

Proposed Development: To demolish the vacant Restoration Public House and erect 18 Apartments with associated amenity space, parking, and landscaping.

Contents

- Introduction/Client Brief
- Existing Building
- Change of use
- Site Location
- Site Analysis and Local Buildings
- Scale and Amount
- Design Cues
- Site Layout
- Access
- Car parking
- Bicycle parking/storage
- Amenity Space
- Bin Storage
- Landscaping
- Sustainable Design
- Conclusion



Introduction / Client Brief

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Bluebird Design and Surveying in support of the application submitted on behalf Mr Hargun. It should be read in conjunction with the overall planning submission and supporting documents.

This proposal seeks to demolish the vacant Restoration Public House and erect 18 apartments with associated amenity space, parking and landscaping.

Existing Building.



The site is located within the Tilehurst area west of Reading town centre.

The application site comprises a currently vacant 1930s public house known as The Restoration with associated car parking and gardens. The last use of the site was as a hand car wash on the car park. The Public House has not been in use at least for the last 10 years.

The building is not listed or is on the Councils List of locally important buildings, but it is acknowledged that it is an attractive building with interesting features.

The building is finished in two tone brick under a plain tiled hipped roof, a central projecting element with a hipped roof adorned with a distinctive arched roof creates a strong visual feature to the frontage. Other architectural details include brick arches to covered balcony to the rear, decorative metal balustrading, contrasting brick details, a vertical window pattern, main entrance porticos and white windows with a vertical emphasis. Currently the setting of the building is unattractive due the extent of hard standing to the sides and frontage and the complete lack of planting to soften the setting. More importantly the building is delapidated with considerable number of issues

The site has 3 crossover access points from the Oxford Rd.

The site levels to the rear of the site are considerably lower than the front. The building is arranged over 3 full floors, due the change in levels the front elevation appears as 2 storeys with a lower ground floor is 3 storeys to the rear.

The lower ground floor was used for storing beer barrels and provisions for the pub, with serving bars to the ground floor and living accommodation at first floor level. There is a green area to the rear and the hard standing to the front was used as external seating area.

Change of use

With reference to previously prepared reports, it is not viable to retain the current usage due to the following reasons: -

1. The location is between a residential area and to the rear of an industrial area (mainly warehouses) thus dramatically reduces the circle of influence that the pub has and consequently reduces the number of clients.
2. When the public house was in use it attracted higher than normal various types of crimes ranging from affray and assaults through to criminal damage.
3. There are 2 popular pubs locally, Tyler's Rest and the Pond House, each within 1km of the site. Because of the available alternative options for clients the business was not successful . Resulting in the closure of the public house for over 10 years

Site Location

The site located close to essential facilities which are noted below: -

- . Waitrose superstore
- . Local parade of shops including hairdressers, beauty salon, restaurant
- . Oxford Rd recreational ground, skatepark and LEAP within 120m
- . Medical centre within 0.6km
- . Primary School within 1km
- . A bus stop is located immediately to the frontage together with cycle path.
- . Reading West Station is also within walking distance.



There are two very successful public houses, Tylers Rest and The Pond House, within 1km of the site allowing easily accessible alternatives for local residents. For this reason and the reason mentioned before resulting in closure of this public House.

Site Analysis / Local buildings

To the rear of the site is a large industrial building at the lower ground floor level.

Immediately to the northwest is a parade of shops which are arranged over 2.5 storeys. In order to accommodate usable space within the roof space the ridge line to the building is relatively high. The large expanse of roof is broken with the inclusion of dormer windows and the ends are finished with projecting hipped roofs. The front elevation of the parade of shops is approximately 40m long.

Beyond the shops is the Waitrose superstore which has a footprint completely out of scale with the surroundings, due to excessive length and depth. The building (Waitrose) is over 100m long and 50 m deep.

However, in order to visually reduce the scale of the building the front elevation appears as a 2-storey block under a large, hipped roof, which conceals a large area of flat roofing from the public realm. Small projects with hipped roofs also help to articulate the sale and massing. In order to accommodate the high commercial floor ceiling heights, the reduced ground floor level helps to reduce the scale and massing. It should be noted that the eaves height is approximately 0.5m higher than the adjacent parade of shops.

Opposite the site on rising ground are 2 storey semi-detached and terraced housing



The proposed development will vary from 3 stories to the front and 4 storeys to the rear, the slight change in massing will provide a visual stop to the street scene



Following pre application discussions with the Council it was suggested that we retain and extend the existing building, however due to its configuration and its physical state it is not possible to efficiently convert the building to modern building requirements and is deemed to be financially unviable. Also, conversion would represent an under development of the site for much needed housing with required floor spaces.

Scale and amount (proposed development)

Accommodation Schedule

9no. x 2bed 4person flats

8no. x 1bed 2 person flats

1no. x 3bed 5 person duplex.

Total 18 dwellings with 16 car parking spaces



Proposed Ground Floor Plan
SCALE 1 : 100

The 2bed flats are arranged to front of the block, on 3 floors, with the 1bed units to the rear together with the 3bed duplex.

11 of the flats will be double aspect and 7 will be single aspect.

The front elevation will be articulated in order to break up the scale of the building, the overall length of which is 32m significantly shorter than the adjacent shops. When viewing from the Oxford Rd the proposed eaves height is only 1m higher than the adjacent shops and the ridge height is significantly lower. It should be noted that the eaves height of the super store is 0.5m higher than the shops.

We therefore believe that although the proposed development is bigger than the existing building the proposal fits well with the existing context of the area.



The proposed building aligns with adjacent shops, in addition the 3 projecting elements to the front elevation articulates the elevation. There are a distance of between 3.5 to 5m to front edge of the development and pavement allowing significant planting.

The building will have a hipped roof which also encompasses the projections, the central element is adorned with an arched roof feature which is a visual reference to Restoration Pub (existing BUILDING).

The step-in site levels naturally results in splitting the building into 2 parts with 3 floor levels to the front and 4 floor levels to the rear.

This level change is expressed on the side elevations with a shadow gap, the rear element also steps in from the site elevation which effectively provide modelling and interest to the side elevations.

This is particularly relevant to the SE elevation which is visible from the Oxford Rd and designed as an attractive stop end to the building, embellished with features taken from the Restoration.

Design Cues taken from the Restoration

It has been acknowledged that the Restoration is considered to be an attractive building which contributes to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Consequently, design cues for the new apartments have been drawn from the existing building and these are itemised as follows: -

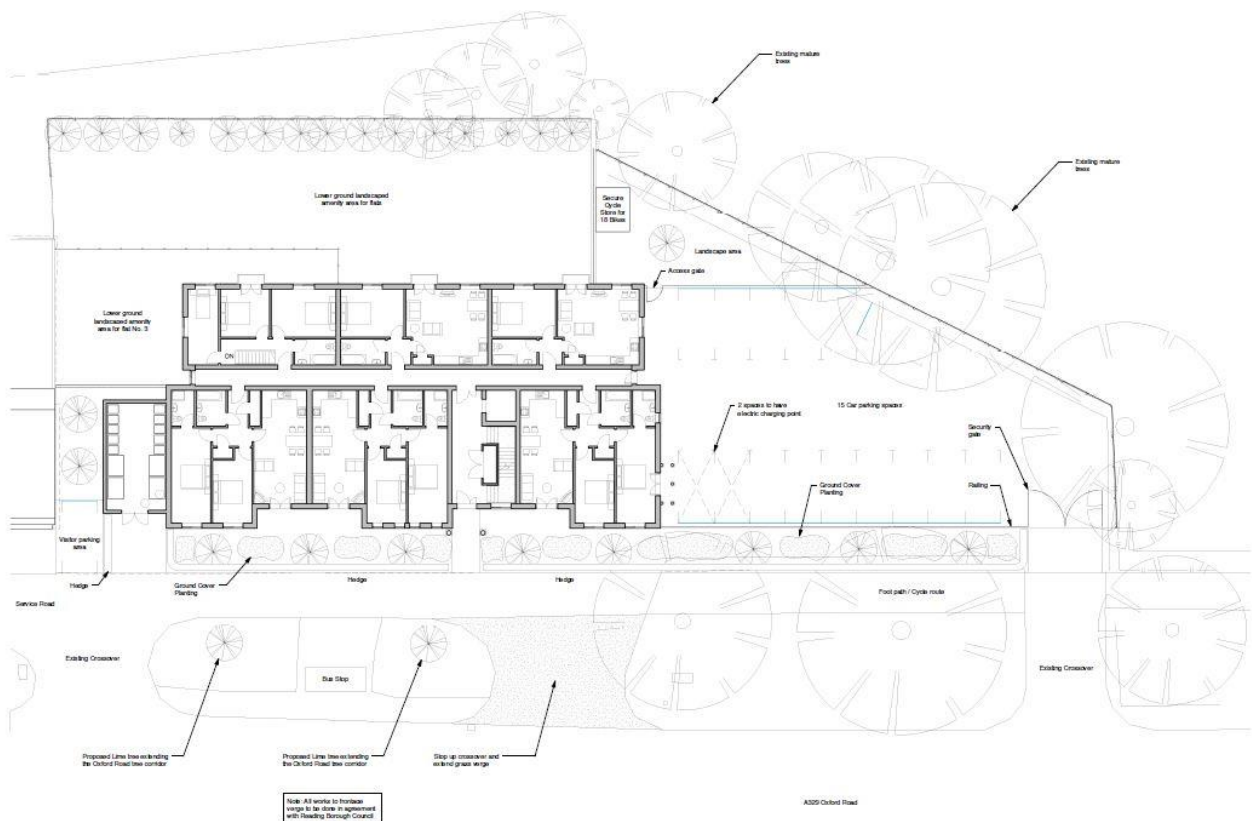
- hipped roof with project elements, including central arch roof dormer.
- vertical window pattern
- decorative metal balustrades to rear balconies, and Juliet balconies.
- brick elevations with contrasting window head and string course detail.
- main entrance portico
- projecting balcony to see side elevation with arched openings.
- feature chimneys.



South Elevation
SCALE 1 : 100

Site Layout

The proposed building is located in a similar position as the Restoration, with landscaped amenity space to the rear and parking to the east. During pre app discussions the Council expressed preference for locating the car parking at the lower level to the rear of the site. This entails the use of a ramp adjacent to the ne boundary, however due to the impact excavations for the ramp on the existing mature trees the car park has been located in a similar position as existing.



Access

The site is conveniently located for public transport, being served by the route 17 bus service from Wokingham Road to Tilehurst. There are bus stops directly opposite about approx 3m which heads west of Oxford Road. and a bus stop the opposite side of the Road (directly opposite Waitrose) to go east of Oxford Road towards Tilehurst., during the week the bus service is every 15-25 minutes, depending on the time of THE day, starting at about at about 5:00 and finishing at about 03:00, depending on the direction of travel.

Tilehurst railway station is about 1km walking distance away to the east of Oxford Road, providing services to Reading and Paddington, and stations between.

Reading West is approx. 2 km to the west of Oxford Road. This pedestrian route also provides a link into the Reading Centre for employment. The Oxford Road is also convenient for cyclists, who may wish to ride into Reading or Tilehurst, and there are plans to upgrade the various lengths of the oxford road to provide a cycleway for much of the route.

Pedestrian access to building will be via an entrance portico which directly connects to the main circulation core containing stairs and a lift which serves all levels. A side access is also available leading directly to the car park. Access to the rear communal garden is available to all residents via a rear door connecting to the general internal circulation.

We intend to use the existing crossovers at each end of the site for bin collection, and car park access respectively. The central access will be removed and will provide the opportunity to reinstate the grass verge and extend the Oxford Rd treed corridor across the frontage, under agreement with the Council. Removal of the access will be beneficial reducing the crossings over the cycle way.

Car parking

16 car parking spaces are proposed as indicated on the site plan. The amount is less than RBCs recommendation, however we seek to encourage reducing car ownership and use in order to lower emissions and encourage the use of local transport. As previously noted, a local bus route and station is nearby.

2 parking spaces will have electric charging points and one space will be used for car club parking. The visual impact of the car parking will be screened from the Oxford Rd by the introduction of a soft boundary including hedging, shrubs and trees.

Bicycle parking

18 no. secure bike spaces are proposed located next to the car park within the amenity space. This is double the amount required by the Council and will encourage the use of sustainable transport.

Amenity space

Approximately 530sqm of landscaped communal gardens are located at lower level to the rear and will receive SE and NW sunlight.

This area is well overlooked by residents and will benefit from the noise shadow created by the industrial building in relation to railway noise, the apartment block shielding road noise.

In addition, a smaller landscaped area is provided at ground floor level accessed via the car park.

The 3-bed duplex apartment will have a 65 sqm of private garden area. Projecting private balconies are also provided to the rear and side elevation facing the car park.

Bin storage

This is located at the side of the building adjacent to the shops, with the bin collection vehicle conveniently parking on the existing service road next to the shops.

Landscaping

The rear communal will be landscaped and will be overlooked by residents. Strategic planting to the frontage both within the site and the public realm reinforcing the Oxford Rd treed corridor will significantly enhance the setting to the benefit of the surrounding area

Sustainable Development

The development will create a sustainable environment being close to alternative modes of transport movement to the private car.

The integrated approach of dovetailing with the local fabric and infrastructure will ensure local facilities are accessible by public transport and by bike, and the number of car journeys could be minimised by ensuring alternative, more sustainable patterns of movement are convenient, attractive and safe, which will impact directly on emission levels, fuel consumption and air quality.

The site is located close to good bus and train services that could take residents into Reading or Tilehurst for shopping or to the local supermarket beyond the adjacent terraced row of shops, where there is a large Waitrose supermarket.

There are also a number of employment opportunities in the area, including the major site at the Portman Road.

The locality of the site suggests the delivery of a compact form which makes the most effective and efficient use of land. The scheme makes good use of natural light and avoids excessive overshadowing.

In order to minimise the energy consumed in the manufacture, delivery and use of the dwellings, where possible it is proposed to use materials that are locally sourced, from renewable sources; with a long life expectancy or that can be easily reused/recycled; and possessing a low embodied energy.

Wherever possible, materials arising from site demolition will be re-used on site avoiding the requirement for unnecessary import of materials or cart away of excess.

The retained landscape elements and trees, both within the site and at the boundaries, encourage biodiversity and habitats.



In accordance with the local waste and recycling policies and advice from the Reading Borough Council Waste Department, provision for waste and recycling storage have been included within the development in line with the Council's requirements.

Subject to the relevant approvals it is anticipated that a Sustainable Drainage system may be incorporated for the new apartments.

The apartments are to be constructed to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and will incorporate water butts to reduce the usage of potable water.

Conclusion

We are pleased to present this development for your consideration, which will provide a new detached 18 apartment building in a sustainable location.

The development has been planned positively in order to embody high quality and inclusive design, following a considered appraisal of the identity of the neighbourhood and the site's setting, and will provide an environment which is informed by the site's unique characteristics and locality. In the preparation of this application the development team has strived to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of this part of Tilehurst and the way it functions:

A design approach has been adopted which will integrate the design of the buildings, the materials palette, hard and soft landscape details and enclosure features into an overarching concept.

The scheme has access to good public transport links as well as the services and facilities of the local centre at Tilehurst area.

The development will provide a form of development and grain in keeping with the local area.

These application proposals represent high quality, contextual design, of which we believe the applicant, and his designers, the Borough Council and residents can feel positive about.