

Ref: 18016.9.1_DAS_19.05.15
Date: 15/05/2019

Document Title: **DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

Project: **REFURBISHMENT & ALTERATIONS**

Site Address: **6 / 8 ALEXANDRA ROAD, READING, RG1 5PE**

Client: **TURNER ESTATES**



Fig.1: View of 6 / 8 Alexandra Road from the street

1.0 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement is written as a supporting document for a Full Planning Application with Reading Borough Council at 6 / 8 Alexandra Road, Reading.

The proposed development involves the demolition of existing single-storey rear extension, followed by construction of replacement single-storey rear extension, refurbishment and alterations throughout the building.

The intention of the application is to create high quality living accommodation whilst enhancing the appearance of the building and wider Conservation Area.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the following Weston & Co Architects drawings: 18016-PL-01, 18016-PL-02, 18016-PL-03, 18016-PL-04, 18016-PL-05, 18016-PL-06, 18016-PL-07, 18016-PL-08, 18016-PL-09, 18016-PL-10, 18016-PL-11, 18016-PL-12A, 18016-PL-13, 18016-PL-14, 18016-PL-15, 18016-PL-16, 18016-PL-17, 18016-PL-18.

2.0 The Site Location & Context

The application site is located toward the northern end of Alexandra Road close to the junction with London Road, refer to Fig.2 below.



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Fig.2: Site location plan extract from drawing number 18016-PL-01

The application site comprises a pair of 2.5-storey late Victorian semi-detached houses with full basements. A shared external amenity space is located at the rear of the site which includes a cycle store, and an off-street car parking area is located at the front of the site.

3.0 Use

The existing use of the site is as 2no. large Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), sui generis use class. No. 6 Alexandra Road is a nine bedroom HMO whilst no. 8 Alexandra Road is an eight bedroom HMO.

A previous planning application from 2001 for the change of use from hotel to houses let as lodging rooms (app ref: 00/00725/FUL) had previously established the use of the site as an HMO (sui generis) for 18 bedrooms.

The application site has been un-occupied since 30th June 2018 due to the death of the previous property owner instigating the sale of the property to the Applicant.

4.0 Heritage Statement

The application site is located within Reading Borough Council's 'Alexandra Road Conservation Area' which is generally characterised by large late Victorian semi-detached and detached houses set back from the tree-lined Alexandra Road.

Numbers 6 and 8 Alexandra Road are a good example of this kind of architecture with high quality and decorative brickwork, generous storey heights and window proportions. The original houses date from between 1879 and 1899, refer to Fig.3 and 4 below, during a period of significant development in this area of the Reading.

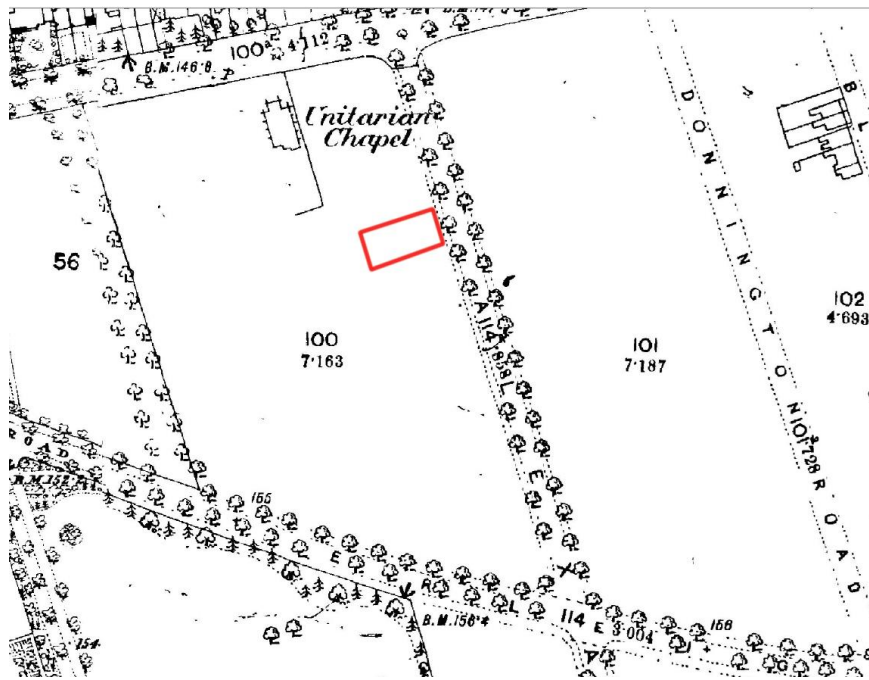


Fig.3: 1877-1879 Ordnance Survey map extract (site bounded by red line)



Fig.4: 1899 Ordnance Survey map extract (site bounded by red line)

5.0 Amount

The application site has a total area of 496.8 square metres. The existing gross internal floor area with ceiling height above 1500mm is 558.9 square metres which is proposed to increase to become 581.2 square metres. The floor area increase is attributed to the replacement single storey rear extension and the addition of proposed splayed dormers on the second floor at the rear of the building.

The accommodation benefits from 263.2 square metres of shared external amenity space.

Secure and sheltered storage for 10no. bicycles is proposed within a cycle store located in the rear garden. This provision is in accordance with the local authority standard for 0.5 cycle spaces per HMO bedroom.

There are no changes proposed to the existing car parking provision at the front of the site adjacent to Alexandra Road.

There are no changes proposed to the existing bin storage provision which comprises: 1no. 1100 litres wheelie bin for general refuse and 1no. 1100 litre wheelie bin for mixed dry-recyclables located within the car parking area.

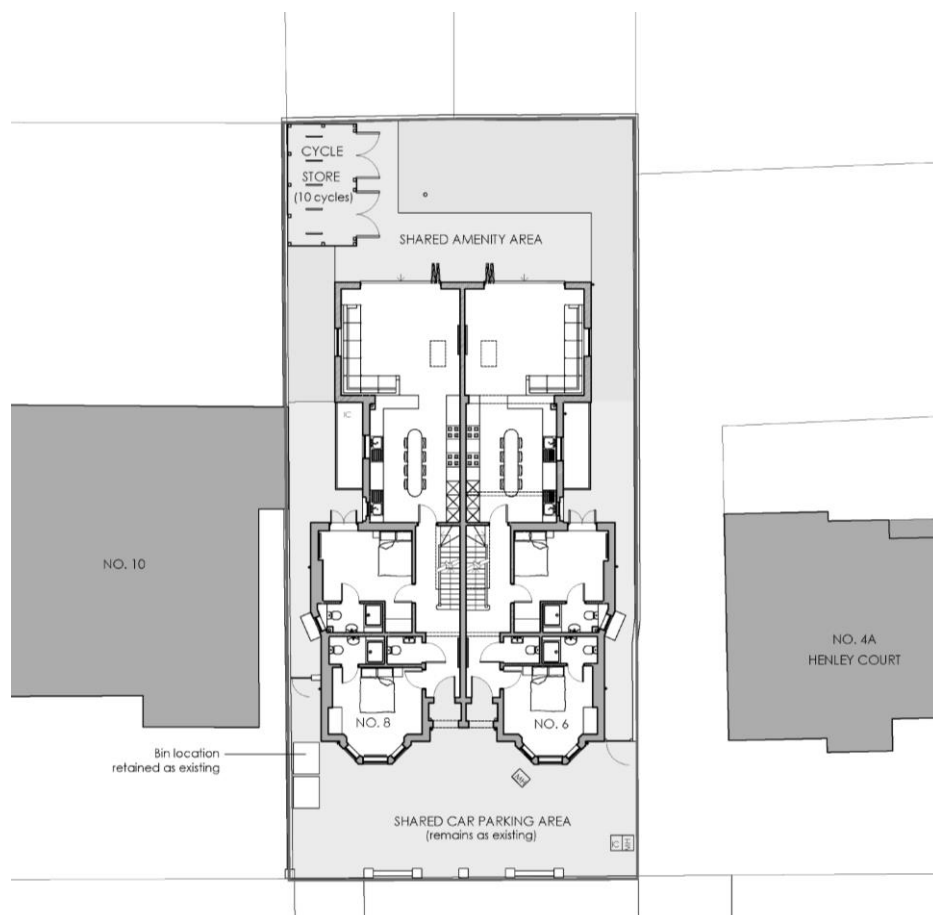


Fig.5: Proposed Site Plan extract from drawing 18016-PL-09

6.0 Layout

The proposals seek to refurbish and modernise the property to offer an improved, rational layout with high quality living accommodation and provide 9no. high quality en suite bedrooms within each HMO.

The building layout is to be rationalised from the current configuration with the following alterations (proposed layouts for No.6 and No.8 are matching and handed to suit each HMO):

Basement Floor

- The basement is proposed to be returned to serve each individual HMO by re-instating the party wall and internal staircases.
- The existing external steps to the basement level and poor quality canopy above are to be removed and replaced with a suitable sized light well which can provide a good amount of daylight to Bedroom 1 located in the basement of No. 6 (the same principle has been adopted for No.8)
- A secondary Lounge / TV Room is proposed within the front portion of the basement floor which benefits from natural daylight being brought in from the existing window and light well

Ground Floor

- En suite Bedrooms 2 and 3, along with the communal WC are proposed within the front portion of the HMOs ground floor layout.
- The rear part of the ground floor accommodates a good quality open-plan shared Kitchen / Dining / Lounge provision which benefits from direct access to the shared amenity space in the rear garden via the glazed sliding/folding doorsets. The lounge area is created by the replacement single-storey rear extension.

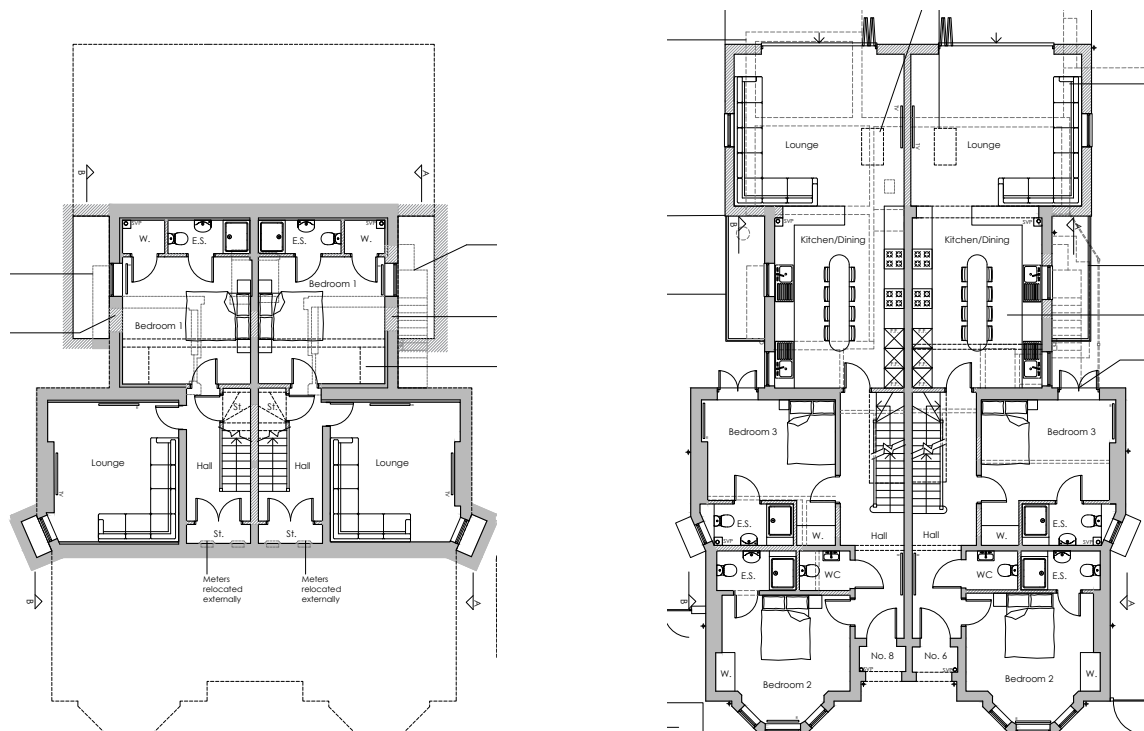


Fig.6: Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plans extract from drawings 18016-PL-10 and 18016-PL-11

First Floor

- En-suite bedrooms 4, 5 and 6 are proposed within existing bedroom locations.
- A shared laundry room is proposed at the front of the buildings above the entrance porch areas.
- A small plant room is proposed within the rear of the building adjacent to proposed Bedroom 6.

Second Floor

- En-suite bedrooms 7, 8 and 9 are proposed within existing bedroom locations.
- Bedroom 9 is proposed to benefit from significant improvement with floor area created by the splayed dormers and the removal of the existing chimney breast and stack

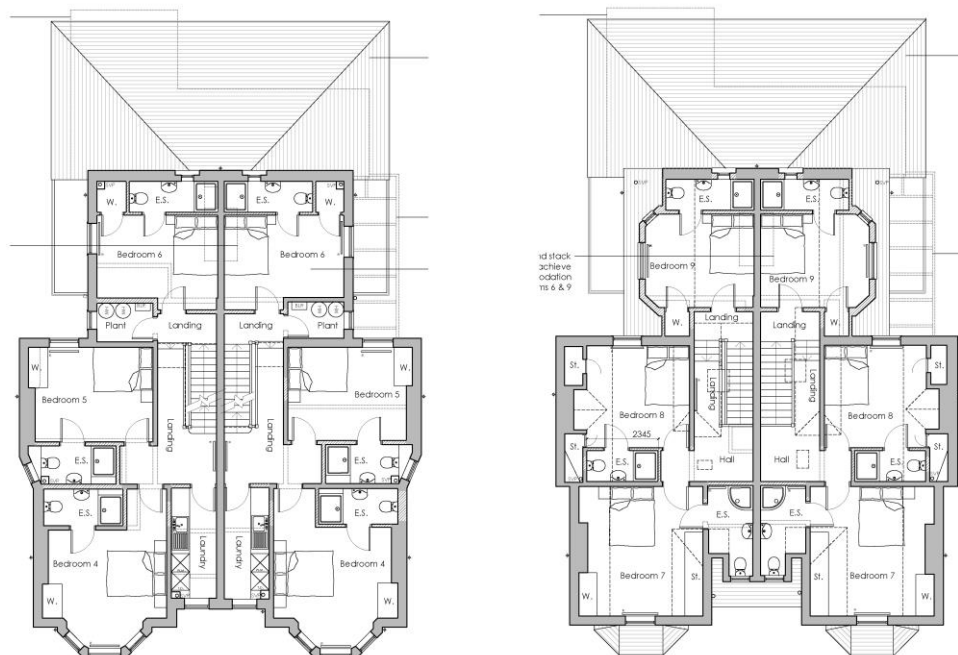


Fig.7: Proposed First and Second Floor Plans extract from drawings 18016-PL-12A and 18016-PL-13

The proposed layouts are generally intended to stack common uses in order to minimise the chance of disturbance being created between the tenants. The two locations where this has not been possible are above and below the proposed Kitchen / Dining room. In these locations it is proposed to upgrade the acoustic performance of the floors and ceilings to provide improved acoustic separation.

7.0 Scale

There are no significant alterations in scale proposed to the existing buildings as part of this application.

8.0 Landscaping

There are no material alterations proposed to landscaping associated with the application.

9.0 Appearance

Modifications proposed to the existing buildings will provide enhancement to the appearance of the existing buildings and wider conservation area, and provide improvement to the quality of interior accommodation. The following alterations have been proposed:

- The existing poor quality UPVC windows are proposed to be replaced with painted timber sash windows to better suit the quality and style of the existing building.
- The existing single-storey rear extension is proposed to be demolished in order to improve the quality of the shared living accommodation and also the appearance of the building from the rear. The poor quality brickwork and render finish to the existing extension will be replaced with a high quality facing brickwork (Flemish bond) extension to match the existing building.



Fig.8: Rear view photograph illustrating existing poor quality extension to be demolished

- Bedrooms 9's en-suite bathrooms at the rear are proposed with smaller sash windows. In order to preserve the existing second floor widow details, we propose the openings and arch details to be kept and to recess infill brickwork within the openings, surrounding the new windows. The same window details

are proposed for the rear en-suite bathrooms on first floor to achieve a consistent and attractive appearance.

- The splayed dormers serving Bedrooms 9 are proposed to be clad using plain clay tile hanging to match the existing roofs.



Fig.9: Proposed Rear (West) Elevation extract from drawing 18016-PL-14

- Modifications proposed to windows on the side elevations (north and south) are all to be congruous with the window proportions, type and style of the existing building.
- A glass balustrade has been proposed as guarding to the proposed Bedroom no.1 lightwells in order to create an unobtrusive appearance and maximise daylight transmittance.

10.0 Access

There are no material alterations proposed to the pedestrian or vehicular access to the application site.