacant but the last use was Class E office.

- 2.7 TSB's current lease will expire in March 2026 and they have recently announced 21 branch closures in 2020 with a further 164 closures planned in 2021, due to lack of patronage of their high-street branches.
- 2.8 The building is of red-brick construction with timber-framed white painted sash windows and white stone cornices above the ground floor shopfront and below the roof parapet. The corner façade is topped by two decorative stone vases. The building has a flat roof with additional plant housing and roof access.
- 2.9 Immediately adjacent to the Site at 26 West Street is a five-storey building in use as serviced apartments. The fifth storey is a later addition as part of a rear extension.
- 2.10 The immediately adjacent building is much taller with an additional storey, high pitched roof and tall chimney stacks. This building also has a rear projection a storey higher than the building at the site.
- 2.11 The site is in a highly accessible location within the defined town centre, with immediate access to associated shops, services and facilities. Reading Railway Station lies approximately 400m to the north east and frequent local bus services run along Friar Street, approximately 110m to the north.
- 2.12 The building is not listed, nor are adjacent or surrounding buildings, and the site is not within a Conservation Area.



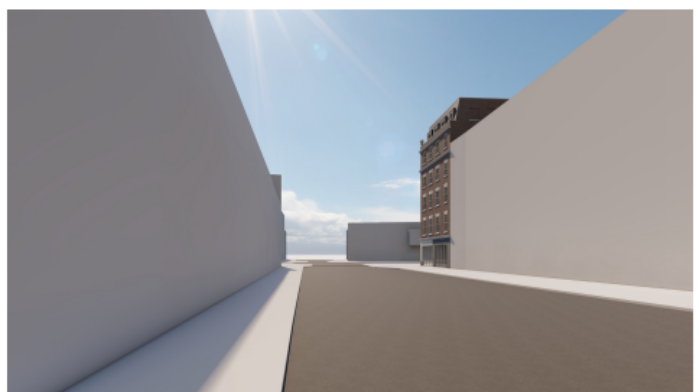
View West from Broad Street



View East from Oxford Road



View North from St Mary's Ditch



View South from West Street

3.0 Relevant Planning History

The Site

3.1 There have been numerous applications for minor works at the site, such as shop front alterations and installation of ATM machines. More significant applications are limited and are summarised below.

- **220970** : Change of use of 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors from Class E (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 9 self-contained flats, comprising 6x1 bedroom flats and 3x studios. Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015.
 - Approved/ Issued November 2002.
- **980922**: Change of use from A1 retail to A2 financial and professional services.
 - Approved January 1999

Surrounding Area

3.2 Of relevance to the site and this application is the proposed development of the Broad Street Mall, located opposite the site. An outline planning application (ref: 182137) received resolution to grant permission at a meeting of the Planning Committee on 4th March 2020. This is for the comprehensive redevelopment of the existing mall site to create 1,500 sq m of ground-floor and first-floor retail uses and up to 446 residential units.

3.3 The proposals include four towers ranging from five to 20 storeys in height.

4.0 Relevant Planning Policy

- 4.1 In preparing this application regard has been had to national and local planning policy, the relevant policies of the Development Plan are set out below:

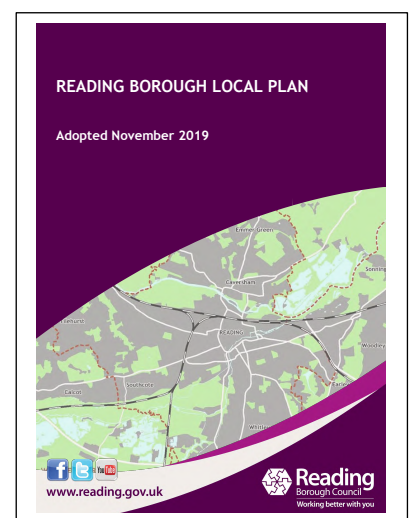
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021)

- 4.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development where permission should be granted for development that accords with an up-to-date development plan, or where material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF establishes the presumption in favour of sustainable development, whereby proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.
- 4.4 The up-to-date development plan in this case is the RBLP, which has been prepared with consideration to the NPPF.

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (RBLP) November 2019

- 5.1 The RBLP provides local policy and guidance, which accords with that set out at national level in the NPPF, providing a greater level of detail. The key policies of relevance to this application are listed below:

- Sustainability, Design and Amenity:
 - CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
 - CC2: Sustainable design and construction;
 - CC3: Adaptation to climate change;
 - CC4: Decentralised energy;
 - CC5: Waste minimisation and storage;
 - CC6: Accessibility and the intensity of development;
 - CC7: Design and the public realm;
 - CC8: Safeguarding amenity;
- Natural and Historic Environment:
 - EN5: Views
- Central Reading:
 - CR1: Definition of Central Reading;
 - CR2: Design in Central Reading;
 - CR4: Leisure, culture and tourism in Central Reading;
 - CR6: Living in Central Reading;
 - CR7: Primary frontages in Central Reading;
 - CR10: Tall Buildings



The site has the following planning policy designations as identified from the RBLP Proposals Map:

- Primary Shopping Area;
- Office Core;
- Central Core;
- Designated Primary Frontage in Central Reading (proposed);
- Area of Archaeological Potential;
- Tall Buildings Cluster (CR10b);
- Adjacent Classified Highway Network (Oxford Road and West Street);
- Adjacent Cycle Route (Oxford Road);
- Air Quality Management Area.

- 4.5 Additionally, the site sits within an identified significant view of heritage interest, northwards down Southampton Street from Whitley Street towards St Giles Church, St Mary's Church and Greyfriars Church.
- 4.6 The building is not listed, nor are neighbouring buildings. The existing building or neighbouring buildings also do not appear on the RBC 'List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures'. The site is not within a Conservation Area.

5.0 Access Considerations

Approaching horizontal building access

- 5.1 Pedestrian access to the site is directly from Broad Street.

Vertical Circulation/ Disabled Use of the Building

- 5.2 Access to the floors is via internal lifts and staircases, as existing; there is no practical alternative to this arrangement.

Car Parking

- 5.3 There is no change to the existing situation - no off street parking space is provided.

Cycle Parking

- 5.4 Cycle parking will be provided in the basement in a dedicated cycle store.

Waste Storage

- 5.5 Waste/ refuse storage will be provided in the basement in a dedicated refuse store.

Servicing

- 5.6 The site does not benefit from car parking. Due to the City Centre location car parking provision is not necessary due to the highly sustainable nature of the site.
- 5.7 Given the location, travel to and from the site is by public transport particularly the Metrolink and railway.
- 5.8 During the works any waste generated will be stored within the building/site. This will be transferred to contractor vehicles which will park in the identified loading bay. Contractor vehicles will only park temporarily within this bay and will use nearby on street and public car parks at other times.

6.0 Planning Considerations

6.1 Planning permission is sought for the creation of a fourth floor and mansard roof extension to the existing TSB bank building. We consider the main planning issues for consideration are:-

- The acceptability of the proposed design and additional height
- The impact on neighbouring amenity.

6.2 We address these issues in turn and demonstrate how the scheme as proposed complies with development plan policy and guidance.

Design Considerations

- The acceptability of the proposed design and additional height

6.3 The following elements of the proposed external works are addressed in turn below. We also refer readers to the drawings provided as part of this application pack.

6.4 The NPPF identifies at paragraph 126 that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

6.5 Paragraph 130 requires developments to function well and be visually attractive, be sympathetic to local character, whilst not preventing appropriate innovation or change. Proposals should use street layouts, spaces, building types and materials to create distinctive places.

6.6 **Policy CC1** Reiterates the presumption in favour of sustainable development within the NPPF and will approve developments that are in accordance with policy. Proposals contrary to the development plan will be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.7 The following key principles for the central Reading area are set out within the RBLP:

- The centre will contain a broad range of different but complementary uses within an area easily accessed by foot.
- The centre will appeal to all sectors of Reading's population as a place to live in, work in, study in and visit.
- New development will exhibit an excellent, safe and sustainable quality of design that contributes to the attraction of the centre.
- Areas and features that positively contribute to the unique and historic character of central Reading will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced.

- 6.8 **Policy CC6** states that the scale and density of development should be related to the level of accessibility of a site by walking, cycling and public transport to a range of services and facilities. The supporting text notes that good levels of accessibility are considered to be those within 400m of a defined centre with a good range of facilities by pedestrian routes, and within 400m by pedestrian routes of a bus stop with a service frequency better than one bus every 20 minutes in each direction.
- 6.9 **Policy CC7** reflects the national position in seeking high quality design and further reinforces the desire for high quality design and for proposals to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located.
- 6.10 Under **Policy CC7**, developments will also be assessed to ensure that they:
- Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;
 - Address the needs of all in society and are accessible, usable and easy to understand by them, including providing suitable access to, into and within, its facilities, for all potential users, including disabled people, so that they can use them safely and easily;
 - Are visually attractive as a result of good high-quality built forms and spaces.
- 6.11 Building upon these principles and with a focus on Central Reading;
- 6.12 **Policy CR2** seeks high quality design in proposals and requires the use of high quality architectural details and materials, respecting the form and quality in the local area. **Policy CR2** requires proposals to demonstrate the following attributes:
- Respect the existing grid layout, provide continuity and enclosure and frontages that engage with the street at lower levels. Enhance ease of movement through and around the central area
 - High quality architectural details and materials should be used, respecting form and quality in local areas
 - Should be designed with consideration to adjacent development sites, not preventing or causing unreasonable burdens on future development.
- 6.13 **Policy CR10** states that within Reading Borough, tall buildings will only be appropriate within the ‘areas of potential for tall buildings’ as defined on the Proposals Map. The application site falls within CR10b: Western Grouping, which states;
- Tall buildings in this area should:
- Contribute to the development of a cluster of tall buildings that is clearly subservient to the Station Area Cluster;

- Be generally lower in height than the tallest buildings planned for the Station Area Cluster;
- Be linked to the physical regeneration of a wider area and should not be proposed in isolation;
- Where buildings are to be integrated or front onto existing streets, include upper storeys of the taller structures that are set back from a base which is in line with the general surrounding building heights, particularly where the structure adjoins a conservation area;
- Not intrude on the key view between Greyfriars Church and St Giles Church, and a view from the open space in the Hosier Street development to St Mary's Church.

- 6.14 **Policy EN5** states new development should not harm, and where possible, should make a positive contribution to, views of acknowledged historical significance. The following view specific to the site merits special protection: View northwards down Southampton St from Whitley St towards St Giles Church, St Mary's Church and Greyfriars Church.

Principle

- 6.15 The surrounding streets of Broad Street, West Street, Oxford Road and St Mary's Butts are eclectic in their variety of different built form and architectural design. The existing building at the site is unique in its design and style to those surrounding it.
- 6.16 The proposed mansard extension has been specifically designed to be sympathetic in scale, massing, design and materials, to that of the host building and surrounding buildings. The use of a mansard roof with dormer windows will reduce the perceived bulk of the extension and reflects features of other buildings in the vicinity. The highly accessible location of the Site lends it to higher density and larger scale development, which the proposals achieve, whilst still being in keeping with, and respectful to, the existing buildings and setting.
- 6.17 Care has been taken in the design of the proposals to recognise and celebrate that individual design and the contribution it makes to the diversity of character in the local area.
- 6.18 The use of redbrick in construction with architectural detailing is characteristic in this part of Central Reading. The use of matching materials, detailing and the mirroring of fenestration rhythm for the proposed fourth-floor reflects and respects the character and appearance of the existing building.
- 6.19 The new parapet level created by the proposed fourth-floor will sit below the 'crow-stepped' gable end of the adjoining McIlroys Building, maintaining a subservient and subordinate appearance to this more ornate building. This also sits below the height of the roof extension to the adjacent no.26 West Street.
- 6.20 The existing decorative vases atop the corner elevation will be retained and repositioned at the top of the new proposed fourth-floor to maintain this characterful architectural detail.
- 6.21 A mansard style-roof with dormer windows has been selected for the fifth level to provide a visual break-up of the upper level and to reduce its perceived mass. This level will be stepped

back and incorporates a 10-degree slope away from the new parapet to further reduce the appearance of the additional floor. Natural slate will be used in the finish of the mansard roof, enhancing the 'roof-type' style and reducing the perceived prominence of this level.

- 6.22 The height of the mansard roof will match the top of the 'crow-stepped' gable end of the McIlroy Building but still sit well below the tall chimney stacks and the ridge line of the pitched roof and front façade, providing a stepping down in building line towards the junction. The mansard roof will appear as a subordinate and subservient rooftop addition, which will respect the existing and extended character of the main building and the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 6.23 The site is within a protected view, identified in Policy EN5, as set out in the policy section above, which requires development to avoid harm and, where possible, make a positive contribution to that view. Within this view, the site sits between St Mary's Church and Greyfriars Church, which are identified as forming key parts of the view. The site is also located within an area where tall buildings are acceptable under Policy CR10, also set out above.
- 6.24 When looking north from St Mary's Church along St Mary's Butts and West Street, the large gable end with stained glass window and the spire of Greyfriars Church appears in the centre of the street. An increase in height at the site would not impede this view and a portion of Greyfriars church is already entirely obscured by the existing properties on the west side of West Street. The proposed mansard roof would be set back from the West Street frontage and would angle rearwards to reduce the massing at this elevation.
- 6.25 The image below is an extract from Google Earth showing the view northwards from St Mary's Church to Greyfriars Church. The site has been outlined in yellow dashes.

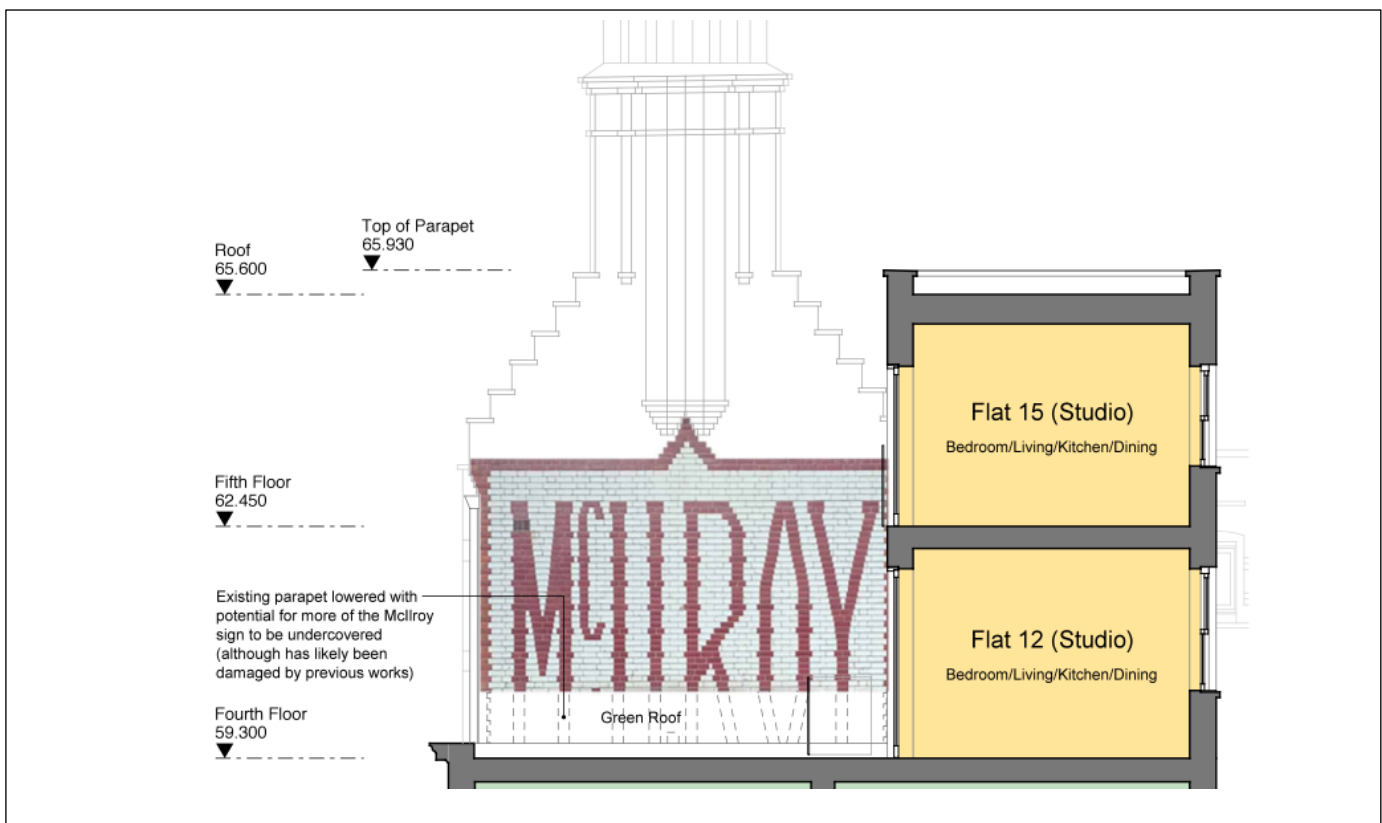
View northwards from St Mary's Church to Greyfriars Church (Google Earth)



- 6.26 Overall the proposals are considered to be a sympathetic design response to the local area, whilst making efficient use of the site in accordance with relevant policy and will continue to protect the identified view.

McIlroys Building Sign

- 6.27 we note that the sign for the McIlroys Building is still in-situ, therefore the Applicant is proposing to preserve this feature and has designed the scheme to ensure the sign is visible, which is at the expense of the comprehensive building of the site.
- 6.28 The drawing below show how the existing parapet will be lowered to reveal more of the sign, which is a benefit. The proposed extension will then be set back from the sign to ensure it is still visible. It is a shame the McIlroys Building has bene so heavily altered, however, the Applicant is keen to preserve this sign as local amenity societies have suggested.



- 6.29 A view analysis has also been prepared, which accompanies the application and is repeated below for ease.



View North from St Mary's Butts

Section Summary

- 6.30 The proposals represent an appropriate and sympathetic design response that will respect and enhance the listed building and provide a high-quality visual and functional environment that is secure and accessible to all, in compliance with the NPPF and RBLP policies.
- 6.31 The proposal has been assessed against design policies.
- 6.32 The overriding conclusion is that the mansard design and height would ensure the extension appears sufficiently subservient in scale to be supported by officers.
- 6.33 We therefore submit that the proposal fully complies with the requirements of Reading Borough Council Policies and the NPPF.

The impact on neighbouring amenity

- 6.34 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF promotes development that will create a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 6.35 **Policy CC8** of the RBLP stipulates that development Must not cause a detrimental impact to living environment of existing or future residential properties in terms of (inter alia):

- 6.36
- Privacy and overlooking;
 - Access to sunlight and daylight;
 - Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
 - Harm to outlook;
 - Artificial lighting; and
 - Security and Safety
- 6.37 The property is a corner site, which has windows on all elevations, which ensures that there are copious areas of glass that provide a good outlook.
- 6.38 The new mansard roof extension will provide the occupiers with the benefit of more sunlight and daylight into their residential accommodation.
- 6.39 The mansard roof extension will be constructed to exactly match the existing building and would therefore cause no harm to the street scene or surrounding area. The new roof extension would be a positive addition to the street scene and roofscape.

Principle

- 6.40 The proposal will protect the amenities of existing and future residents and will provide a well-designed new mansard roof extension that provides good levels of outlook, access to sunlight and daylight.
- 6.41 The proposed roof extension would overlook the existing street and would have enough separation distance (approximately 20 m) to the opposite building to not cause any concern with overlooking or harm to current or future neighbouring occupiers.
- 6.42 The proposal is considered to comply with the NPPF and Policy CC8 of the RBLP.

Delivery of Housing

- 6.43 **Policy H1** identifying a shortfall against need, not able to be met within the Borough. The Local Plan emphasises a focus on housing provision within the town centre, with **Policy H2** and its supporting text recognising the role of town centre sites in delivery of higher density development and, accordingly, smaller unit sizes.
- 6.44 The proposals will deliver four additional residential units and a mix of 1-bed and 2-bed sizes. This will assist in the delivery of much needed housing within the Borough and is in accordance with relevant policies.

Future Occupiers

- 6.45 The Nationally Described Space Standards as reflected under **Policy H5** of the Local Plan. The proposals will also allow for outdoor private amenity space to be provided for flat 12. This will result in an enhanced environment for future occupiers and is in accordance with policy.
- 6.46 The dwellings to be provided offer a range of sizes, but importantly all meet or exceed the minimum flat sizes as set out in the Technical Housing Standards (March 2015).

Flat No.	Flat Type	Standard sqm	Size Proposed
10	2bed/ 3 person	61	61 (meets standard)
11	1bed/ 1 person	37	39 (+ 2sqm standard)
12	1bed/ 1 person	37	39 (+ 2sqm standard)
13	1bed/ 2 person	50	50 (meets standard)
14	1bed/ 1 person	37	37 (meets standard)
15	1bed/ 1 person	37	39 (+ 2sqm standard)

- 6.47 Aspect: Flats 10, 12, 13 and 15 are dual aspect, with Flats 11 and 14 being south facing.

- 6.48 Amenity Space: Flat 12 will benefit from a terrace.

Amenity

- 6.49 **Policy CC8** of the Local Plan sets out multiple considerations for the potential impact of development on the living environment and amenity of both existing and future occupiers.
- 6.50 **Policy EN16** reiterates the requirement to ensure sensitive developments are not exposed to high-levels of pollution, including noise and air pollution.
- 6.51 **Policy H8** relates specifically to conversions of buildings to residential use, seeking to protect the amenity of the surrounding area and for future occupiers.

Neighbouring Occupiers

- 6.52 The proposals involve the internal alterations of the existing building at first floor, with no external alterations to the existing building. In the absence of external changes, the proposals will not have any impact with regard to daylight/sunlight, overbearing or loss of outlook of any neighbouring or surrounding occupiers.
- 6.53 Given the surrounding uses in the immediate vicinity of the site and the wide spacing of Broad Street, the introduction of residential uses and habitable rooms will not create and overlooking impacts for existing neighbouring occupiers or in the surrounding area.

Noise

- 6.54 A Noise Exposure Assessment is submitted with this application, which assesses the existing external noise levels and the potential impact on future occupiers of the proposals. The

assessment has been carried out in accordance with relevant British Standards and concludes that acceptable internal noise levels can be achieved, utilising recommended mitigation through glazing and ventilation specification.

Air Quality

- 6.55 **Policy EN15** of the Local Plan requires applications for sensitive uses, such as residential, introduced into an Air Quality Management Area to mitigate for any detrimental impacts. This application is accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment, which has assessed the baseline conditions and potential impacts on future occupiers of the proposals, particularly that of traffic emissions from Broad Street. This concludes that pollution levels are below relevant Air Quality Objectives and suitable for the proposed use. Owing to the car-free nature of the development, the air quality impacts arising from the proposals are identified as not significant. The proposals therefore comply with relevant planning policy in this regard.

Sustainability

- 6.56 **Policy CC2** of the Local Plan requires new developments to be of sustainable design and construction and to take account of the effects of climate change. The policy specifically requires all minor conversions to residential use to meet BREEAM 'Very Good' standard as a minimum. **Policy CC3** sets out further examples of how developments can incorporate measures to adapt to climate change, which will be sought.
- 6.57 The proposals will comply with the BREEAM 'Very Good' Standards as a minimum in accordance with Policy CC2 if required by the Council.
- 6.58 Utilising an existing building for refurbishment to alternative uses limits the scope of climate change adaptation measures that can be incorporated. However, the design of the proposals has taken advantage of existing attributes of the building, such as the orientation of habitable rooms to utilise facades with southerly exposure for natural light and heating where possible, which coordinates with window proposals as part of other applications discussed above. The conversion of the premises will also incorporate modern insulation materials to assist in regulation of the internal climate and reduce the energy usage.

Transport and Parking

- 6.59 **Policy TR3** of the Local Plan requires development proposals to consider their effect on traffic safety, congestion and the environment.
- 6.60 The existing premises do not have off-street servicing capabilities. Appropriate internal refuse storage will be provided for within each flat. Domestic waste will then be removed by kerbside collection in line with existing arrangements in the vicinity. This is not considered to give rise to highways safety issues.
- 6.61 **Policy TR5** of the Local Plan requires development proposals to provide car and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility to sustainable transport facilities. The Parking Standards and Design SPD establishes a parking requirements of 0.5 spaces per 1/2-bed flat within the

identified Zone 1 for the Central Core Area, which the site is within. The SPD states that where parking provision is proposed below these standards, it needs to be demonstrated that there would be no detriment to highway safety.

- 6.62 The site is extremely sustainably located with easy walking access to Reading Railway Station and bus interchange as well as town centre uses such as shops, restaurants, cafes and other facilities. The application therefore proposes a car-free development to reflect the sustainable location. This approach is in line with the accepted position on car-free proposals in the PNCs, where it was acknowledged that, owing to the town centre location and local parking restrictions, a car-free development of this nature would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with relevant planning policies.

Affordable Housing

- 6.63 **Policy H3** of the Local Plan sets out the requirements for on-site provision and financial contribution towards affordable housing from residential developments of differing yields. Development proposals that fall short of the requirements must provide a viability assessment as justification for the reduced proposed contribution or provision. At six proposed dwellings, the policy requirement is for a financial contribution equivalent to 20% of units to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the borough.
- 6.64 This application at this stage is not accompanied by a high-level viability appraisal. However, the Applicant is happy to provide such if requested.

Heritage Impact

- 6.65 The site falls within a designated Area of Archaeological Potential. **Policy EN2** requires applications to identify and evaluate archaeological significance and any impacts of proposals, with a programme for documentation and preservation where relevant. The proposals are for an extension of the existing building.

7.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 7.1 Planning permission is sought for the development of a fourth floor and mansard roof extension to the existing TSB bank building. The roof extension will comprise an increased parapet height to create a formal additional storey and a single-storey mansard roof above. This will provide a balanced and proportionate single-storey mansard.
- 7.2 The scheme will provide six self-contained flats in a highly sustainable part of the town centre.
- 7.3 The proposal would ensure the extension would remain subordinate on this large building.
- 7.4 The design is high quality and is a material improvement versus that which is currently in place.
- 7.5 The scheme has been designed to ensure the McIlroys sign is still visible.
- 7.6 The scheme complies with the relevant Local Plan policies and guidance.
- 7.7 The proposals will comply with relevant planning policy, providing much needed residential development in a sustainable location, creating a suitable environment and amenity for neighboring and future occupiers.
- 7.8 The policy presumption is in favour of the grant of planning permission and there are no material considerations that outweigh that presumption as the development proposed would be of a high.
- 7.9 We therefore submit that the proposal fully complies with the requirements of Reading Borough Council and the NPPF and this proposal could be supported by officers.

