zoar chapel / south street / reading / rg1 4qu

design and access statement

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colony architects

RIBA

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introduction

executive summary

- Application for nine flats to former Zoar Chapel, South Street, Reading;
- Development within settlement boundary;
- Sustainable location, based on proximity to shops and transport links;
- Designed to reflect character of context;
- Designed to reflect scale and massing of context.
- Innovative high density housing scheme offering much needed affordable first time buyer housing.
- Re-submission of withdrawn application 180964, following advice from the LPA, including pre-application adjustments and consultation with the LPA.

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.

This statement 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 100m^2

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 observer statutory requirements and guidance documents, but also local planning policy requirements, examples of these documents include:

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

site

application and location

Description

This application is for the residential development of 8 units at the site formerly Zoar Chapel, South Street, Reading, RG1 4QU.

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 Reading town centre, to the south of Queens Road and Kennet River.

Site Locality

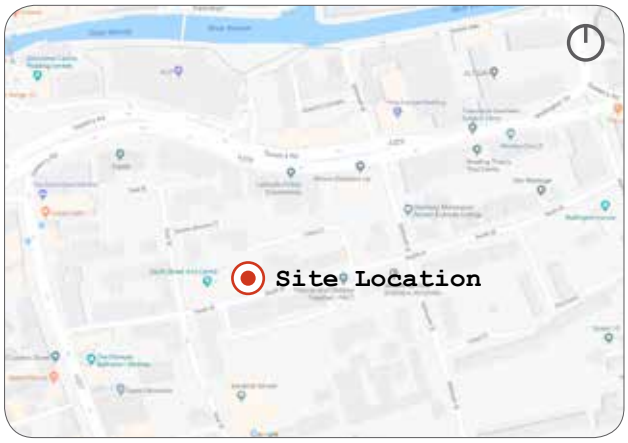
The aerial view of site shows that the locality of the site is a mix of residential, retail, business and culture within the defined settlement boundary of Reading. The site is surrounding by residential properties to the East and North, offices to the South and South Streets art centre to the west.

Sustainable Location

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

- Supermarket [5 mins walk]
- Reading town centre [15 mins walk]
- Reading railway station [12 mins walk]
- Bus routes – numerous bus routes in and out of Reading [3 mins walk]
- Newsagent [5 mins walk]
- Schools – Kendrick School [5 mins walk], St Johns C of E Primary School [15 mins walk]

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.

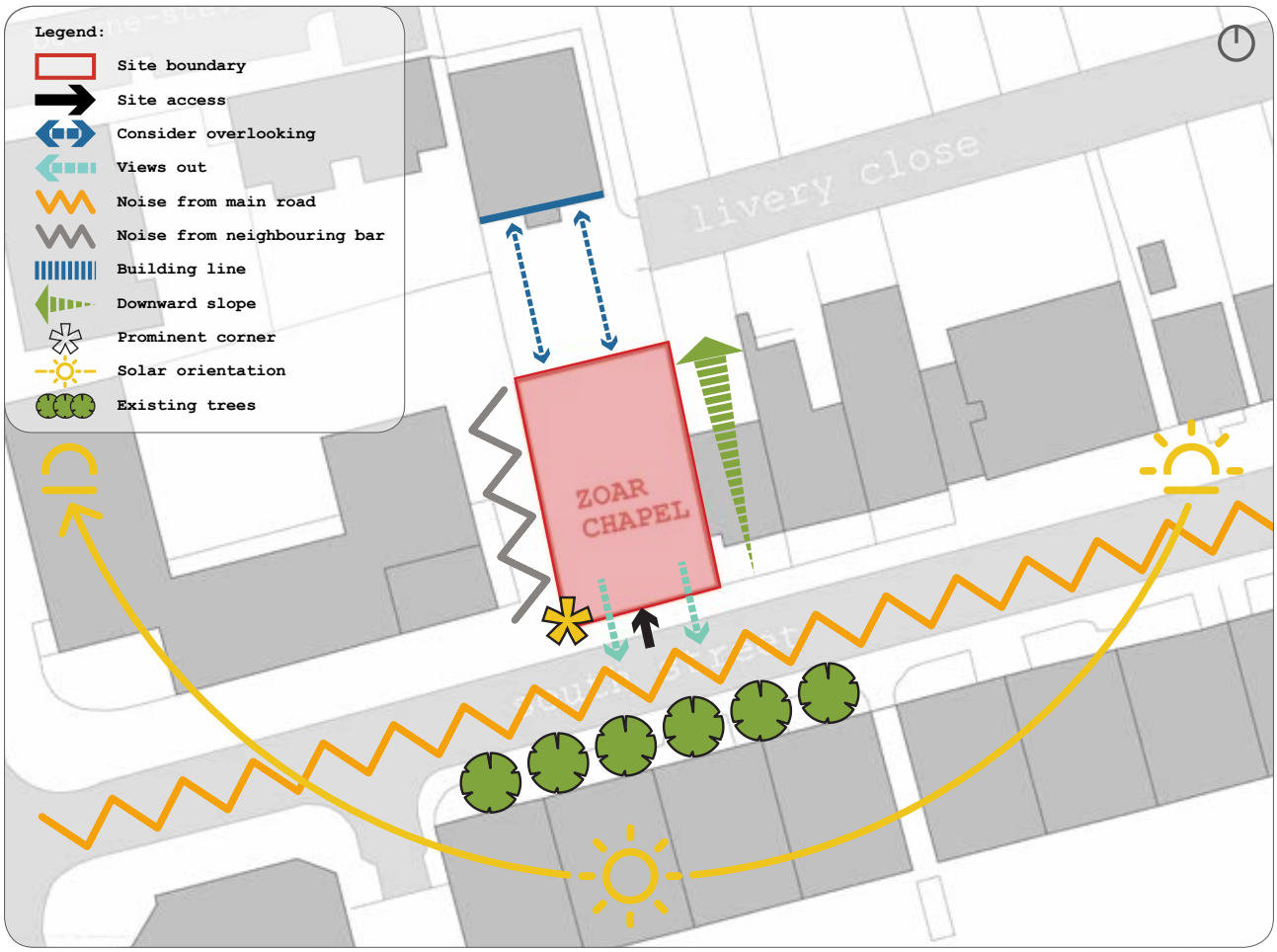


Site location - road map

Site location - aerial view

site parameters

- Site area: approx. 270m^2
- Current site use: not in use – former site of Zoar Chapel – brownfield
- Site shape is broadly rectangular
- Orientation – on a SSE–NWW axis with street elevation (South Street) on the SSE side
- Nearby buildings – South Street arts centre to the west, 1-5 Livery Close to the north, 25-49 South Street to the east and the office units of 1-10 South Street to the south
- Overlooking – potential for overlooking of residential space to the north (Livery Close)
- Overshadowing – from offices to the south in the winter. Avoid overshadowing of No.25 garden
- Roads – South Street to the south, Livery Close to the north, East Street to the west and Sidmouth Street to the east
- Access points – To the north and south, principal access to the south off South Street
- Previous site uses – former Zoar Chapel, now demolished
- Existing buildings on site – none
- Surrounding site uses – residential, offices, arts centre, education


Legend:
Site boundary
Site access
Consider overlooking
Views out
Noise from main road
Noise from neighbouring bar
Building line
Downward slope
Prominent corner
Solar orientation
Existing trees
livery close
ZOAR
CHAPEL

site context

Character of Context – Townscape, Architecture and Density

- Generally a very varied street scene;
- A variety of Georgian, Victorian, 1950s and 1980s architecture;
- The Georgian architecture of the Arts Centre and its modern extension adjacent to the proposed site;
- Modern office blocks along the south side of South Street;
- Mixed palette of materials elevation materials (red brick, yellow brick, brown brick, buff brick details, white painted brick, metal cladding sheets to arts centre extension;
- A variety of roof styles – flat, mansard, gables to the street, pitched roof sloping away from the street, asymmetric roofs;
- Roof materials vary from slate tiles, clay tiles and roofing felt;
- Properties with individual character and identity.

Character of Context – Landscape, Trees & Public Realm

- Tree-lined avenue along south side of South Street;
- Mature;
- Variety of deciduous tree.

Urban Grain

- Strong axis along south street between London street and Sidmouth Street;
- Proposal site add to strong axis by continuing existing terrace;
- Cul-de-sac roads of Livery Close and Bourne-Stevens Close provide a quite environment to the rear of the site;
- Large rear gardens to the properties along Queens Road provide openness to the rear of proposed site.

Building Heights

- The immediate area has a variety of building heights from 2 to 4 storeys, the properties along the terrace to the east make use of the topography with a lower ground level, as do the proposed flats;
- Offices to the south are tall 3 storey buildings that dominate the street scene.

design principles and proposals

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:

Responding to Local Character

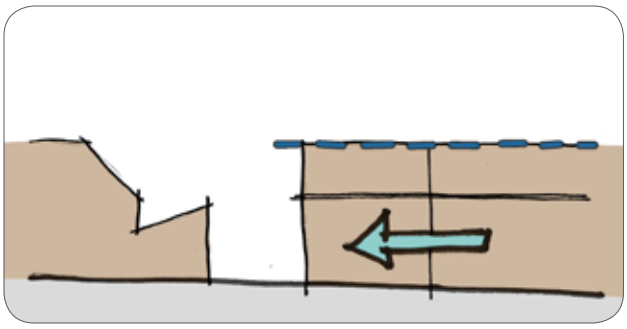
- Terraced properties to the east;
- Varied appearance of context;
- Lower ground level apartments/rooms.

Amount, Use, Size

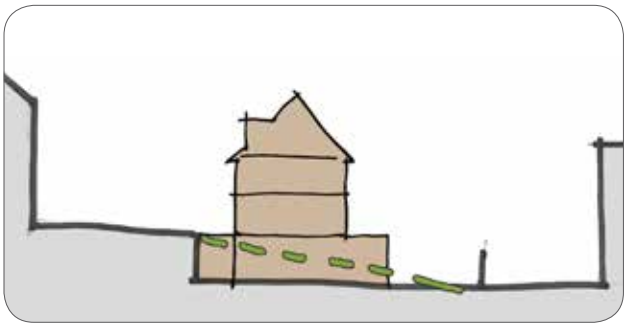
- 1-2 bedroom flats;
- urban density.

Scale, Massing, Proportion

- Established 2-4 storeys context including lower ground floors (off South Street);
- Strong building line;
- Variety of styles, windows sizes and heights;
- Proposals ridge and eaves heights equal if not very close to No.25 and 27 South Street.



1. Massing of new building set by extent of the existing terrace form.



2. The existing slope across the site is made advantage of and cut out to provide more development area.

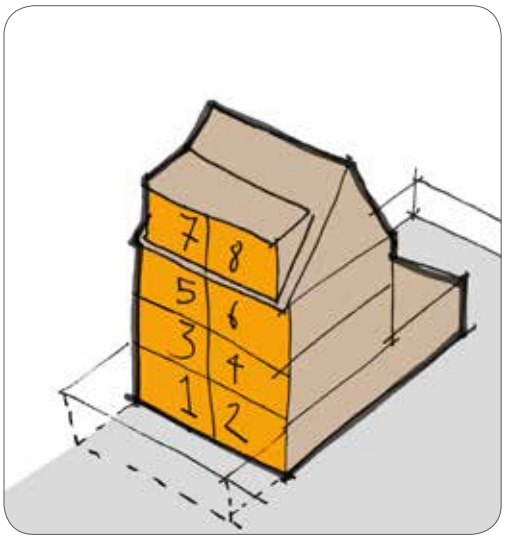
response to context – continued

Respect of Neighbouring Properties

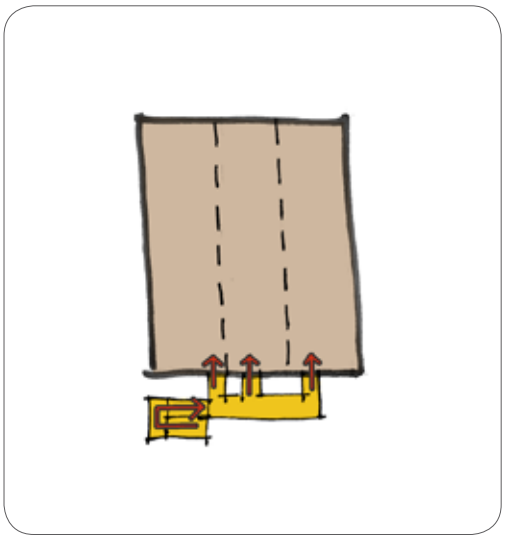
- Overlooking distances – Ground to second floor rear wall is beyond the recommended 20m overlooking distance from 1-5 Livery Close. Proposed roof terrace protected from overlooking by obscure glazed louvres;
- Overshadowing distance – Ground to second floor rear walls in-line with No.25 so overshadowing reduced. Proposal presents less overshadowing than the previous Zoar Chapel.

Relationship to South Street

- External staircase and circulation off South Street, with access to lower ground level, as per neighbouring properties. Planting proposed along circulation to soften aesthetic.



3. The terrace form is cut into 8 units efficiently stacked.

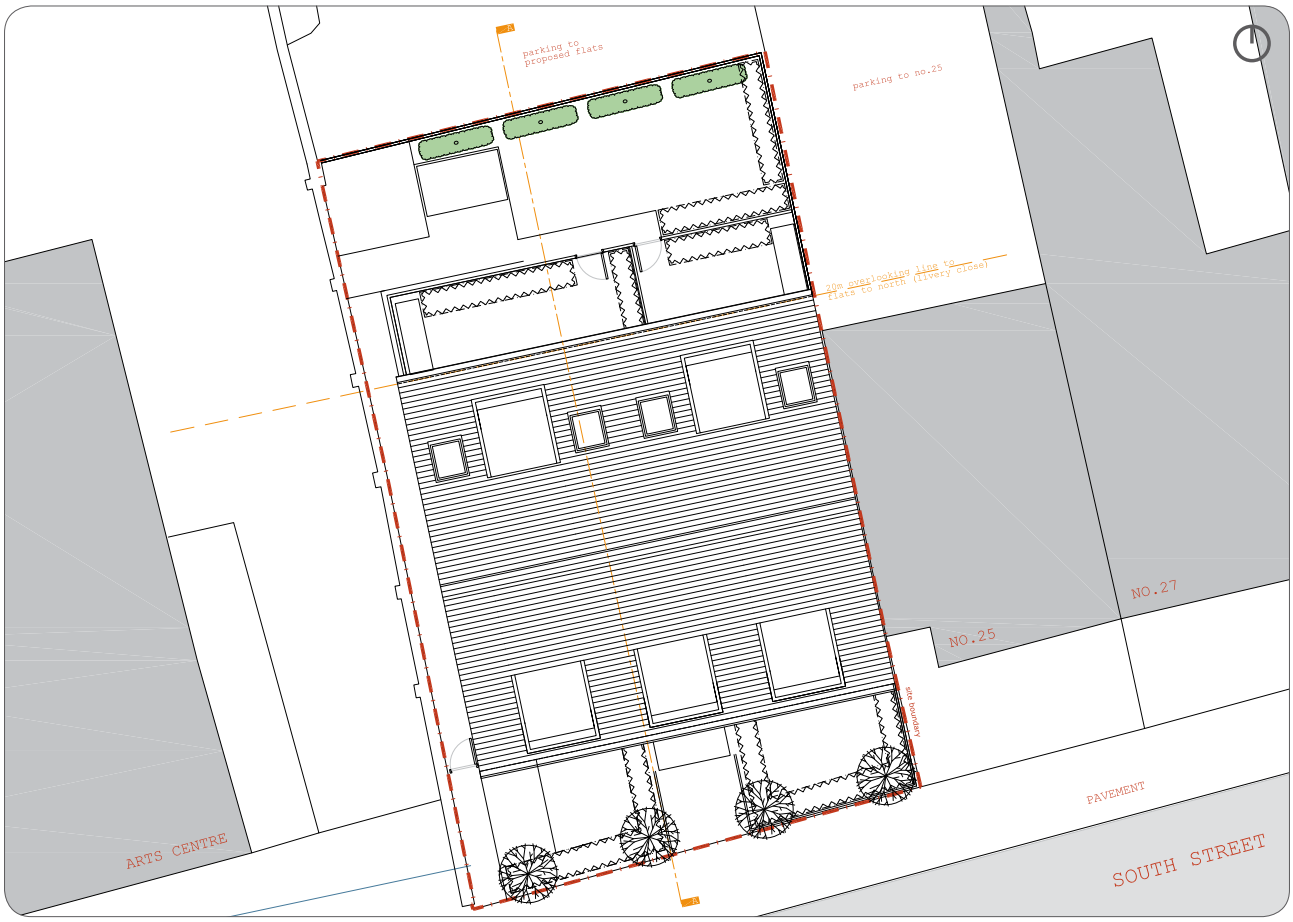


4. No internal communal space is proposed. There is a feature bridge access on South Street.

proposed layout

Site Plan

- Site Access – pedestrian access provided from South Street to the south;
- Garden size / orientation – small gardens provided to the north and balconies/circulation to the south;
- Planting / screening – planting proposed along south boundary, green roof to the north;
- Overlooking – ground to second floor flats beyond 20m overlooking line as shown in floor plans. Lower ground floor protected with 2.4m high fences, ground floor roof terraces with obscure glazed louvres;
- Parking / cycles – Off site parking to the north and along south street, cycle storage within communal amenity space at lower ground floor and along west wall.

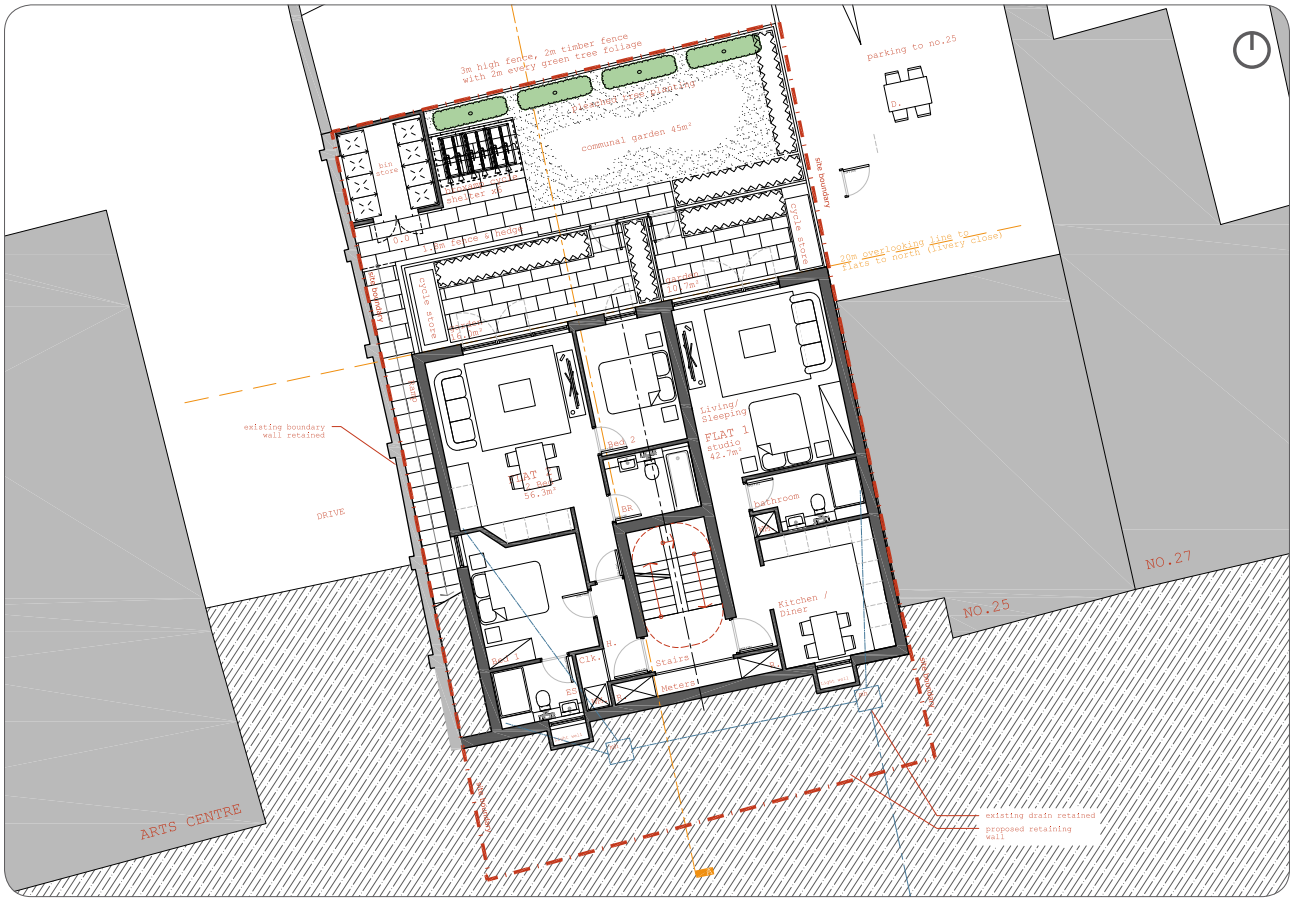


Proposed roof and landscape plan

proposed layout – continued

Floor Plan

- Rectangular plans responding to the terraces to the east of the proposed site;
- Open plan living room, kitchen and dining to reduce circulation space and spaces without natural light;
- Ramp access from the GF street level to the LGF external area, allowing ramped access.
- Central staircase and entrance area to reduce circulation space.
- Mixture of dwellings types.
- Rear windows set back by circa 22m from facing flats.



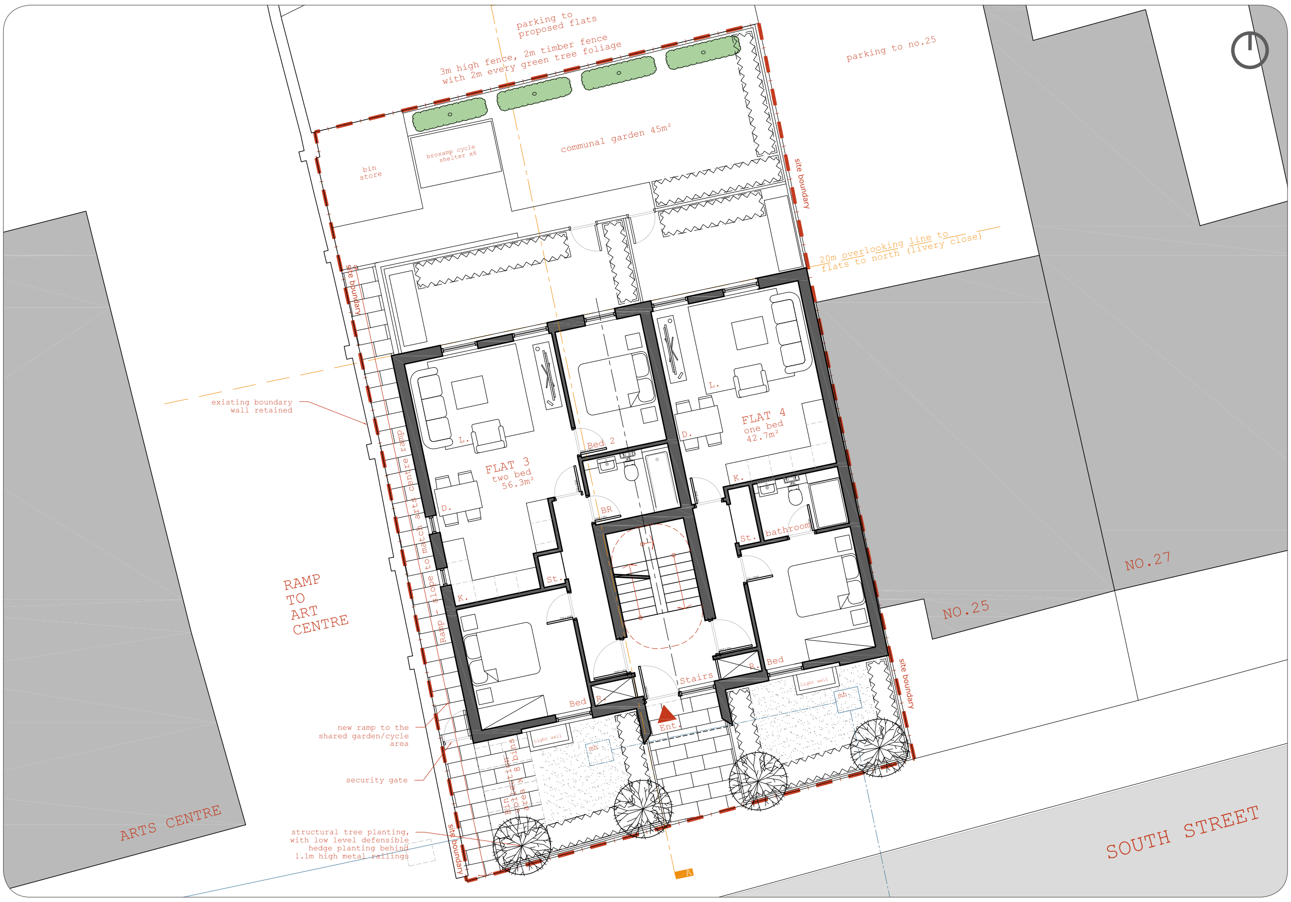
Proposed lower ground floor plan

Amount & Use

Schedule of accommodation:

Lower ground floor	1xstudio (42.7sqm) & 1x2bed (56.3sqm)
Ground floor	1x1bed (42.7sqm) & 1x2bed (56.3sqm)
First floor	2x1bed (49.5sqm)
Second floor	2xstudio (34.9sqm)
Total Area	**8 dwellings GIA area = 366.8sqm**

Residential use only – size of flats suiting young/elderly individuals, couples and small families.



Proposed ground floor plan

proposed layout - continued

Design Standards

The unit sizes are compliant with Reading Design SPD.

Air & Noise Quality

The site is located within Reading Town Centre and therefore is potentially within a poor noise and air quality area. As the building is not on the main roads, a full air quality assessment and survey would be presented to the council by condition.

Proposed first floor plan

Proposed second floor plan

proposed scale and appearance

Appropriate Scale & Massing

- Ridge and eaves of proposal to match neighbouring No.25
- Proposal makes use of topography with lower ground floor / basement level as per No.25, No.27 and No.28
- Sloped roofs sloping from South Street as per No.25
- Front dormers in reference to gable frontage of No.27 and mansard roof of No.27
- Flat roof to lower ground floor to reduce impact on neighbours

Architectural Appearance to Suit Context

- Varied architectural style of context not restricting material palette
- Zinc roof, dormers and balconies in reference to metal clad contemporary extension
- Yellow/brown brick to match neighbouring No.25

South Street streetscene elevation

Context photographs

Architectural Precedent

- Contemporary detailing within traditional forms
- Contrast of open metal stair with solid metal walkway
- Green roofs - biophillic design
- Structured and formal window pattern in reference to Georgian Architecture

Proposed Materials

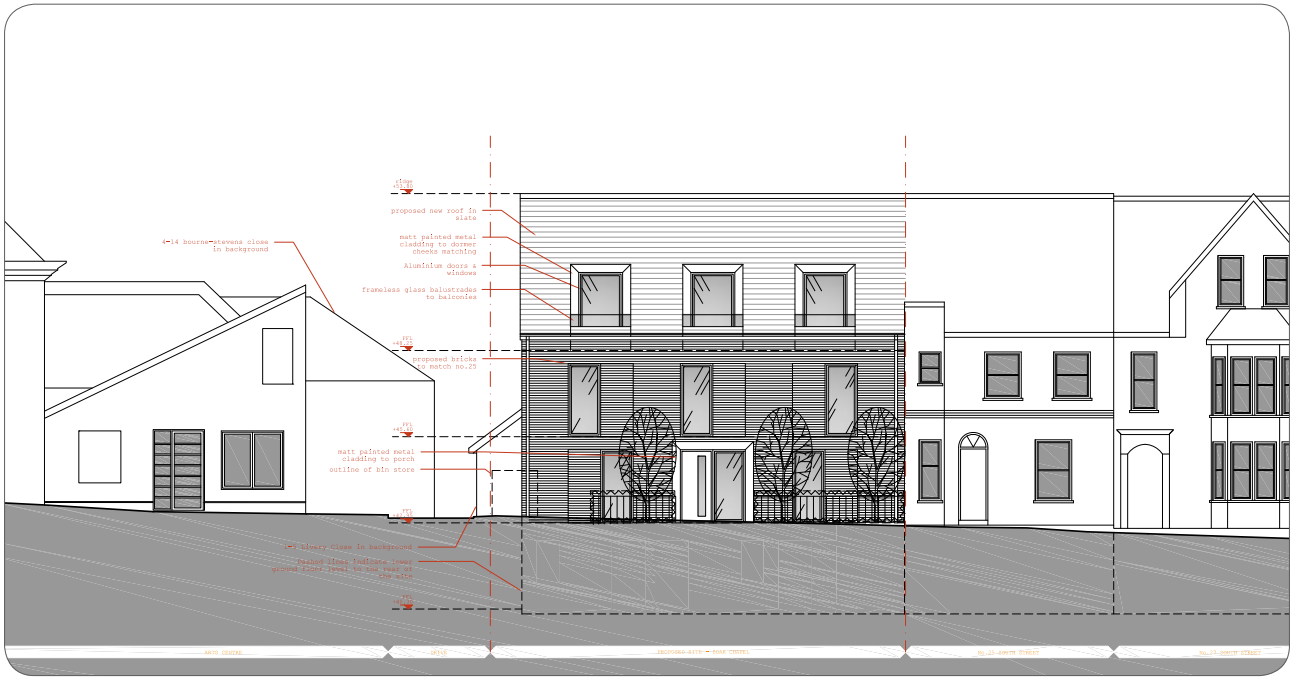
- High quality materials
- Powder coated aluminium doors, windows and rainwater goods
- Buff brick to match No.25
- Zinc roof and external walkway reference to the metal clad contemporary extension of Arts Centre
- High quality weather proof metal to the external stairs

Precedents

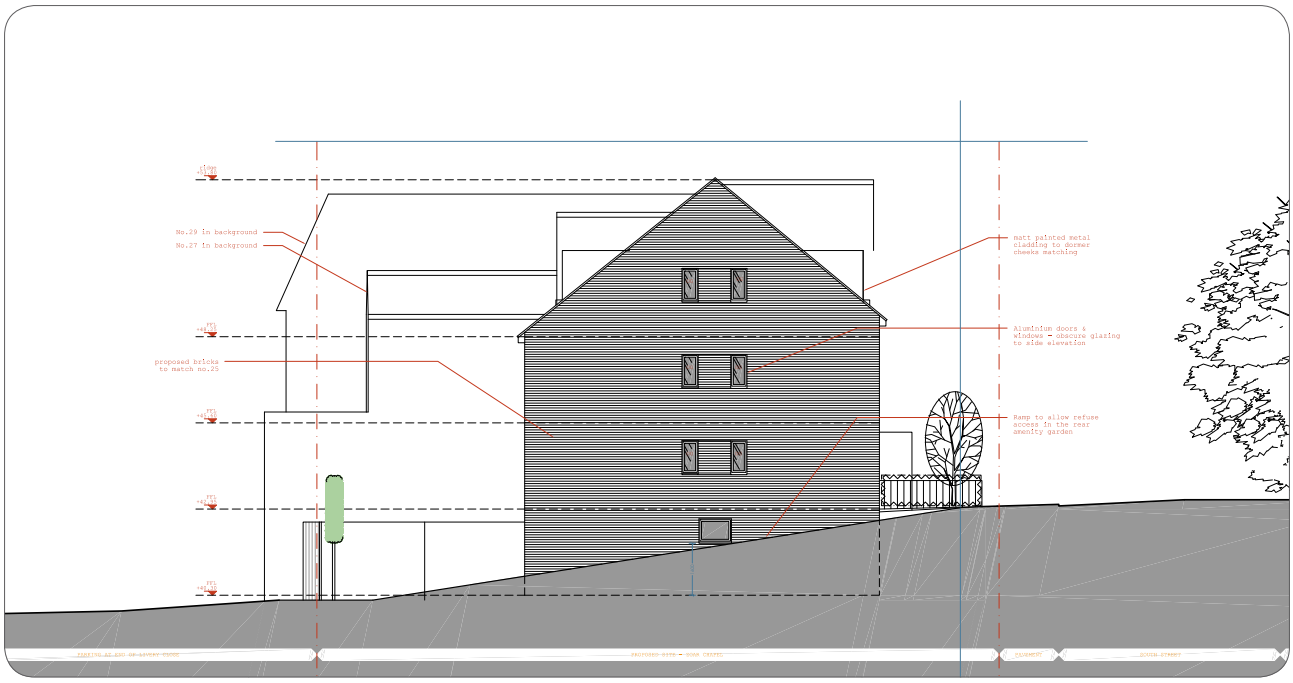
proposed scale and appearance – continued

Elevation Design

- Simple, structured elevation design as per Georgian context
- External staircase to maximise and simplify living space
- Overlooking measures include obscure glass louvres to rear elevation
- Brick detailing around rear windows to define units and provide more privacy



South-east elevation



South-west elevation

North-west elevation

perspective views – continued

perspective views – continued

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 and CO_2

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 floodwater diversion
- water saving sanitary ware – low flow taps and showers and low flush toilets

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
- green roof installed above section of lower ground level - enhancing urban biodiversity

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 a secure shed
- local public transport includes bus routes and railway station

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