

development of alfred house / 78 oxford road reading / rg1 7lj

design, access & heritage statement
27 november 2018 – planning issue

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introduction

about design and access statements

Colony Architects use a Design and Access Statement as an illustration tool to explain a planning application design proposal, the rationale behind its creation and how it is appropriate for the context.

The Statement furthermore serves to meet statutory requirements, local planning policy and national guidance documents.

Statutory Requirements of a Design and Access Statement

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 requires a Design and Access Statement to be made in the following application situations:

- ▶ Major Developments;
- ▶ Within a designated area (conservation area, World Heritage Sites);
- ▶ The provision of one or more dwellinghouses; or
- ▶ The Provision a building, or increase in building area greater than 100sqm.

The statement should cover:

- ▶ The design principles and concepts that been applied to the development;
- ▶ How access relating to the development have been dealt with, adopting local planning policy requirements;
- ▶ Explain the steps taken to appraise the context and how the design of the development takes the context into account;
- ▶ State what, if any consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation.

Guidance Documents

In addition to the statutory requirements of a Design and Access Statement, there is further guidance on the document structure. DCLG Circular 01 / 2006: Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System identifies three essential components of a design and access statement, to which this document generally follows. These are:

Appraising the Context

A statement must demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development, since it is important to the eventual design that an applicant should understand the context in which their proposal will fit and use this understanding to design the scheme. To gain a good understanding of context and use it appropriately, applicants should follow a design process which includes assessment, involvement and evaluation as well as design.

The Design Component

A design and access statement should explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to particular aspects of the proposal. These are:

- ▶ **Use** – How the use or mix of uses proposed for the land and buildings have been derived from an understanding of the site's context.
- ▶ **Amount** – How much development is proposed. For residential development, this means the number of units proposed for residential use. The statement should explain and justify the amount of development proposed for each use, its distribution across the site, how it relates to the site's surroundings and how accessibility to and between all parts of the development have been maximised.
- ▶ **Layout** – The way in which buildings, routes and open spaces, (both public and private), are provided, placed and orientated in relation to each other and buildings and spaces surrounding the site.
- ▶ **Scale** – The size of the buildings, (including their height), in relation to their surroundings. The statement should also explain and justify the size of individual building parts and how these relate to each other.
- ▶ **Appearance** – The visual impression made by the building should be explained and justified, including its built form, architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture.

- **Landscaping** – i.e. the treatment of private and public spaces to enhance or protect the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated, through hard and soft landscaping measures and how these will be maintained.

The Access Component

Design and access statements should explain how access arrangements will ensure that all users will have equal and convenient access to buildings and spaces and the wider transport network.

It should include an explanation of the applicant's policy and approach to access, with particular reference to the inclusion of disabled people, a description of any consultation undertaken in relation to access issues and how the outcome of consultations and advice received on accessibility issues has been followed.

Access for emergency services should be explained where relevant.

Design Process

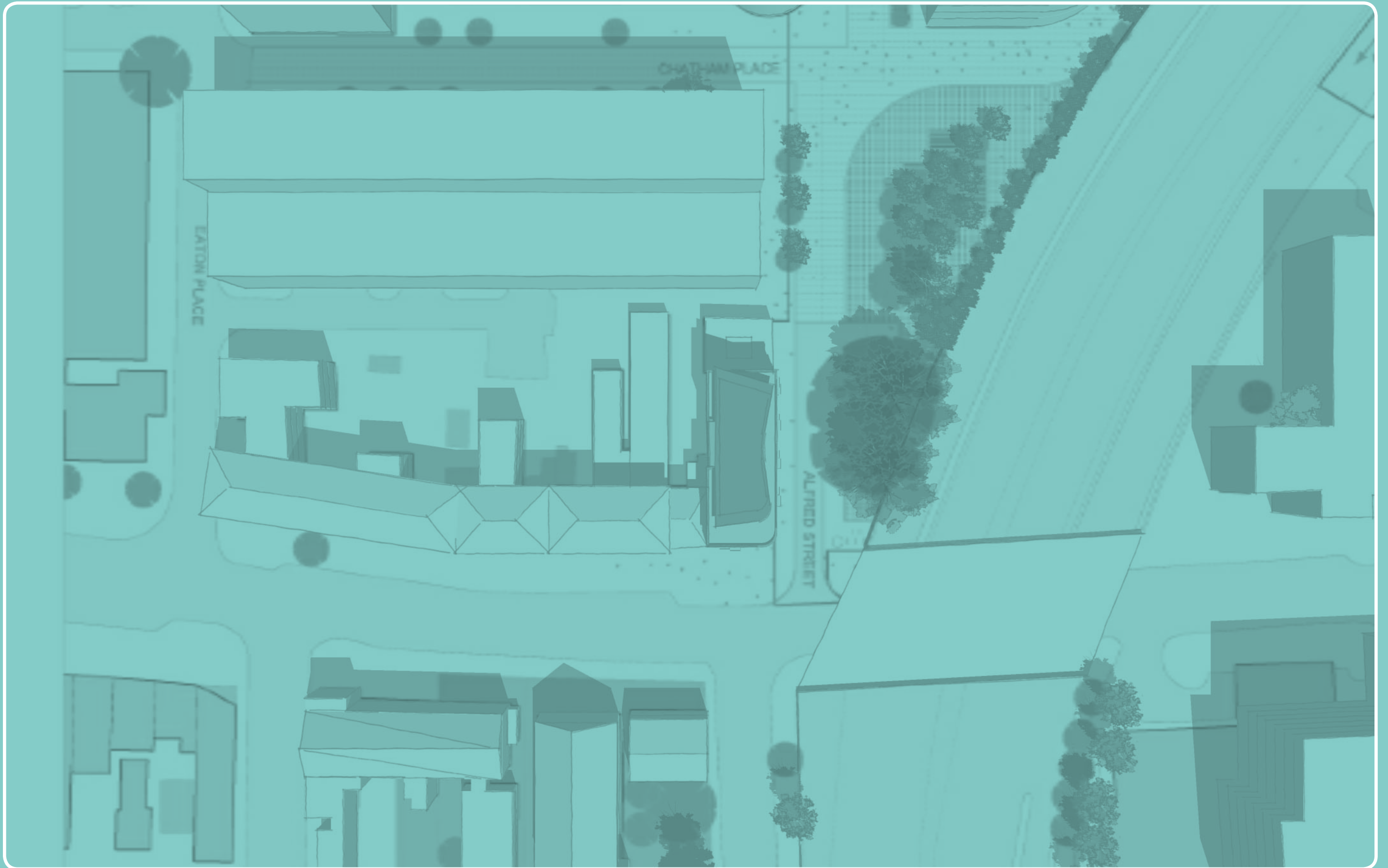
During the design process, the design team not only observe statutory requirements and guidance documents, but also local planning policy requirements, examples of these documents include:

- Design Quality (Supplementary Planning Documents / Guidance)
- Character & Conservation Area assessments
- Lifetime Homes & Wheelchair housing requirements
- Housing design standards
- Sustainability checklists
- Parking & Highways standards

“Circular 01 / 2006 recommends that applicants follow an assessment - involvement - and evaluation design process.

This closely mirrors a good design process and means that the final design will be informed by the wider context of the site.”

CABE: Guide to Design and Access Statements



application and location

Description

This application is for the demolition and replacement of No.78 with a new mixed-use development of 150.8sqm of retail space and 14 residential units.

This document is to be read in conjunction with submitted plans and reports.

Site Location

The site location map illustrates the site's location within central Reading, on the western edge of the Town Centre.

Site Locality

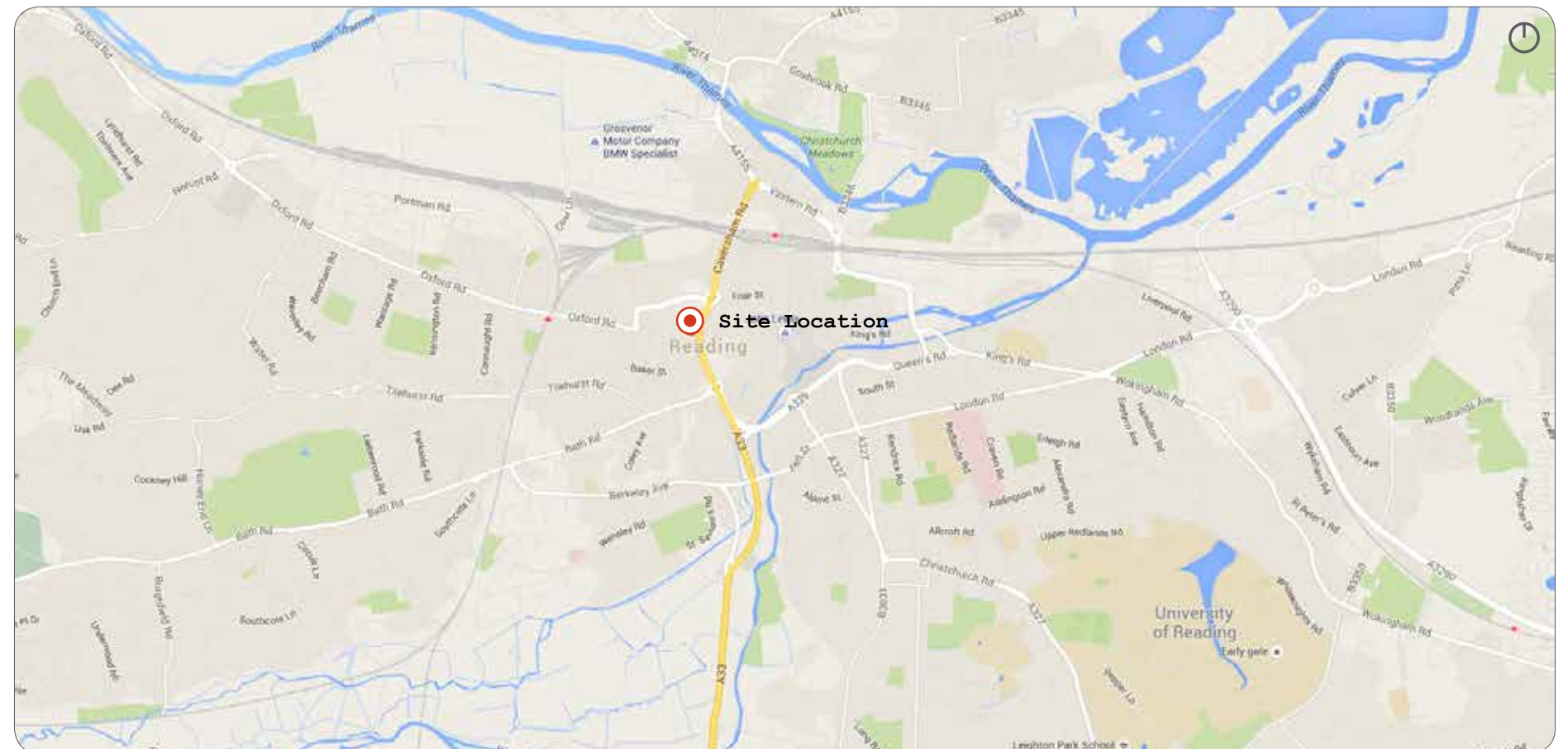
The aerial view of site shows that the locality of the site is a predominantly mixed use area that contains retail, residential, offices and community building. It is central to the settlement of Reading and so has very easy access to the excellent infrastructure, facilities and employment.

Sustainable Location

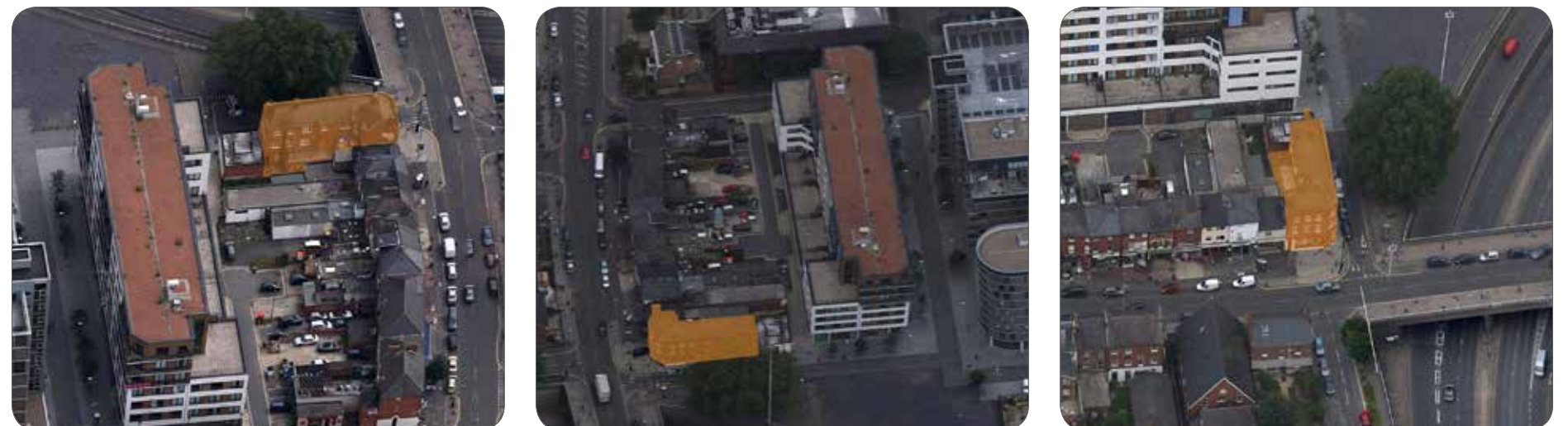
The site is a sustainable location for development as it is in close proximity to:

- ▶ Town Centre [8 mins walk];
- ▶ Reading Railway station [10 mins walk];
- ▶ Reading West Railway station [5 mins walk];
- ▶ Located over a parade of shops on Oxford Road;
- ▶ Employment within Oxford Road and Reading Town Centre;
- ▶ Schools, Churches, Libraries, Hotels and healthcare all nearby.

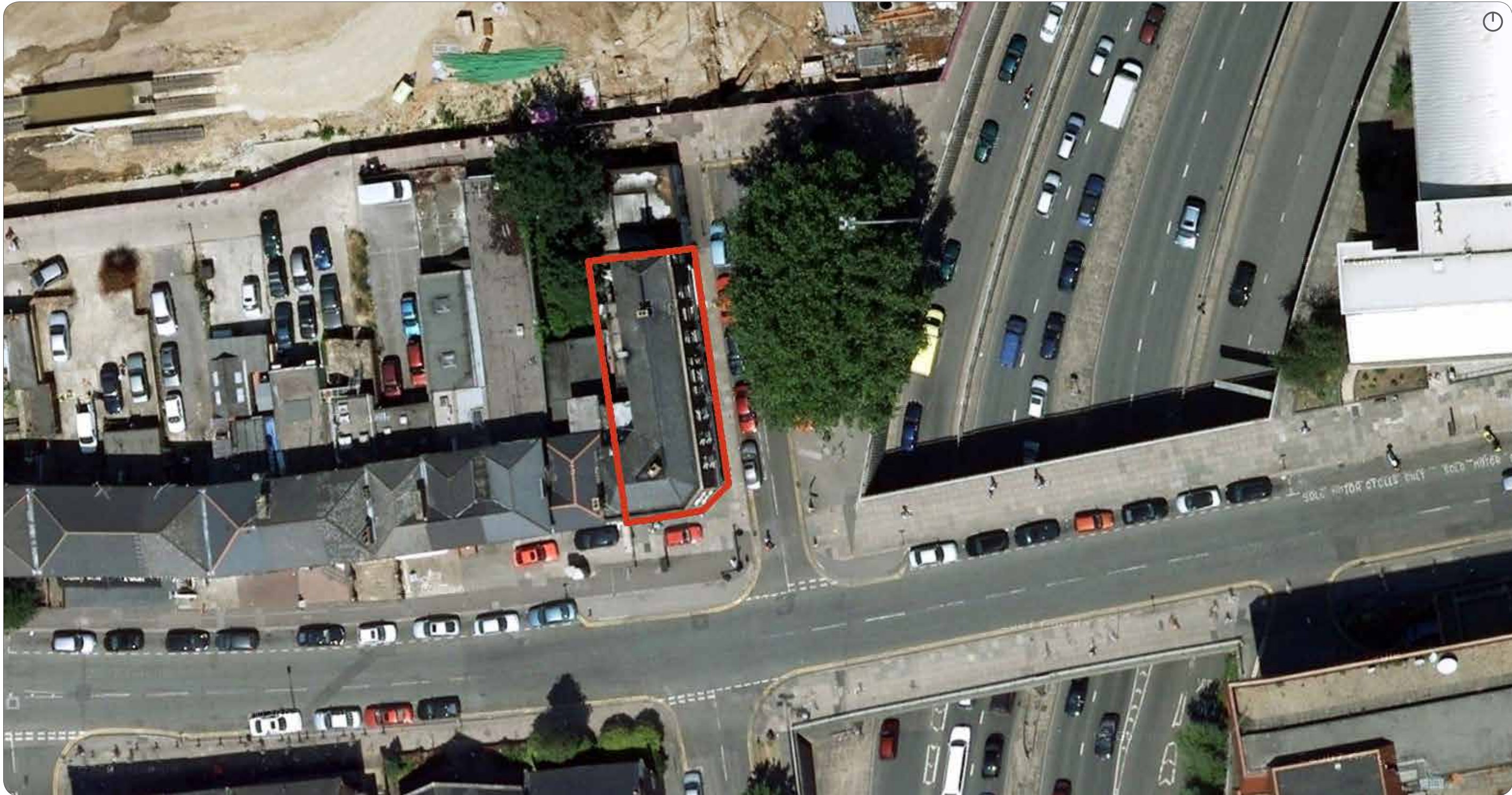
The proposed site for development make use of existing infrastructure, services, facilities and employment opportunities, and therefore should be considered a sustainable location for additional housing. From a broader viewpoint, the increased need for housing in the UK can be met largely from sites of this nature being developed.



Site location - map view



Axonometric aerial views



Site location - aerial view

site parameters

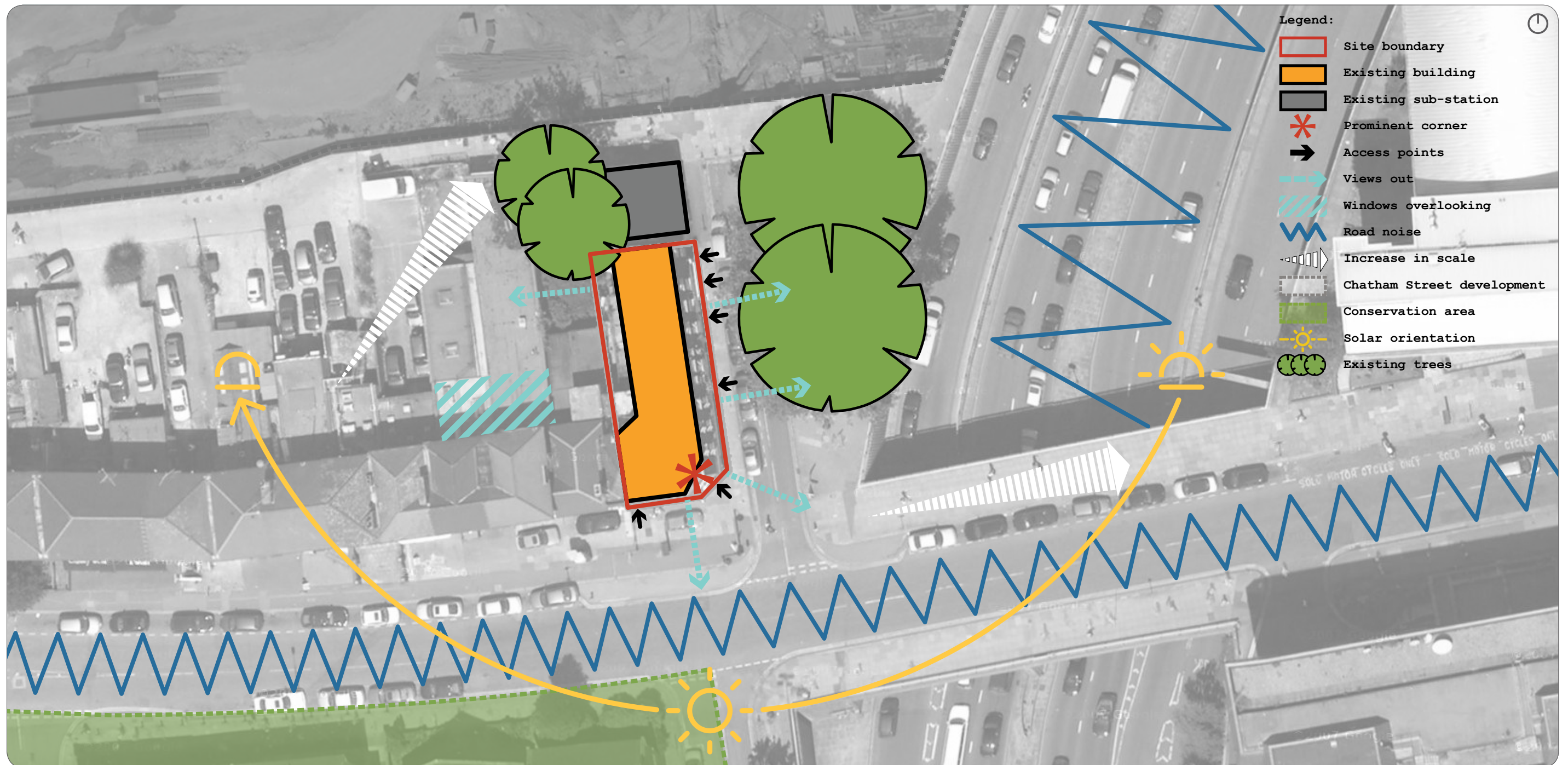


Site Parameters

- ▶ Site area: approximately 246sqm;
- ▶ Current site use: retail to ground floor with residential flats over;
- ▶ Site shape is broadly rectangular;
- ▶ The building has key frontages facing onto Oxford Road to the south and Alfred Street to the east;
- ▶ The rear and side elevations face onto rear services areas and an electrical sub-station;
- ▶ The building abuts No. 80 Oxford Road, a retail building;
- ▶ Given the openness to the south and east there is no overlooking or overshadowing in these aspects;
- ▶ The substation and rear service areas to the rear also present no overlooking or overshadowing concerns;
- ▶ There are some windows to the rear of the properties that face into Oxford Road, but these serve the retail use of the building;
- ▶ The site holds a prominent townscape position, being the gateway building to Oxford Road;
- ▶ The site fronts two busy roads, Oxford Road and the A33. Oxford Road has lower speed town centre traffic, the A33 is a higher speed distributor road, which is sunk below street level to reduce appearance and noise;
- ▶ The site has no parking or vehicular access and given the building has very limited open space this is not a future option;
- ▶ Existing access points to the building are from Oxford Road and Alfred Street, the corner retail unit has a prominent corner access point;
- ▶ The area is has a variety of uses, mainly retail onto Oxford Road, with residential on the secondary streets. Hotels, churches and other community buildings are also located along Oxford Road;
- ▶ The recently completed Chatham Street development lies to the north of the site, this large scale and mixed use development has improved the appearance of the area, provided much needed housing and set a new a new scale of townscape development with the 19 storey tower. The nearest building of the Chatham Street development next to the site is 6 storeys high. To the east, beyond Alfred Street is a small public park, with some meaningful trees and landscaping, this provides a pleasant outlook, helps to separate the building from the A33 and provides amenity to the local area;
- ▶ The Site is opposite Castle Hill and Russell Street Conservation area which is the other side of Oxford Road.



Conservation area map



Constraints and opportunities diagram

site context

Character of Context – Townscape, Architecture and Density

- ▶ Town centre density and scale with some nearby city scale developments such as Chatham Street;
- ▶ Street level shop frontages with offices and flats over, facing onto Oxford Road;
- ▶ Terrace housing faces onto the secondary streets;
- ▶ Mixed age of buildings, styles and scales:
 - Oxford Road and the Conservation Area to the west/south of the site are up to 4 storeys and predominantly historic in character and design;
 - A33 and the Town centre opposite to the north/east is large in scale up to 19 storeys and more modern residential/hotel and offices buildings.

Character of Context – Landscape, Trees and Public Realm

- ▶ Oxford Road is a busy town centre street, commercial in character with limited planting;
- ▶ The Small park and trees to the east of Alfred Street provides the only greenery within the area;
- ▶ The A33 that runs below street level is a “harsh” tarmac and concrete thoroughfare dividing the town centre from Oxford Road.

Urban Grain

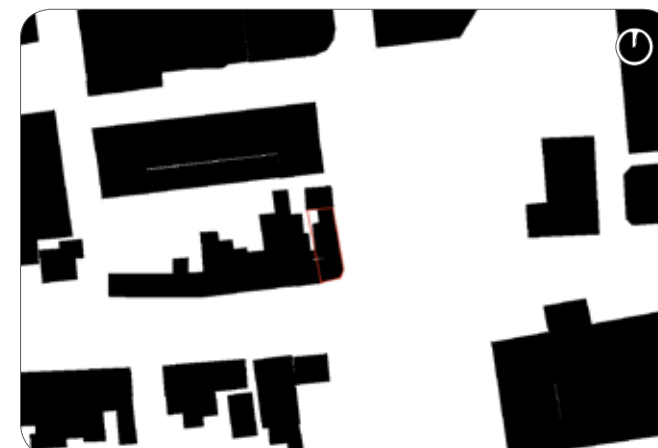
- ▶ To the west of the A33 the Grain of buildings is terraced along the streets with tight front to front and back to back distances;
- ▶ To the east of the A33 the buildings are larger and generally larger in block form, retail elements line the street level.

Building Heights

- ▶ The buildings to the south/west of the site are generally up to 4 storeys;
- ▶ The buildings to the north/east of the site are generally taller up to 19 storeys.



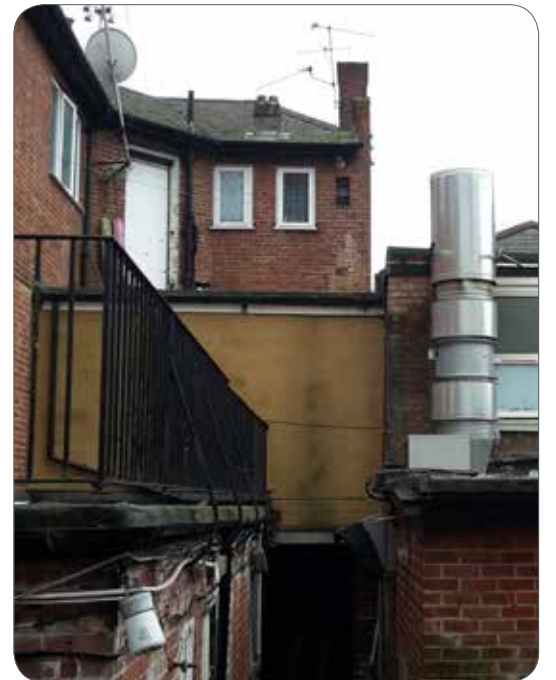
Aerial view of site



Urban grain diagram



Building heights diagram



Site photographs

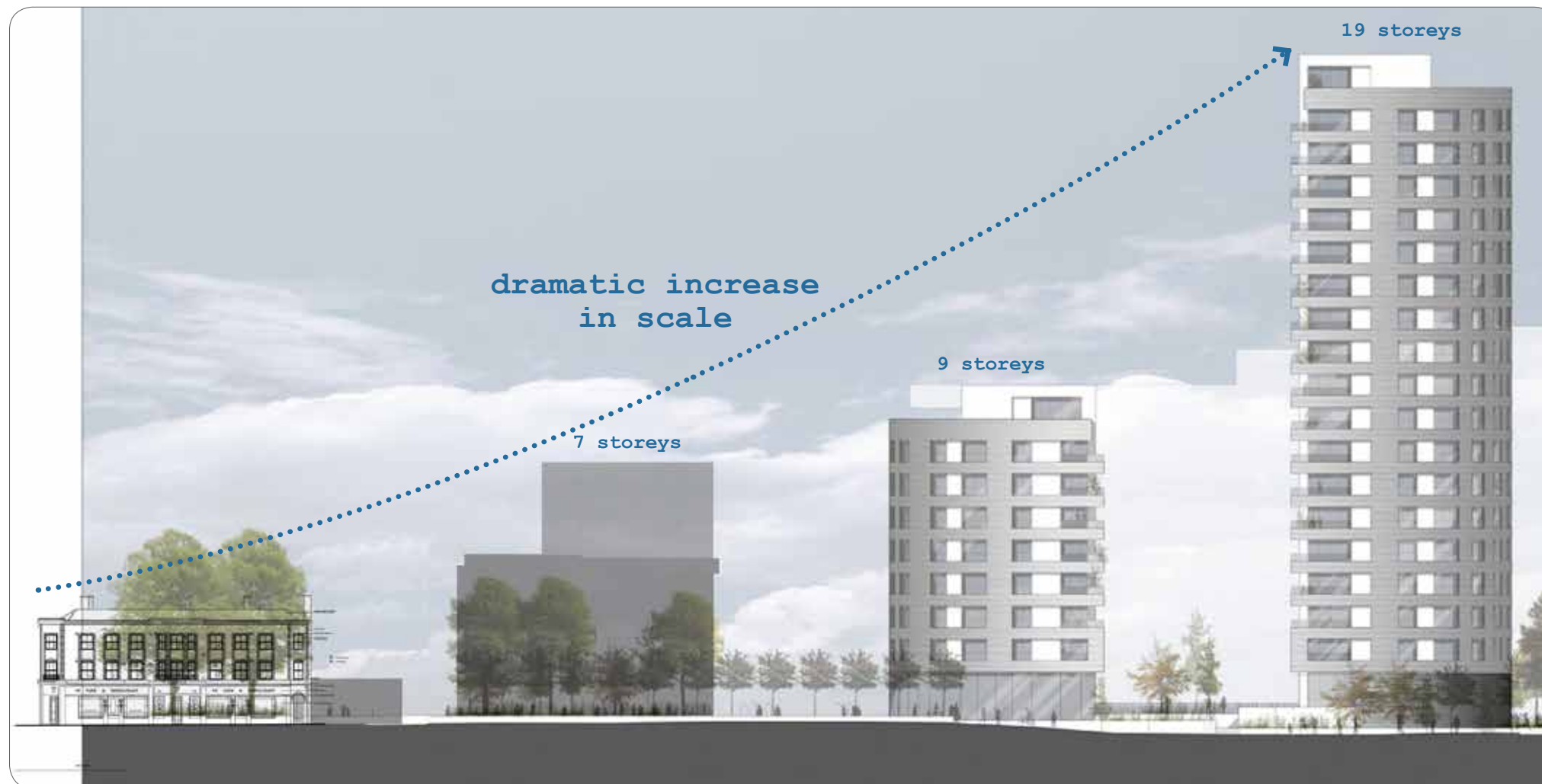
site context – continued



Phase 1 Chatham Street – Plan view



Phase 1 Chatham Street – Site photograph



Phase 1 Chatham Street - Street scene



Phase 1 Chatham Street - Site photograph

heritage statement

Conservation Area Assessment

Whilst the development proposal does not alter any listed building and is outside of any conservations areas it is close to the Russell Street & Castle Hill Conservation Area so an assessment of the schemes impact has been carried out to ensure that the significance of the CA (Conservation Area) has not been compromised.

"The Conservation Area lies on the west side of the medieval core of Reading, from which it is separated by the Inner Distribution Road, built in the 1970s. To the east, the land falls steeply towards the River Kennet, and the land also drops slightly across the Conservation Area to the north." (Section 3.1 Russell Street/ Castle Hill Conservation Area appraisal)

As part of the design process the design team accessed the CA (Conservation Area) appraisal for the Castle Street and Russell Street area to ensure that the proposal would not negatively impact the nearby conservation area. As illustrated on the adjacent map the site lies outside the CA on the north-eastern corner, on the northern side of the Oxford Road or what is considered as "area: 4 Oxford Road" within section 6.4 of the Conservation Area appraisal.

The Conservation Area appraisal describes Area:4 Oxford Road as:

"Oxford Road contains a long terrace of listed buildings, dating to the early 19th century. The terrace is divided by a shorter group of mainly late 19th century development and many of the buildings in the whole group have modern shopfronts or have been converted into offices. Nos. 169/171 have late 19th century shopfronts, somewhat altered."

The appraisal goes further to list some of the negative features within Area:4 that future developments might look to address:-

- ▶ Busy traffic;
- ▶ Poor pedestrian links across the main road;
- ▶ Poor quality shopfronts, some of them in listed buildings (e.g. Nos. 155 and 157);
- ▶ Poorly maintained buildings, some of them listed (e.g. No. 139);
- ▶ Plastic windows in listed buildings (e.g. Nos. 171 and 177);
- ▶ Loss of chimney stacks and chimney pots (e.g. Nos. 155-157 Oxford Road).

The Immediate Historic Context

The prominent corner with Howard Street / Oxford road and the returning lengths of Howard street and southern side of the Oxford road are the closest and therefore most sensitive part of the CA that the application site will need to respond too. The Northern side of the Oxford road is outside of the CA and contains a few historic buildings of merit, these are interspersed with modern commercial buildings and retail frontages which, although not unattractive contain less heritage value.

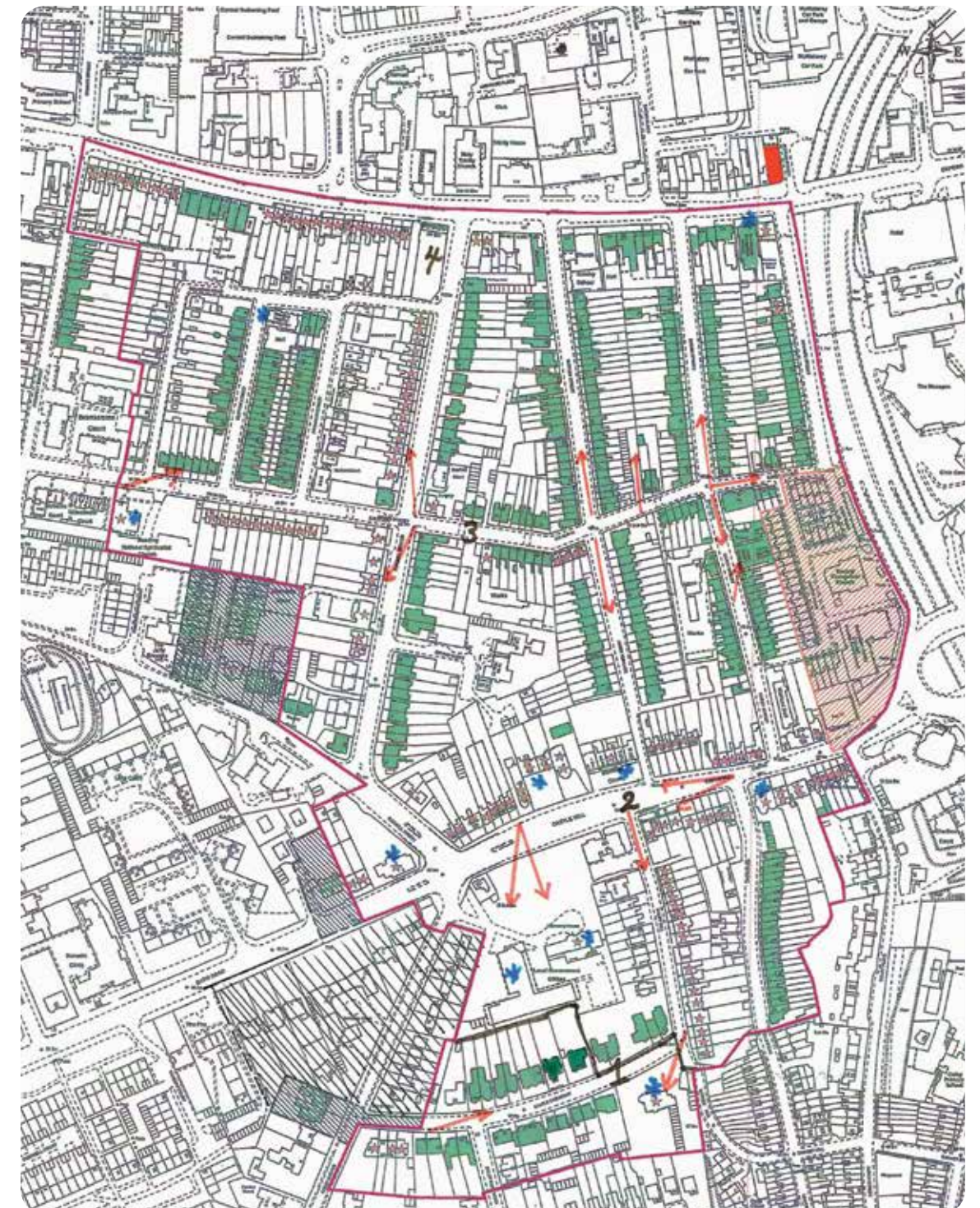
"To the north, Oxford Road, which was developed at about the same time as Russell Street, contains a number of notable late Georgian houses although most of them have been adversely affected by the addition of modern shopfronts. The least altered are nos. 195-203, a three storey terrace, each three windows wide, and built from red brick without any changes to the ground or basement elevations. No. 101 (Roxborough House) is a small villa of c.1840, located on the junction with Howard Street, and No.139 retains a very good quality front door, with a circle and teardrop fanlight." (Section 7.2 Russell Street/ Castle Hill CA appraisal)



Oxford Road / Howard Street Corner



Oxford Road - existing frontage



Conservation Area map

Buildings Listed and of Townscape Merit

The Conservation Area appraisal highlights a number of buildings that are listed and of townscape merit that contribute to this important corner area. These are:

- ▶ No. 101 Oxford Road - Roxborough House (Grade II / NGR: SU7100673371)
Circa 1859. 2 storeys, symmetrical . Red brick on basement with 1st floor stone cill band and wood block eaves cornice to slate roof. Coped gables with kneelers. End chimneys. 3 windows on 1st floor, 2 on ground-floor, glazing bar sashes; architrave surrounds and bracketed cornices on ground floor. Steps to 4 panel door, rectangular overlight. Basement openings have cast iron guards with honeysuckle ornament. Plain verandah at back. Brick flanking walls with stone cope and modern rails.
- ▶ No. 4 and 4a Howard Street – Kent House (Grade II / NGR: SU7101173324)
Early C19. The best in a terrace of pleasant late Georgian houses. 3 storeys. Red brick. Ground floor rendered (No. 4 channelled).

- ▶ *String over ground floor. Cornice and blocking course. Concealed roof. 2 bays each, glazing bar sash windows except for modern casements on 1st floor of No. 4a. Ground floor windows off centre, arched in recesses. Round headed entrances with recessed doors.*
- ▶ Mannson House – Kent House (Grade II / NGR: SU7091973409)
Early C19. 2 storeys. Red brick, small moulded stucco cornice and blocking course. Slate roof (hipped). Glazing bar sash windows, 5 on 1st floor, 4 on ground floor. Central Doric portico with moulded steps, arched fanlight to 6 panelled door.
- ▶ 103 Oxford Road – Providence Chapel – Focal Building as highlighted within the Russell Street/ Castle Hill Conservation Area appraisal

Summary of Conservation area characteristics:

- ▶ Strong linear frontages to Oxford Road and Howard Street
- ▶ Modern buildings surround the Conservation Area (Town Centre/Chatham Street/North Oxford Road) forming a taller contemporary backdrop



- ▶ Generally built within the 19th century
- ▶ Character of area and Palette of local materials:
 - 1.Roof materials typically slate
 - 2.High proportion of brick buildings, with some render/polychromatic facework
 - 3.Strong architectural character created by subtle variations of a strong “townhouse typology”
 - 4.Generally, retail to the Ground floor areas, forming a linear line of shop frontage with residential over
 - 5.Occasional dormers to roofscape
 - 6.Subtle undulation in roofscape



No.101 Oxford Road (Roxborough House)



No.4 and 4a Howard Street (Kent House)



Mannson House



No.103 Oxford Road

heritage statement – continued

Evolution of the Context (Map Regression)

1879 Map of Reading

- ▶ A different street pattern compared to the current context, a tighter network terraced line streets;
- ▶ The density of streets is based on a hierarchy of route importance;
- ▶ The property on the site was different to the one onsite today;
- ▶ Alfred Street existed as a terraced lined secondary route between Oxford Road and Chatham Street;
- ▶ Site held a far less prominent position due to greater density of buildings around and directly address Oxford Road.



1879 Map of Reading

1912 Map of Reading

- ▶ Majority of the street pattern exists from the 1879, but early signs of modern developments altering terrace pattern with new larger building blocks replacing the housing, such as the block opposite the site and the "Palace Theatre);
- ▶ A tramway runs along Oxford Road.



1912 Map of Reading

1962 Map of Reading

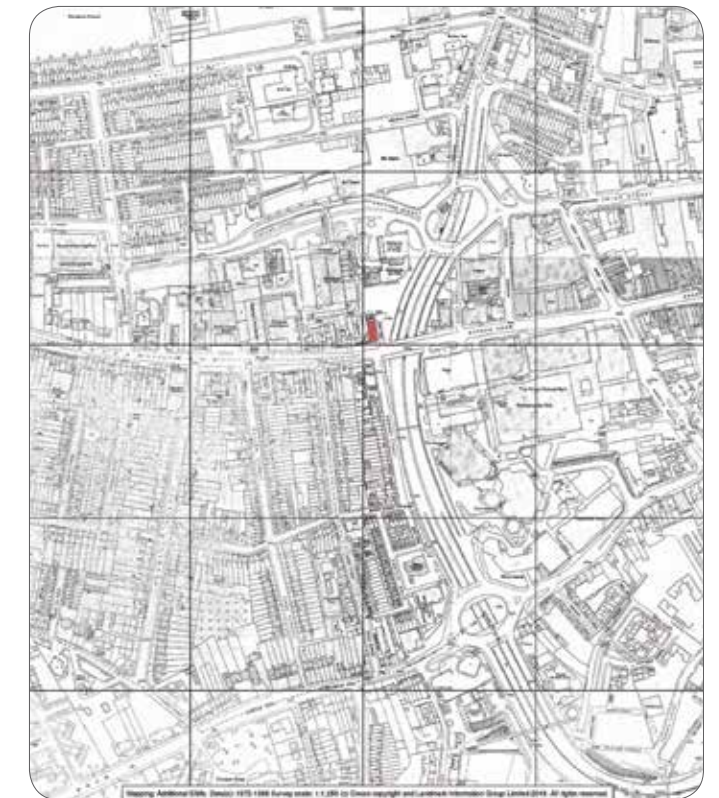
- ▶ Further erosion of previous street patterns notably north of the Oxford Road where larger warehousing, car parks, and retail buildings start to appear;
- ▶ The last map before the IDR "Inner Distributor Road" was constructed;
- ▶ The building as seen on site today was constructed on site.



1962 Map of Reading

1972 Map of Reading

- ▶ Major urban pattern change with the introduction of the IDR "Inner Distributor Road" and town centre regeneration;
- ▶ The tight-knit urban grain was removed to the east, exposing the building to create a new frontage to the IDR and newly formed public realm;
- ▶ Alfred Street cut short and pedestrian link only to Chatham Street;
- ▶ The Electrical substation was built to the north of the site;
- ▶ Much of the street pattern to the Southern Part of the Oxford Road remains very similar, but the north side, save for a few buildings, was wholly altered.



1972 Map of Reading

The Existing Building
"Shillingford House" 78
Alfred Street

- ▶ A more detailed summary of the existing building is covered in the following section;
- ▶ The Map regression exercise illustrates that the building was constructed between 1912 and 1962;
- ▶ There are some suggestions that it was built in the 1930s;
- ▶ The building, thought to be dated as post war, is a well-mannered design which embodies some classical design proportions and light applications of Art-Deco styling;
- ▶ The building, thought to be dated as post-war, is a well-mannered design which embodies some classical design proportions and light applications of Art-Deco styling;

- ▶ Although a prominent building, constructed in a style and of materials that compliment that Conservation area, the architectural and heritage merits low to fair.

Significance

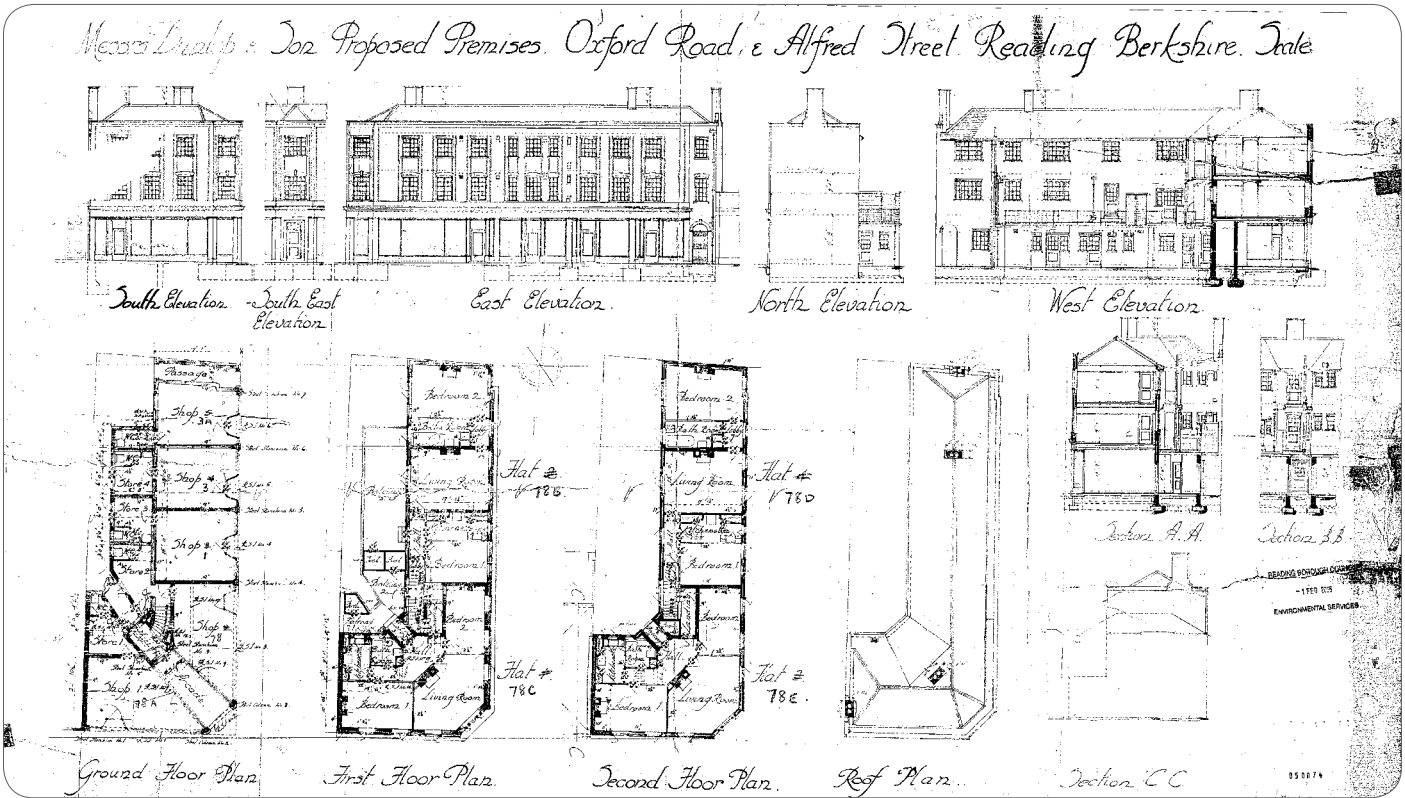
- ▶ Prominent corner position seen within the context of heritage assets (4and4a Howard Street / 101 Oxford Road);
- ▶ High visual heritage value associated with the townscape appearance and architectural merits of the buildings that front Oxford Road and Howard Street;
- ▶ No 78 and the adjoining terrace of shops/flats is the last north Oxford Road of pre-1970s street pattern of Reading Town centre, representing an "island" of built form with an historic layout;
- ▶ The site sits at the end of a vista view along Howard Street and can be read within this context;

- ▶ The openness that fronts Alfred Street and Howard Street has become a green public realm and forms an important character to the area, the development site also fronts this aspect.

Conclusion of Conservation
Area Assessment for
Development

- ▶ The site is outside of the Conservation Area so its immediate impact is therefore peripheral and mainly associated with the visual impact from key vistas, notably:
 1. Along Oxford Road away from the town centre.
 2. Along Howard Street towards the site.
 3. From the IDR / public realm.

4. From the Oxford Road towards town.
- ▶ The scale and impact of the proposal needs to respect the existing scale of the Oxford Road and the listed building (Roxborough House) directly opposite;
 - ▶ The existing building is a modest piece of architecture its partial/full replacement is acceptable if the proposal is of high quality;
 - ▶ The existing building already fully fills the site with a 3 storey scale and taller chimney-scape, any replacement/alterations will need to be of a suitable scale to command this important townscape position whilst not overshadowing the nearby heritage assets;
 - ▶ The site bridges the lower scale / traditional style buildings of the Conservation Area and the taller/ modern scales of the Town Centre/North Oxford Road. A sympathetic design response is required to straddle both these architectural settings.



Existing Building Plans



Conservation Area Map - Extract



Oxford Road - street scene



View along Howard Street towards the site

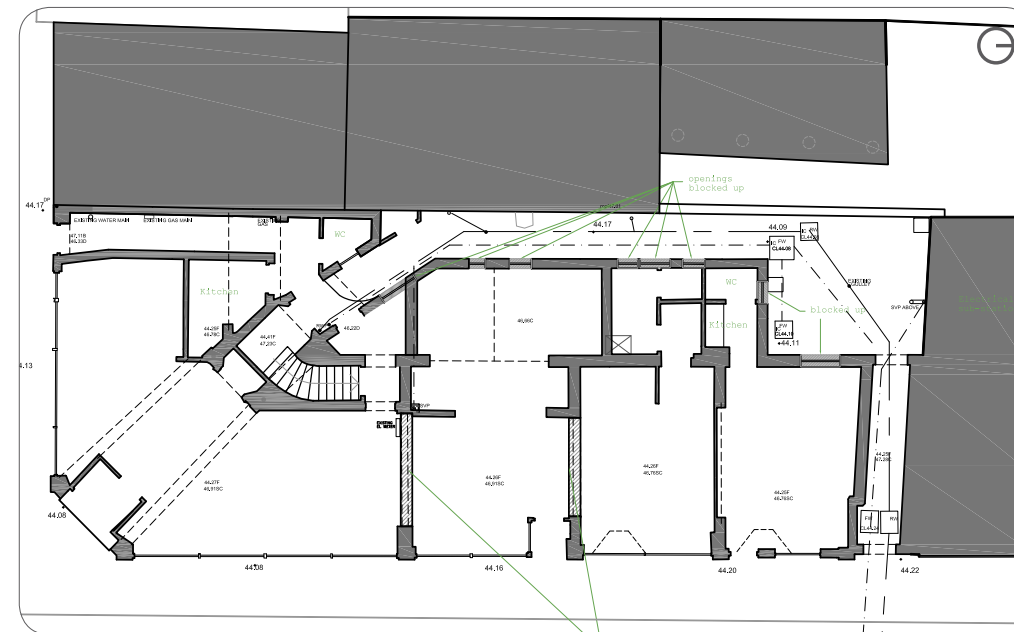


View from the IDR / public realm towards the site

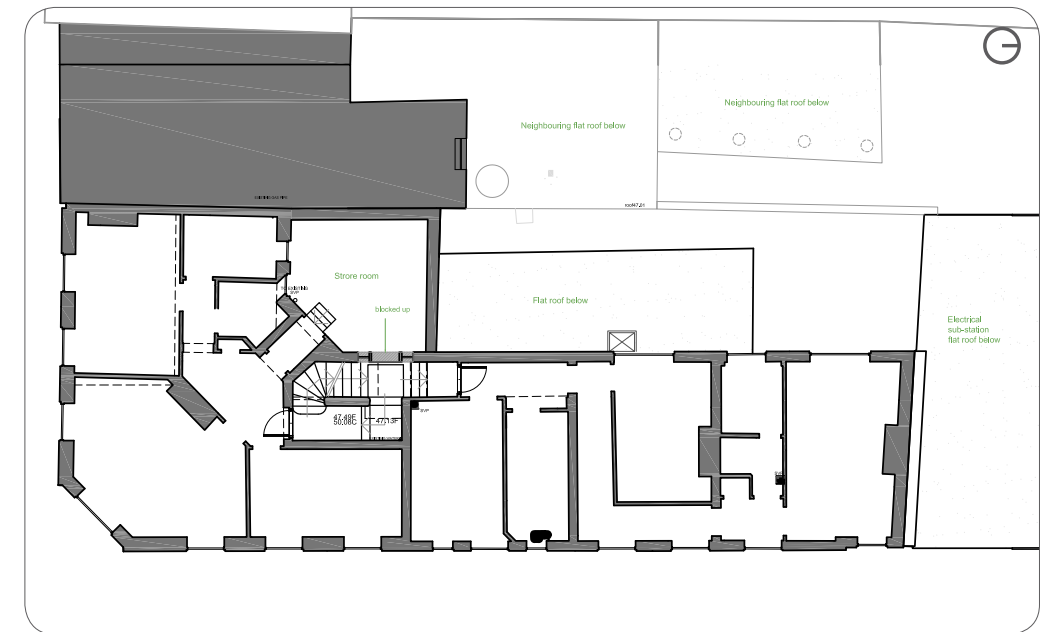
existing building

Description

- ▶ The existing building is a three storey mixed use building (Retail x 4no. units /Residential x 4no. 2-bed dwellings);
- ▶ The building front Oxford Road and Alfred Street directly to the back edge of pavement forming a strong corner block;
- ▶ Behind the building is a small service courtyard that the residents/retailers use for cycles, bins, storage and rear access;
- ▶ The building, thought to be dated as post war, is a well-mannered design which embodies some classical design proportions and light applications of Art-Deco styling;
- ▶ The low pitched roof is sat behind a raised parapet giving the façade a strong townscape presence;
- ▶ The lower floors of retail have altered the existing lower floors and inserted contemporary signage and branding;
- ▶ The internal concrete staircase.



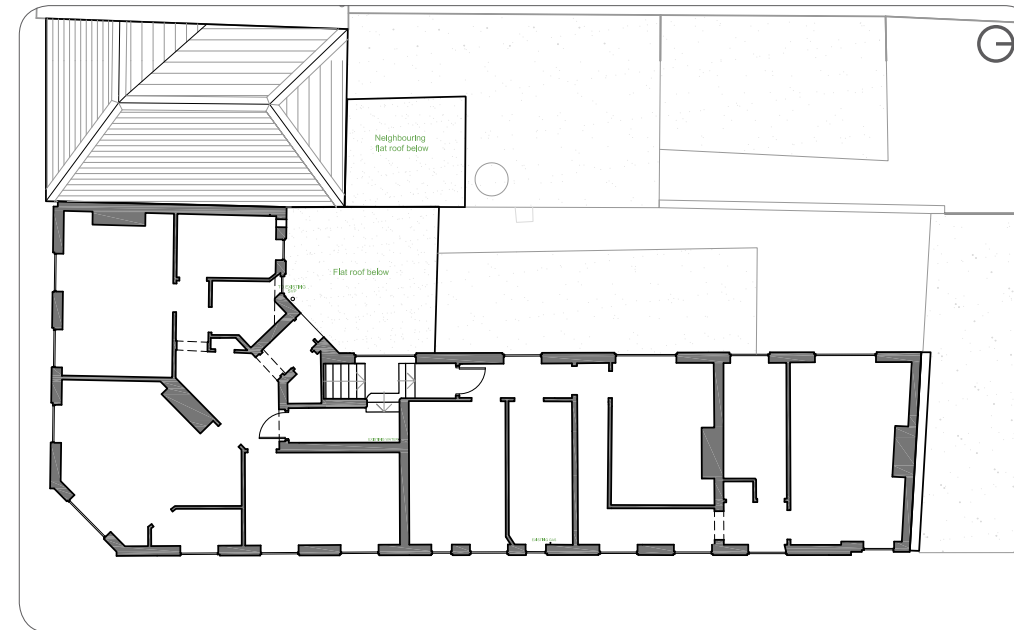
Existing ground floor plan



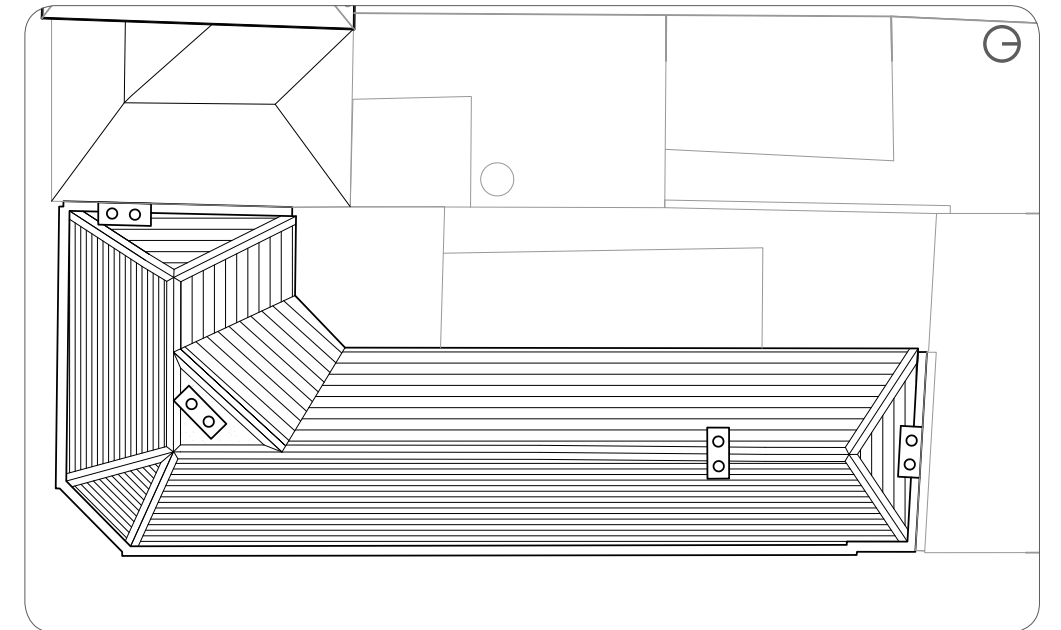
Existing first floor plan



Existing building



Existing second floor plan



Existing roof plan



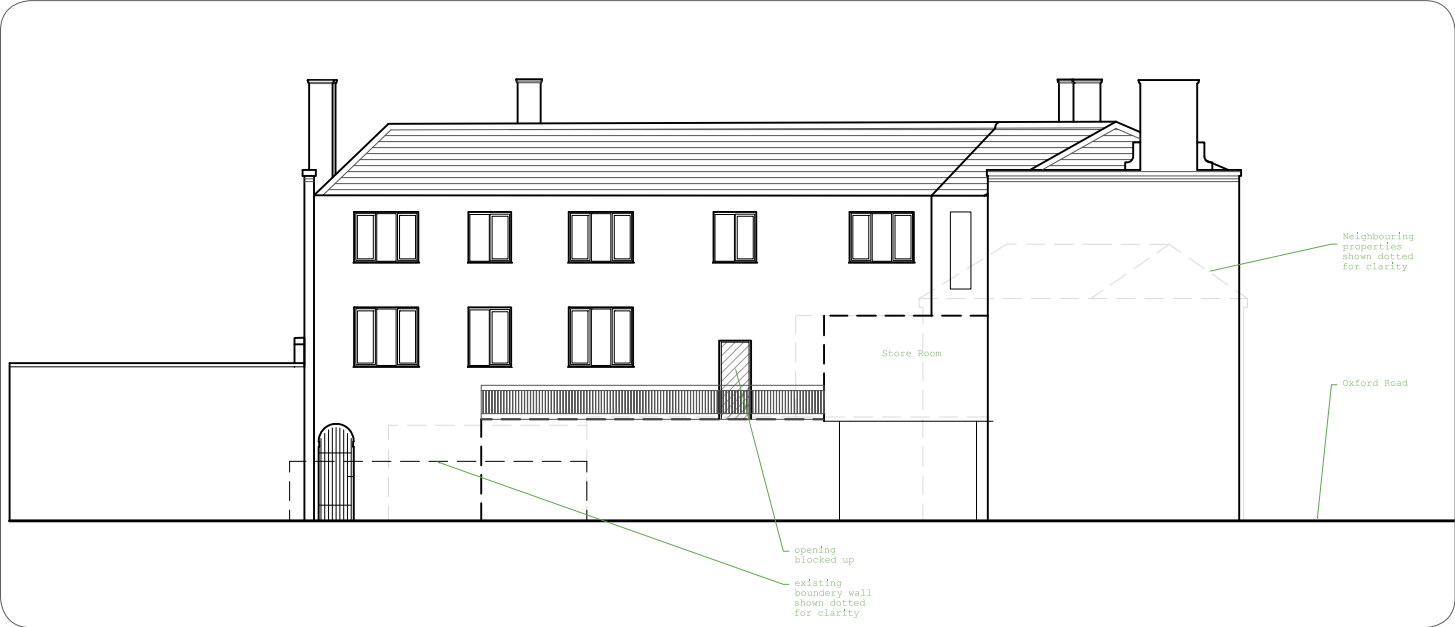
Existing east elevation



Existing south elevation



Existing dormer



Existing west elevation



Existing north elevation

planning history & design development

Summary of Planning History

27 October 2005: Full Planning app: 05/00074/FUL	Full planning approval extension and refurbishment to provide 10 flats and café front. Residential accommodation provided was for 4 x 2-bed, 2x 1-1bed and 2 x studios, totalling 8 flats
16 September 2014: Scoping meeting 141243	Steve Vigar
17 December 2014: PPA (Planning Performance Agreement)	Agreed with Steve Vigar and Lynette Baker
24 August 2015: Pre-application meeting	Steve Vigar
February 2016: Pre app: 141243/PREAPP	Part retention/part redevelopment for reconfigured retail units at ground floor level and 13 residential units
September 2015: Follow-up advice	Jonathan Markwell
11 September 2015: Pre app: 141243/PREAPP	Part retention/part redevelopment for reconfigured retail units at ground floor level and 13 residential units
29 March 2016: Pre-application meeting	Jonathan Markwell – Part retention/part redevelopment for reconfigured retail units at ground floor level and 13 residential units (attached)
October 2016: Full application submitted 161860	Daniel Murkin
October 2016: Application withdrawn 161860	Richard Eautough
May 2018: Design Review Panel	Richard Eautough
6 June 2018: Pre app: 161860PREAPP	Richard Eatough – Demolition of existing building and residential-led redevelopment scheme including retail units at ground floor

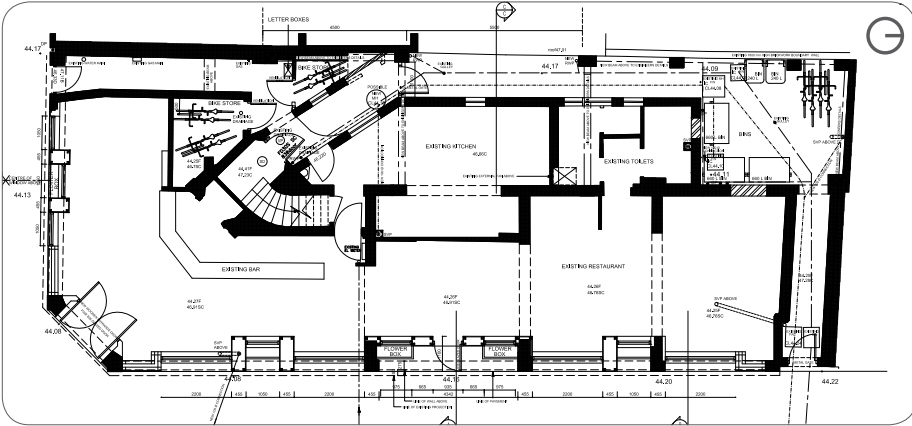
Prior to this application a number of full and pre-applications have been made for the development of the site. The keys ones are listed below with a summary of the applications and an outcomes of the processes:

Previous Application 05/00074/FUL

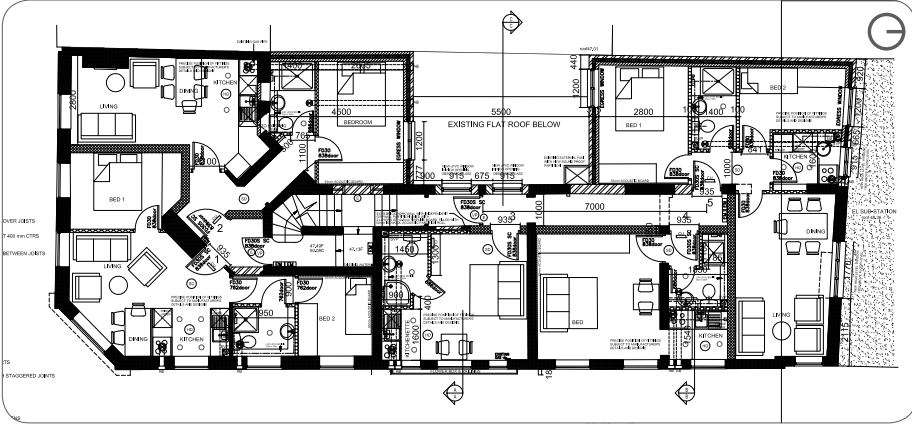
Extension and refurbishment to provide 10 flats and a café front:

- ▶ The Application was granted consent on the 27th October 2005, but expired in Oct 2008;
- ▶ The proposed development converted and extended the property to the rear over all three storeys, a reduced courtyard was created and to avoid overlooking between the new dwellings and neighbouring properties window where carefully positioned;
- ▶ No parking was provided within this application as there was no space on site to allow this and the site was considered central to the transport infrastructure;
- ▶ Balconies are facing to the rear (west) of the property;
- ▶ New windows have been added to the north elevation overlooking the sub-station;
- ▶ The residential accommodation provided was for 4x 2-bed, 2x 1-bed and 2x studios;
- ▶ Cycles and Bins are located to the ground floor area, accessed from the existing side alley.

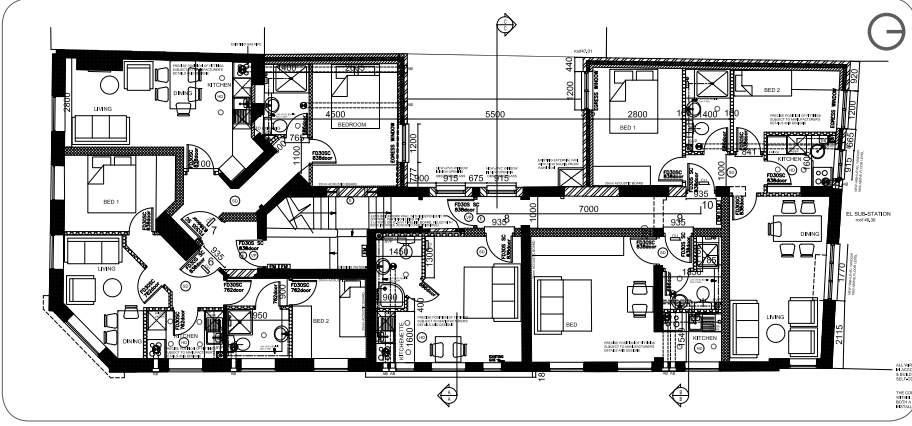
Previous Approved 2006 Scheme



Approved 2006 scheme Ground floor plan



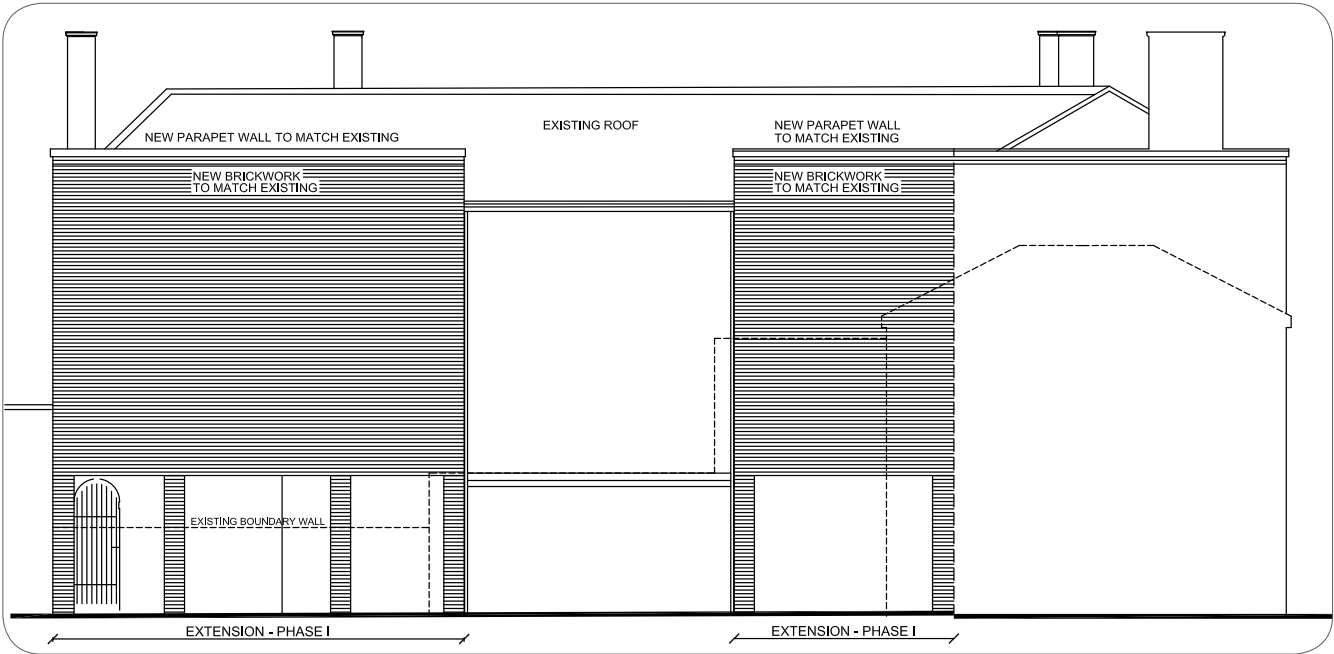
Approved 2006 scheme first floor plan



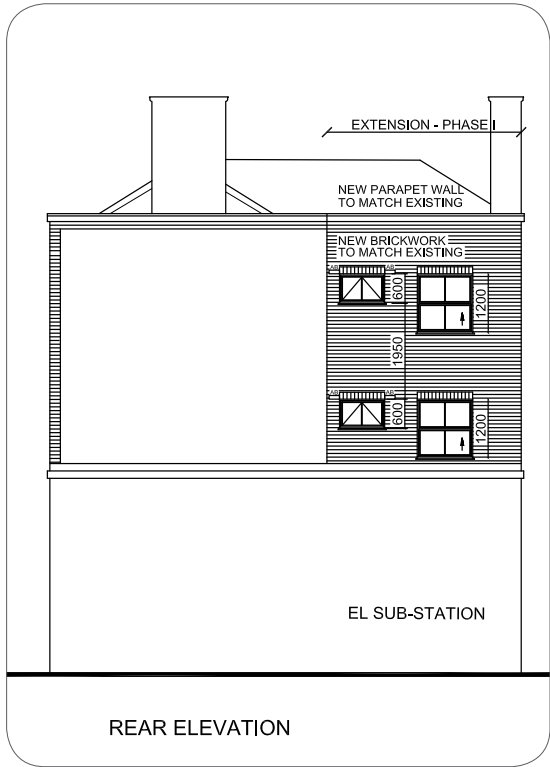
Approved 2006 scheme second floor plan



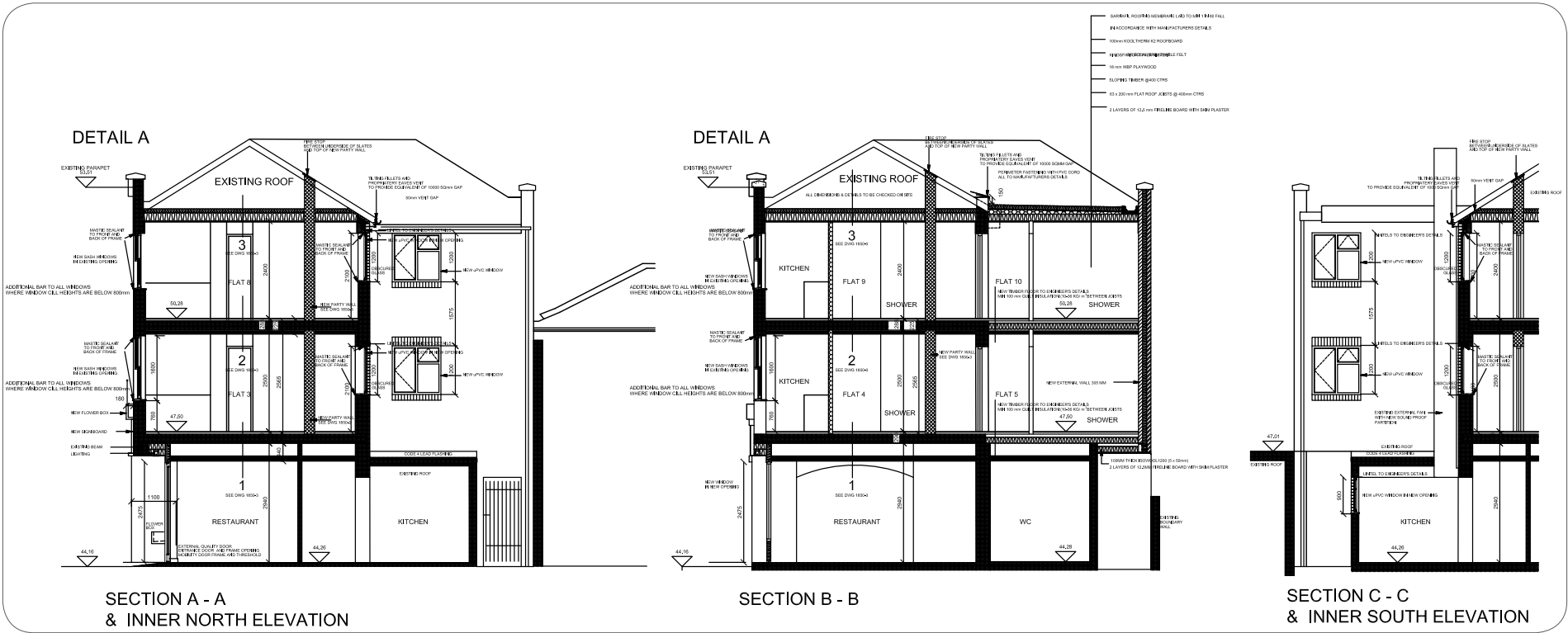
Approved 2006 scheme front elevation



Approved 2006 scheme rear elevation



Approved 2006 scheme west elevation



Approved 2006 scheme site sections

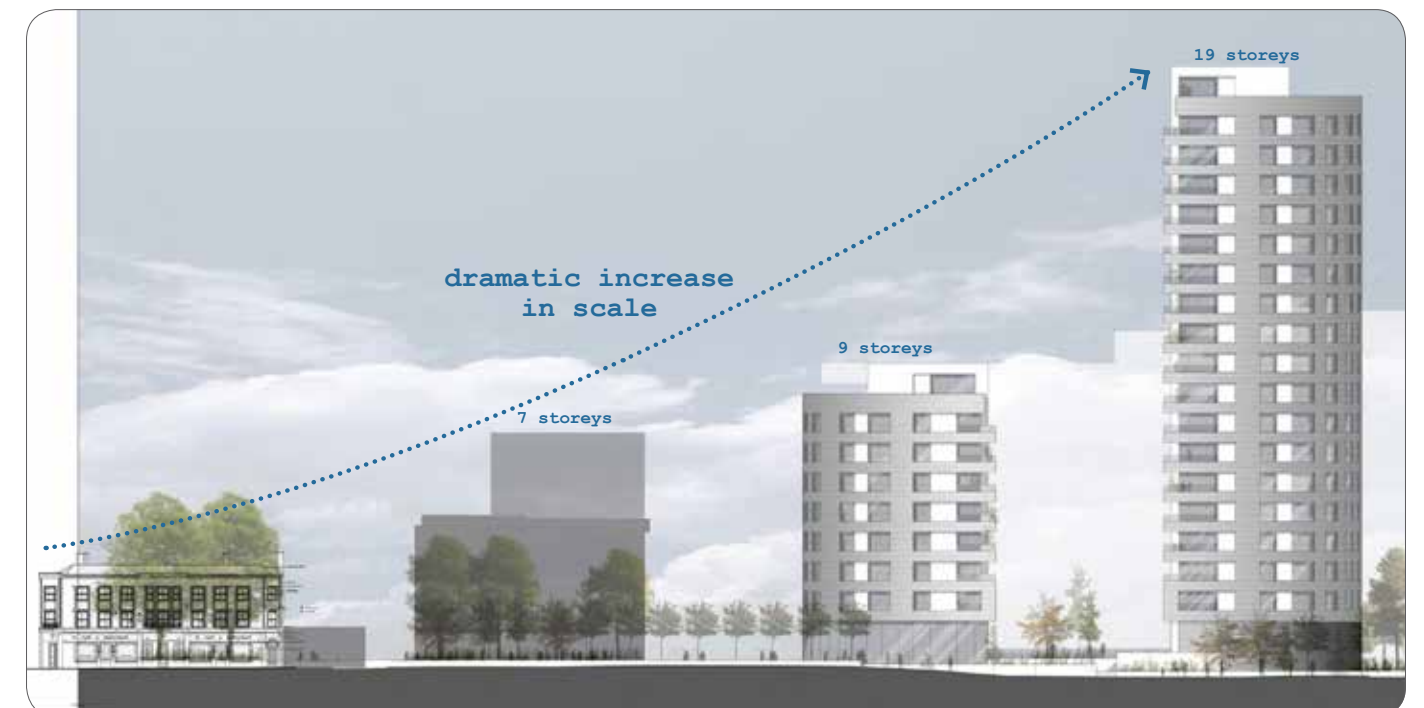
planning history & design development – continued

Pre-application 141243/PREAPP

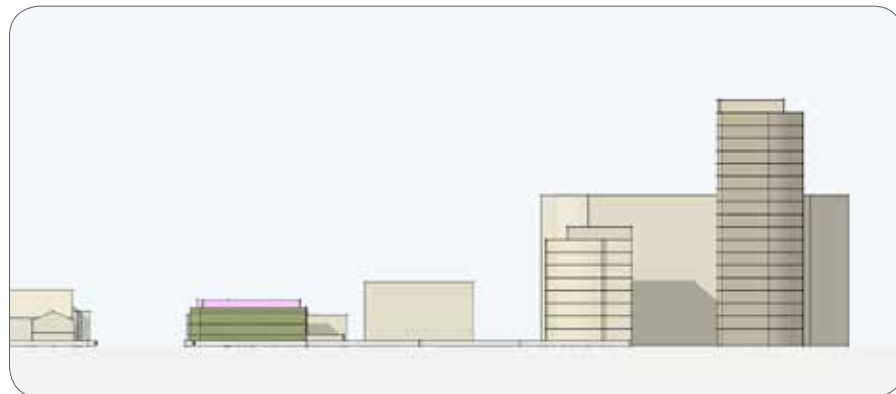
Proposal: Part retention / part redevelopment of site for reconfigured retail units at ground floor level and 13 residential units (2x studio, 8x 1bed and 3x 2-bed) on upper floors (in place of 4 existing residential units):

- ▶ Three options initially;
- ▶ Principle of development generally accepted, including the additional storeys over the existing roof height and possibly more towards the Chatham Street development;
- ▶ The overall design approach of partially retaining the existing building towards Oxford Road and replacing the existing building with a new build element near the new Chatham Street development was considered a suitable development concept and design approach;
- ▶ Given the prominent position of the site design would need to be a high quality architectural response to the site;
- ▶ The additional roof extensions should be lightweight construction set back from the building edge, behind a parapet. The dormer design was considered too visually heavy;
- ▶ The staircase element of the building should be better expressed in the façade as a glass articulating element;
- ▶ Recesses to the ground floor level should be avoided to prevent anti-social behaviour;
- ▶ Outward opening doors from the refuse store are not suitable;
- ▶ Issues concerning overlooking between dwellings facing into the courtyard, to be resolved with obscured glass/screens;
- ▶ Concerns regarding overlooking to some of the buildings further along Oxford Road. Although a majority of these building are retail/A3 uses. The officer confirmed that a site visit would be required to ascertain the use;
- ▶ It is acknowledged that the proposed dwellings are small in size, but given the development is refurbishment, on a tight site, the units have dual aspect and good outlooks, the dwelling sizes are not an issue;
- ▶ The retail units to the ground floor are small and RBC had concerns that these might not easily let, it was assured that there is market demand for small “start-up” retail units;
- ▶ The proposed mix of dwelling sizes varies from studio to 2-bed dwellings. To provide greater diversity in the development offer, RBC have asked if the development can support a 3-bed dwelling?;
- ▶ The transport department has confirmed that the development is within the Town centre and given the unique tight character of the site it does not need to provide parking for the new dwellings;
- ▶ Cycle parking will be required at a ratio of 0.5 per dwelling and 1 per 300sqm of retail accommodation;
- ▶ Further details to be provided for the bin store layout and design;
- ▶ Environmental protection have raised comments and have requested an air quality and acoustic report;
- ▶ As the scheme provides a net increase of 9 units, the scheme is not considered a major application.

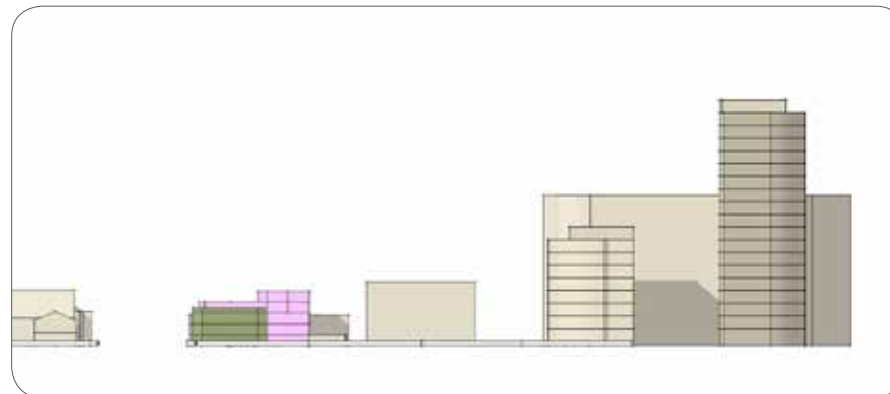
Planning and development context



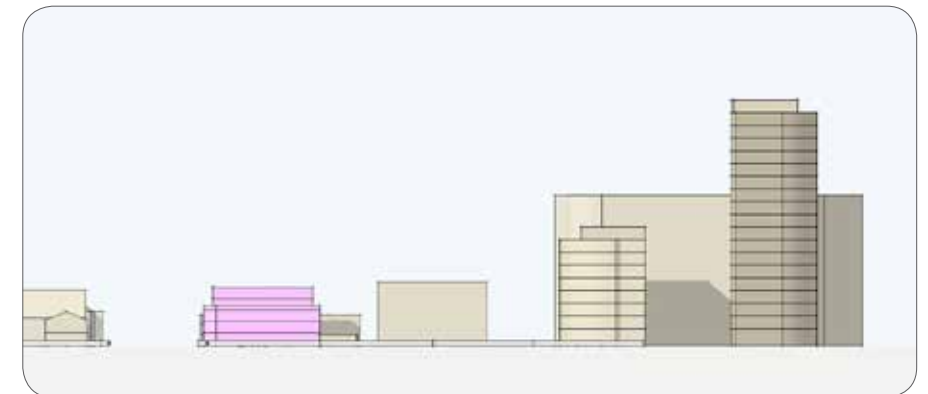
Option 1: floor plans & massing model



Option 2: floor plans & massing model



Option 3: floor plans & massing model



planning history & design development – continued

Pre-application 141243/PREAPP

Proposal: Part retention / part redevelopment of site for reconfigured retail units at ground floor level and 13 residential units (2x studio, 8x 1-bed and 3x 2-bed) on upper floors (in place of 4no. existing residential units).

- ▶ Since the previous pre-application, a number of positive steps have been made to address previous concerns with pre-app 141197;
- ▶ In particular the new re-designed roof-scape and aesthetic of the new-build elements;
- ▶ The design of the “new-build” element is considered a suitable design response;
- ▶ The proposed mix does not provide a 3-bed unit, if the proposed mix is economic restricted and this can be proved, then the proposed accommodation mix should be considered a suitable;
- ▶ It was confirmed that the scheme is not a major development;
- ▶ The waste management strategy appears to be acceptable;
- ▶ A noise report will be required given the proximity to the IDR.

Option 1



Option 2



planning history & design development – continued

Full Application 161860/FUL

Part second floor rear extension plus addition of third floor to existing building fronting Oxford Road. Partial demolition and conversion of existing and new build in linked 4/5 storeys element addressing Alfred Street to provide mixed use comprising a total of 13no. residential units (7no. one bedroom flats and 6no. two bedroom flats) and 4no. ground floor retail units with associated enclosed bin-store and cycle storage facility in semi-covered rear courtyard.

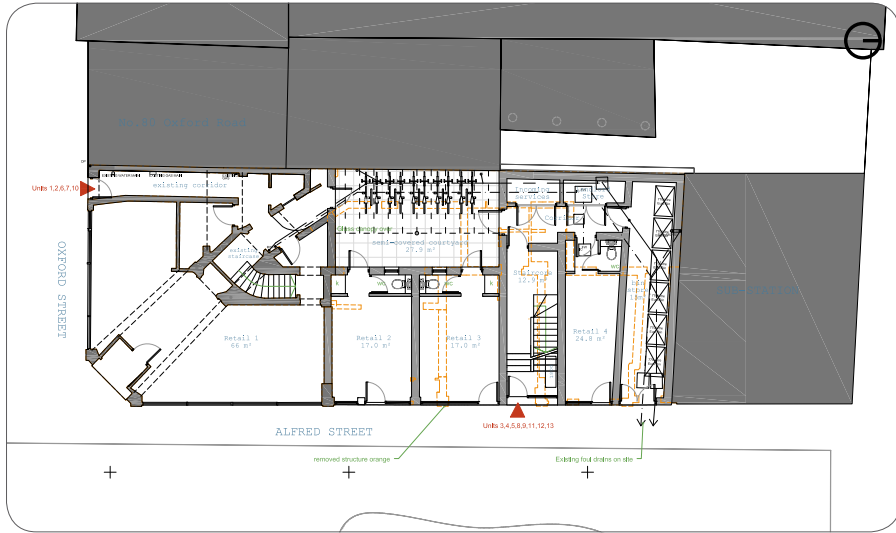
- Application initially received well by the LPA following earlier pre-applications, officers and planning consultees raised no major issues and the scheme was recommendation for approval pending planning committee hearing and an agreed S106 position;
- Whilst arranging committee dates, miss-management within the planning procedures led to last minute internal reviews that forced the scheme to be withdrawn and the planning officer at the time being undermined (who late left the council);
- Before the S106 was agreed and the committee was held, the officers consulted the newly formed Design Review Panel and some design and technical issues were levelled at the proposal late in the process. It was then felt that the design required revisiting;
- At this point the planning officer was also changed;
- The main issues with the design were:-
 1. Transition from the Oxford Road level towards Chatham Place looked rather forced or clumsy.
 2. Reconsider the constraints of retaining the older building suddenly leads to increasing the density.
 3. Concerns with internal overlooking.
- The application did establish some key development principles that subsequent designs can build upon, these are:-
 1. Increase in scale 4/5 storeys.
 2. Important townscape frontage, high quality contemporary design.
 3. No car scheme.
 4. Impact and scale onto the surrounding neighbours.
- Affordable housing viability was submitted but not concluded;
- Application was withdrawn after an extended application process and by agreement that a follow up pre-app enquiry would be conducted.



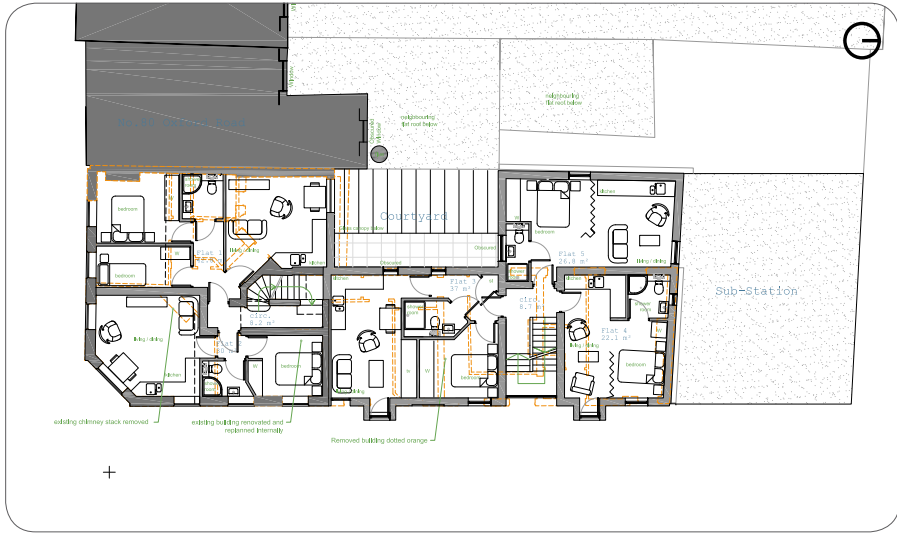
Application 161860/FUL – Proposed perspective elevation



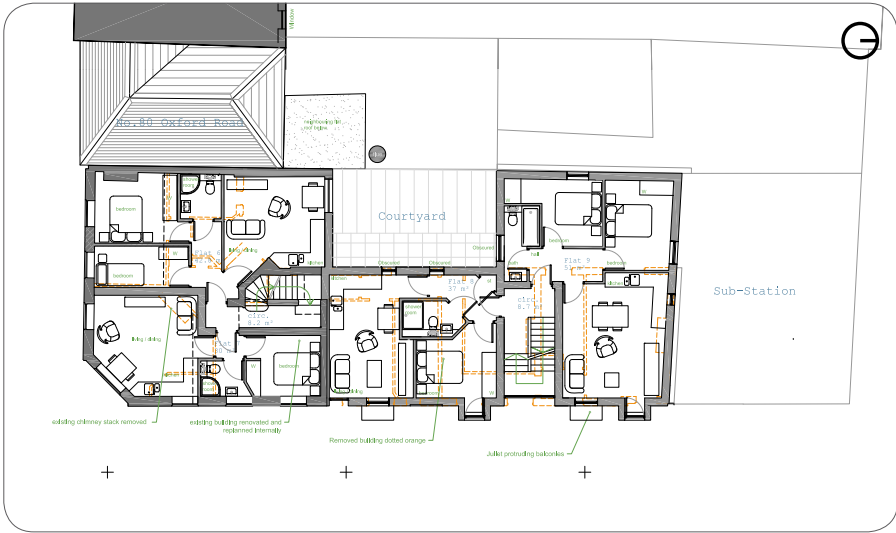
Application 161860/FUL – Proposed perspective view



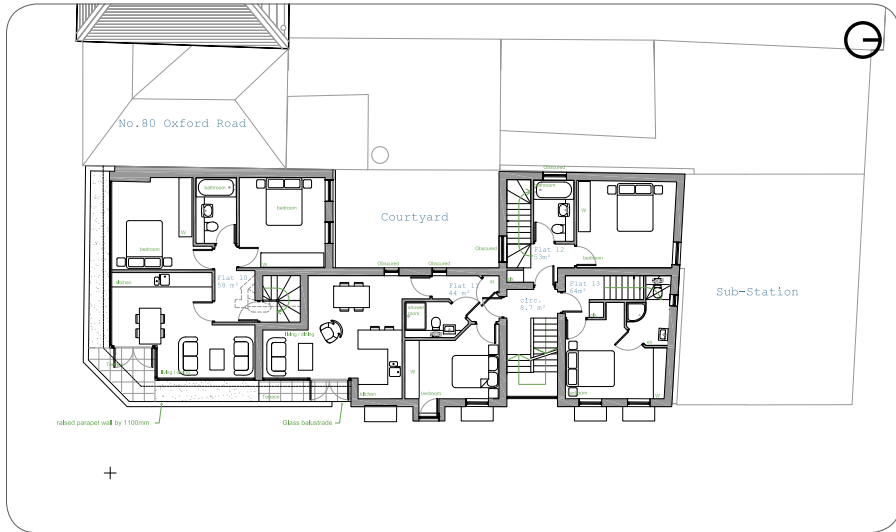
Application 161860/FUL - Ground floor plan



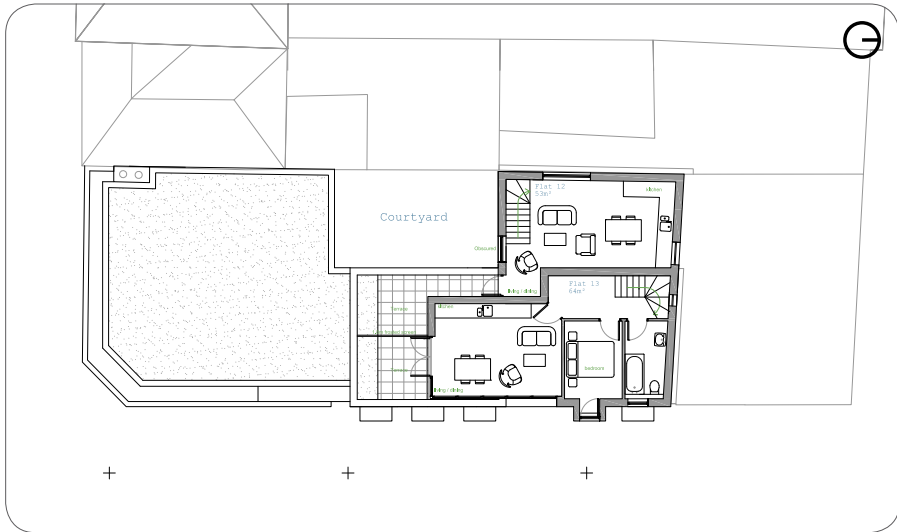
Application 161860/FUL - First floor plan



Application 161860/FUL - Second floor plan



Application 161860/FUL - Third floor plan



Application 161860/FUL - Fourth floor plan

planning history & design development – continued

Pre-application 161860/ PREAPP

Demolition of existing building and residential-led redevelopment scheme including retail units at ground floor, Including Design Review Panel comments on the 3rd May 2018.

- ▶ Complete demolition and replacement scheme seen as a positive by the LPA;
- ▶ A4/A5 at GF advised;
- ▶ Too much glazing to brickwork on the uppers which dilutes the form;
- ▶ The projecting corner balcony conflicts with the curved brickwork corner, omit;
- ▶ LPA and DRP agree to the principle to a contemporary building as a design bridge between Chatham Place redevelopment and Oxford Road ;
- ▶ Concern that the massing and appearing excessive;
- ▶ Set back of the top floor is in principle a good idea as is the inclusion of duplex units into the mix where achievable;
- ▶ Servicing area seems extremely tight more detail required;
- ▶ Place retail doors closer to Oxford Road;
- ▶ Light/overbearing to neighbouring properties potentially problematic, daylight study to rationalise;
- ▶ Lack of a 3 bed units and inadequate proportion of two bed units contrary to Policy;
- ▶ North facing outlooks to the small bedrooms on the second and third floors appear to be poor.

Summary of Design Changes Following Pre-App: 161860

- ▶ No A4/A5 usage agreed;
- ▶ Reduction in elevation glazing (Circa 1/3rd);
- ▶ Existing streetscene presented and Alfred Street animated;
- ▶ Further setting back of 4th floor duplex units to mitigate scale and massing, circa 1.5 away from Oxford Road;
- ▶ Floor to ceiling heights amended, GF increased to maintain shop frontage “plinth”;
- ▶ Heritage statement completed (added to this DAS);
- ▶ Service area and residential entrance amended to provide more generous space;
- ▶ Third retail unit deleted, access moved closer to Oxford Road;
- ▶ 3 bed unit included and provision of two bed and Studio units altered;
- ▶ North facing outlooks to the small bedrooms on the 2nd and 3rd floor – these are secondary rooms and the flats are generally dual aspect.



Pre-application 161860/PREAPP – Proposed perspective views



Pre-application 161860/PREAPP - Proposed perspective views



design principles

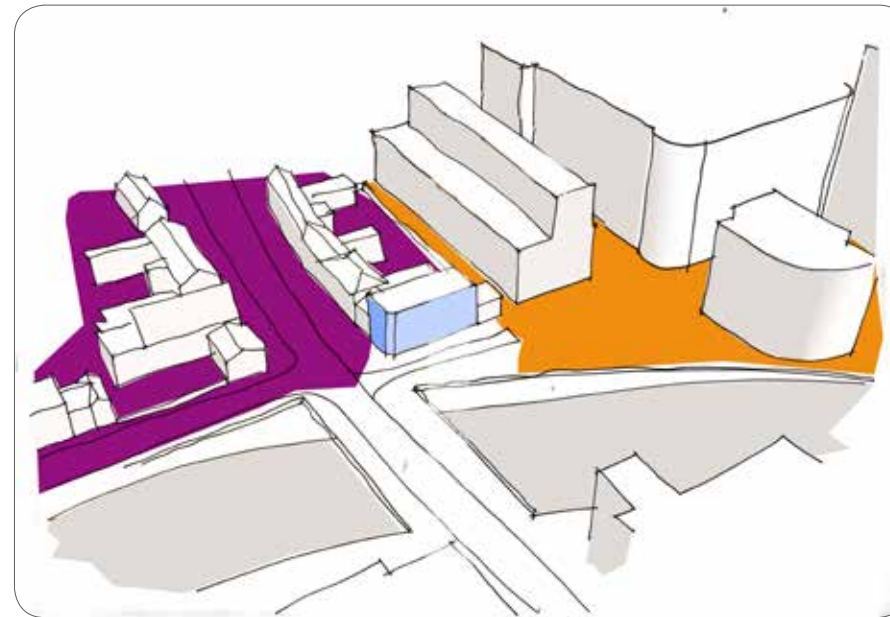
response to context

The previous **site assessment** pages illustrate the important aspects of the locality, and the constraints to be borne in mind when producing proposals for this site.

This section identifies key design principles which are derived from the site assessment.

The design principles have been used to inform and develop the proposals that follow in the **proposed scheme** section.

The key design principles established from analysis process are as follows:



01 – Intersection

Transition of character areas - Oxford Road and Chatham Place.

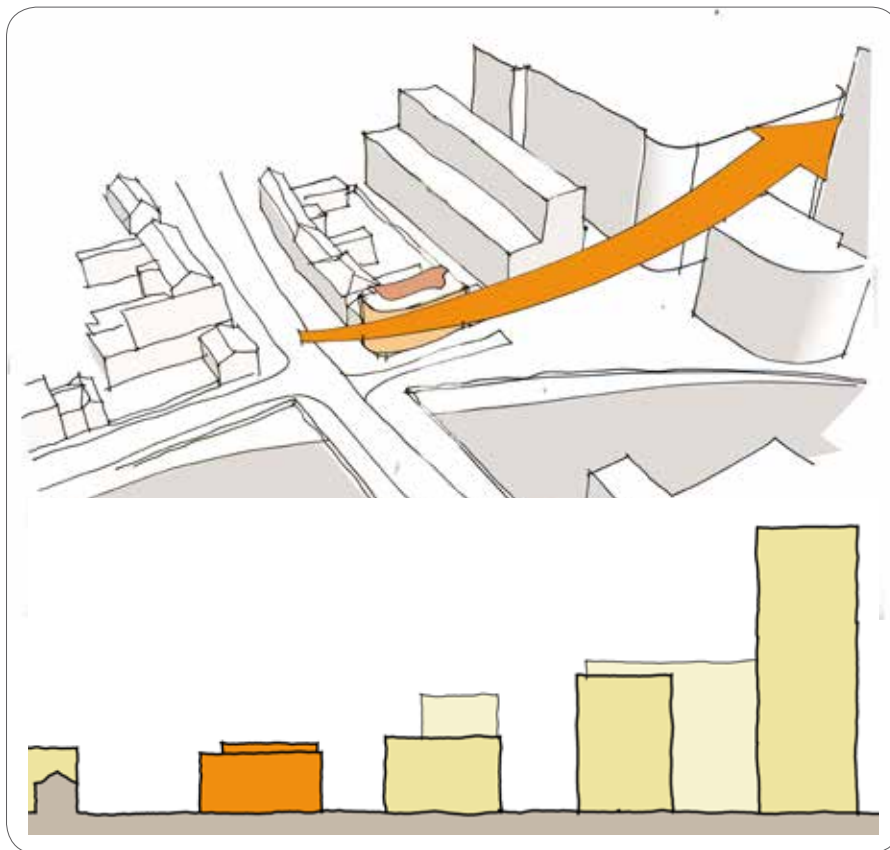
- ▶ The site is positioned at a point where the character of Reading Town Centre changes, from lower scale historic character to a taller modern townscape;
- ▶ The development then proposes to introduce a contemporary element nearer the more developed north/east to respond to the emerging character and style found in these areas.



02 – Enhance Public Realm

Address the public realm and help link Chatham Place with Oxford Road.

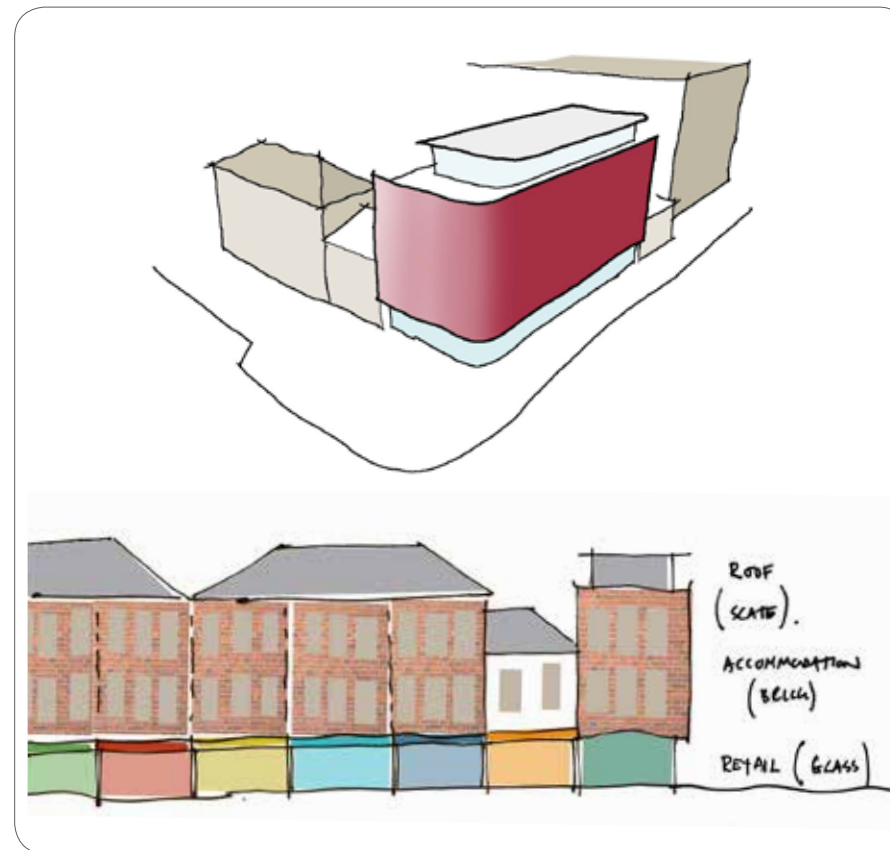
- ▶ Ground floor retail enhanced and extended along Alfred Street;
- ▶ Improved overlooking and active frontages to the public realm;
- ▶ Extends the modern architecture from Chatham Place to the Oxford Road, completing larger scale development aspirations.



03 – Scale Transition

Transition of character areas – Oxford Road and Chatham Place.

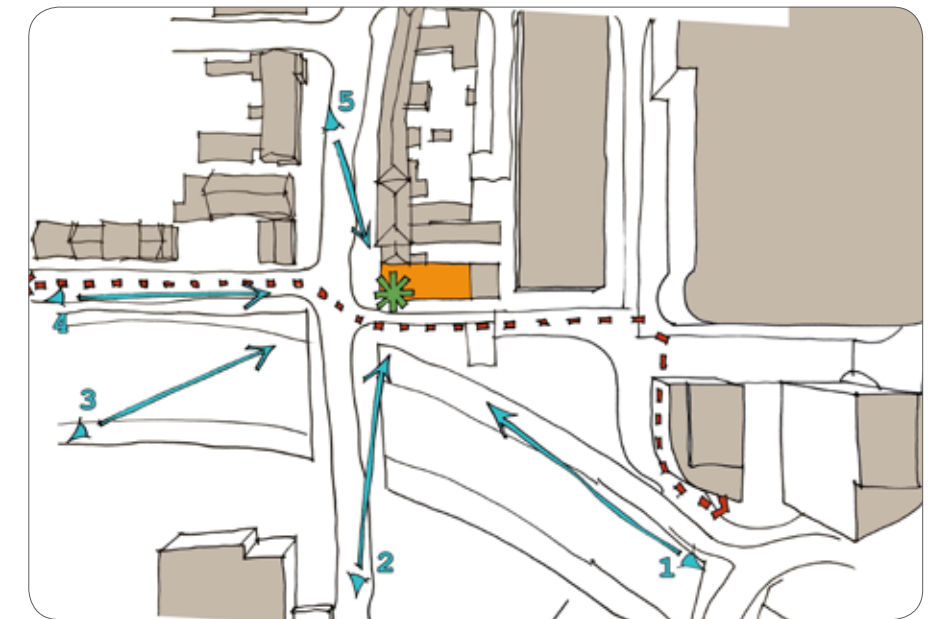
- ▶ The building increase in scale from Oxford Road to the Chatham Street development to bridge this dramatic contrast in heights;
- ▶ Lower Scale at Oxford Road to respect the local context, listed buildings and Conservation area;
- ▶ Top Floor set in and shaped to aid the scale transition.



04 – Facade

Soft curve and playful fenestration and detail.

- ▶ Basic facade grid with staggered balconies;
- ▶ Feature cantilevered balconies to enliven façade;
- ▶ Grid theme used on blank façades;
- ▶ Subtle curved corner feature;
- ▶ Recessed top floor - different architecture to separate and control scale.



05 – Presence and Gateway Site

Prominent and elevated position, many vista and townscape roles to consider.

- ▶ 5 Key vista points as highlighted within the Heritage Statement;
- ▶ The building is positioned at the end of Oxford Road where it opens to the A33 bridge, this open expanse caused by the A33 and bridge then places greater importance on the buildings that face this openness as they can be seen from a distances;
- ▶ Alfred House in particular plays an important gateway role at the entrance to Oxford Road and as a result a high quality design response is required to suit that context and provide enhanced urban design legibility;
- ▶ The proposed increase in scale will also help to reinforce this important role that the building undertakes.



design proposals

design proposals

proposed layout

Site Plan

- The access points to the building are the same;
- Building access (Part M etc.);
- No gardens – balconies and overlooking park;
- No recessed doorways at ground floor security;
- No Parking;
- Cycles;
- Bins;
- Sustainability;
- Noise – see report;
- Environmental health.

Floor Plans

- High proportion of dual aspect units;
- Open plan living and kitchen areas;
- Central new glazed staircase link expressed in elevation;
- Central courtyard to rear allowing flats to have a rear outlook and prevent overlooking, extension to the rear are as approved scheme 05/00074 consented scheme;
- Retail units to ground floor are small and design for start up retail/office operations;
- Bins and cycles accessed from the side alley;
- Overhanging balconies – build over license;
- Overlooking to the rear of property not an issue;
- Each dwelling has a balcony terrace, the upper floor units have a large rooftop terrace.

Amount and Use

The proposed residential mix is compliant with RC9, adjustment were made at the pre-application stage to make this mix more compliant, the main addition was the inclusion of a 3bed and large units generally.

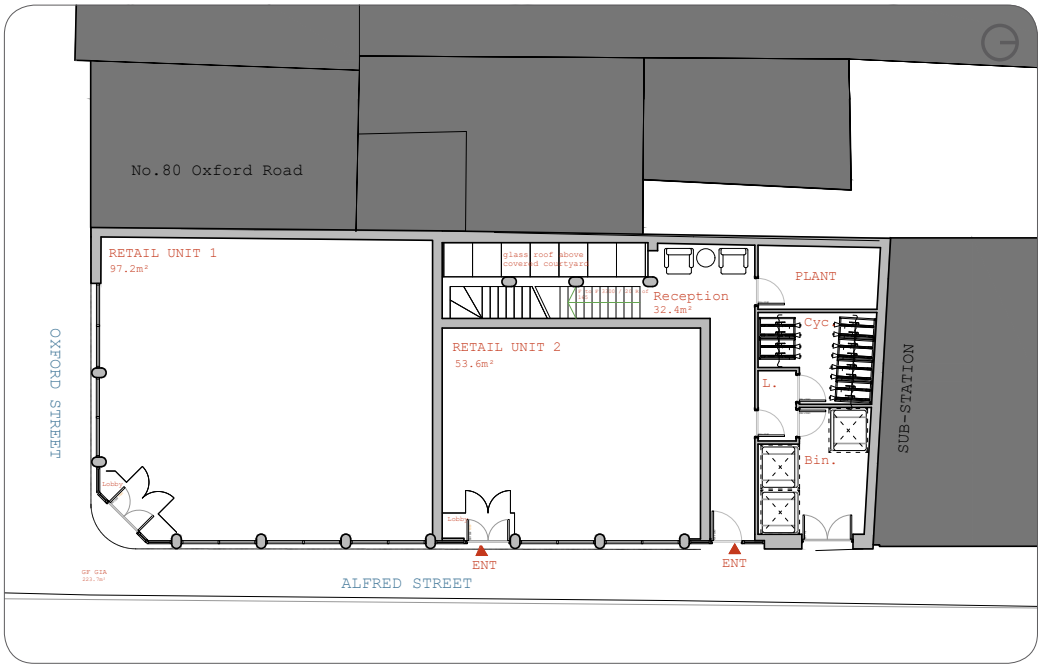
Schedule of Accommodation

Existing:	
Retail 152sqm	2bed 71sqm
Communal space 56.6sqm	2bed 65sqm
2 bed 71sqm	2bed 65sqm
Total residential = 328.6sqm	
Total area = 480.6sqm	

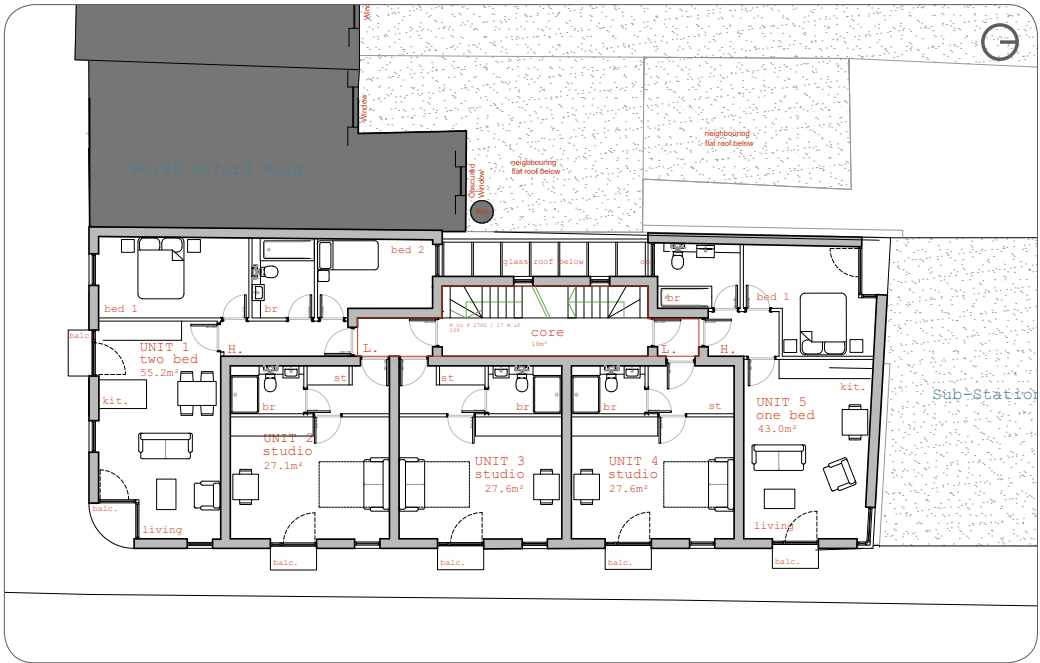
Proposed:	
Retail 150.8 smq	
Service space 32.4sqm	
Communal space 43sqm	
Unit 1 – 2bed 55.2sqm	Unit 8 – 1bed 33.6sqm
Unit 2 – stu 27.1sqm	Unit 9 – 1bed 44sqm
Unit 3 – stu 27.6sqm	Unit 10 – 2bed 54.9sqm
Unit 4 – stu 27.6sqm	Unit 11– 2bed (duplex) 60sqm
Unit 5 – 1bed 43sqm	Unit 12 – 2bed (duplex) 60sqm
Unit 6 – 3bed 67.9sqm	Unit 13– 2bed (duplex) 60sqm
Unit 7 – 1bed 37sqm	Unit 14 – 1bed 43.2sqm
Total residential 14 units (3xstudio, 5x1bed, 5x2bed, 1x3bed) = 716.5sqm	

Total proposed building area = 867.3sqm
Net overall area increase = 386.7sqm
Net overall residential area increase = 387.9sqm (10 units)

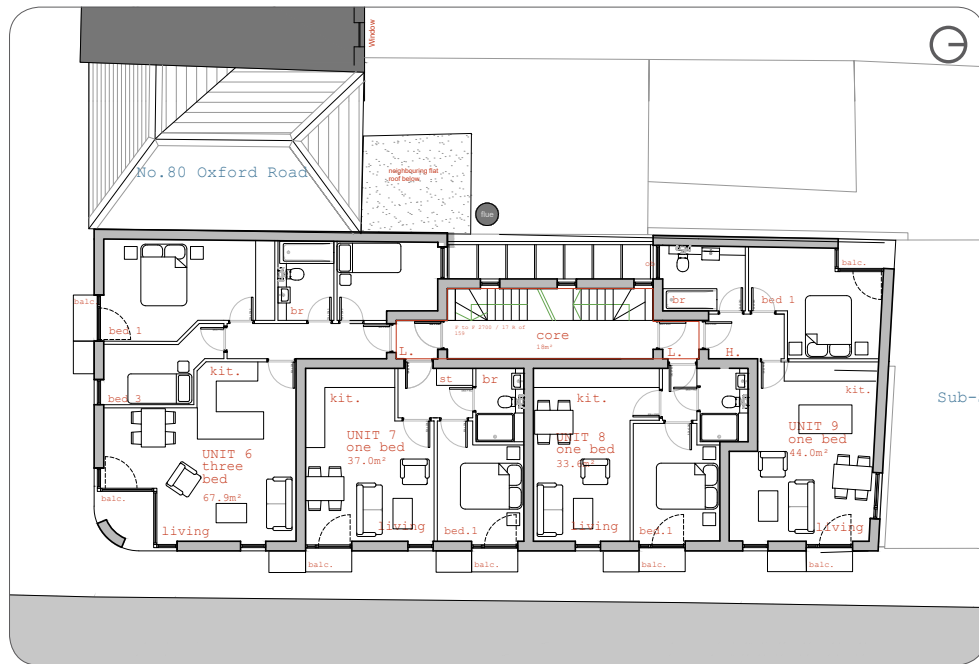
- Retail to the ground floor and residential over as the existing building, remaining almost the same;
- Small units for first time buyer market;
- All private tenure (see affordable housing statement);
- Mix of residential units studio, 1bed and 2 bed, no 3 bed accommodation provided given the constraints of the existing building and financial viability of the scheme.



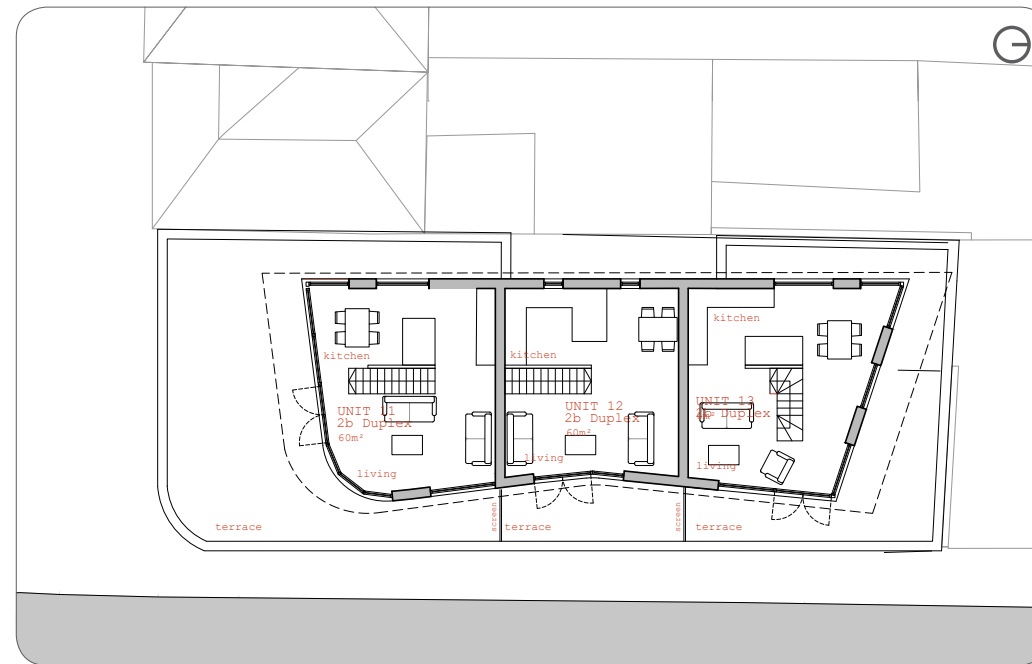
Ground floor plan



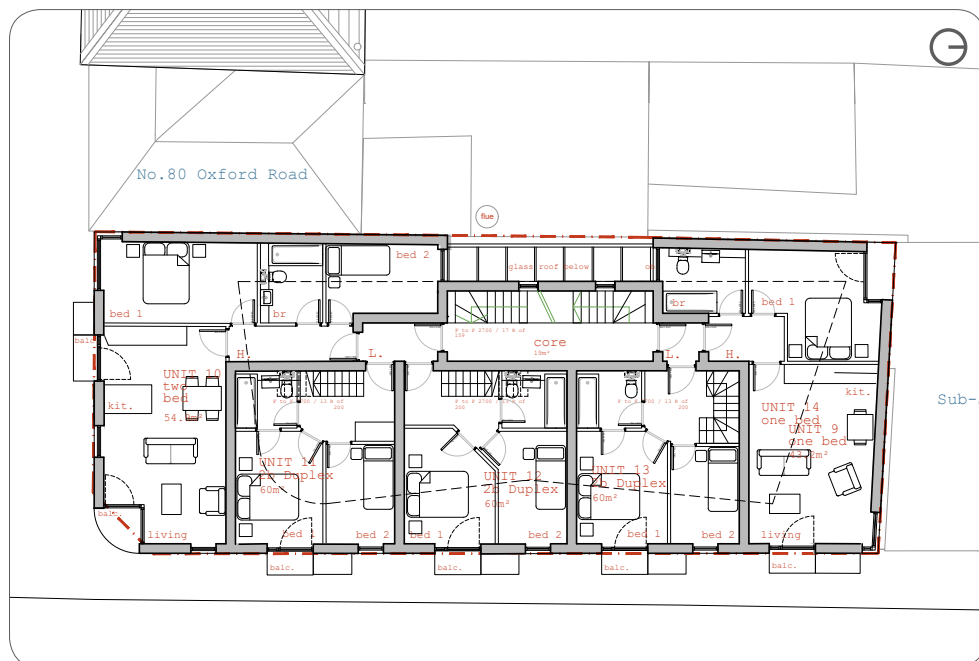
First floor plan



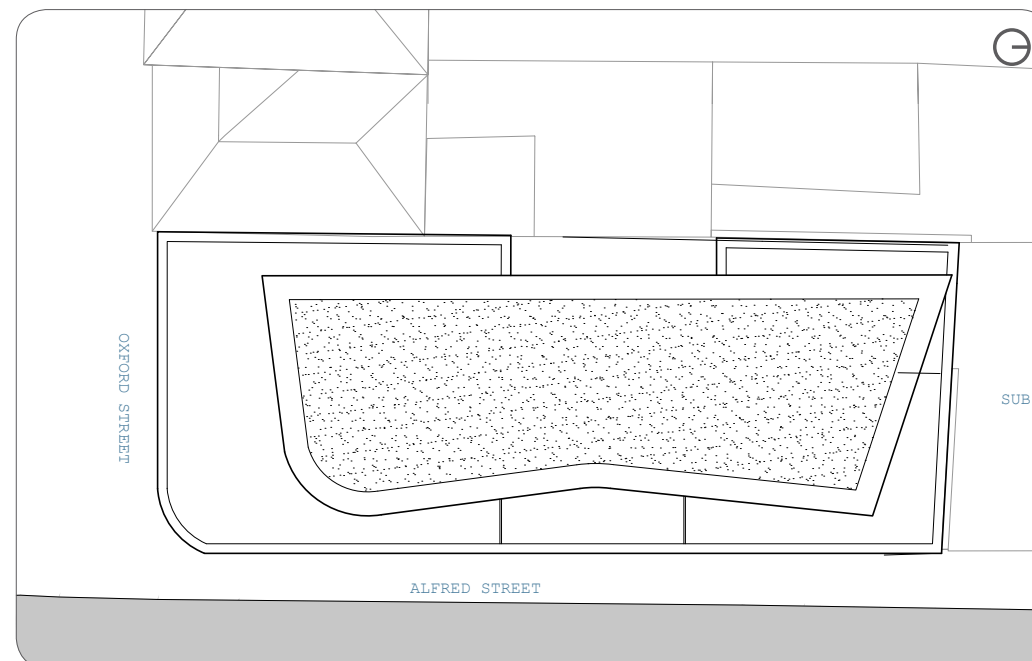
Second floor plan



Fourth floor plan



Third floor plan



Roof plan

Noise & Air Quality

Air Quality

- ▶ The site is within an area that has concerns over the air quality, due to town centre traffic and industry;
- ▶ The building faces onto the IDR, which is a high pollutant road;
- ▶ Given there is a reasonable chance that the air is of poor quality, each dwelling will be mechanical vented from the rear of the building and the incoming air will be filtered;
- ▶ If planning is successful further air quality surveys will be carried out and the exact specification of the dwelling air handling units will be presented to the council by condition.

Acoustic report

- ▶ The site is within a known high noise area, a full survey has been carried out prior to this submission;
- ▶ Each unit will have triple glazed windows and attenuated mechanical ventilation systems to absorb disturbing noise;
- ▶ During the application process, the acoustic consultee will assess the report and if further measure are required these can be covered by restrictive condition.

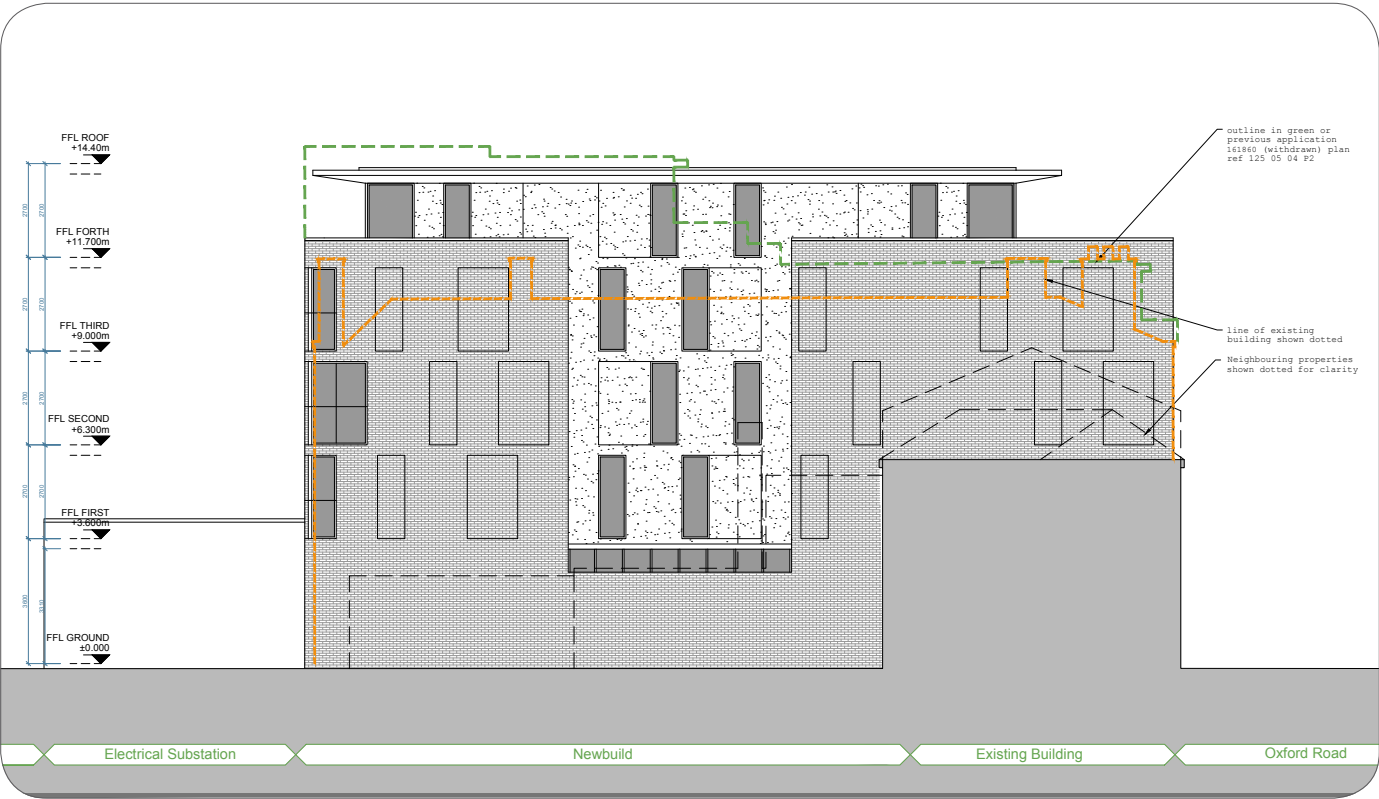
proposed elevations



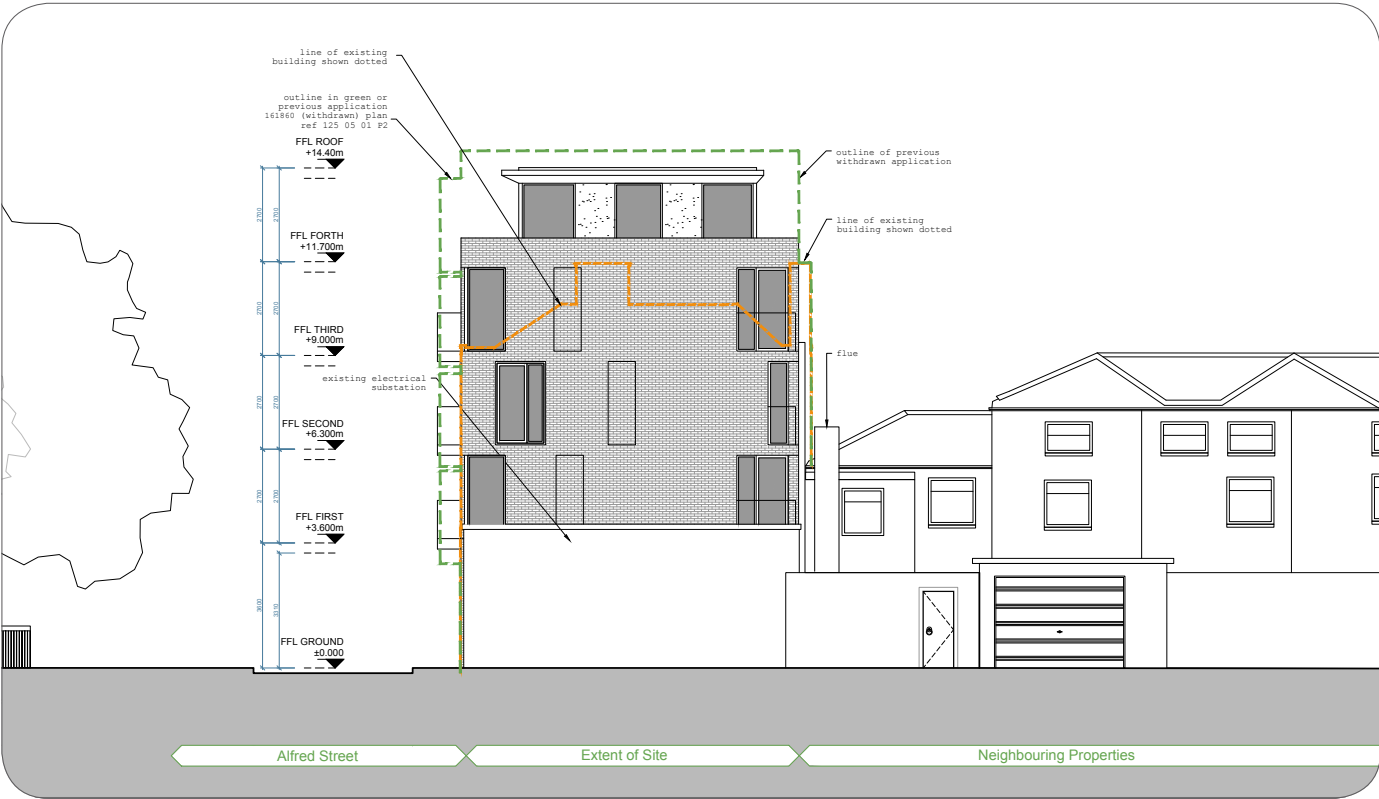
Proposed east elevation



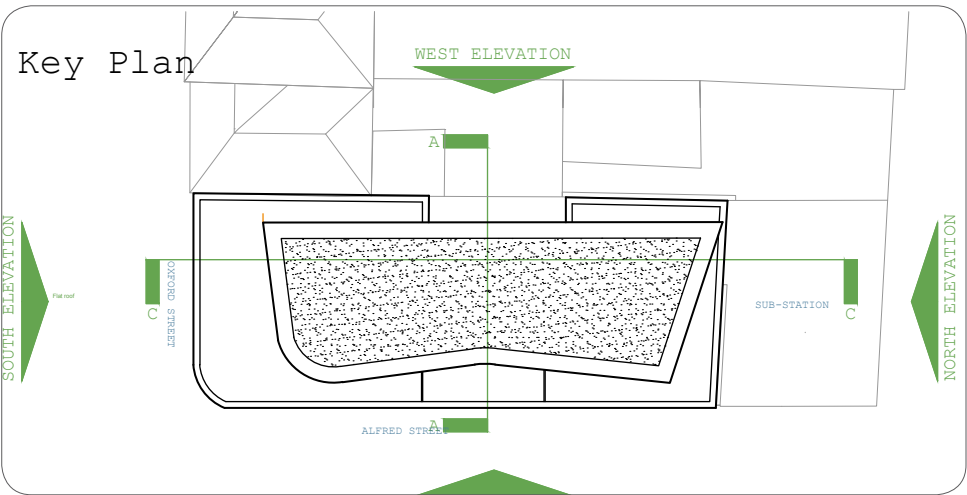
Proposed south elevation



Proposed west elevation

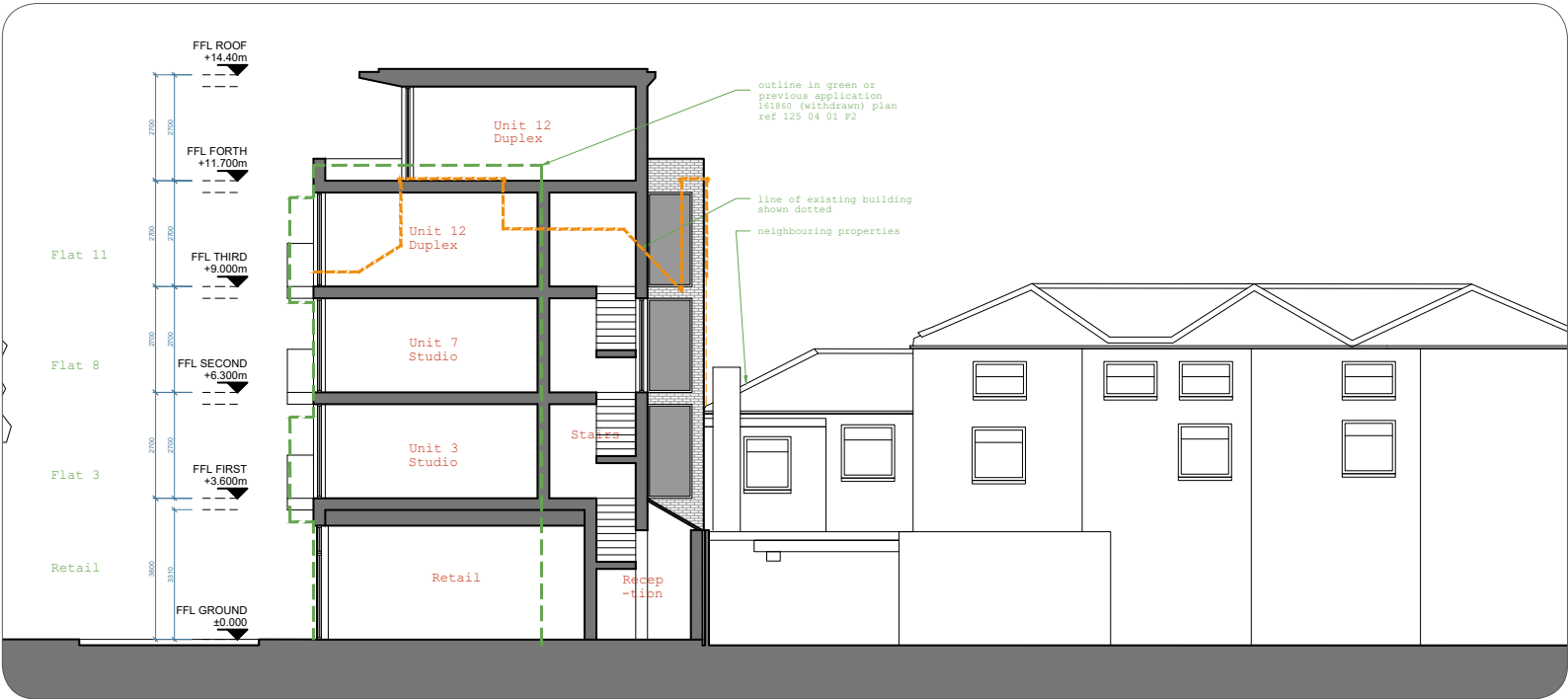


Proposed north elevation



Proposed elevation key plan

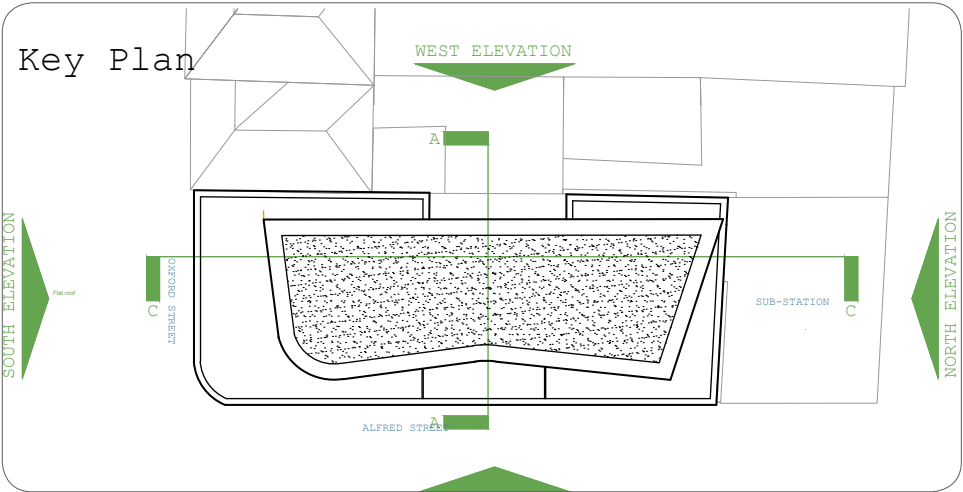
proposed sections



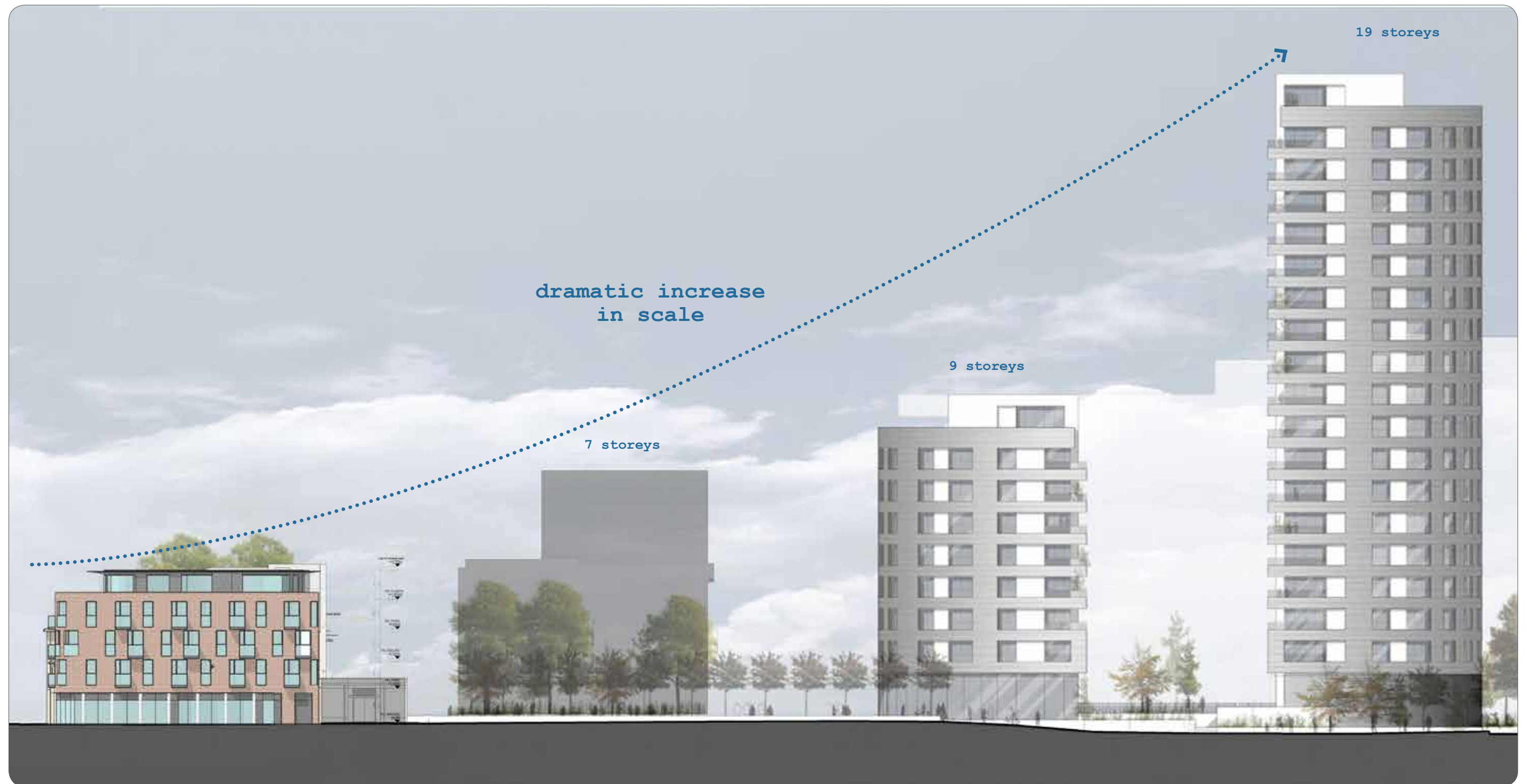
Proposed section A-A



Proposed perspective section A-A



Proposed section key plan



Proposed street scene

proposed scale and appearance

Respect of Castle Hill and Russell Street Conservation Area

- ▶ Historically respectful design it helps the scheme sensitively respond to the nearby heritage buildings and conservation area;
- ▶ There is a proposal to insert a new floor over this retained façade, but this is set back behind a new parapet wall to be subservient to the existing building and be less visually obtrusive to the heritage setting;
- ▶ The more contemporary part of the proposal is further away from the historical areas and as a result will be aligned more with the modern parts of Reading Town centre and will not be visually connected to the heritage areas.

Appropriate Scale and Massing

- ▶ During the pre-application process, the Design Review Panel agreed that the scale and mass of the proposal broadly acceptable given the prominent position of the site;
- ▶ The extension to the rear are as the previously approved 05/00074 scheme, so the impact of massing and scale to the properties to the west remains very similar;
- ▶ First floor extension of retained part of building increasing height at corner to 4 storeys;
- ▶ Stepping up in height as the building nears Chatham Street development to 6 storeys;
- ▶ Scale, massing and height has been design to respect the surrounding heights.

Architectural Appearance to Suit Context and Elevation Design

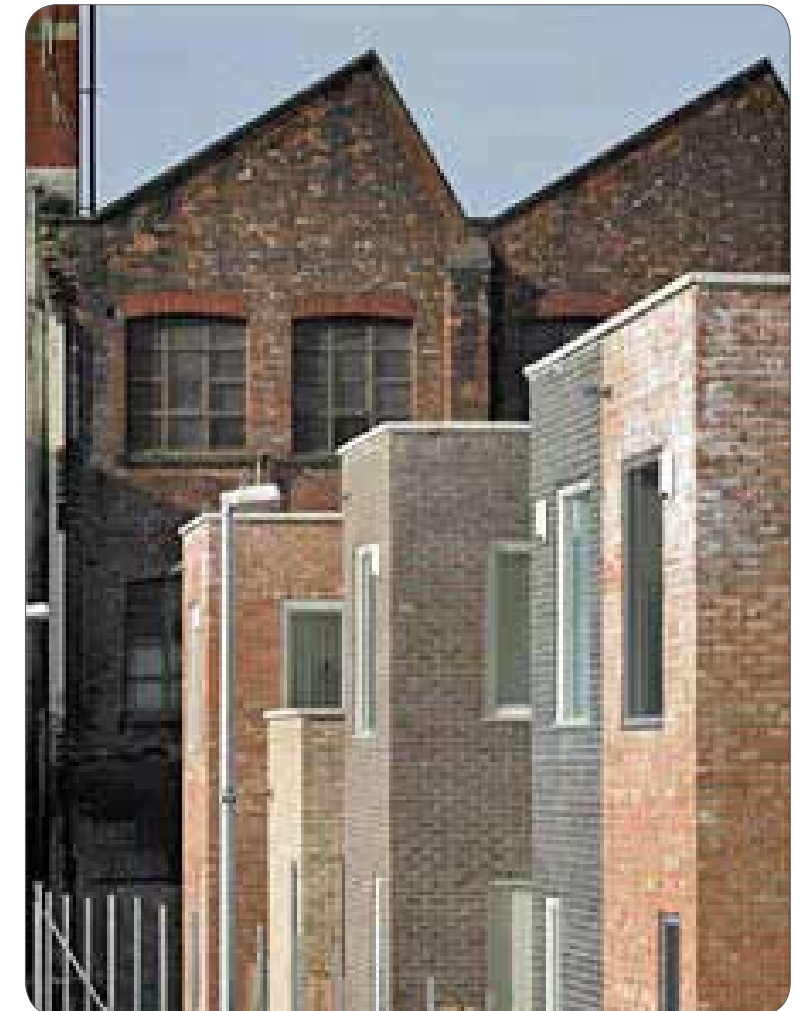
- ▶ High quality design approach commensurate with the important townscape position;
- ▶ Retained portion of building preserves the heritage character;
- ▶ New building part preserves existing character to respond to conservation area;
- ▶ New feature glass link to staircase to articulate the “old and new” parts of the building and provided improved active frontage;
- ▶ New part of the building has a contemporary design aesthetic, borrowing a regular layout of fenestration from the existing building;
- ▶ Feature protruding balconies;
- ▶ Blank recessed panels to maintain façade fenestration rhythm.

Proposed Materials

- ▶ High quality materials;
- ▶ Metal framed windows;
- ▶ Glass balconies;
- ▶ Existing building materials retained and made good;
- ▶ New build brickwork to match the existing brickwork but used in a modern style, helping to link the old and new parts of the building;
- ▶ New Parapet to have improved brickwork detailing.

Architectural Precedent

- ▶ Contemporary detailing within traditional forms;
- ▶ Alternative application of materials;
- ▶ Blend of brick;
- ▶ Regular window pattern.



Precedent images

“Scale steps up from Oxford Road to Chatham Place, and this strategy seems appropriate, and provides a reasonable argument for the scale, massing and approach.” DRP 3rd May 2018



Indicative perspective view

perspective views





sunlight

Sunlight

The following diagrams present the existing building and proposed building under various sunlight conditions to illustrate the impact that the proposed building has in respect to sunlight compared to the exiting situation. The summary findings are:-

- The rear part of the Existing Oxford Road buildings face north as a prerequisite, as a result the do not receive any sunlight until the peak summer months;
- In the morning (9am), the building (existing and proposed) shield the early sun;
- By Midday the sun-path is aligned with the vertical orientation of the site and only the substation is shaded;
- In the afternoon (3pm) the sun is not shaded by the building and the impact on the Oxford Road buildings is negligible.

Sunlight: Existing – March



Sunlight: Proposed - March

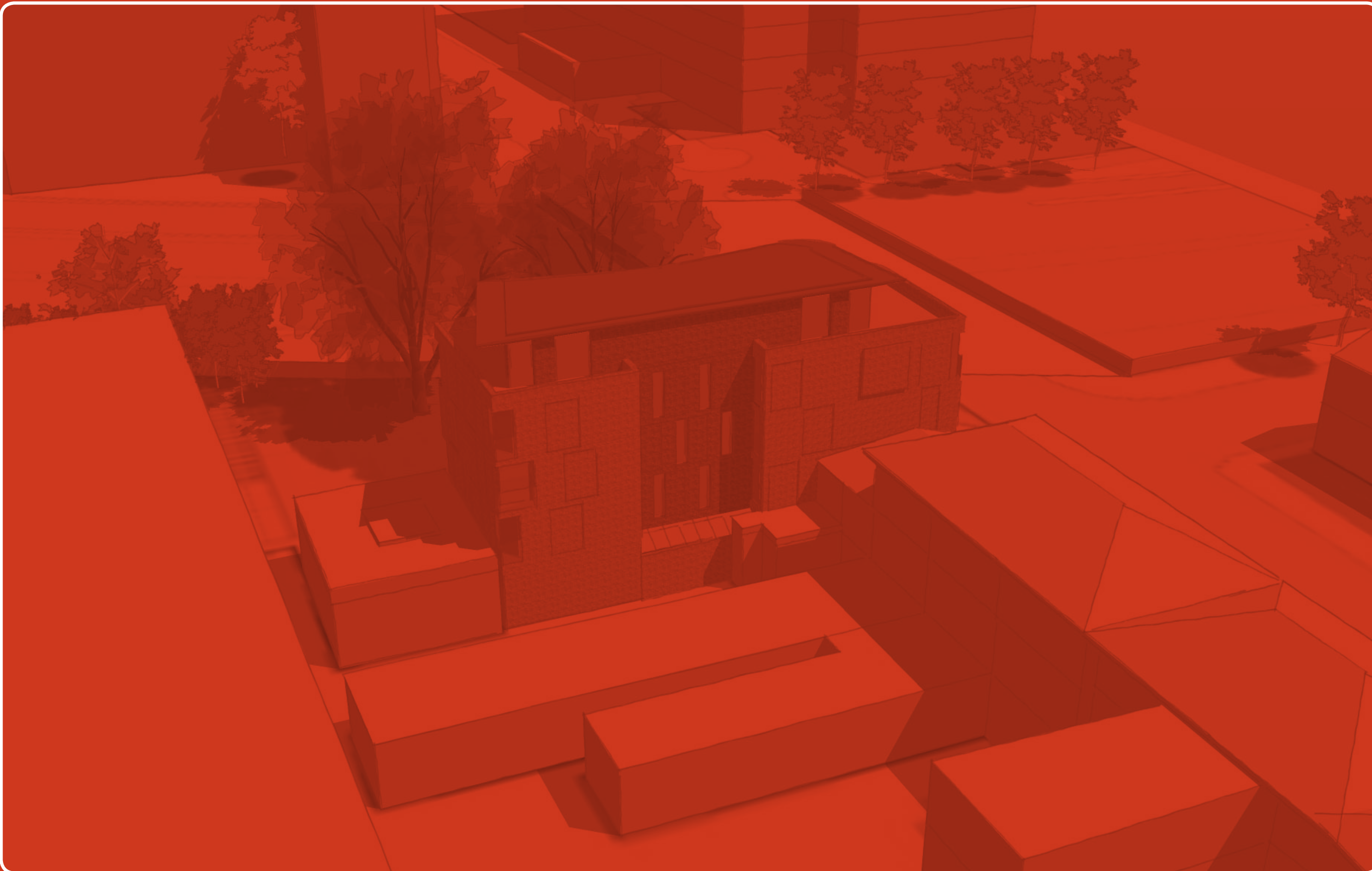


Sunlight: Proposed - June



Sunlight: Proposed - December





sustainability

sustainability assessment

We have completed a sustainability assessment for the development, which is largely based on the CODE Sustainable Checklist and the BREEAM Sustainable Design Checklist.

In this regard the aim is to consider the project as a whole, in its context, with a view to ensuring it will be a positive addition to our built environment now, and for future generations.

Energy & CO2

Aim: To conserve energy, in particular carbon dioxide emissions and maximise the use of energy efficiency techniques.

- solar space heating and natural lighting maximised through glazing position
- adequate space for insulation to prevent unnecessary heat loss
- energy efficient gas-powered boiler
- A-rated appliances to be recommended

Water

Aim: To improve efficiency in the use of water, conserve water resources and minimise vulnerability to flooding.

- no substantial ground works reducing risk of flood-water diversion
- surface water is to be discharged into soak-aways to disperse rainwater on-site
- waterbutts can be installed to collect rain water for gardening

Materials

Aim: To retain local character and promote the use of materials with a low environmental impact.

- materials selected to be harmonious with the local environment
- development adds to local character positively
- standard building products in ample supply ensure low transportation burden and availability from local sources

Waste

Aim: To minimise the production of waste and maximise re-use and recycling.

- contractor to manage waste responsibly including separating waste during construction
- waste and recycling bins to be integrated into council network reducing burden on transport
- garden provided includes space where user is able to compost household waste

Pollution

Aim: To minimise damage to the environment through air, surface water, land, noise or light pollution.

- development has been situated to reduce unwanted communication between proposal and surrounding house, including spread of noise and light
- A-rated appliances will reduce reliance on harmful refrigerants
- no harmful materials are required for the construction or maintenance of the building
- development is outside flood risk areas, reducing likelihood of contaminants from flooded surface water

Health and Well-Being

Aim: To improve the quality of life in homes through good daylighting, improved sound insulation, provision of outdoor space with good accessibility.

- private garden area offers opportunity for range of healthy activities
- large areas of glazing provide views out and connection to garden
- level access allows flexibility of user and provides for less ambulant

Management

Aim: To manage the site in an environmentally and socially considerate manner.

- ▶ environmentally and socially responsible contractor can dramatically reduce the impact of a project on the environment and community
- ▶ clear Operation & Maintenance manuals given at project completion allows non-technical users to understand the technologies and their efficient use

Ecology

Aim: To retain, protect and enhance wildlife habitats and natural features.

- ▶ no substantial trees felled or cut back
- ▶ substantial planting proposed with the development

Transport

Aim: To reduce the need to travel through appropriately located development.

- ▶ proposal sits in walking and cycling distance of many facilities
- ▶ cycle storage is provided in the garage
- ▶ local public transport includes bus routes and railway station



Indicative perspective street view



**colony architects ltd is a collaborative of architects
and designers, to find out more contact us:**

by post: intermezzo, c/o stoke lock cottage, moorfield road, guildford, gu1 1ru

e-mail: info@colonyarchitects.com

call stuart: 07990 515372

call edward: 07779 255328

or visit our beautiful website: www.colonyarchitects.com