

ATLAS

PLANNING GROUP

TRANSPORT STATEMENT

Mulberry House, 1A Eldon Road, Reading, RG1 4DJ

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Transport Statement (TS) has been prepared by Atlas Planning Group in support of a planning application for the demolition of the existing dental surgery and the construction of a residential development comprising 7 residential apartments at Mulberry House, Eldon Road.
- 1.2 Pre-application discussions have been held with the planning and highway authority regarding the redevelopment of this site providing 11 flats (LPA Ref: 170968). In response to the larger scheme, transport officers raised concerns that the proposed car parking provision was too low to meet the demand from the development.
- 1.3 This TS therefore seeks to understand the sustainability of the area surrounding the application site and to explore whether the reduction in parking standards will be appropriate.
- 1.4 Due consideration has been given to the parking standards set out within Reading Borough's Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The proposed site is located between Hanover House and Nos 1/3 Eldon Road. Eldon Road is located to the east of the centre of Reading and is a main through way linking London Road with King's Road (A329). The site is bounded to the north by flatted development at Hanover House and residential dwellings to the south, east and west. The site location in its wider context is shown in the figure below.



Figure 1: Site location

- 2.2 The existing site comprises a small dental surgery. Although their dimensions do not meet modern standards, 5 parking spaces are provided for the dental surgery in an established car park.

LOCAL TRANSPORT NETWORK

- 2.3 To understand the transport implications of the proposals, it is important to understand the baseline conditions within the vicinity regarding the local highway network, sustainable access and road safety.

BUS ROUTES

- 2.4 Two bus stops are located less than 100m from the site providing frequent services to several destinations, including Reading Town Centre, Wokingham Town Centre, Tilehurst, Lower Earley District Centre, Loddon Bridge and Arborfield Garrison.
- 2.5 Bus routes 3, 9, 12 and 22 serve the nearest bus stop. At peak times, these buses run every 8-10 minutes.

RAIL ACCESSIBILITY

- 2.6 Two railway stations are easily accessible from the site making it extraordinarily sustainable from a transport perspective. Reading Station is located approximately 1.4km cycle from the site. This is approximately a 5-minute cycle ride; 17minute walk; 8-minute car journey; or 9 minutes by bus.
- 2.7 Reading West Station is located approximately 3.2km from the site. This is approximately 10 minutes cycle; 31minutes on foot; and 22 minutes bus journey of which 5minutes is on foot.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY

- 2.8 Table 1 demonstrates that a wide range of facilities are within easy walking distance of the site, including supermarkets, community centres, public houses and banks. It is evident that a comprehensive range of retail, employment, education, health and leisure facilities are also within walking distance of the proposed development.
- 2.9 To the north of the application site lies a pedestrian crossing with tactile paving and dropped kerbs. This crossing also comprises a central island.
- 2.10 It is evident that the site is well placed to promote journeys on foot.

Table 1: Walking times to services and facilities

Service/Facility	Approximate Distance	Approximate Walking Time
Supermarket	0.8 miles	16mins
Opticians	0.3 miles	5 mins
Bank	0.7 miles	14 mins
Community or visitor centre	0.4 miles	8 mins
High Street	0.4 miles	9 mins
Post Office	0.7 miles	14 mins
Local Food Shop	0.4 miles	9 mins
Public House	0.1 miles	2 mins
Reading Town Centre	0.7 miles	15 mins
Social Club	0.1 miles	3 mins
Church	0.2 miles	4 mins
Medical Centre	0.2 miles	3 mins
Medical Surgery (Hospital)	0.3 miles	6 mins
Library	0.5 miles	11 mins
Primary School	0.4 miles	8 mins
Secondary School	0.5 miles	9 mins
Doctors surgery	0.1 miles	2 mins
Dental practice	0.4 miles	8 mins

CYCLE ACCESSIBILITY

0.5 Reading Cycle Routes R20 and R30 bound the site to the north and south along London Road and King's Road.

R20 and R30 have routes that follow to Central Reading. The site is therefore surrounded by a network of streets which are suitable for cyclists.

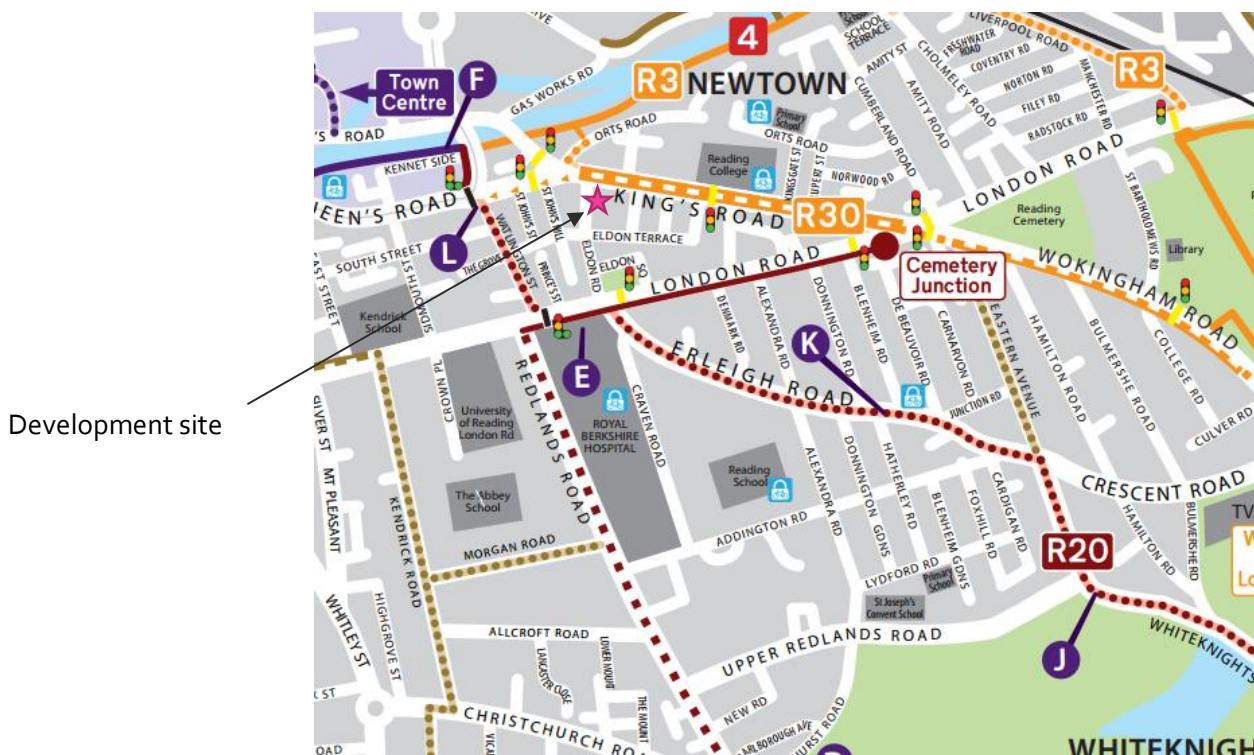


Figure 2: Reading Cycle Routes (source <http://www.reading-travelinfo.co.uk/media/4180/R2-R20-Routes-Map-Feb11.pdf>)

VEHICULAR ACCESS

0.6 The application site has vehicular access from Eldon Terrace, which is a local road, operating one-way westbound forming a no-entry, priority junction with Eldon Road.

0.7 King's Road is a main route from Reading town centre and comprises a total of four lanes. It operates with two lanes for traffic travelling eastbound only, along with a bus lane in this direction. There is also an additional contra-flow bus lane headed westbound into Reading centre. Parking, waiting and loading are all restricted along this road.

0.8 Eldon Road is a single carriageway road which serves a mix of commercial and residential properties. At the junction with King's Road, traffic is only permitted to turn right. Double yellow lines are present along both side of Eldon Road, which restricts parking at all times.

0.9 The M4 is located approximately 4.23km to the south of the site. The Inner Distribution Road (A33) is located approximately 1.26km west of the site.

1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

1.4 The proposed development is for the demolition of a dental surgery and the erection of a three and five-storey building to accommodate 7 residential units.

1.5 Access is to continue off Eldon Terrace through the established car park. Parking on-site for 5 cars is proposed. 10 cycle spaces are further proposed.



Figure 3: Proposed parking arrangements

POLICY REVIEW

- 1.6 Parking requirements for such a development are set out within the Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (2011) (SPD).
- 1.7 The SPD indicates that *“parking is identified by the Government as being a major contributor to rising levels of car usage, and in turn congestion and environmental damage”* and highlights that *“PPG13 states that local authorities should ensure that as part of a package of planning and transport measures, levels of parking provided in association with development will promote sustainable transport choices”*.
- 1.8 A zonal approach has been adopted as part of the SPD, which *“considers the accessibility to sustainable forms of transportation and in the case of residential parking, the distance to local facilities and services”*.
- 1.9 The development site is located in Zone 2, a Primary Core Area, which surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2km from the centre of Reading. *“Typically this zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone. Much of this area is within acceptable walking distance (400m) of either the main railway station, or Reading West railway station. Walking and cycling in this area tends to be encouraged through the provision of wide and safe footways, with some dedicated or shared cycle ways. The areas within Zone 2 also typically have smaller local centres, providing day-to-day access to retail and some commercial facilities. Future growth in these areas is likely to be more mixed than in the core area, with larger amount of residential than commercial space”*.
- 1.10 The SPD sets residential car parking standards for new developments based on these zones, as demonstrated in Table 2. According to these standards alone, there is a requirement for the development to provide 7 car parking spaces.

Table 2: Reading Borough Council's Revised Parking Standards and Design Supplementary Planning Document (2011)

	Residential Parking Provision			
	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
Residential				
C3 Retirement Home with Warden (spaces per individual units)	0.5 + 1 space on site for staff	1 + 1 space on site for staff	1 + 1 space on site for staff	1 + 1 space on site for staff

1.11 It is considered that the proposed development has an extremely low parking demand. The local characteristics of the area and the accessibility of local facilities and services will reduce the need for residents to own vehicles.

1.12 The application site is also located on the boundary with the Reading Central Area Action Plan (Zone 1), which further strengthens the argument for reduced parking.

Figure 1.2: Boundary of the Reading Central Area Action Plan



Figure 4: Map of Reading Central Area Action Plan

1.13 The vision for the Reading Central Area Action Plan, states

1.13.1 *“By 2026, central Reading will build on its status as the dynamic and creative core of the capital of the Thames Valley and an important regional hub....It will be easily accessed by a choice of means of transport, and will contain a national significant interchange between European, UK, regional and local service, and between train and bus and other forms of transport”.*

1.14 One of the key principles in the Reading Central Area Action Plan is *“access to the centre by foot, cycle and public transport will be improved”*, along with *“access within the centre by foot and cycle will be improved and barriers to this improved access will be overcome, particularly in a north-south direction through the core”.*

1.15 It is clear that there is an emphasis in the area surrounding the development site to promote sustainable modes of transport, where places are accessed via foot, cycle, bus or train.

PARKING PROVISION

1.16 Parking on-site for 5 cars is proposed, thus giving an average car ownership of 0.7.

1.17 Data from the 2011 census provides car ownership levels per household by ward. The data collated differentiates between “‘whole houses’ and ‘bungalows’” and “‘flat, maisonette, apartment, caravan or other mobile or temporary structure.’” The scheme comprises 7 flats and is positioned within the Redlands ward, therefore the data for this ward has been examined (table 3).

Table 3: 2011 census data for car and van ownership for Flat, Maisonette or Apartment [LC4415EW]

Redlands	Number	Proportion
All Categories	1428	
No vehicle	721	50.5%
1 vehicle	583	40.8%
2 or more vehicles	124	8.7%

1.18 Table 3 shows that half of households living in flats would have no vehicle at all and only 9% had more than one vehicle. The average car ownership per flat in Redlands was vehicles 0.4 per households, significantly less than the average car ownership proposed.

1.19 Although the figures above relate to 2011, given the aims of Reading Central Action Plan and external factors such as fuel prices, the increased production of electric cars, changing policy and social attitudes, it is highly likely that car ownerships levels will be affected in the future. Indeed, since the 2001 census the number of households in flats with no vehicles has increased from 647 to 721. Using the same rate of growth seen between 2001 and 2011, it is predicted that 805 households would have no cars or vans in 2021.

CYCLE PARKING PROVISION

1.20 Reading Borough Council sets out its minimum cycle parking standards within the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD, which are summarised in Table 4.

1.21 The proposed development comprises 7 dwellings. For the proposed development the minimum cycle parking provision is therefore 3.5 if no individual secure facility is required.

1.22 The development includes secure bike stores at ground floor level with 10 spaces. This exceeds the minimum standards.

Table 4: Minimum cycle parking standards

Minimum cycle parking standards	
	Zone 1 - 4
Residential	
C3 Dwelling Flat 1/2-bed	0.5*
C3 Dwelling Flat 3+ -bed	1*
C3 Dwelling House 1-bed	1
C3 Dwelling House 2/3-bed	2
C3 Dwelling House 4-bed +	2

PARKING CONCLUSIONS

1.23 The development location is considered to be in a highly accessible location by non-car modes. The site is located on the edge of Reading Central Area, where the Town Centre is accessible on foot, a journey lasting

20mins. There are dedicated footways along both sides of Eldon Road, which provides a good route to the key local services and amenities. Table 1 lists the local services available within a 10-15min walk of the site. Overall, the majority of services are walkable from the development site, being within 1 mile.

1.24 As outlined above, there are also a range of bus services available from the site location. There are two bus stops within a 100m walk from the development site – Eldon Road (W-bound) and Eldon Road (adj 11) bus stop, King’s Road.

1.25 Both Reading Station and Reading West Station offers option for national rail connections. Reading is also on National Cycle Route 5 which provides a cycle connection from the north (Oxford) to the south (Reading). Although Reading town centre is highly accessible by foot from the development site, accessibility by bike reduces journey times more significantly. Cycle storage has been proposed, further encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport.

1.26 The accessible location of the site will minimise the likelihood that residents will need to own and use a car. Census data has demonstrated that those living in flats are more likely to have no cars and the average car ownership meets the car parking provision.

1.27 Secure cycle parking will be provided in excess of Reading Borough Council’s standards.

1.28 The accessibility of the site demonstrates that the proposed development would have a genuine choice with regards to their mode of travel and therefore, the reduction in parking will not have any harmful impacts. The site is accessible and would not limit the ability of the residents to travel, preventing social exclusion. Moreover, it is unlikely that the future residents will own a car and besides, when moving into the proposed flat, they will be made aware of the level of parking provision for the scheme and will be factor in their decision to move to this location.

2 CONCLUSION

- 2.4 The proposed development is for the demolition of the existing building and erection of a three and five storey building to accommodate 7 residential units. Parking is provided for 5 cars and 10 cycle spaces are also proposed.
- 2.5 Reading Borough Parking Standards demonstrate that 7 car parking spaces would be required. The proposed development therefore falls short of these standards by 2 spaces.
- 2.6 However, there are a range of local amenities and services within 1 mile of the development site, which are a 10-15min walk or less. This includes the centre of Reading. The full list is shown in Table 1. Considering this and the fact that the site is directly adjacent to the area covered by the Reading Central Action Plan, of which has an aim to encourage access to the centre by foot, cycle and public transport, the need to own vehicles is significantly reduced. Therefore, a low parking demand is likely.
- 2.7 When compared to the characteristics and composition of the surrounding area, census data has shown that over 50% of households living in flats do not own a vehicle. Moreover, the average ownership of the proposal will exceed that of the overall area. As such, it is considered that the reduced parking standards is acceptable.
- 2.8 In light of the above, it is clear that there is a case to permit the development with less than the minimum parking standards sought by the LHA for this application. Therefore, there should be no reason for this proposal to be detrimental to highway safety on transport or highway grounds.