Design, Access and Sustainability Statement

REF: 21-J3733/DAS

Land at Corner of Downing Road & School Road,
Tilehurst, Reading

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ASCOT DESIGN
Timeless architecture

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Introduction

This statement has been prepared by Ascot Design Ltd to accompany an application for full planning permission for a corner unit consisting of 4 small apartments with associated parking and a retail unit.

The accommodation will provide 2 No. 2 Bed apartments (approx. 71m2 and 82m2) and 2 No 1 Bed apartments, (at approx. 55m2 and 56m2). All units are in excess of the Nationally Described Space Standards. The retail unit is measured at approximately 70m2.

This statement has been produced in accordance with guidance published by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and covers the following:

- An analysis of the site as existing, the immediate area and the wider context.
- A description of the design process followed to reach the final design solution, covering the subjects of Use, Amount, Layout, Scale, Landscaping, and Appearance. It considers the constraints of the site and relevant local and national planning policies to demonstrate that the proposed scheme is well conceived with the aim of integrating with its surroundings.
- Considers accessibility within the site and the proposals relationship to transport links in the surrounding area, as well as inclusive access for the elderly and the disabled. It justifies the location of pedestrian and vehicular access points to the site and establishes accessibility to public transport.

It should be read in conjunction with all other reports and correspondence submitted with the application.

1 The Site and Surroundings

The site is located centrally in Tilehurst. The site lies approximately 1.2 miles South East from Tilehurst train station and 1.5 mile South West from the M4 motorway. Reading town centre 3 miles west.

The Site – NTS. Image courtesy of Google

The plot is on the corner of Downing Street and School Road. It is currently unmaintained, semi-grassed and partially covered with a pile of building rubble. The remainder of the site is taken up with advertisement hoarding.

The boundary to the North-West is occupied by ‘Park Lane Primary School’. The boundary to the South-West abuts Downing Street, the South-East abuts School Road, and provides an access road which serves No.116 back yard immediately adjacent is a Café/pottery shop. This access Road abuts the North-Eastern boundary.

The site is considered to be an extremely sustainable location. It is close to local amenities, a bus station and further connections into Reading. Tilehurst train station is approximately 1.6Km from the site.

Street view from School Road

Street view from Downing Road

The site is located within a predominantly residential area which is comprised of detached 2 - 2 ½ storey dwellings that are mixed in character, architectural style and appearance. Uses are mainly residential to the side streets. Retail, industrial and leisure businesses mostly fronting the main roads. This is provided on ground floors with residential above.

2 Planning History

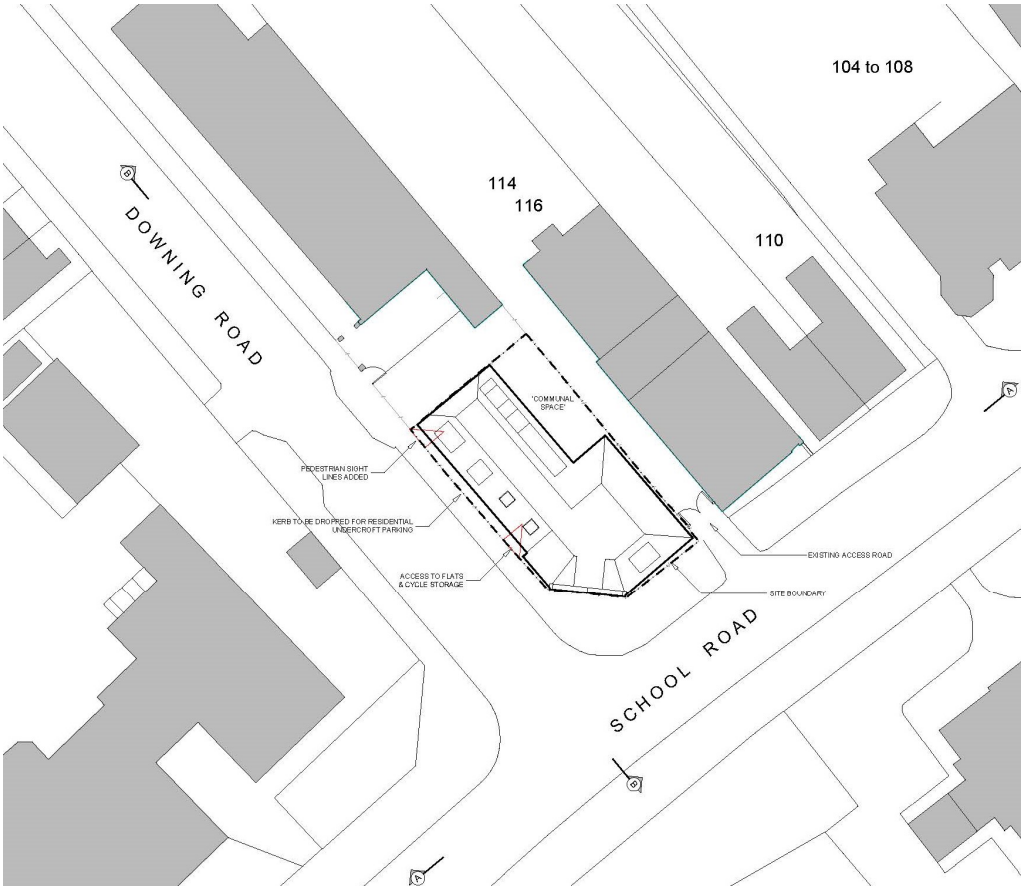
There is no planning history to this site.

3 Design

The site is a corner setting and a focal 'bookend' to the buildings along School Road street. Currently the site is being used inefficiently and is underachieving its potential to visually acknowledge its setting. The design looks to address this shortfall and aims to enhance the architectural interest on the street scene.

The proposal is for a mixed-use building. The proposed building features retail on the ground floor with under croft parking for 4 no. 1 and 2 bed apartments above.

The proposed 2.5 storey building is reflective of the eave's heights of the surrounding buildings.



Proposed Site Plan NTS

The proposed building will be of a traditional design and feature materials from the neighbouring buildings such as brick, with contrast elements to tie in with the street scene along Downing Road and School Road.

The building will harmonise with the surrounding buildings, make efficient use of an underutilised site and provide much needed housing. It will also make use of the opportunity to provide a visually attractive corner turning, bookend building.

(a) Amount

The proposal is for one, two and a half storey building, with under croft parking Incorporating a retail unit on the ground floor.

The accommodation will provide 2 No. 2 Bed apartments (approx. 71m2 and 82m2) and 2 No 1 Bed apartments, (at approx. 55m2 and 56m2). All units are in excess of the Nationally Described Space Standards. The retail unit is measured at approximately 70m2.

(b) Layout

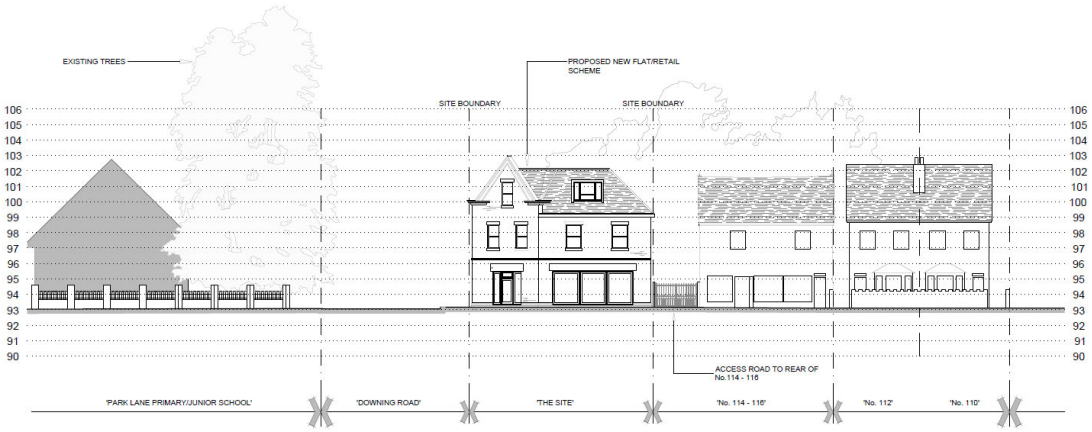
The proposals provide private amenity space to the rear of the building for the residents use. Covered secure cycle storage is also proposed in this area.

Under croft Parking is provided for the apartments, access to these spaces will be from Downing Road. Residents will gain access to their apartments via internal stair core, off of the under-croft area.

Bin storage will be discreetly incorporated within the under-croft parking area.

(c) Scale

The proposed unit has been designed to respect the size and scale of the existing properties in the immediate area. The height of the proposed dwelling is consistent with other dwellings in the locality, these being of 2 - 2½ storey in height.



PROPOSED STREET SCENE A-A - (1:200)
VIEW TAKEN ALONG 'SCHOOL ROAD'

A separate Daylight and Sunlight report has been prepared to support this application and should be read in conjunction with this report.

(d) Appearance

The proposal will draw on traditional Victorian detailing within the area. Red brick with contrast buff brick/stone is predominant within the area.

PROPOSED 'DOWNING ROAD' ELEVATION

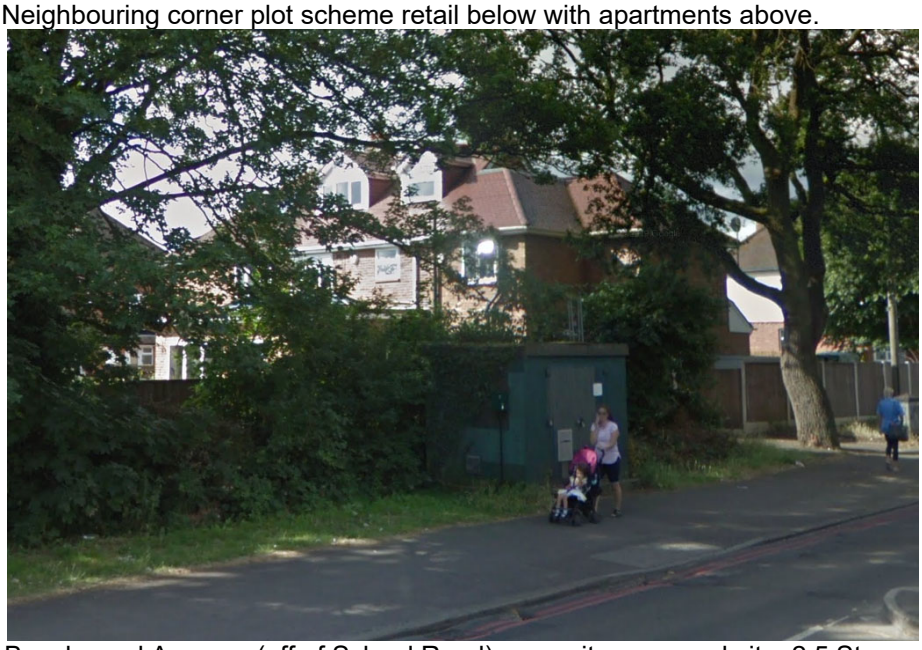
PROPOSED 'SCHOOL ROAD' ELEVATION

The design is considered appropriate and compatible with the surrounding area in terms of building heights. The design provides a ‘wayfinding’ marker at its corner location, visually signalling the start of the street. Parapets will be completed with stone capping’s.

No.70 School Road
Local vernacular details we have incorporated within our design.

No.88 School Road
Local vernacular gable stone detail we have incorporated within our design.

No.111 School Road
Neighbouring corner plot scheme retail below with apartments above.



Beechwood Avenue, (off of School Road), opposite proposed site. 2.5 Storey.

(e) Landscaping

The communal garden will be laid to lawn if needed further planting can be secured by condition.

4 Access and Sustainability

(a) Access

Access to the under-croft parking serving the apartments will be of Downing Road. Pedestrian visibility sight lines of 2m x 2m have been provided to allow safe exit from the parking spaces for pedestrians and vehicles, meeting the local authorities requirements.

(b) Sustainable Design and Construction

(i) Sustainable Design

The proposal has been designed to potentially accommodate any of the following:

- Air source heat pumps and/or solar thermal panels where appropriate
- Heat Recovery System
- Under Floor Heating
- Electric charging points for cars

(ii) Energy Efficiency

To minimise heat loss from the proposed dwellings and to maximise the efficiency, the proposal will incorporate the following:

- Insulated roofs, walls and floors
- Double glazed windows
- Ventilation incorporated onto the design to avoid condensation
- Energy efficient lighting
- Natural daylight to all habitable rooms

The development will be designed to allow the future potential use of on-site renewable technologies.

Domestic appliance ratings will aim to provide the following:

A+ Fridge Freezer
A rated dishwasher & washing machine
A rated tumble dryer

(iii) Water Resource Management

To minimise the use of water, the proposal will incorporate the following:

- Water saving devices, such as dual flush /low flush toilets
- Rainwater harvesting such as water butts and storage tanks

(iv) Flood Risk Management

The application is not situated in a flood risk area. To minimise the surface run off and promote permeability, the following will be incorporated:

- Soakaways for surface water drainage
- Permeable surface driveway

The development will incorporate the requirements of SUDS hierarchy, by disposing of as much storm water drainage on-site as possible. Any shallow infiltration available will be utilised by the provision of the permeable road surfaces and the runoff from the proposed building will be dispersed via soakaways located on site at a depth determined by the best available percolation rate. The runoff rate achieved will be in accordance with stipulated EA requirements.

(v) Biodiversity

An ecology report is submitted with the application which considers biodiversity in more detail. The proposal will retain existing trees and hedgerows where possible and in addition, new planting is proposed which will further support diversity.

(vi) Waste Recycling

The proposal will encourage responsible waste recycling in the following ways:

- Adequate space exists for storage of waste and recycling containers.

- Adequate space exists on the site for composting facilities.

(vii) Sustainable Transport

The site lies within proximity to the town of Tilehurst in a highly sustainable location close to a range of services and transport links. Within 100m of local bus routes.

The site is located centrally in Tilehurst. The site lies approximately 1.6 Km South East from Tilehurst train station and 2 Km South West from the M4 motorway. Reading town centre 5 Km to the West.

(viii) Sustainable Construction

Materials will be, as far as possible, environmentally friendly and the 'Green Guide' and BRE publication 'Methodology for Environmental Profiles of Construction Materials' will be consulted. Timber will be obtained, where possible, from certified sources. A waste separation and disposal policy will be operational for the duration of the site construction.

5 Summary and Conclusions

The planning application allows for the redevelopment of the site to provide a retail and apartment block of a very high architectural quality. The proposal meets in full the Council's adopted Local Plan policies and should be supported for the following reasons:

- The application site falls within a location where the principle of redevelopment is acceptable, subject to meeting the Council's design policies.
- The proposal provides for a form of development that is in keeping with the established character and appearance of the surrounding area in terms of its size, scale, layout, height and design.
- The siting of the new building has considered the positioning of adjacent dwellings and ensures that the proposal would not result in any loss of amenity to occupants of adjoining properties.
- The proposal is designed to reflect the scale, proportions and spacing of similar developments close to this location and regard has been given to the design process including the evaluation of the site and surrounding area as set out within the CABE guidance "Design and Access Statements".
- The application delivers an appropriate scheme that provides a mixed-use development which responds to its context in a manner that is conducive to the sustainable development of the local residential and commercial sectors in the area, while keeping in line with council's planning policies.

- The site is accessible to public transport modes.
- The proposal makes best use of the site ensuring it is used efficiently, visually acknowledges its setting by providing a focal point to a road junction and ‘bookend’ to School Road’s retail character.