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Submission and Heritage Statement:

in respect of:

The erection of 2 new townhouses at the rear of Dukesbridge House, Reading

1.0 The Proposal:

1.1 This application proposes the erection of 2 new double story townhouses with roof terraces, in the courtyard at the rear of Dukesbridge House.

2.0 Existing Property:

2.1

Fig. 1 – Existing Courtyard behind Dukesbridge House

2.2 The Site is located at 23 Duke Street, Reading, RG1 4SA. The site is referred to in this application as Dukesbridge House, and is comprised of existing commercial buildings (Dukesbridge House and Dukesbridge Chambers) along with a car park to the north of Dukesbridge House and east of Dukesbridge Chambers. The site is bounded by residential and office buildings from the west, east and north sides with the river on the south.
The planning boundary includes Dukesbridge House and excludes Dukesbridge Chambers. Dukesbridge House has a consented Permitted Development which was approved on 06.06.2019 (Application No: 190602). Change of use of building from Class B1(a)(offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 77 residential units has been granted. This planning application is to show that the proposed erection of 2 new double storey townhouses in the courtyard of Dukesbridge House will have no adverse impact on either Dukesbridge House, or the neighbouring buildings.

3.0 Site Appraisal:

3.1 Dukesbridge House is located within an Urban Block immediately to the north of the River Kennet and within the Central Zone, which is also inside the Inner Distribution Road (IDR Zone 1).

3.2 The proposed site of the new townhouses, in the courtyard behind Dukesbridge House, is currently occupied by 7 parking bays, which will be removed, and partially replaced with planted zones.

4.0 Heritage:

4.1 Dukesbridge House is located within the London Street Conservation Area and is one of several buildings that form an urban block between Dukes Street, Highbury Wharf and Kennet River. The Conservation Area has buildings that have been designed in a range of styles and variety of materials.

4.2 The location of the proposed new double storey townhouses within the courtyard of the 4 storey Dukesbridge House means that they are hidden behind the bulk of the neighbouring 4 storey building, and have no impact on the streetscape of the surrounding roads

4.3

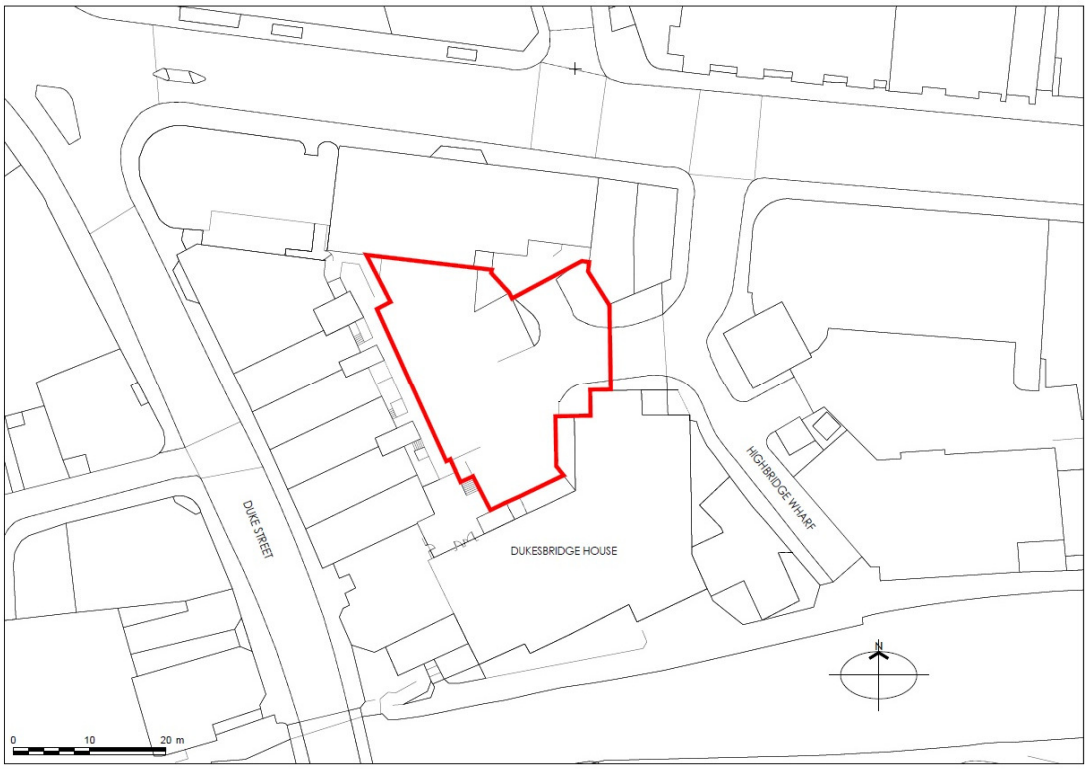

Fig. 2 – Site Plan

5.0 **Design:**

5.1 The flats have been designed in accordance with the planning requirements as set out by the Department for Communities and Local Government in the Technical Housing Standards. The Schedule of accommodation is as follows:

House No.	No. Beds	No. Persons	GIA [m^2]	Private Amenity [m^2]
House 1	2 Bed	3 Person	70	9
House 2	2 Bed	3 Person	73	12

5.2 Even though the site is located within the Central Area as defined by the Reading Borough Local Plan both flats exceed the minimum standards required, all their internal spaces comply with National Space Standards, and they have been designed to fully comply with the requirements of Approved Document M of the Building Regulations. Each flat also benefits from its own private amenity space, which has been provided in the form of the roof terraces.

5.3 The façade of the proposed new development will be executed in red facing brick with grey mortar, to match the facing brick and gey mortar of Dukesbridge House, complemented by aluminium door and window frames powder coated in colour burgundy, to match the existing windows and doors of Dukesbridge House, with balustrade details being carried out in brushed stainless steel and glass. The courtyard façade of the proposed development is enriched by the horizontal timber cladding which runs between the windows on the first floor. The detailing of the balcony balustrade steelwork adds to the richness of the façade.

5.4 In contrast to the bottom two floors, the faces of the top floor walls will be finished with zinc cladding, which complements the facing brick used on the exterior faces of walls of the floors below. The top floor features two glazed lanterns, which not only allow access to the roof terraces but also enrich the skyline with their sculptural forms.

5.5 Provision for secure and covered bike storage for 4 N^{o} bicycles has been made in front of the houses with the provision of a lockable weather proof bicycle storage shelter.

5.6 Provision has been made in the adjacent Dukesbridge House bin store to accommodate 2 N° 240 litre wheelie bins for refuse and dry recycling use, created as a result of the proposed development.

6.0 **Access:**

6.1 The site is located within 7 minutes' walk from Reading train station through the quiet backstreets along the Kennet River. The site is also well connected by local bus routes which are within 2 and 5 minutes' walk and providing transport options in all directions.

6.2 The site is also well connected by local and wider road networks, located on London Street which is in close proximity to the A33 and M4 motorway. The site is well linked with footpaths coming from The Oracle and Broad Street. Also, as its situated directly on the River Kennet it benefits from direct access to the cycle and footpaths along the river.

6.3 No site parking is provided. Its town centre location means that it is perfectly suited for a car free development.

7.0 Sustainability:

7.1 The development will meet the requirements of Part M4(1) of the Building Regulations, and in accordance with Policy H5 in the Reading Local Plan, will be accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations.

7.2 In accordance with Policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, namely Standards for New Housing, both houses will be built to the higher water efficiency standard under Regulation 36(3) of the Building Regulations 79.

7.3 Having regard to Policy H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, both houses will achieve at a minimum a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as defined in the 2013 Building Regulations.

7.4 In order to help reduce the electricity demand of the proposed development, as set out in Appendix 2e of the Reading Borough Council SPD, solar PV panels will be fitted onto the roofs of the 2 Townhouses.

7.5 In order to comply with policies CC2-CC5, EN18 and H5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, as described in Section 4.8 of the Reading Bourough Council SPD, the flat roofs of the 2 Townhouses will be planted. This will also provide visual relief for the adjacent buildings.

8.0 Conclusion:

8.1 In conclusion - The proposed development has been carefully prepared to accommodate and respect planning policy, both local and central, and makes efficient use of the site to provide much needed good quality accommodation for the local area. It should be granted planning approval.