

Project

New Dwelling

Address

Rear of 9 Eldon Square

Reading

RG1 4DP

Client

Dr & Mrs D'Cruz

Document

**Design, Access & Heritage
Statement**

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CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	page 3
2.0	PRE-APPLICATION & PLANNING HISTORY CONTEXT	page 4
3.0	SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT	page 5-7
4.0	HERITAGE STATEMENT	page 8-9
5.0	USE	page 9
6.0	AMOUNT	page 9
7.0	PREVIOUS APPLICATION COMMENTS & OBJECTIONS	page 10
8.0	DEVELOPMENT SCHEME PRINCIPLES	page 10
9.0	EXISTING/FORTHCOMING DEVELOPMENT ON ELDON TERRACE	page 11
10.0	PROPOSED LAYOUT, SCALE & MASSING	page 12
11.0	APPEARANCE	page 13-14
12.0	ACCESS	page 15
13.0	CONCLUSION	page 15
14.0	APPENDICES	page 16-50

1.0 INTRODUCTION



Fig.1: Proposed Eldon Terrace street view sketch

This Design & Access Statement is written as supporting document for a Full Planning and Listed Building Consent Application with Reading Borough Council associated with development at the rear of 9 Eldon Square, Reading, RG1 4DP.

The development proposal involves the demolition of existing garages and car port, followed by construction of one detached 3 bedroom 1.5 storey detached dwelling, with associated car parking, cycle and bin storage.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the following supporting drawings and documents:

Weston & Co Architects Drawings:
21002-PL-01 Location & Proposed Roof Plans
21002-PL-02 Existing Site Plan
21002-PL-03 Proposed Site Plan
21002-PL-04 Proposed Floor Plans
21002-PL-05 Proposed Elevations
21002-PL-06 Existing & Proposed Street Elevations
21002-PL-07 Proposed Street View Sketch
21002-PL-08 Proposed Bin Store Plan & Elevation

SJ Stephens Associates Arboricultural Impact Assessment

2.0 PRE-APPLICATION & PLANNING HISTORY CONTEXT

The applicants (Dr & Mrs D'Cruz) currently reside in the first and second floor of 9 Eldon Square above the Pembroke Surgery GP primary care clinic which is operated by the applicants who have both been working within the NHS for 40 years. An important aim for the proposed development is to create a new dwelling which is more suitable for the applicants' age and access requirements than their current home in the upper floors of the historic Pembroke House (9 Eldon Square), whilst enabling a close tie to their surgery practice, and children / grand-children who are all settled in the local area.

This planning application follows on from the previously withdrawn planning application ref: 162343FUL, and listed building consent ref: 162344LBC.

The applications were withdrawn due to objections to the previous development scheme which are summarised within the Case Officer's Committee Report (attached within Appendix A). There was also objection to the previous application from Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (RCAAC) (attached within Appendix B). Local residents raised various objections also to the previous scheme to replace the existing garages with a new dwelling.

The objections and comments raised by the previous Case Officer and Conservation Area Advisory Committee have been carefully considered to inform the development proposals for the current application.

Due to the majority of the issues with the previous scheme relating to heritage, design, and impact on neighbouring dwellings amenity – an informal pre-application enquiry has been carried out consulting with: Reading Civic Society (RCS), Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (RCAAC) and relevant neighbours to the application site at the following addresses:

Nos. 5, 7, 9, 11 & 13 Eldon Road.

3.0 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT

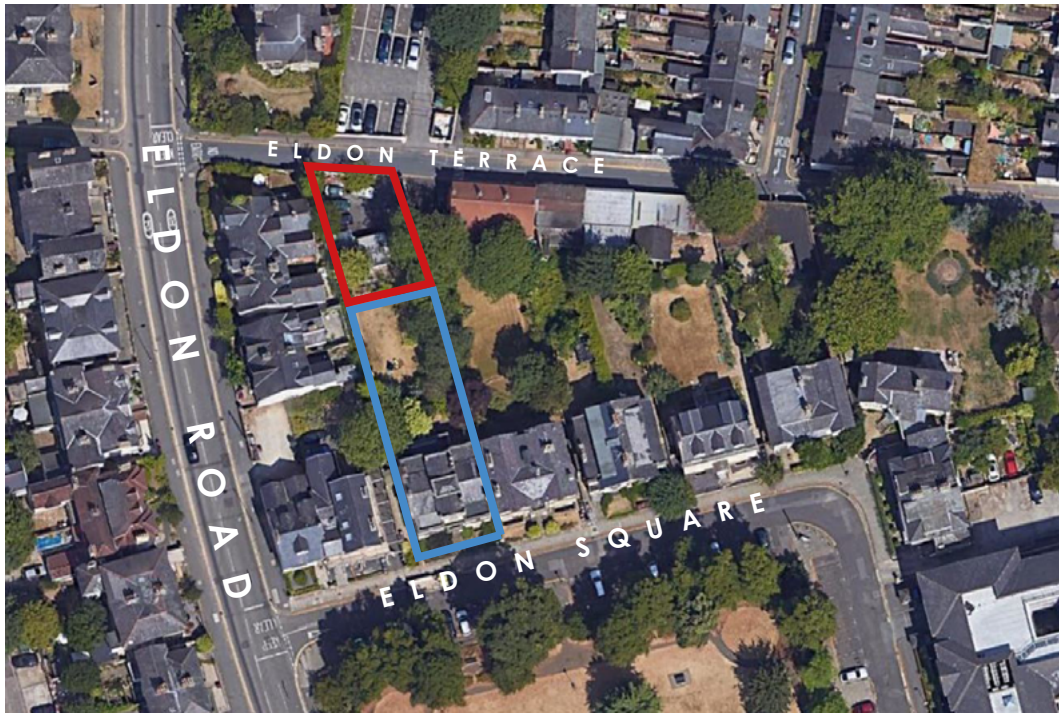


Fig.2: Aerial view, red line indicates application site boundary, blue line indicates additional land within the applicant's ownership

The existing application site is comprised of low-quality garages, car port structure and hard-landscaped parking area to the rear of no. 9 Eldon Square, accessed from Eldon Terrace.

Set within the Eldon Square Conservation Area, it is approximately 1km south east of Reading's town centre and 2 minute walk from King George V Gardens (located in Eldon Square) - the only public open green space within the conservation area.

To the west of the site, lie the unusually short depth gardens serving the neighbouring dwellings on Eldon Road.

To the east of the site are the car parking spaces associated with the 3no. dwellings at nos. 2-6 Eldon Terrace.



Fig.3: (left) Existing views of existing garages and car-port structure & Fig.4: (right) Existing view of 9 Eldon Square garden, facing towards existing garages

3.0 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT



Fig. 5: (top) Aerial view from the north

Fig. 6: (bottom) Aerial view from the south

Key

- 1. Application Site
- 2. Eldon Terrace
- 3. Eldon Road
- 4. Eldon Square

- 5. King George V Memorial Garden
- 6. London Road
- 7. Royal Berkshire Hospital
- 8. King's Road

The surrounding context includes an assortment of uses, predominantly residential types - including single family houses, flats and some houses in multiple occupation in the immediate vicinity. Other uses nearby include public houses, healthcare facilities, Royal Berkshire Hospital, religious institutions, offices and convenience shops.

3.0 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT

The boundary treatment fronting Eldon Terrace has a visually detrimental impact on the appearance of the Conservation Area in this location. Having been significantly damaged by vehicle impacts historically, the wall has a ramshackle appearance with concrete blockwork patched repairs and many steel wall tie pattress plates installed to support the remaining original stonework portion from collapse.



Fig.7: Eldon Terrace street scene



Fig.8: Existing rear view of 9 Eldon Square & garden

4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT



Fig.7: Character Area Map extract from RBC Eldon Square Conservation Area Appraisal, application site highlighted yellow

The application site is located within Reading Borough Council's 'Eldon Square Conservation Area' and within that, Character Area 1, which is characterised by containing the majority of the conservation area's listed buildings, of tall detached and semi-detached stone residences in a central location.

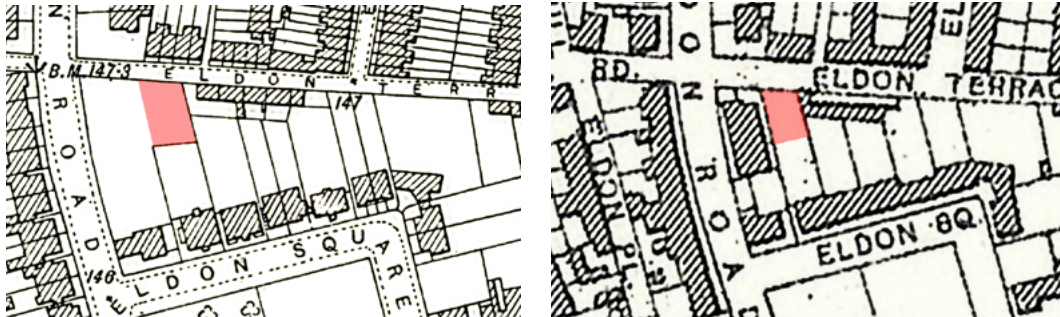
Grand town houses were built on Eldon Square and King's Road from the 1830s, constructed from Bath limestone brought to Reading via the Kennet and Avon Canal. The square was named after Lord Eldon (1751-1838), who among many other titles was a great patron of Reading's Royal Berkshire Hospital. Upon their completion, these houses became popular with doctors working at the Hospital.

The application site is located within the current curtilage of the grade II listed 9 Eldon Square, which is also known as Pembroke House (Historic England listing ref: 1113468 attached within appendix D). The ashlar limestone detached italianate villa at 9 Eldon Square is considered to date from circa 1840.

4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT



Figs. 8: Existing front view of 9 Eldon Square



Figs. 8 & 9: Extracts from Historic Ordnance Survey Map from 1898 (left) and 1913 (right), application site highlighted with red hatch

Early OS maps indicate that the application site was not part of the original curtilage of 9 Eldon Square, having been added between 1898 and 1913. There is no reference of the later addition within the statutory listing, therefore the reversion to the original smaller rear garden curtilage proposed by the application can be considered as a return to the original situation.

5.0 USE

The existing application site use is car parking and garages serving 9 Eldon Square – Class C3(a) Dwelling use with GP surgery.

The proposed application site use comprises 1no. 3-bed detached house (Class C3a) with associated car parking and bin storage.

6.0 AMOUNT

The application site area is 287 sq.m.

The gross internal floor area of the proposed new dwelling is 143.5 sq.m.

The proposed building covers 36% of the application site.

The car parking provision allows for 2no. vehicles parked within the site boundary.

Bin storage provision for 2no. 240 litre waste and recycling bins is located in the proposed rear garden of the site. A secure and sheltered cycle store accommodating 2no. cycles is proposed within the rear garden.

7.0 PREVIOUS APPLICATION COMMENTS & OBJECTIONS

The following significant comments and objections were raised against the previous unsuccessful planning application (illustrated on previous page):

Significant Public Comments

- Objections to height of proposed boundary wall
- Objection to division of no. 9's plot via a hard boundary
- Objections to proposed dwelling's long western elevation in close proximity to the western boundary

Significant Conservation Area Advisory Committee Comments

- Satisfied with the principle of a new dwelling development on the site
- Objection to the inappropriate proposed site layout
- Objection to the proposed external materials and the inappropriate design / building form proposed which are 'alien' to the Conservation Area context
- Suggestion to site the new dwelling along the eastern boundary
- A revised scheme should use a materials palette congruous with the conservation area
- A revised scheme should explore using a 1 - 1.5 storey massing which references stable / coach house / mews style building massing and fenestration
- A revised scheme should avoid 'pastiche-ism' and propose a building addressing the street in a positive manner to create an enhancement to the Conservation Area.

Significant Planning Officer Comments

- Design and appearance would be harmful to the setting of the listed building at 9 Eldon Square and the wider Conservation Area
- Siting and scale of building massing adjacent to the western boundary would have a detrimental impact on the living environment of 7, 9 and 11 Eldon Road
- Concerns on the relationship between the proposed dwelling and the mature Ash trees located in the rear garden of no. 11 Eldon Square

8.0 DEVELOPMENT SCHEME PRINCIPLES

The proposed scheme has been developed to address the matters listed above in the following ways:

- Propose a new dwelling which enhances the appearance of the Conservation Area and street scene using materials which are inherent to the area
 - Propose a built form which references coach house / stable building types in a contemporary way
 - Site the dwelling with appropriate separation away from the neighbouring dwellings on Eldon Road in order to suitably protect amenity
 - Ensure the proposed dwelling considers the proximity to the Ash tree on the adjacent site to the rear of no. 11 Eldon Square
 - Existing east and west boundary walls are proposed to have their height unaltered
 - A shared rear garden amenity space is proposed between in order for the extent of the 9 Eldon Square curtilage to continue to be recognisable.
-

9.0 EXISTING / FORTHCOMING DEVELOPMENT ON ELDON TERRACE

It is important to consider the proposals for the new dwelling in relation to the existing approved development involving the construction of 3no. new dwelling flats and 3no. new dwelling houses as a terrace extending from the eastern end of no. 6 Eldon Terrace.



Fig.10: Planning approved street elevation ref: PP-08829390

These new dwellings have been designed with a simple appearance using high quality materials and contemporary detailing whilst referencing the terraced housing built forms found within the Conservation Area. The dwellings are to be finished externally with ashlar natural stonework external walls, natural slate roofs and slim aluminium framed windows, all creating an elegant and high quality appearance which will enhance the street scene.

The residential development is due to commence on site this year following the completed demolition works. The scheme will positively transform the Eldon Terrace street scene, replacing what was previously low quality garage buildings and one dwelling. There is scope presented to further enhance the street scene in the Conservation Area presented by the opportunity to replace the poor quality garage buildings and dilapidated street boundary wall at the rear of no.9 Eldon Square.

10.0 PROPOSED LAYOUT, SCALE & MASSING

A layout is proposed to locate the new dwelling largely along the western boundary within a 1.5 storey building volume with pitched roofs and gables addressing Eldon Terrace to the north and the rear garden to the south. A single-storey element projects to the west with a part-pitched, internally vaulted roof forming an 'L' shaped footprint defining a parking courtyard fronting onto Eldon Terrace.



Fig. 11: Proposed site plan extract from drawing no. 21002-PL-03

The new dwelling is proposed with a footprint that provides suitable separation from the rear of the dwellings at nos. 5, 7 and 9 Eldon Road. A 5 metre horizontal offset is proposed between the western site boundary and the proposed single storey element of the dwelling. There is over 11 metres proposed as an offset distance between the rear gable wall of nos. 5 and 7 Eldon Road and the flank wall of the first floor portion of the new dwelling within the 1.5 storey volume situated along the eastern boundary. There are no windows at eye level proposed along this side (west) elevation facing towards the rear of nos. 5 and 7 Eldon Road in order to protect privacy.

The ground floor accommodates a lounge / dining room within the single storey western projection, and hall, study/bedroom 3, kitchen, WC and stair located within the ground floor of the 1.5 storey portion. The first floor accommodation proposes 2no. bedrooms with windows on the gabled elevations facing north and south, along with stair, landing and bathrooms, naturally lit via roof lights.

11.0 APPEARANCE

The new dwelling is proposed on a site which is able to bring better legibility to the street scene by knitting together the emerging new residential terrace to the west with the existing townhouses along Eldon Road.



Fig.12: Proposed Eldon Terrace street elevation extract from drawing no. 21002-PL-07

The site is currently disconnected from these neighbouring buildings determining that a typical mews style row house reference is not appropriate. Instead, a new dwelling is proposed referencing the form of a detached coach house building with large ground floor structural door and window openings around a courtyard.

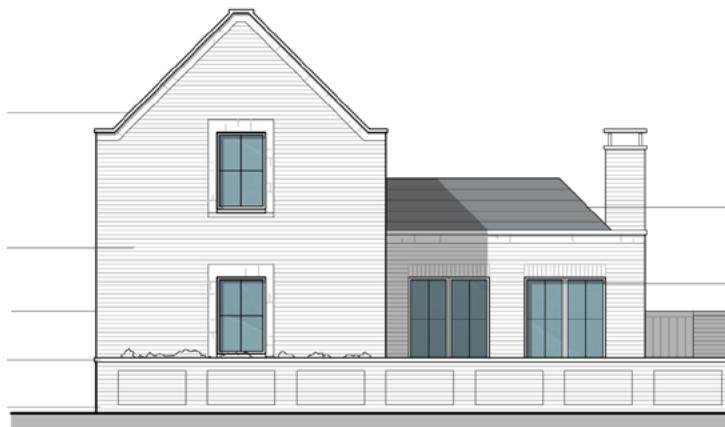


Fig.13: Proposed front (north) elevation extract from drawing no. 21002-PL-05

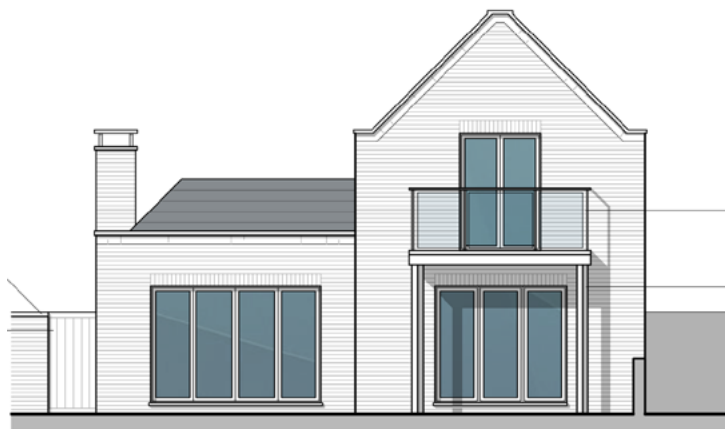


Fig.14: Proposed rear (south) elevation extract from drawing no. 21002-PL-05

11.0 APPEARANCE

The dwelling is to be finished externally with materials found in the Conservation Area and detailed in an appropriate contemporary manner. A replacement 1-metre high street boundary wall is proposed to be constructed in red facing brickwork with a natural limestone coping.

Following the scheme proposals presented to RCS, RCAAC and neighbours, it has been decided to set-back the street facing gable away from the boundary to allow protection from vehicle impact and rationalise the building volume geometry.

Natural stone window surrounds and coping details to parapets are also proposed as features to the red facing brickwork laid using an english bond employed for the external walls finish. Natural slates are proposed to the pitched roofs with conservation type rooflights for additional daylighting improvement.

Aluminium slim-framed windows and glazed doors are proposed providing a high quality appearance similar to the 6no. new dwellings being constructed further along the street. There are no windows at eye level proposed along the side (west) elevation facing towards the rear of nos. 5 and 7 Eldon Road in order to protect privacy.

A corten weathering steel & glass balustrade balcony structure is proposed providing external amenity space accessible directly from the first floor bedroom 1, this element is a revision from the scheme proposals presented to RCS, RCAAC and neighbours to the site. The importance of this element is to continue to enable the applicants access to external amenity space allowing for failing mobility as age increases.

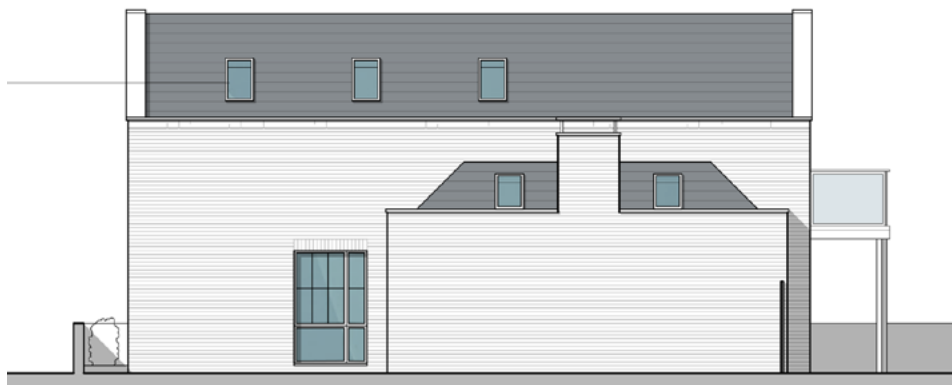


Fig.15: Proposed side (west) elevation extract from drawing no. 21002-PL-05



Fig.16: Proposed side (east) elevation extract from drawing no. 21002-PL-05

12.0 ACCESS

The existing vehicle and pedestrian site access is located on Eldon Terrace via gate on the east side of the north boundary.

It is proposed to form a new vehicle and pedestrian access to Eldon Terrace - adjacent to the west boundary, the new access point allows for safe vehicle access from the site with appropriate visibility splay.

13.0 CONCLUSION



Fig.17: Proposed Eldon Terrace street view sketch

The construction of a new dwelling presents the opportunity to rationalise this disjointed portion of the street by using attractive and appropriate materials and built form which mediates the transition between the range of buildings adjacent.

The scheme proposes that a significant visual enhancement to this part of the Conservation Area can be achieved, whilst respecting the amenity of the neighbouring dwellings.

The new proposed dwelling will revitalise an existing brownfield site, and offers high quality accommodation which will contribute toward the local authority housing supply targets.

