



The Keen Partnership

Planning Statement

Curzon Club-362 Oxford Rd, Reading RG30 1AQ

Project Team

Client

City Wide Serviced Apartments Ltd

Architect

The Keen Partnership



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Introduction

Project Address: Curzon Club-362 Oxford Rd, Reading RG30 1AQ

Site Area: 835.3m2

Architect: The Keen Partnership

This planning statement seeks to summarise and justify the demolition of the existing unused social club and the erection of a block of 35 flats with associated access, parking and a ground floor commercial unit. This document is to be read in tandem with Et Planning - Planning Statement: Redevelopment of the Curzon Club.

With the intent of enhancing the proposals response to the local character and environmental benefit, input has been sought from the Planning Officer, Sam Peacock BA (Hons) MSc Senior Planner at ET Planning, Richard Fenton BSc (Hons) Msc MCIEH MIOA Director at RF Environmental Ltd, Dr Ryan Walker MCIEEM, Cenv at The Ecology Co-operation Ltd, Mike Piotrowski Principal Hydrologist at GeoSmart, Including Road noise survey by Matt Hine at Jostec and Transport Statement by Chris Saunders & John Russell.

It was felt that in order to successfully achieve the projects requirements, justification of selected materials and aesthetic style would be fundamental. A character analysis has therefore been conducted, which forms part of this submission and is included later within this document. The proposals have therefore been considered in detail to ensure a great degree of synthesis with local built vernacular, whilst also providing further clarification and detail with respect to the materials palette and landscaping.

We are of the strong opinion that the proposed scheme constitutes a high-quality design, affording a healthy balance of quality and proportionality, in a highly sought-after location, without detriment to the amenities of surrounding residents or indeed the visual amenities of the locality. Indeed, such development would have a positive impact on the character and setting of the immediate locality, Adding a strong degree of architectural interest whilst remaining faithful to the local built vernacular.

Included with this submission:

- Air quality Assessment
- Ecology
- Flood Risk Report
- Transport Statement
- Noise Report
- ET Planning - Planning Statement
- BRUKL Output Document
- Energy Statement
- Daylight & Sunlight Assessment
- Sustainability Statement

Introduction Notes

The proposal provides 33 flats with a varied mix of bedroom arrangements. The layout of the block of flats is summarised below.

Floor	Units
1st floor	7 units (3 x 1-bedroom and 4 x 2-bedroom)
2nd floor	7 units (3 x 1-bedroom and 4 x 2-bedroom)
3rd floor	7 units (3 x 1-bedroom and 4 x 2-bedroom)
4th floor	7 units (3 x 1-bedroom and 4 x 2-bedroom)
5th floor	4 units (2 x 1-bedroom and 3 x 2-bedroom)
Loft Conversion/Half storey	1 units (2 x 2-bedroom)

Retail space of 125m2 with associated storage is provided to ground floor along with dedicated bin and bike storage.

Large balconies are provided on all but the Southern Aspect, facing Oxford Rd. Substantially larger in size than required as space allows; Flat 32 benefitting from a 22m2 balcony and Flat 33 benefitting from a 10m2 balcony. This aims to best improve liveability and forming mixed-use external family space.

Sheltered parking is accessed through the existing site approach, car parking wrapping around the rear of the site, obscuring view from Oxford Rd. The Carpark benefits from a separate rear access. The building is raised on columns, which are left open in the carpark, providing improved visibility at ground level, strategically reducing visual massing where it is most impactful. The open carpark allows natural planting to a space that would otherwise be enclosed and devoid of ecological benefit.



Introduction Notes

Trees and Landscaping

5.5m existing deep mixed mature tree planting softens the Western aspect, strategically placed to best benefit the existing Curzon Club, the views of this revitalised aspect now also benefiting. A path runs along this Western aspect joining with Oxford Rd. As the landscape opportunities on site are limited, enhancements we wish to make include deep planting beds to the ground floor and green roofs. We aim for the proposal to ensure the wider site would be visually attractive within the context of the street scene and a range of wider views.

Drainage

This Planning Statement is accompanied by a SuDS strategy. Including proposal for a Green roof covering a total area of 297 m², rainwater harvesting butts, and lined permeable surfacing underlain by Type 3 aggregate material.

Environment

Considering Climate change and environmental sustainability, highly energy-efficient technologies will be selected to exceed standards, from internal appliances to the fabric composition of the proposed structure. Water conservation shall be targeted through modern water saving fixtures, such as taps and shower heads, also though the inclusion of large areas of permeable driveway, a move beneficial to environmental impact. Heat pumps will also be utilised to achieve a 19% reduction in CO₂ over the previous submission. Solar is also proposed to the roof.



Site

The site is currently a brown field development opportunity.

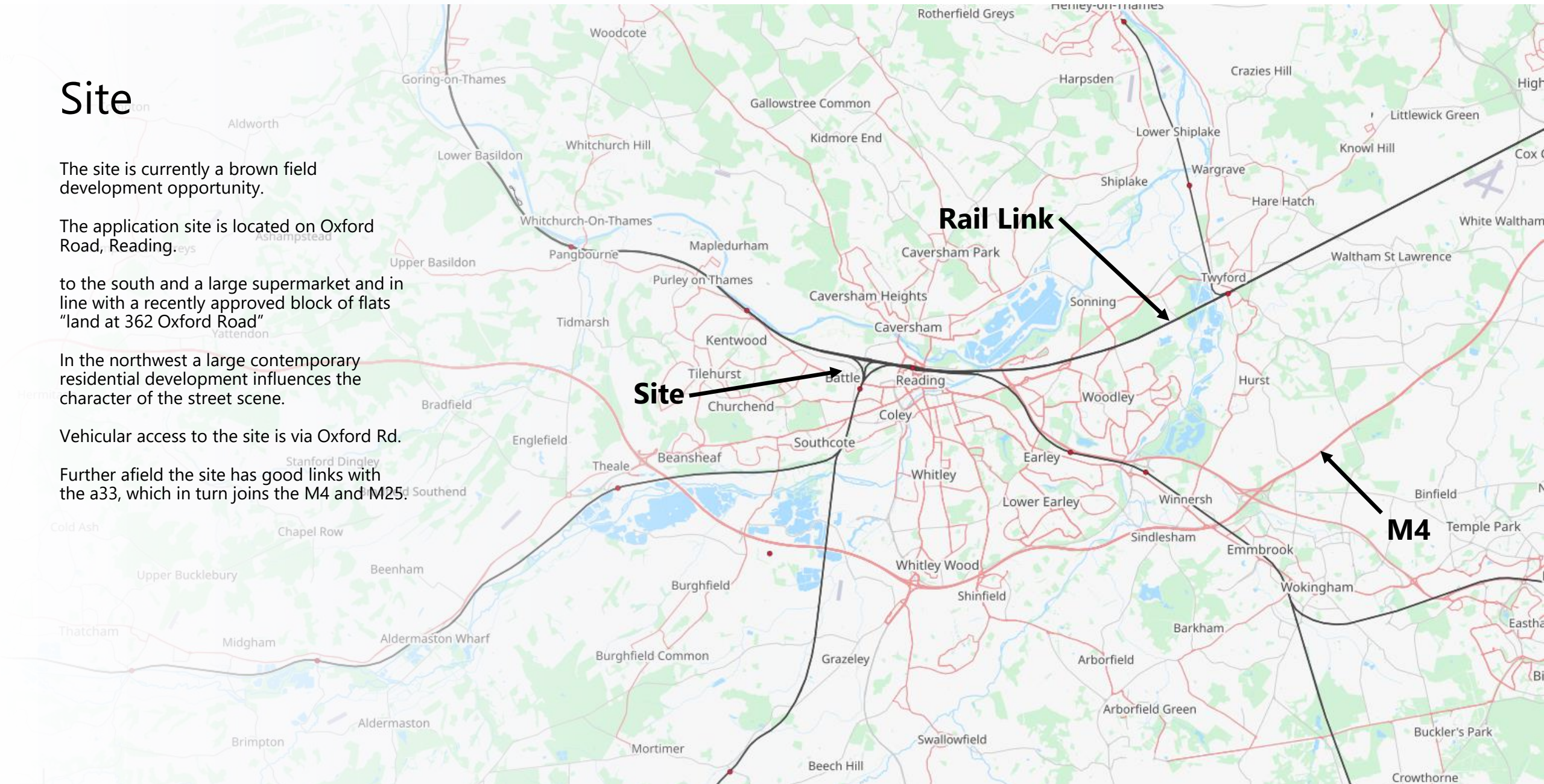
The application site is located on Oxford Road, Reading.

to the south and a large supermarket and in line with a recently approved block of flats "land at 362 Oxford Road"

In the northwest a large contemporary residential development influences the character of the street scene.

Vehicular access to the site is via Oxford Rd.

Further afield the site has good links with the a33, which in turn joins the M4 and M25.



Site

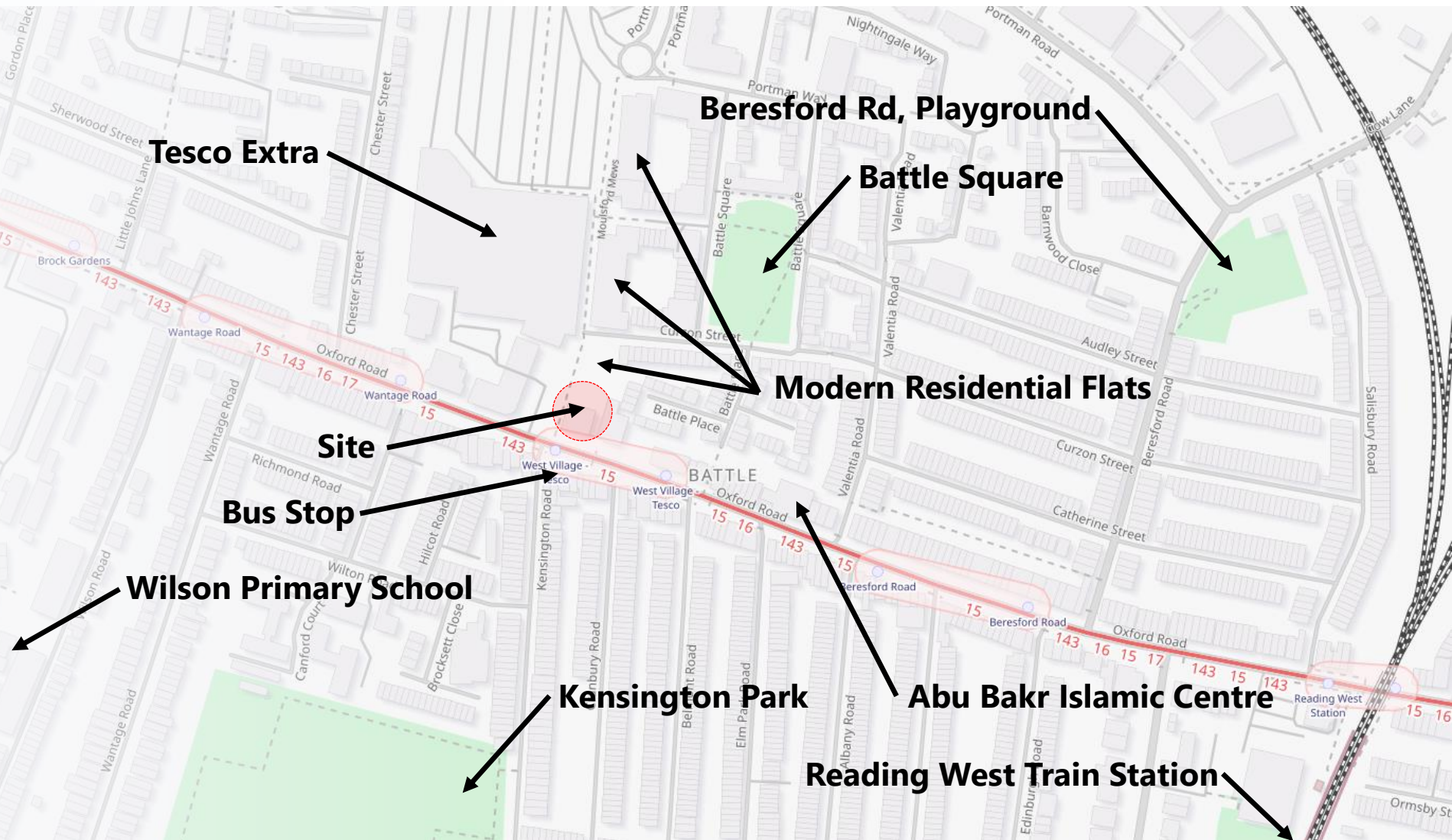
The site is situated in a built-up neighbourhood and is surrounded by buildings of varied scale and use.

The location is highly sustainable, benefiting from local public transport connections. The nearest bus stop being across the road and the Reading West train connection being a 3-minute walk.

Modern residential flats run along a footpath starting at Oxford Rd and running along the site's West boundary.

Off site amenity can be found in the large Kensington Park, Beresford Rd Playground and Battle Square; all providing generous green space, all benefiting from playgrounds for children.

Kensington Park is a 4-minute walk and has space for 40 cars. Battle Square is a 2-minute walk and features landscaped lawns.



Local Context

View looking down Oxford Rd. Curzon Club can be seen centrally. The recently approved "land at 362 Oxford Road" is not yet present in this scene but the notional position is illustrated in Orange alongside our proposal for Curzon Club in Red.

Mixed use shops with flats above can be seen to the left. Recent flats off Curzon Street can be seen in the background.

Residential terrace can be seen on Oxford Road on the Right.



View from Oxford Rd looking up path leading to Curzon Street. View running along the West side of the Curzon site. Curzon Club can be seen on the Right.

Vegetation and trees are provided in and around the site, these will be retained. Further planting of shrubs and small vegetation is proposed around the parking area within the site. The existing mature trees seen to the right of the path are to be retained for the benefit of screening and softening the proposal.



Local Character

The design process analysed surrounding built context of the Oxford Road area of Reading. Gathering a greater understanding of local character.



Terrace Housing – Kensington Rd



Battle Hospital – Oxford Rd



Curzon Club – Oxford Rd



Flats – Battle Square



Houses – Oxford Rd



Flats – Battle Square

Current Land use

To the north of the site is a recently approved and completed development of 26 units over a 5 and a half storey building "land at 362 Oxford Road". The proposal within this submission looks to take influence from this adjacent approved scheme to ensure acceptability.

The site formed part of the 2006 planning application for the redevelopment of the former Battle Hospital site. (06/00011/FUL)

Outline planning permission for the site was originally granted in 2002 which established the scale as a 4-storey building.

The currently approved proposal for the site to the north is for a five-story building with additional Loft Conversion.

Key:

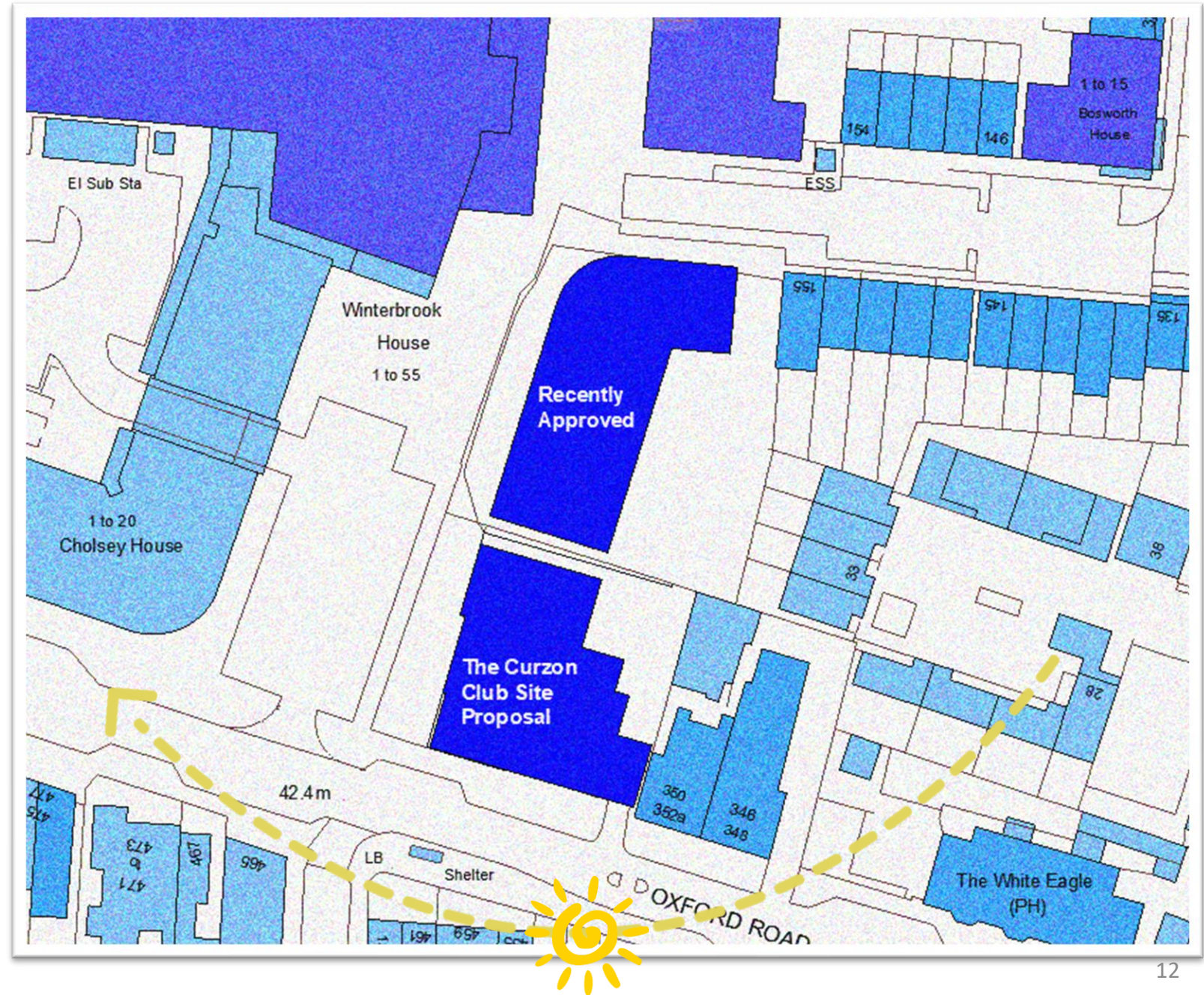
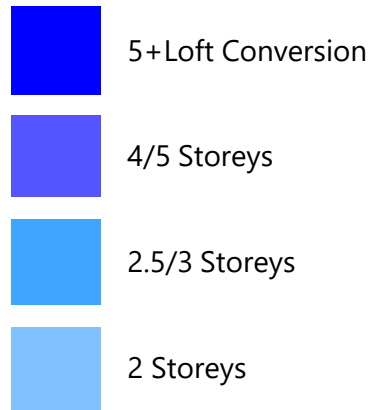
-  Planted ground
-  Mixed Use
-  Commercial
-  Residential



Building Height

The current proposal matches the recently approved development to the north in terms of height and scale. Various additional techniques have been employed to reduce visual mass as outlined in the following pages. The site is situated in a built-up area surrounded by buildings of differing scale and use.

Key:



Character Analysis Intro

Pursuant to the goal of maintaining high design quality, enhancing and respects the local character; Character Analysis has been drawn from the local vicinity, playing an instrumental role in enhancing the design proposal.

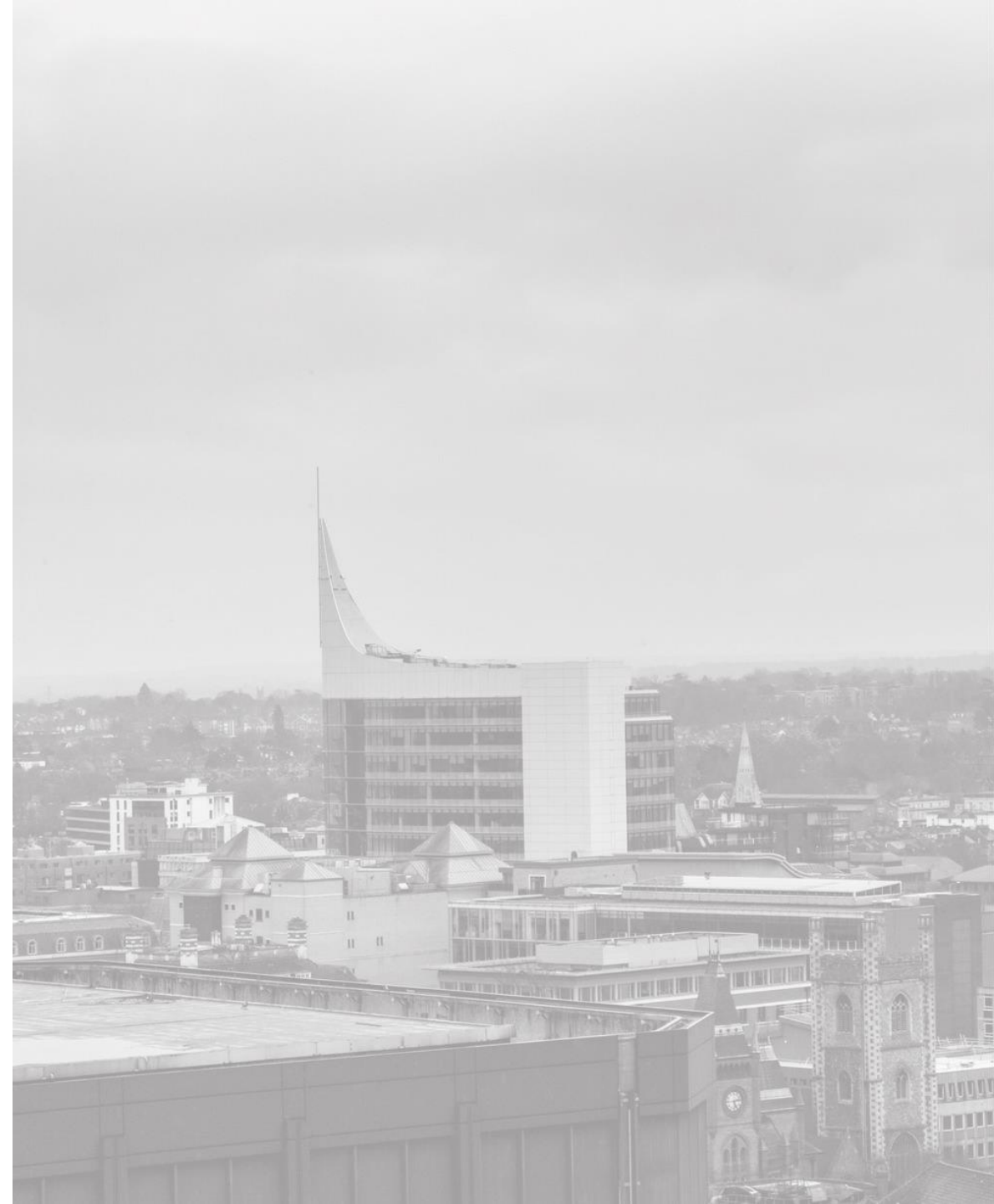
The bulk, massing and scale of the development has been further refined, reducing impact of elements visible to Oxford Rd.

This approach has been employed to ensure negative visual impact would be mitigated against whilst at the same time recognising and representing the valuable architectural character of the surroundings.

1.11.1 "Roofscapes often unconsciously shape our perceptions of a place - when a roof is out of character with neighbouring properties, it is often incongruous"

1.11.3 "Roofing materials should reflect and respect those adjacent to the proposed development."

1.12.1 "New development is expected to respond to locally distinctive features where appropriate."



Scale

Moulsford Mews can be seen to the far left below, accessed from a path running along the West of the site. The recently approved flats on "land at 362 Oxford Road" respond to the scale of this building.

Responding to the neighbouring's flats, the Northern elevation reduces in height with set back mansard roof.

The scheme proposes a 4-storey element to the South facing Oxford Rd visually reducing the mass as seen from the street and approach also benefiting from a set back mansard roof.



Scale

The building steps up to a 5.5-storey block at the northwest corner of the site. The proposed building under application 201391 had the full 5 and a half stories facing the street scene. It was felt the tallest element should be best obscured from street scene which this achieves.

A daylighting assessment has been carried out to ensure the flat proposed to "land at 362 Oxford Road" shall not have its daylight unreasonably impleaded.



The more central location of the taller element has several benefits to the site, obscuring the tallest element from Oxford Rd enables the creation of several south facing Green roofs.



Appearance

The Oxford Road face of the building has been designed to feature an aesthetic split in built form into 3 sections to emulate town villas which can be found locally. The principal elevation facing Oxford Road is split into sections of red brickwork and render, matching the character of Oxford Road and the surrounding buildings.



This proposal has considered any potential impact on Oxford Road and has been designed so the highest point of the building is at the centre of the site, ensuring that it is not visible from the street scene.

Dormer Windows to Roof

Accommodation to First Floor and roof

Shops

View From Oxford Road

Appearance

The West Elevation Faces a more contemporary street scene. Here we have continued the local material selection while opting for a cleaner contemporary aesthetic style. We have opted to still break the face of this elevation up, using a variety of heights, materials and setting back of the external walls as we feel it important to minimize the visual bulk, also existing mature planting in a deep site boarder further help integrate and minimize the proposal.



West View



View Towards opposite shops



View Towards Tesco Extra and Battle Square

Materials

Green Roof



Mansard with Lead Dormer



Slate shingle Roof



Render



Aldwick Blend brick – red, light texture.



Aluminium Windows & Doors



Aluminium Glazed Shop Frontage



Materials Used

Materials

Hard Landscaping

Permeable Resin – Natural Ochres



Existing Tarmac – To Be Retained



Hard Landscaping

Planning Policy Assessment

Sustainability

The ecological aspect has been carefully considered to enhance the site, introducing a diverse array of planting opportunities, generous green roofs and benefiting from substantial mature Natural Screening. Planting is aimed at benefiting local wildlife, targeting bees and providing a usable and enjoyable environment which can grow with the site.

Considering Climate change and environmental sustainability, highly energy-efficient technologies will be selected to exceed standards, from internal appliances to the fabric composition of the proposed structure. Heat pumps will be utilised along with Solar.

Water conservation shall be targeted through modern water saving fixtures, such as taps and shower heads. Permeable paving solutions will also be included, a move beneficial to environmental impact.

The Local Plan requires high standards of sustainable design and construction and sets out several objectives which should be achieved, including; meeting the national technical standard for energy efficiency in new homes and delivering a minimum water efficiency standard.

For more details see attached Energy Statement & Bat Scoping Report and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.



Design Summary and Conclusions

This scheme has been carefully developed with consideration for the Local plan and guidance on Sustainable Design and Construction. The proposal seeks to improve the functionality, economics and longevity of the site, whilst positively contributing to the local character and aesthetics of the wider locality through a sensitive design approach which seeks to successfully and sympathetically integrate with the wider site surroundings. Likewise, such proposals would not result in a detrimental impact upon the living conditions of surrounding residents.

The proposed development provides much needed accommodation whilst fully catering for the needs of modern occupants, whilst safeguarding and promoting the natural and built environment. The proposals ensure the new development would blend with and complement the modernizing local character, whilst comprising a high-quality form of development which would stand the test of time. The proposals go a long way to meeting the needs of the local community, in particular by providing much needed accommodation, whilst supporting the sustainable, economic and social growth of Reading.