Thames Valley Surveying

Planning Statement

Extension to

Progress Theatre, Reading

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Issue Record

Issue	Date	Description	Created by	Reviewed by
-	21/04/21	Initial issue	SM	OW
2	20/05/21	Amended	SM	OW

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report forms the supporting information seeking approval from Reading Borough Council for the extension to a theatre in Reading.

1.2 The planning statement, design and access statement and Heritage Statement have been combined to avoid repetition.

1.3 Progress Theatre was set up in 1946. The current building was initially used in 1951, which was then the Mildmay Hall, owned by the Co-operative Society. The original hall remains.

1.4 The building was subsequently purchased by Progress Theatre in 1963 and the foyer was constructed at this time.

1.5 Since this date various extensions and alterations have been carried out.

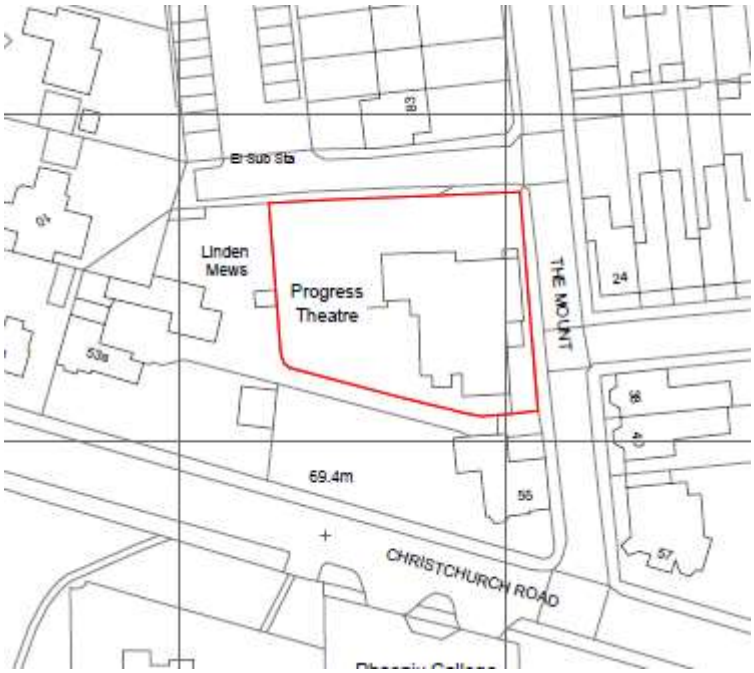

Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

2.0 Heritage Statement

Purpose of this statement

2.1 Legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Sections 16 and 66 of the Act place a duty on the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings.

2.2 This Heritage statement is to assist with the application by informing the decision takers on the effects of the proposed development on the historic environment.

The Site

2.3 The theatre is accessed via The Mount, which runs along the eastward site boundary, north of Christchurch Road.

2.4 The southern site boundary abuts a gated driveway serving Linden Mews.

2.5 Trees subject to TPOs are located to the front of the site.

2.6 The building itself is a low, flat roofed structure, located to the southeast corner of the site.

Photo 1 – View of the front elevation

Photo 2 – View of the rear Elevation

Photo 3 – View of the party wall and front elevation

Photo 4 – Location of extension

Photo 5 – View to the rear of the existing toilets

Listed Buildings

2.7 To the West of the site is one listed building:

- 114 Kendrick Road

2.8 The listed building has been identified on the plan below.

Figure 2 - Plan showing the Listed Building within the vicinity

Conservation Area

The site is part of The Mount Conservation Area.

The numbered areas denote the following:

1. The Mount and Christchurch Road frontage
2. Hillside, Lower Mount / Allcroft Road
3. 53, 53a Linden Mews, 55 Christchurch Road, Progress Theatre

Figure 3 - Townscape Appraisal Map (the Conservation Area Boundary is outline in red)

Historic Background

2.9 114 Kendrick Road was constructed c1840.

2.10 It was added to the Local List 27th February 2013.

3.0 Planning History

Application number	Description	Decision	Date
200696	Tree Works	Approved	02/06/2020
200691	Tree Works	Approved	02/06/2020
191414	Discharge of condition 4 (landscaping) of planning permission 190294/FUL	Approved	12/11/2019
190294	Resurfacing of car park	Approved	19/06/2019
182237	Tree Works	Approved	30/01/2019
131498	Tree Works	Approved	28/10/2013
110898	Tree Works	Approved	13/10/2011
110610	Tree Works	Approved	13/10/2011
051120	Replace existing access ladder with an external staircase and alterations to lighting control room and stores	Approved	19/01/2006
980876	Erection of single storey storage area	Approved	06/07/1998
950120	Single storey extension for enclosed access to stage	Approved	06/09/1995
910636	Partial demolition of covered storage area	Approved	24/07/1991
910862	Partial demolition of covered area and alterations to provide extension to kitchen, new roof, amended external elevation and toilet for disabled persons	Approved	24/07/1991

4.0 The Development

Existing

4.1 The current WC provision to the building does not meet the requirements of current guidance and is inadequate to meet the needs of the theatre.

4.2 The existing WC provision comprises of:
- Male - 3 Urinals, 1 WC and 2 basins
- Female - 2 WC's and 2 basins
- The staff WC provides the only accessible facility for visitors and is accessed through the backstage area.

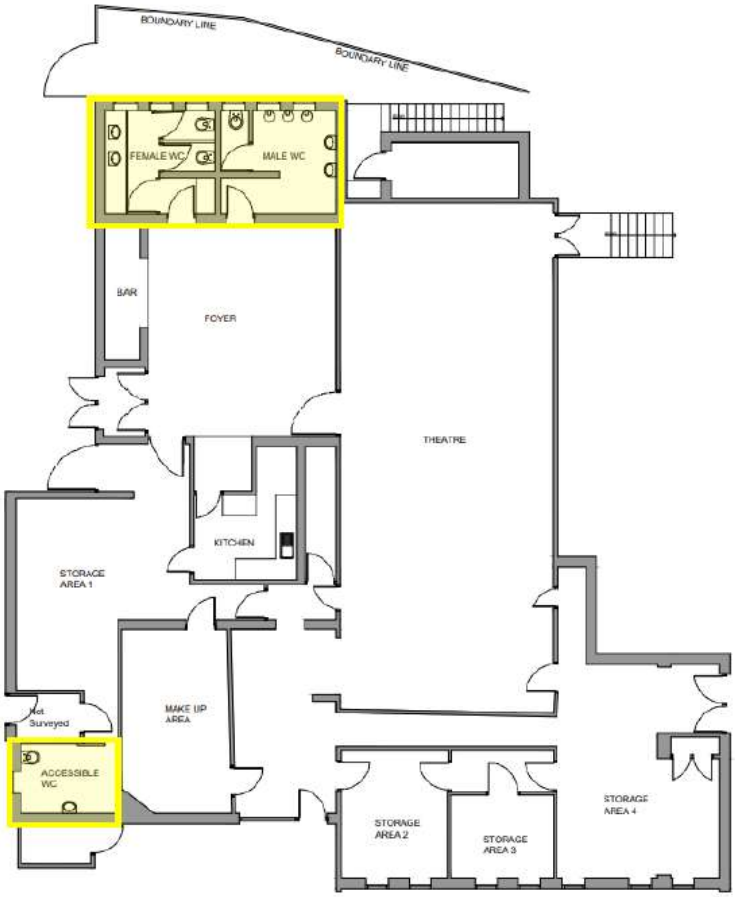

Figure 4 – Floor plan showing existing provisions

Proposed

4.8 It is proposed to extend the existing building to the boundary fence, creating a large unisex toilet space.

4.9 The provision comprises of:

- 5nr unisex toilets
- 1nr unisex accessible toilet.

5.0 Design and Access Statement

Design

5.1 The proposed extension will match all materials of the existing building with the exception of the wall facing the boundary fence which will be in brickwork to minimise maintenance to this area as access is limited.

Layout

5.2 The existing front entrance and layout of the building will remain as existing.

5.3 The extended toilet facilities and opening up of the foyer area is an improvement in terms of space manoeuvrability, a lobby space has been created avoiding the toilet doors opening out directly into the bar area.

Scale

5.4 The extension will be subservient to the existing building in design by ensuring the roof height is lower than the existing roof.

5.5 It is proposed to install raised planting beds to the front elevation in order to break up and soften the scene.

5.6 The existing paved area to the front is where the bins are positioned to await collection, the bins will not be collected from the back of the building.

5.7 The general upkeep and maintenance are solely relied upon by volunteers and as such any landscaping is kept to a minimum.

5.8 The theatre have been and continue to do a lot of work to the external areas and are currently in the process of weeding, preparing and planted beds of climbers and evergreen shrubs, perennials and wildlife friendly planting, so the overall green nature of the site is vastly improving. Before the car park was resurfaced there was no planting at all around the site.

5.9 Progress theatre have a very strong desire to improve the look of the site as a whole, including as much planting and greenery as possible with the help of volunteers.

Access

5.6 There is existing vehicular access from the access road (arrow shown in orange).

5.7 The existing access arrangements will not be changed.

5.8 Access to the building will be via the current main entrance door which is ramped.

5.9 The existing rear escapes will remain.

Photo 6- Ariel view of site (site outlined in red)

Parking

5.10 There is a vehicular tarmac parking area to the side and rear of the site for 20 cars.

5.11 The existing parking arrangements will remain unchanged.

6.0 Pre-Planning Application Enquiry

6.1 A pre-planning application enquiry was submitted in January 2021 and has been appended to this document.

6.2 The principle of the development is acceptable however; care should be taken to ensure that the extension is sympathetic to its conservation setting and to mitigate the impact on neighbouring residential amenities.

7.0 Planning Policy

National Guidance

7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

7.2 Section 2 of the NPPF, Achieving Sustainable Development. The proposals are to improve the toilet facilities within an existing cultural building and therefore support this policy.

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Policy CC2 – Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy CC3 – Adaption to Climate Change

Policy CC5 – Waste Minimisation and Storage

Policy CC6 – Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

Policy CC7 – Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8 – Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN1 – Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Policy EN3 – Enhancement of Conservation Areas

Policy EN12 – Biodiversity and the Green Network

Policy EN14 – Trees, Hedges and Woodland

Policy OU1 – New and Existing Community Facilities

We have sought to conform to the planning policies noted above and are looking to enhance and preserve the buildings appearance and be sympathetic to its conservation area.

8.0 Impact of Development and Conclusion

Heritage Impact

8.1 The theatre and the proposed extension is not related to the listed buildings in any way.

8.2 The proposed extension will be constructed in a similar style and appearance with no increase in roof height.

Conclusion

8.3 It is considered that the proposed toilet refurbishment will be of significant benefit to the community as a whole and that it generally supports current planning policy.