

**Proposed Student Accommodation
EAST STREET, READING
Design & Access Statement**

October 2018



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Design & Access Statement**

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Client Studios Development (Reading) Ltd

Date: 2018 10 19
Reviewer: -
Author: MB
Revision: Rev B – PLANNING APPLICATION ISSUE

Job No: **18053**

Prepared on behalf of Studios Development (Reading) Ltd

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gdl architecture

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1.0 introduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

GDL Architecture has been commissioned by Studios Development (Reading) Ltd for the redevelopment of the application site, currently occupied by an electricity substation and redundant surface car-parking, to provide high quality purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA). The Client is a prominent student accommodation provider with an extensive countrywide experience and well developed management support systems.

The application site is ideal for student accommodation being focally located between the university's main and London Road campuses, Reading College, the railway station, and the Town Centre. It is the only remaining gap site in a mixed-use perimeter block framework which is contained by Queen's Road, London Street, South Street and East Street.

This Design and Access Statement seeks to show how the development may enhance the local environment and explain that the design proposals are a logical response to the physical and social characteristics of the townscape.

The site currently has an approval for a 103 beds PBSA scheme. Appeal Ref: **APP/E0345/W/17/3190317**. The DAS makes reference to the consented scheme to illustrate the differences between that and the scheme proposed in this planning application

1.1 The Studios Brand

Studios have taken a demand-led approach to carefully work up a design concept that listens to the needs of the students, the universities and the local community. The company doesn't believe that building student accommodation is about trying to squeeze students into small, featureless boxes, recognising instead that modern students wish to be treated like adults and the place they call home should be in line with this expectation.



Figure 01 Studios standard specification

All Studios developments have a consistent specification and set of requirements to ensure the student's day-to-day life and studying requirements are made as easy as possible. A student's university experience is not solely about studying, but also social learning and benefitting from the sharing of ideas and concepts. In order to facilitate all of this all their schemes include, as a minimum:

- Minimum room size
- Club lounge social area
- Group study rooms
- Private dining room
- Fitness Suite
- Cinema room
- On site management
- Security system

Experience has shown that offering this quality of accommodation and amenity space attracts a more discerning student supporting academic study and the relative attractiveness of local higher and further education institutions.

Furthermore, with the increase in international students playing an important part in the growth of the UK Higher Education offering, it is essential that they are offered a quality of accommodation that matches the quality of their degree. In this way, the UK will be able to continue to attract the best students from around the world.



Figure 02 Studios standard social areas

1.2 The Site

The site, which measures 0.316 acres is a redundant car park to the south of New Century Place and fronting East Street. The car parking requirements are now redundant due to the conversion of NCP1 & 2 into C3 use. The north east corner of the site is occupied by a small electricity substation that has planning approval to be re-located to a new position adjacent to the site.

The land in the vicinity generally falls from south to north, with a 1:22 gradient on East Street for the length of the site. The site levels fall from a high point of 42.50 AOD in the south-west corner to 41.45 AOD in the north-east corner. The site has therefore been rendered relatively level on made ground to suit functional car parking, with the edge interface treatment a combination of sloping verges to the east and retaining walls to the north, south and west. The southern boundary is delineated by the north façade of number 16 East Street which is a community building.

The surface finish comprises herringbone bond concrete paviors with perimeter drainage points. A curved concrete ramp rises from the lower car parking level between the site and New Century Place to another raised car parking area to the west.

The on-site verges are cultivated with hedging and hedgerow trees.

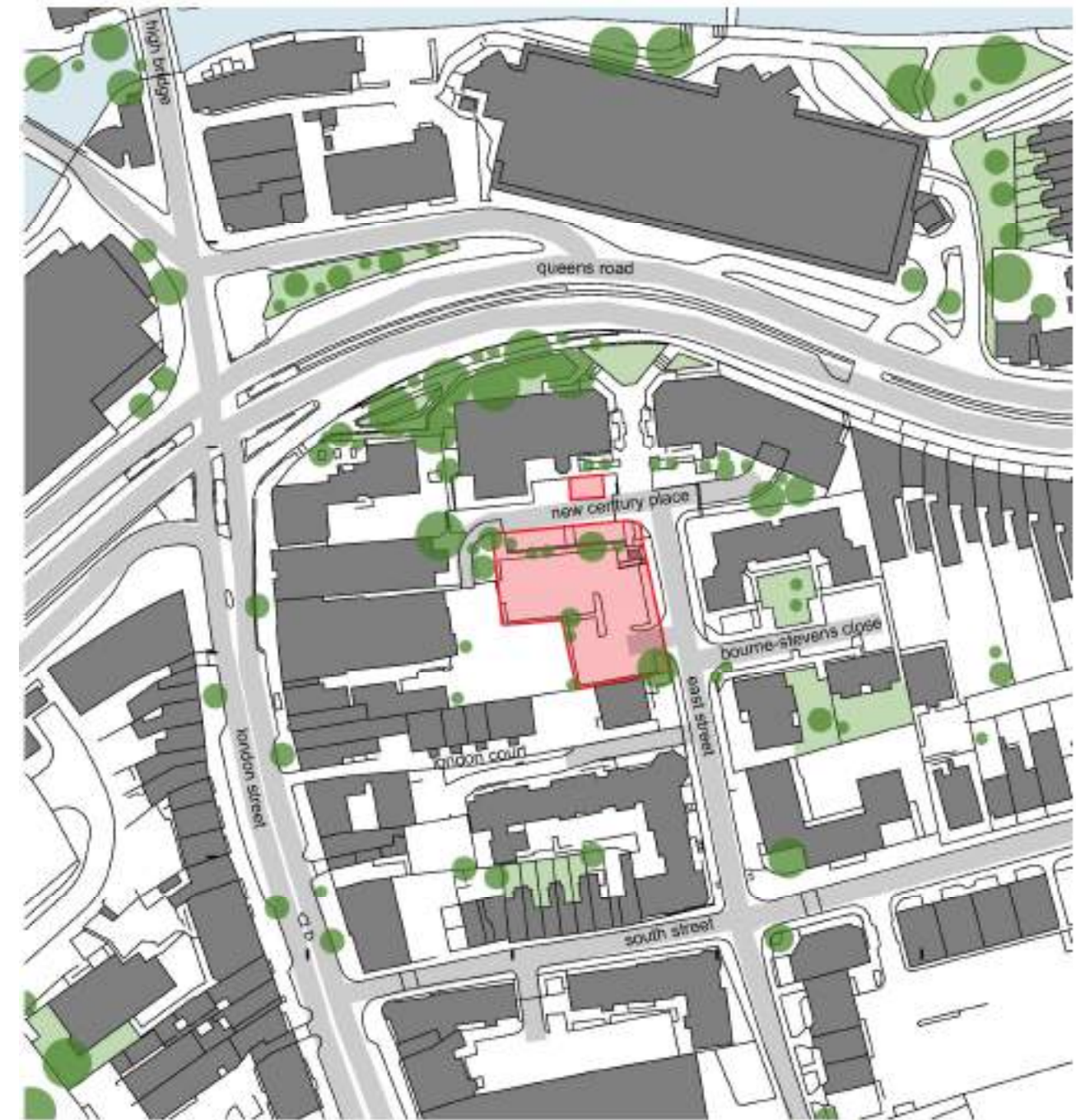


Figure 03 Existing Site



Figure 04 View from adjacent building looking south over site



Figure 06 View of retaining walls along site boundary



Figure 05 Panoramic view of site from East Street



Figure 07 View of tree and party wall on southern boundary



Figure 09 View of the existing substation from within the site



Figure 08 Access road and parking along northern site boundary



Figure 10 View of northern site boundary and rear of London Street properties

1.3 The Context

The Site, which is broadly 'L' shaped, measures approximately 0.127 hectares. It comprises a surface level car park, formerly used by the commercial occupiers of a neighboring building, now vacant. The site is located on the western side of East Street, which is a cul-de-sac that extends northwards from South Street, which can be accessed from London Street.

To the west, the site abuts the rear of the raised area of car park, which falls outside the application site area. Further west is the rear of a terrace of buildings which face London Street. The terrace includes 31, 33, 35, 37, 39 and 41 London Street, which are all statutorily listed buildings. Buildings at 43 – 47 London Street and 1 – 4 London Court are buildings of townscape merit. Directly to the north of the site are 1 New Century Place and 2 New Century Place, both four storeys (plus pitched roof) which are the former office buildings now being converted to residential use.

To the east of the site is Bourne Stevens Close, a cul-de-sac surrounded by three storey residential buildings. To the south of the site is a single storey community use building, and further south beyond that, East View Place which is a residential development of up to five storeys tall. It is therefore clear that following the conversion of 1 and 2 New Century Place, the immediate surrounding land uses will almost entirely be residential.

Since becoming redundant the condition of the site has deteriorated and it is now a target for litter, anti-social behavior, illegal fly-tipping and illegal occupation by travelers. The site is neighboured by surrounding buildings in both commercial and residential use. In its current condition, the site detracts from the appearance and character of the surrounding area, including the Market Place/ London Street Conservation Area, which the site falls within. The site is previously developed, brownfield land located within a sustainable location within the town centre of Reading.



Figure 12 View along East Street to New Century Place



Figure 11 Corner of East View Place and no 16 East Street community building



Figure 13 View of existing site from East Street



Figure 14 View from East Street along Bourne-Stevens Close



Figure 16 View of site from Queen's Road



Figure 15 Gable of Bourne-Stevens Close facing site



Figure 17 Offices at junction of Queen's Road and London Street



Figure 18 Corner of East View Place at South Street



Figure 20 View along South Street



Figure 19 View north along East Street



Figure 21 Offices and Great Expectations Hotel at the end of London Street

1.4 Heights and Massing

The site is a redundant surface car park which sits among a mix of office and residential buildings.

The frontage to Queens Road is made up of three separate office buildings. The two which form the New Century Place development are 4 storeys high with pitched roofs at 60.10 AOD, and corner turrets rising to 62.82 AOD.

The government Central Point offices to the corner of Queen's Road and London Street are at a height of 5 storeys, with flat roof areas at 59.88 AOD.

The new housing development to Bourne-Stevens Close is 2 to 3 storeys with the highest ridge line at 50.58 AOD.

The 3 to 5 storeyed East View Place has a large corner turret with a flat roof at 56.33 AOD.

The rest of the immediate contextual area comprises the street frontage to London Street. The Great Expectations Hotel at the north end has a roof ridge line at 51.97 AOD and eaves at 49.01 AOD. The pediment fronting onto London Street has a ridge at 55.15 AOD.

To assist our understanding of these physical relationships a comprehensive survey of AOD levels was carried out within the surrounding area.

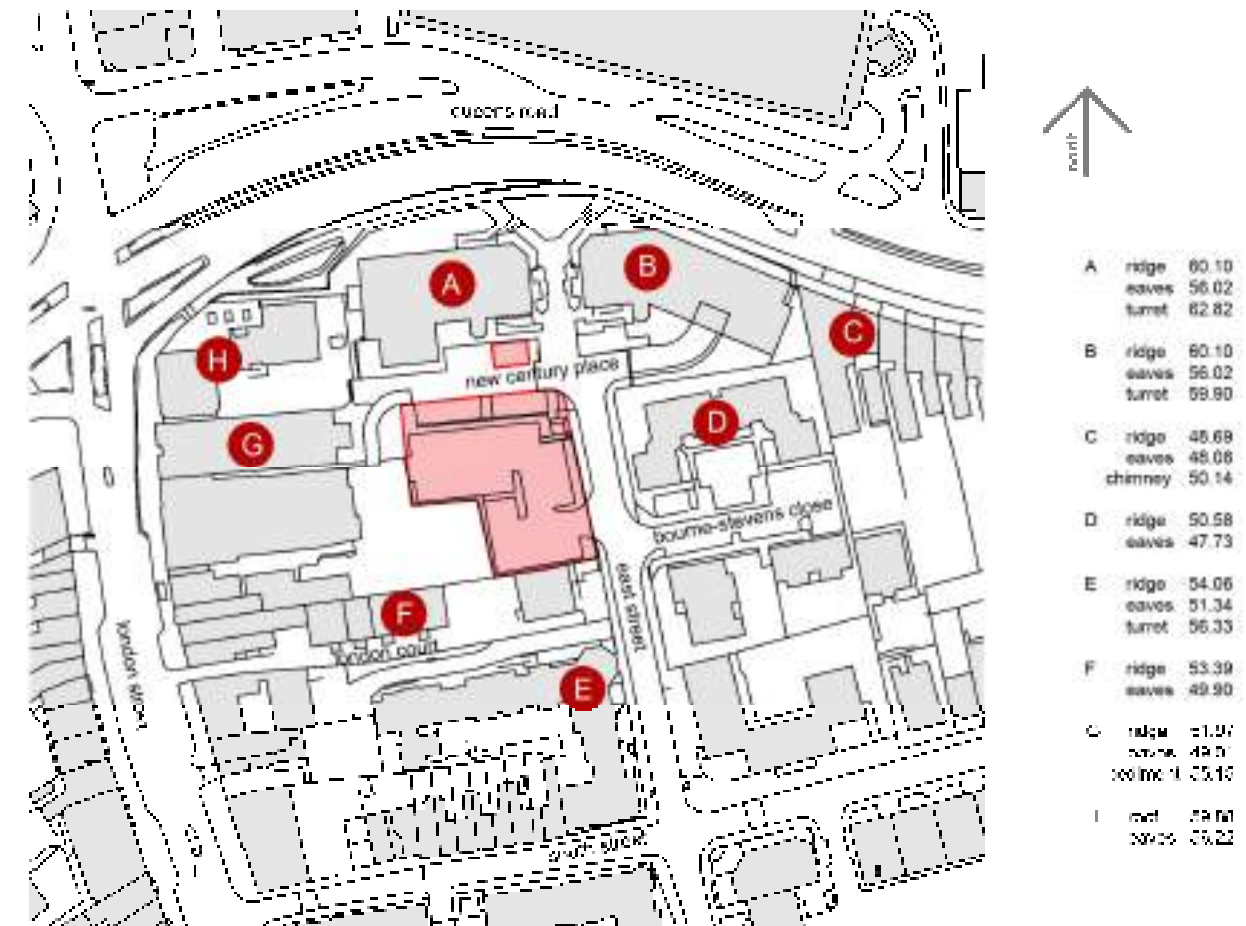


Figure 22 Building Datum Heights



Figure 23 Aerial view – from west over London Street



Figure 24 Aerial view – from south to Queen's Road

2.0 project background

2.1 Original Planning Application – January 2017

Development proposals for the Site were first discussed with the Council in 2016. The First Planning application, subsequently granted consent at appeal, undertook considerable pre-application engagement in refining the proposals in terms of architecture, massing and scale in response to advice received from Reading Borough Council officers.

The application Ref 170019, dated 5 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 7 June 2017.

Description

New purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) (Use Class Sui Generis) comprising 116 units across a mix of studios/premium studios/club and 1 bedroom apartments with shared communal, recreational and living facilities and all associated car parking, landscaping, access and ancillary works



Figure 25 Elevations from the submitted application

2.2 Design Evolution

During the Planning Application stage the design was reviewed and reduced following comments received from the Council. This section aims to describe with the aid of diagrams the changes that were taken

Pre Application Stage



Description

- 6 storey
- 139 beds
- Primarily brick with areas of aluminium cladding

Comments received

- Loss of landscaping to East Street
- Windows too small
- Loss of car parking
- Setting of the heritage assets
- Inappropriate scale
- Flat roof
- Active frontage required to East Street

Full Planning Application

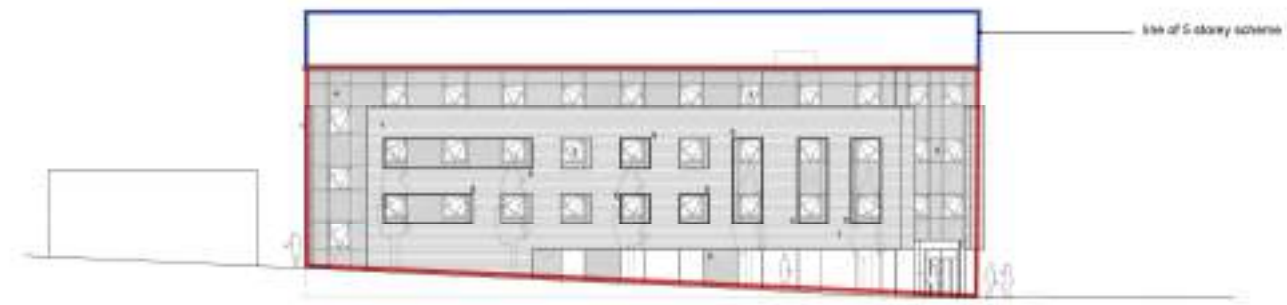


Description

- Increased active frontage to East Street
- Reduced height to 5 storeys
- 116 beds
- Simplified materials
- Larger windows with increased interest – less 'block' like elevations
- 500mm landscapes strip to North and East frontages

Comments received

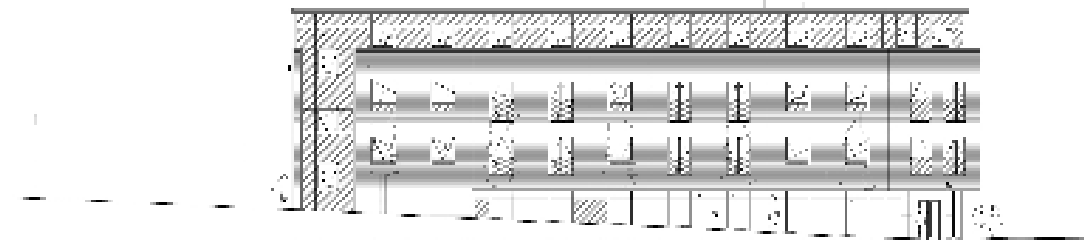
- Setting of Heritage assets
- Arrival and departure needs to be explained in terms of a management plan / strategy
- Inappropriate use of material - aluminium cladding. NOTE that no aluminium cladding is proposed
- Scale and massing queried
- Cycle parking inappropriate
- Directly abutting East Street – the council would like to see increased public realm along East Street
- The use of a flat roof was commented on

Informal Issue

Following submission of the planning application further comments were received from the council on the full planning application scheme, we revised the scheme and issued the updates to the council for informal comments

Description

- Increased set back to East Street with the introduction of trees and low level shrubs
- Primary material – brick
- Reduced height from 5 to 4 storeys
- Reduced beds from 116 to 107

Informal issue No.2

Following the verbal comments received the scheme was revised as follows

Description

- Increased definition to the elevations with the introduction of steps within the façade which takes on the character of the surrounding area.
- Added Juliet balconies to provide greater residential appearance

Comments received via Barton Wilmore – Verbal

- Scale – step needed to the south of East Street to provide relief to the single storey community building

Informal issue No.3

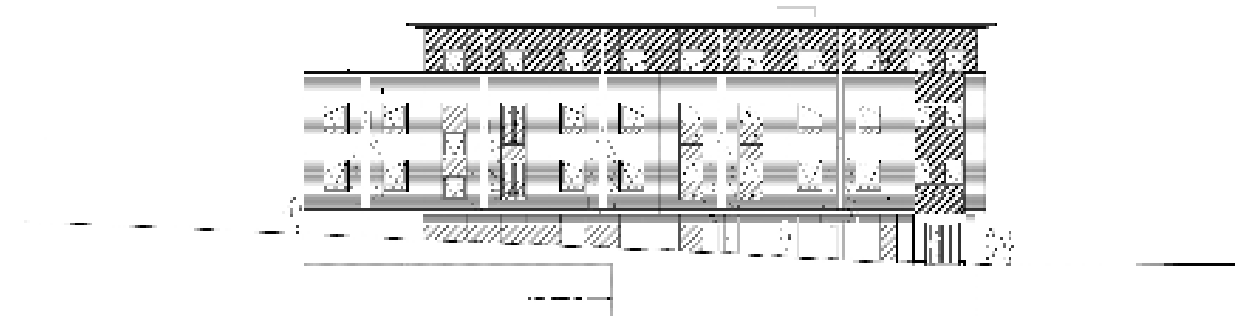
East Street elevation

**Description**

- Step provided to the south of East Street

Comments received

- Setting of historic assets
- Flat roof
- Scale and massing
- Negative comment regarding the use of basic brick as the dominant material
- Proposed materials are not classed as high quality
- Too bulky in mass and would dominate the streetscape

Revised full planning application**Design benefits and description**

- 4 storey building
- 103 beds
- The contemporary roof form allows for the deployment of sustainable renewables and rain water attenuation.
- The building restores the integrity of the historic perimeter block formed by East Street, Queen's Road, London Street and South Street, and enhances the active frontage to East street.
- The proposal is viable and responds to market demand.
- The proposal screens service areas from the East street public realm.
- The design respects the East Street elevation in terms of scale, and height. It is significantly lower than East View Place and New Century Place 1.
- The building's occupancy profile improves the diversity of the housing mix in the locale.
- Increased roof overhang with introduction of columns to add verticality and interest
- The Development will use materials consistent with the nearby buildings and respects the character of the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings.

2.3 Consented Scheme – July 2018

Appeal Ref: **APP/E0345/W/17/3190317**

Description:

Erection of 4 storey building to provide 103 student accommodation units (Sui Generis), landscaping, access and ancillary works, following removal of a 49 space car park

The application was refused based on the below 4 points

1. The proposed building by reason of its scale, form and dominant massing, use of inappropriate materials and lack of detailing is unsympathetic to and would fail to enhance or preserve the character and appearance of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. Furthermore, it would have a detrimental impact on the settings of the rear of listed buildings in London Street and thus harm the significance of those buildings. It is thus contrary to Policies CS7 and CS33 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015), DM4 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015) and to S.66(1) and S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
2. The proposal fails to demonstrate in a sequential test that there is no alternative location for such development, which is classified by the Environment Agency as “more vulnerable” and part within Flood Zone 2, and that the potential risks from flooding such as reduced flood water storage, impedance to flow or risks to life and property are acceptable or can be mitigated. It is thus contrary to Policy CS35 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015).
3. The proposed development does not comply with the Local Planning Authority’s standards in respect of arrival and departure procedure at the beginning and end of term and as a result constitutes a highway safety hazard in conflict with Policy CS24 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015) and Policy DM12 of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015).
4. In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure an Employment and Skills Plan and use of the living accommodation to be occupied as student accommodation (Sui Generis) only, the proposal will not mitigate its impact on the social and economic infrastructure of the borough, contrary to Policies CS3 and CS9 of the Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015), Policy DM3 of the Reading Borough LDF Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (Altered 2015) and the Council’s Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents on Employment, Skills & Training (2013) and Planning Obligations (2015).

Following a successful Appeal Hearing dated 17th July 2018 the scheme was granted Approval on 10th August 2018.



Figure 26 Elevations from the consented scheme

3.0 proposed scheme

3.0 DESIGN COMMENTARY

The proposed building takes its cue from the buildings to the north and south.

The application scheme responds to the streetscape hierarchy and comprises 5 storeys of studio bedroom accommodation with shared social facilities at ground and within the basement.

The plan form, largely generated by the shape of the site and in common with student accommodation projects generally, is based on an economical dual aspect layout with a centralised corridor, and is arranged as two separate elements running north-south and east-west which reflect the primary and secondary local urban grain. The north-east corner is chamfered on plan, a traditional device to accentuate a street intersection, and is detailed to exploit its landmark potential as a key visual anchor seen through the entrance to East Street from Queen's Road.

Fenestration patterns generally reflect the functions within the building. The scheme is flat-roofed for a variety of reasons, first, to mitigate the building mass; second, to facilitate roof top maintenance access; third, to provide a practical platform for the future installation of renewables; and fourth, to reinforce the contemporary architectural character.

The ground floor has a mix of uses – studios, foyer lounge and ancillary space for refuse and cycle storage. The basement comprises a dinner party room, cinema, study and library with double height void linking this area with the foyer lounge on the ground floor and ancillary facilities such as laundry, switch room and plant. The upper floors are taken up mostly by studios.

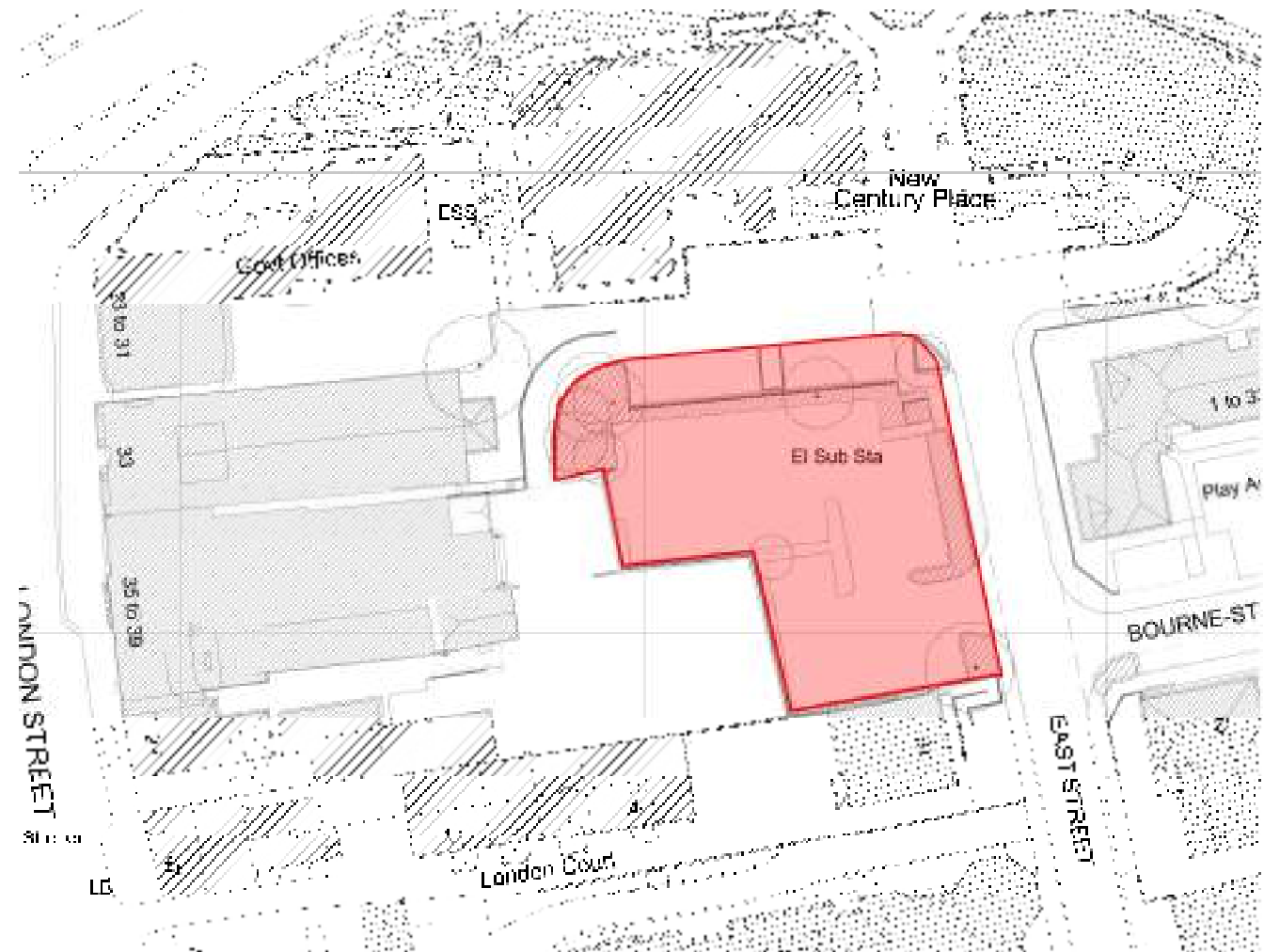
The external materials will be of high quality and limited in number to ensure restful and composed facades. Primarily the material palette will be composed of facing brickwork, and curtain walling. Windows will be set back within the building envelope to add depth and interest to the elevations.

- 135 beds
- 5 storey
- Social areas including cinema, lounge, study / library and a dinner party room
- Secure cycle storage
- Landscape courtyard
- Visitor and staff car parking including term time drop off and pick up allocated spaces
- CCTV
- Fully managed building

3.1 FOOTPRINT RATIONALE

The Site

Cleared 'L' shaped site



East Street

Continuation of the street down East Street



Street edge

Close the urban grain between New Century Place and the site

**Corner Node**

Create a focal node point as the site turns the corner



Entrance

Primary entrance point created on the corner due to maximum visibility and relationship with New Century Place

**Set back**

Building edge set back from street to provide additional / improved soft landscape to East Street



Courtyard

Secure and private courtyard for the residents between building and retaining wall

**Building Footprint**

3.3 PROPOSED SCHEME FLOOR PLANS

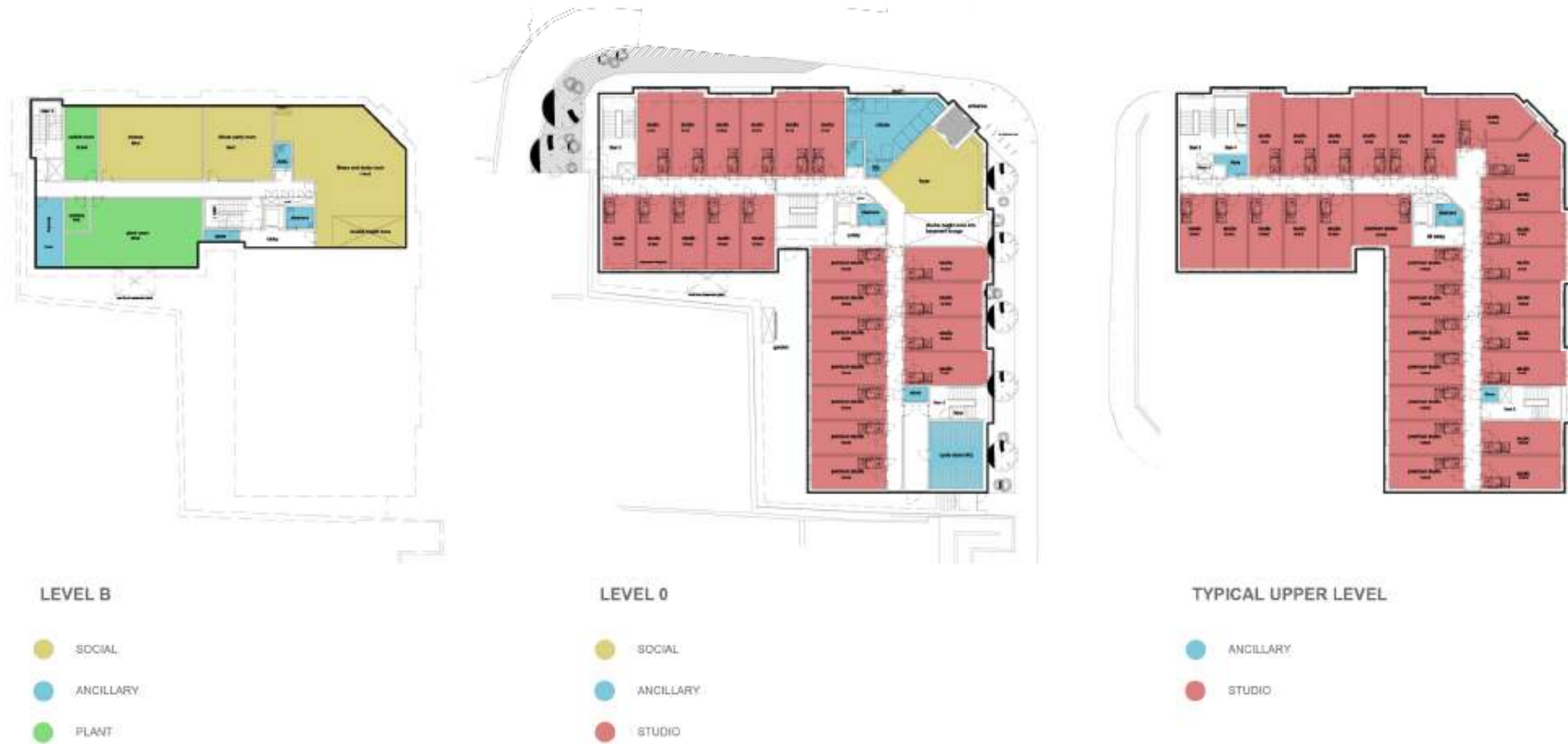
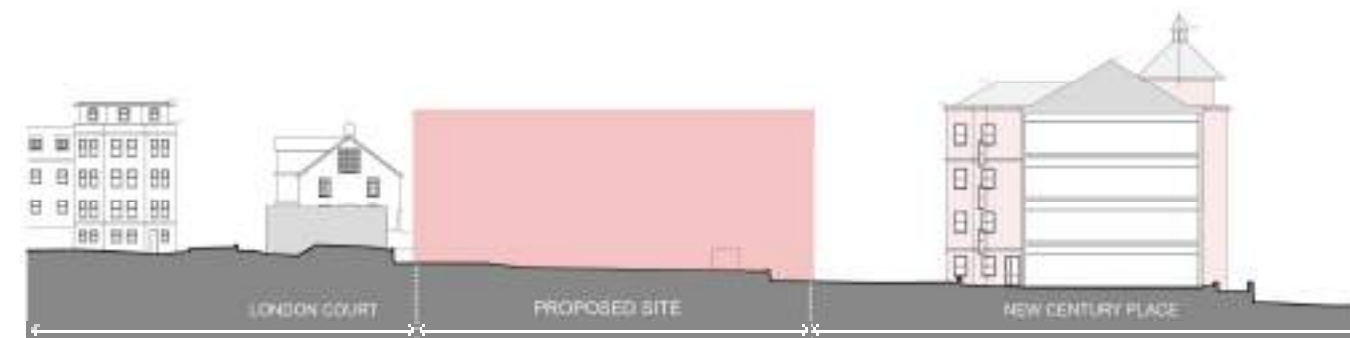


Figure 29 Proposed floor plans

3.4 MASSING RATIONALE

Site Section through East Street

Infill site



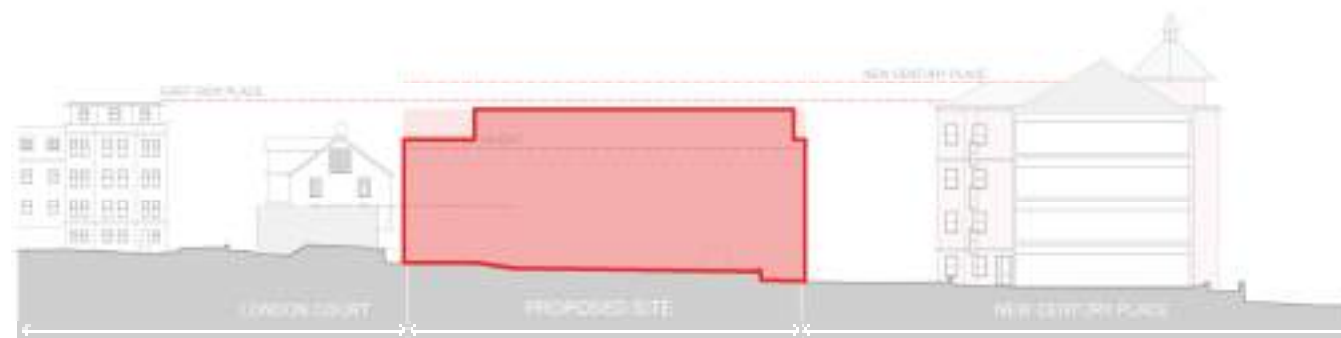
Heights

Surrounding properties with clear distinctive massing datum reference points

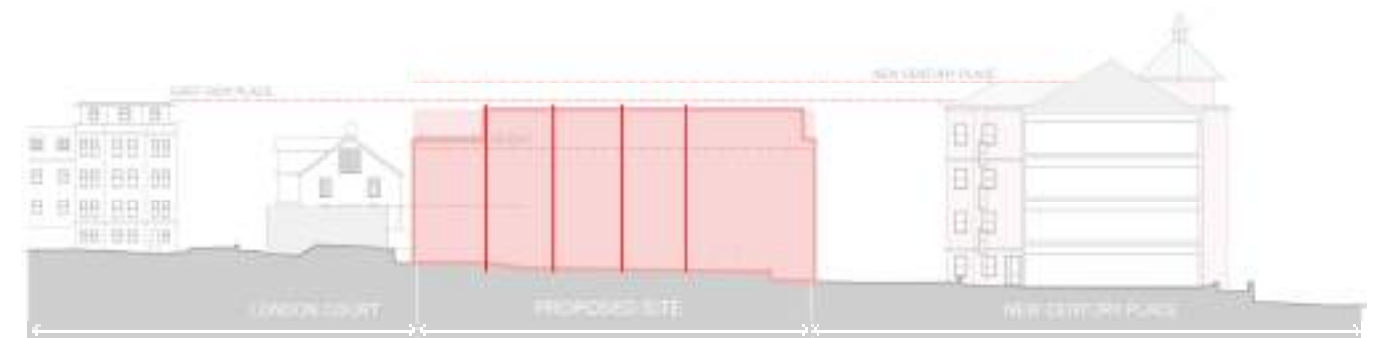


Infill

Building block inserted into open site based on scale of surrounding buildings
Setback top floor to provide roofscape and relief

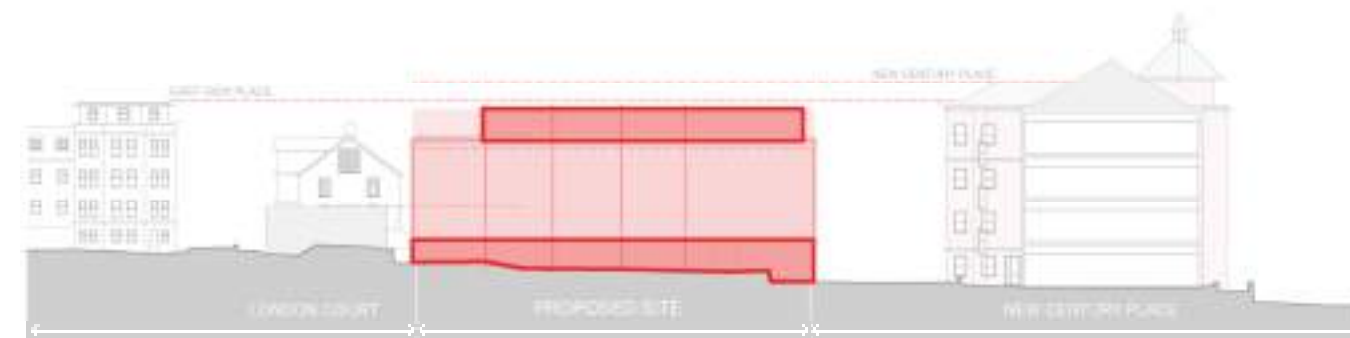
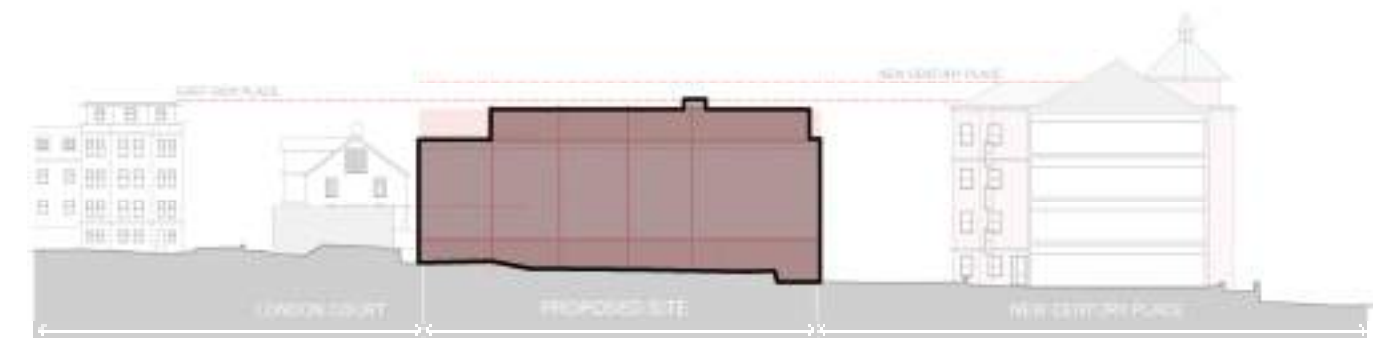
**Residential verticality**

Add residential scale and mass with the inclusion of vertical proportions
Step down at edges to relate to scale



Horizontal Planes

Introduction of a plinth to help land the building and set back top floor to reduce overall visual mass

**Elevation Outline**

CONSENTED SCHEME

PROPOSED SCHEME



Figure 30 North Elevation



Figure 32 North Elevation



Figure 31 East Elevation



Figure 33 East Elevation

3.5 MATERIALS

The external materials will be of high quality and limited in number to ensure restful and composed facades. Primarily the material palette will be composed of facing brickwork, and curtain walling. Windows will be set back within the building envelope to add depth and interest to the elevations.

Material Palette

- Facing Brick – Red to match adjacent buildings
- Textured Brick
- PPC aluminum windows and curtain walling
- PPC metal surround with shadow gaps to feature bay windows and entrance pod
- Metal standing seam cladding
- Balcony doors with glass Balustrades
- Glass spandrel panels
- Artificial stone

The material difference between the consented scheme and this proposal is the introduction of a stone plinth to the base of the building providing a 'grounding'. Areas of textured brickwork has also been introduced to add interest and texture. The top floor has been simplified from curtain walling to metal standing seam cladding and windows. The corner chamfer has also been refined with the introduction of a feature bay window in lieu of the full height curtain walling



Figure 34 Material image board

3.6 VISUAL IMPACT

Visual impact has been tested by computer generated imaging as outlined in the illustrations below. This exercise has established that the proposals are in-keeping with the local context and character.



Figure 35 Visual Impact study – view along London Street from bridge



Figure 36 Visual Impact study – view at junction of South Street and East Street



Figure 37 Visual Impact study – view from Queen's Road up East Street



Figure 38 Visual Impact study – view at junction of Queen's Road and London Street



Figure 40 Visual Impact study – view from London Street looking east

3.7 COMPUTER GENERATED IMAGES

CONSENTED SCHEME



Figure 41 View from East Street looking toward the proposed scheme



Figure 42 View from New Century Place 2 looking towards Great Expectations

PROPOSED SCHEME



Figure 43 View from East Street looking toward the proposed scheme



Figure 44 View from New Century Place 2 looking towards Great Expectations

3.8 SUBSERVIENCE

The table below has been compiled from on-site topographical survey data

	AOD
Designed GF FFL	40.52
Parapet edge trim to flat roof	55.80
Highest part of proposed building (Lift shaft enclosure)	56.275
Proposed Level 4 step	52.370
North and east elevation set-back	52.895
New Century Place highest ridge line	60.10
New Century Place highest eaves	56.02
New Century Place turret ridge height	62.82
Queen's Road crescent ridge line	48.69
Queen's Road crescent chimney stacks	50.14
Bourne-Stevens Close ridge line	50.58
East View Place corner turret	56.33
Great Expectations Hotel roof ridge line	51.97
Great Expectations Hotel eaves	49.01
Great Expectations Hotel pediment ridge	55.15

The table demonstrates that whilst the general roof level of the proposed development is at a height of 55.80 AOD it is more than four metres lower than the highest ridge level of the New Century Place development and seven metres lower than the west turret; with the result that the existing buildings remain the dominant skyline features in long distance views.

The height of the proposed development has been mitigated by setting the ground floor datum at the lowest part of the site and working to minimum floor-to-floor heights at each level.

The general roof line to the north and east elevations at 55.80 AOD, sits above a set-back along these two elevations with a shoulder height of 52.895 AOD. To the west of the new development the ridge line of the Great Expectations Hotel is at 51.97 AOD and the pediment ridge is at 55.15 AOD fronting onto London Street.

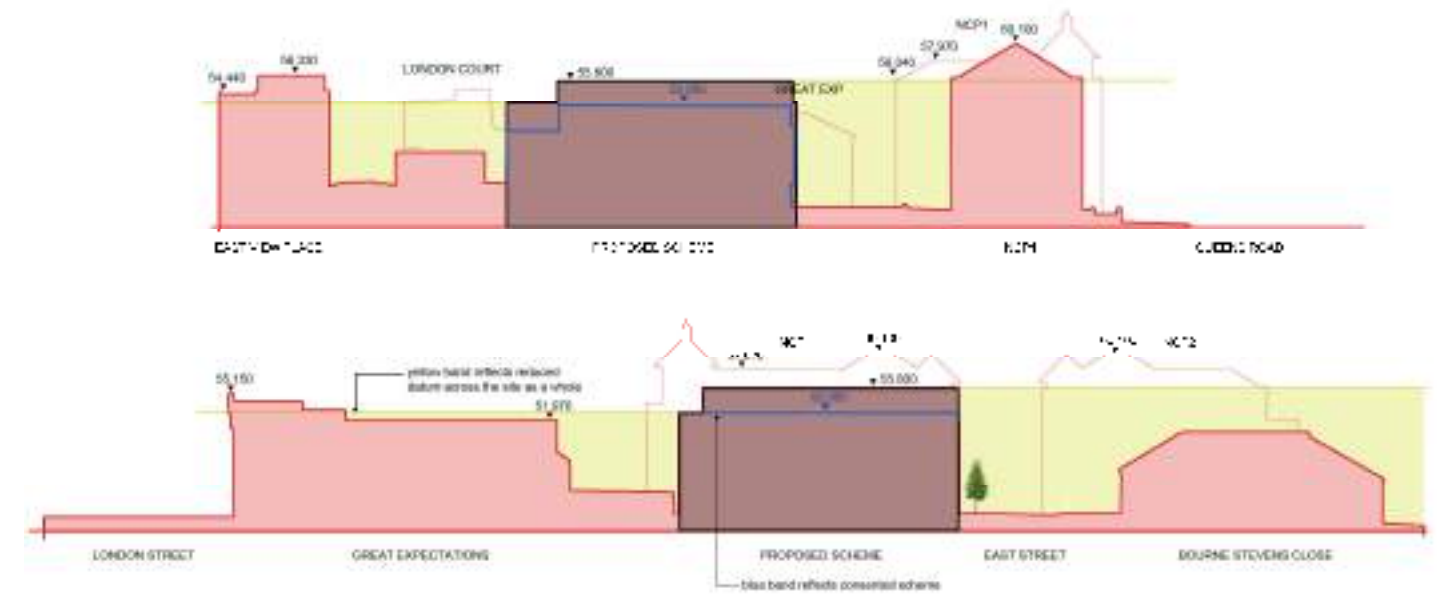


Figure 45 Subservience diagram

4.0 accommodation schedule

4.0 ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE

The following schedule lists all rooms within the development.

GIA

	Area (m2)
Level 0	783 m ²
Level 1	789 m ²
Level 2	789 m ²
Level 3	789 m ²
Level 4	619 m ²
Level B	427 m ²

Total GIA – 4,196.0 m² / 45,165sq ft.

NIA – not including plant, circulation, laundry, cleaners, stores etc...

	Area (m2)
Level 0	471 m ²
Level 1	637 m ²
Level 2	637 m ²
Level 3	615 m ²
Level 4	486 m ²
Level B	197 m ²

Total NIA –2,989.0m² / 32,173 sq ft.

Total beds 135

Total social area – 355.7m2

Social ratio – 221.4 / 135 = 1.64 m2 per bed

Location	Description	Nominal Room Area	
BASEMENT LEVEL			
		m2	
Social spaces	Library and Study	106.8	
	Dinner Party Room	37.8	
	Cinema	47.3	
Core 1	Stair 2 lobby	6.9	
	Stair 2	10	
	Lift	3.0	
	Stair 2 corridor	8.3	
	Cleaners store	4.7	
	Store	2.9	
	Riser 2	1.2	
	Riser 3	1.2	
	COSHH	1.3	
Service spaces	Switch Room	18.2	
	Plant Room	66.6	
	Comms Room	7.5	
	Riser 1	1.3	
	Laundry Room	13.4	
	Accessible WC	3.2	
Core 3	Stair 3	10.2	
	Store	1.1	
	Stair 3 corridor	6.5	
	Store	4.1	

Location	Description	Nominal Room Area	
LEVEL 0			
		m2	
Entrance			
	Entrance Lobby	6.5	
Social spaces			
	Foyer- Entrance Area	29.1	
Core 1			
	Stair 2 Lobby	6.9	
	Stair 2	10.8	
	Stair 2 corridor	11.6	
	Lift	3.0	
	Cleaners store	4.7	
	Riser 2	1.2	
	Riser 3	1.2	
Service spaces			
	Lobby	2.5	
	Refuse	33.7	
	Accessible WC	3.2	
	Cycle lobby	15.9	
	Cycle store (34 bikes)	27.7	
	Store	2.9	
Core 2			
	Stair 2	9.8	
	Store	1.4	
	Stair 2 corridor	4.8	
Premium Studios			
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	19.5	
	Premium studio	22.9	
Studios			
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
Core 3			
	Stair 3	9.6	
	Stair 3 corridor	8.4	
	Riser	1.3	

Location	Description	Nominal Room Area	
LEVEL 1			
		m2	
Core 1			
	Lift	3.0	
	Cleaners store	4.7	
	Riser 2	1.2	
	Riser 3	1.2	
	Lobby	6.9	
Premium Studios			
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	19.5	
	Premium studio	22.9	
Studios			
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	24.6	
	Studio	23.65	
	Studio	20.7	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
Core 2			
	Stair 2	9.8	
	Store	2.0	
	Stair 2 corridor	9.5	
Core 3			
	Stair 3	9.6	
	Stair 3 corridor	8.4	
	Riser	1.3	

Location	Description	Nominal Room Area	
LEVEL 2			
		m2	
Core 1			
	Lift	3.0	
	Cleaners store	4.7	
	Riser 2	1.2	
	Riser 3	1.2	
	Lobby	6.9	
Premium Studios	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	19.5	
	Premium studio	22.9	
Studios	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	24.6	
	Studio	23.65	
	Studio	20.7	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
Core 2	Stair 2	9.8	
	Store	2.0	
	Stair 2 corridor	9.5	
Core 3	Stair 3	9.6	
	Stair 3 corridor	8.4	
	Riser	1.3	

Location	Description	Nominal Room Area	
LEVEL 3			
		m2	
Core 1			
	Lift	3.0	
	Cleaners store	4.7	
	Riser 2	1.2	
	Riser 3	1.2	
	Lobby	6.9	
Premium Studios	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	19.5	
	Premium studio	22.9	
Studios	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	24.6	
	Studio	23.65	
	Studio	20.7	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	21.4	
	Studio	20.1	
	Studio	20.1	
Core 2	Stair 2	9.8	
	Store	2.0	
	Stair 2 corridor	9.5	
Core 3	Stair 3	9.6	
	Stair	9.6	
	Stair 3 corridor	13.8	
	Store	1.1	
	Riser	2.4	
	Store	4.5	

Location	Description	Nominal Room Area	
LEVEL 4			
		m2	
Core 1			
	Lift	3.0	
	Cleaners store	4.7	
	Riser 2	1.2	
	Riser 3	1.2	
	Lobby	6.9	
Premium Studios	Premium studio	19.5	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	18.8	
	Premium studio	22.9	
Studios	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	18.8	
	Studio	21.5	
	Studio	21.5	
	Studio	19.5	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	19.0	
	Studio	19.0	
Core 2	Stair 2	9.8	
	Store	2.0	
	Stair 2 corridor	7.1	
Core 3			
	Stair 3	9.4	
	Stair 3 corridor	8.3	
	Riser	0.9	

5.0 heritage

5.0 HERITAGE



Please refer to Heritage Assessment report dated October 2018 by KM Heritage

Summary and conclusion

An appeal (ref. APP/E0345/W/17/3190317) against the refusal of planning permission ref 170019 for the development of the site was allowed on 10 August 2018, and planning permission granted with conditions. A new scheme, similar to that allowed on appeal, is now proposed.

The proposed new scheme is for a building that is similar in nearly all respects to the scheme that was allowed on appeal, but whose key difference is that it is one storey higher, the additional story being part of the main body of the proposed building.

The site is located at the northern end of East Street, within Sub-area 1 (London Street) of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The conservation area appraisal makes no reference at all to East Street, other than to say 'the west side of East Street, is predominantly modern in character and appearance'. In our view the part of the conservation area in which the site located is unrepresentative of what is significant in the overall conservation area or Sub-area 1, and which is described in the conservation area appraisal. The character and appearance of East Street, whether within or outside a conservation area, is almost entirely that of the last thirty to forty years. In contrast to linearity, continuous street enclosure and distinctive historic character of London Street, East Street is characterised by recent object buildings designed to be contemporary but contextual. East Street is a modern street with no historic character or particular significance beyond its route. The nature and appearance of East Street now detracts from the conservation area in two key ways. East Street contains the surface car park site that is the subject of the proposed scheme. Its appearance and condition clearly detract from the conservation area. It, and the higher level surface car park to the west, adjacent to the listed buildings on London Street, are precisely the kind of unattractive modern feature that are inherently at odds with the historic character and appearance of conservation areas. The site is ugly and should be occupied by built form rather than being open. The open space of the site is an anomaly in urban terms. The exposed view of the rear parts of the listed buildings at 33 to 47 London Street and the Buildings of Townscape Merit at 1-4 London Court is, in our opinion, ahistorical, artificial and harmful. It detracts not just from the conservation area, but from the setting of the other heritage assets in question.

The general design approach of the proposed scheme is consistent with the modern character and appearance of East Street. The scale of the proposed scheme is respectful and the height of the building causes it to sit comfortably within the East Street streetscape. The proposal helps to reinstate missing urban form where it should exist, recreates a street edge where it is lacking, and helps to create a meaningful sense of enclosure for the 'hammerhead' at the northern end of East Street.

It is very questionable whether the rear parts of Nos 35-39 London Street should be considered as listed, given the evident lack of special architectural or historic interest to be found in those parts. The cottages to the rear of 39 London Street have sufficient local interest to merit inclusion in the conservation area and the brick block to the rear of 33 London Street obviously forms part of the historical interest of that building. Regardless of the inclusive legal definition of the extent of listing, a proper analysis of special interest in these listed buildings cannot sensibly allocate equal significance across the whole of their sites.

In broad terms the judgement regarding the effect of the proposed scheme on the external special interest of the listed buildings at 33-41 London Street should be of the effect of the scheme on their main parts facing London Street. In that respect the effect is entirely positive. The proposed scheme would, without doubt, preserve their special architectural or historic interest.

For the reasons given above we agree with Orion Heritage (in its January 2017 report) regarding the minimal effect of the proposed scheme on Queens' Crescent and St Giles Church, and the scheme will therefore preserve the special interest of both these listed structures.

The same is true of the special interest of the conservation area. The proposed scheme is well-designed and will indisputably improve this part of the conservation area over its present condition. It therefore preserves and enhances the conservation area.

The conclusion of our assessment is that the proposed scheme at the East Street site will preserve the setting of listed buildings and preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The proposed development thus complies with S.66(1) and S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

We also believe that the proposed scheme is consistent with the urban design and heritage policies of the National Planning Policy Framework and Reading's Local Plan.

Finally, and very importantly, the key consideration in respect of the proposed scheme is that the proposed scheme is only different from the successful appeal scheme by being just one storey higher than the appeal scheme and, other than in a very limited number of areas, the proposed scheme is essentially the same as the appeal scheme.

This does not alter the conclusions of the inspector in the successful appeal, and the additional storey does not significantly alter the effect of the proposed scheme in townscape or heritage terms, assessed in this report. The proposed scheme is, like the successful appeal scheme, of an appropriate scale and design, and it preserves and enhances the conservation area and the setting of listed and unlisted buildings.

6.0 access

6.0 ACCESS

The main pedestrian entrance to the building, from New Century Place, has been chosen for its relationship with the social zone and the management office, and also for practical reasons, as the only other alternative access point is on East Street where the ground floor is in retention, the ground floor finished level being below the adjacent ground level. The physical arrangement of this area has been devised to permit maximum visual surveillance by management staff. Access from here to all other ground floor social and ancillary spaces, is level. A passenger lift is located within the entrance foyer serving all upper floors which are fully accessible without changes of level from the lift lobbies.

The foyer space gives level access out to the secure private and shared garden area, which will have controlled street access from East Street.

The design is responsive to all statutory guidance and best practice and will be audited at successive RIBA work stages to ensure compliance through to completion of the project. All circulation areas satisfy part M of the Building Regulations.

Transport issues:

The site is located close to Queens Road and London Street which are key public transport corridors. The Oracle development and the commercial centre of Reading are within 200m walking distance, whilst the railway station is some 700m away. The Whiteknights entrance to the main university campus is 1.5km to the south-east. The London Road campus and Reading College are closer, at 500m and 700m respectively.

Secure cycle storage is provided in order to encourage cycling from the development to the local area and Universities.

For further details of the travel and transport issues please refer to the Transport Statement prepared by TPA Transport Consultants.

6.1 CYCLE STORAGE

Secure cycle storage is provided within the building envelope via access controlled gate and door.

There will be 2 Sheffield cycle hoops along with 30 two-tier racks utilizing the available height

34 bike spaces (1:4 ratio)

The cycle store has increased corridor and door widths to aid the maneuverability of the cycles in and out of the building

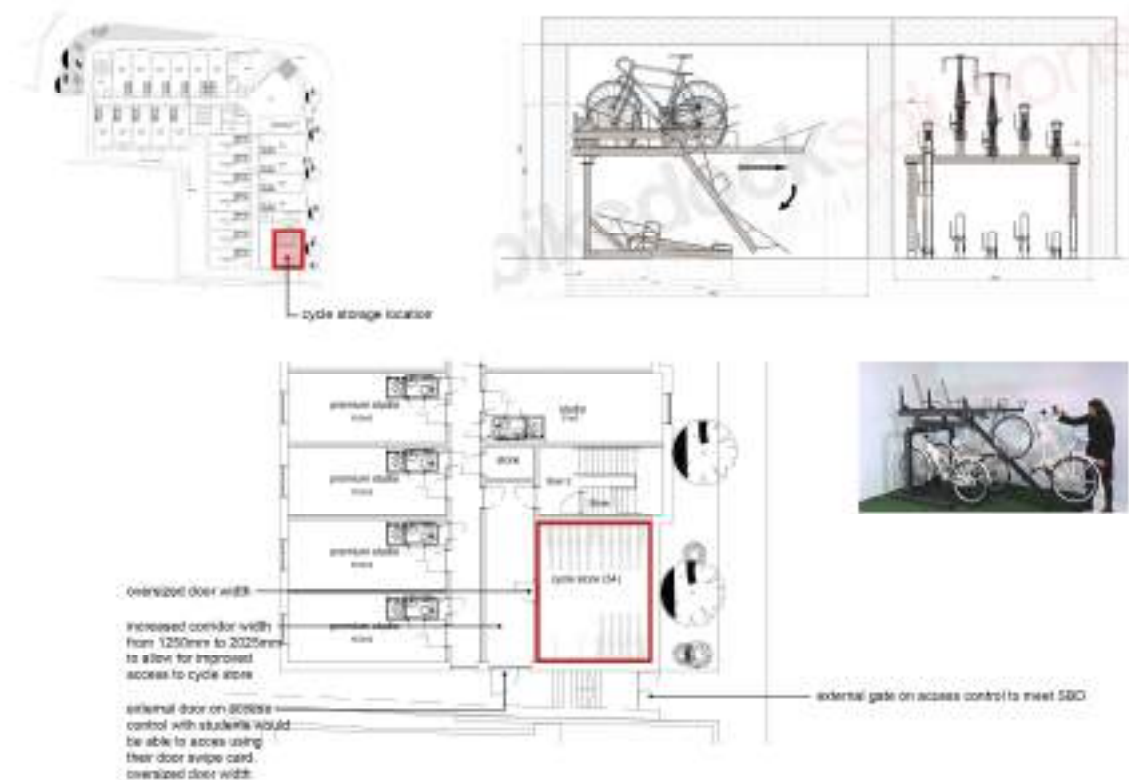


Figure 46 Cycle storage provision

6.2 ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

The scheme provides the following in superior accommodation;

- 135 studios
- Social areas – cinema, study room/library, foyer lounge and dinner party room

The management company (Collegiate AC) do not provide accessible rooms, as in their experience the University caters for all students that would require this, therefore they are not generally required as an accommodation provider to provide these room types.

Collegiate have advised on over 300 schemes in the sector and have found that when providing accessible rooms these have not been booked or occupied by students that require these facilities.

If in the future the University were to change their protocols the building would then need to be retrofitted with a number of accessible rooms to meet the individual student's needs. Our approach therefore has been to design a number of rooms, in this case four, that if required could be converted to meet the actual need of any tenant that may have accessibility requirements as these needs can vary considerably from individual to individual.

It has been agreed with the Approved Inspector, Cook Brown, that in order to 'future proof' the building the 4 no. studios will be designated for future conversion to Building Regulations AD M (DDA) compliant rooms.

These 4 no. rooms stack above each other and are immediately adjacent to the lift core. Should these rooms be converted a Building Regulations AD B compliant refuge with emergency evacuation communications (linking to main office and call centre) will be provided in the corridor outside of protected cores at Levels 1 to 4.

Justification for this location is the larger room size and proximity to the main stair core. The Core affords lift access, which is not an evacuation lift and provision depending on the PEEP of the person concerned will dictate the evacuation method to be utilised, which will be addressed on occupation.

7.0 landscape

7.0 LANDSCAPE

With the proposed site location, currently a car park, the site and its boundaries are poorly vegetated with a sporadic mixture of native and non-native tree planting, none of which have been highlighted as trees of significance within the Market Place / London Road Conservation Area. However, it is still proposed to retain and protect any trees which aren't affected or inhibit the construction of the proposed new development. Moreover, the removal of trees from the existing landscape can be off-set against the introduction of mature tree planting within the landscape proposal, of which all are native to the UK.

The landscape for the site has been designed to reflect and reinforce the architectural layout and character of the development. Tree planting within the scheme comprises trees appropriate to the scale of the development and local soil conditions, with the aim of providing both structure and aesthetics. The incorporation of trees and shrubs within the scheme will provide a softening element to the hard surfaces and enhance the visual and sensory aspects of these spaces.

Amenity shrub planting to the front of properties within the public realm has been chosen to be decorative and specified as evergreens to provide year-round interest and colour. Planting choices within the site are a selection of various shaped evergreen hedging which are easily maintained, but provide robust structure, as well as clear division and softening impact on the scheme.

Safety by design principles have been incorporated into the landscape design, implementing a 1.2m maximum height of planting and clear stem trees in the pedestrian areas, helping to ensure that the site is safe and secure for the users.

Due to the relatively tight dimensions for the resident's private landscaping scheme, the area has been designed to promote a journey through the space, avoiding straight lines and introducing curves through the planting. Seating is provided within the space by nestling hardwood benches amongst the planting scheme and under the canopy of the trees, creating a pleasant space to sit and enjoy the proposed vegetation and sociable layout. The configuration aims to promote a feeling of retreat and relaxation within luxurious surroundings. There are also small strips of soft landscaping to the external boundaries of the proposed site location to soften the transition between the building and the pedestrian / vehicular area whilst also providing clear boundaries & an element of privacy.

The hard landscape materials are from a palette appropriate to the character of the development, as well as taking into consideration the sensitivity of the conservation area. Materials are natural wherever possible; a mixture of hardwood, natural limestone aggregate and 50mm thick York Stone slabs are consistent with providing a 'specialist boutique' and inspiring communal environment, whilst also producing softening natural tones. Where material choices cannot be of natural substance, it is important that they are natural in appearance i.e. through-colour render.

Trees and landscape within the site are proportionate to the scale of the buildings and garden spaces. Larger scale trees are located in the open spaces to provide scale and structure to the scheme and also a variety of shade and full sun required under current design guidance.

Where planted beds have been located, these are to be dressed with a free-draining decorative gravel on a layer of geotextile, which will help to retain moisture and suppress weeds, whilst also remaining in keeping with the aesthetic of the scheme and providing a contrast with the honed finish of the paving. As the tree pits and hedging are all designed to be positioned at paving level, we have created the opportunity to encourage surface water from certain areas of the hard landscaping to filter through these beds, thereby creating a sustainable drainage system in these areas.

The lighting scheme has been designed to highlight the structural qualities of the multi-stem Carpinus trees and produce a subtle 'warm-white' ambient light to promote a relaxing and tranquil atmosphere, with minimal impact on surrounding areas.

Hornbeam (*Carpinus Betulus*) will keep its leaves all year round, providing shelter, roosting, nesting and foraging opportunities for birds and small mammals. Hornbeam is the food plant for caterpillars of a number of moth species, including the nut tree tussock. Finches and tits and small mammals eat the seeds in Autumn.

Although Hornbeams are deciduous, they are very reliable for holding their leaves, especially in sheltered locations, which in turn minimises leaf clearance. Traditionally used for coppicing, they respond extremely well to hard pruning, so retain their intended form and won't become oversized for the space. Pruning will only be required once annually.

The multi stems of the intended specimens are extremely structural in appearance, whilst the lifted crowns help retain views and clear access through the space. Elegant canopies will both soften the architecture and help link it with the surrounding area.

Clipped Yew (*Taxus*) is incredibly dense, offering protection and nesting opportunities for many birds. The fruit is eaten by birds such as the blackbird, mistle thrush, song thrush and fieldfare, and small mammals such as squirrels and dormice. The leaves are eaten by caterpillars of the satin beauty moth. Planted at the desired ultimate size will mean; other than a light clipping twice annually, very little maintenance will be required. A slow growing habit, lends itself nicely to the relatively confined space within the courtyard. *Taxus* is suitable for full sun to partial shade and will thrive, planted in amongst the *Carpinus*.

The organic radial shapes in the topiary, will create a striking juxtaposition to the angular lines of the architecture. Evergreen foliage will help inject colour and interest around the space throughout the year.

7.1 LANDSCAPE MATERIALS

A robust palette of materials has been carefully selected based on the following parameters:

- Sustainability in relation to raw materials, origin and manufacturing processes;
- Whole life cost with regard to supply, longevity and maintenance requirements;
- Robustness; and
- Consistency (material selection to complement architecture and the principle external spaces of the courtyard and entrance plaza).

Within the parameters outlined above, it is proposed to create a distinctive paving design that reflects the colour hues of the building façades and laid in a way which will echo the fine detailing of the façade materials and detailing. Materials will be a combination of concrete flags, blocks and timber/composite timber.

Seating will be robust without compromising comfort and comprise a combination of timber and metal. Furniture items will be robust and easily maintainable.

8.0 sustainability

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY

8.1 Community

The scheme benefits from:

- re-using a brownfield site with scant ecological value.
- having no flood risk
- occupying an urban location close to existing shops, housing, transport links and educational facilities

8.2 Transport

The site is located close to Queens Road and London Street which are key public transport corridors. The Oracle development and the commercial centre of Reading are within 200m walking distance, whilst the railway station is some 700m away. The Whiteknights entrance to the main university campus is 1.5km to the south-east. The London Road campus and Reading College are closer, at 500m and 700m respectively.

Secure cycle storage is provided in order to encourage cycling from the development to the local area and Universities.

For further details of the travel and transport issues please refer to the Transport Statement prepared by TPA Transport Consultants.

8.3 Energy

The scheme will rely mainly on natural ventilation. Other provisions will include:

- The specification of low energy lighting
- Minimum or above air-tightness standards
- Green guide external materials
- Solar control

8.4 Waste and Recycling

All refuse storage for the student accommodation will be located within the building footprint,

8.5 Specification and Materials

The constructional details of the project will adhere to the general principles of the Building Research Establishment's Green Guide to Specification.

8.6 Structural Adaptability and Future Retrofit

Whilst the project will make use where possible of modern methods of construction and pre-fabrication techniques this will not be at the expense of future-proofing the building for adaptation

8.7 Photovoltaics

The development will incorporate a 397 m² array of PV installed across the uppermost roof at Level 4 and the lower south facing room at Level 3. Comprising of 242 no. Panels, each with a 320w output and measuring 1640mm(l) x 1000mm(w), a PV array of this size will have a capacity of 77.44 kWp and is expected to generate 51,790 kWh of electricity per annum for export to the grid or for use on site.

9.0 public consultation

9.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Following the Public Consultation event on 4th October, BECG have provided a summary statement as per below

Overview

We have made it our priority to engage in comprehensive and informative consultation with the local community around Studios' East Street site.

In anticipation of the submission of the planning application, a public drop-in event was held on Thursday 4th October 2018 at the site management office in which Ward Councillors, residents and local business owners were invited to attend. Approximately 424 invitation letters were posted to the local community. In addition to this, we also visited local business in the surrounding area, particularly in London Street and London Road, to gain greater range of perspective on the proposals.

The public consultation was delivered via an open dialogue with the planning team and a presentation on tablets, giving the attendees greater understanding of the plans. The drop-in event had 10 attendees including local residents and students. The development team also showed the presentation to representatives from 8 local businesses. Exhibition attendees and the local businesses were both encouraged to fill out feedback forms at the end of the presentation.

Feedback

General comments toward the scheme were positive, specifically regarding the value that students could add as well as the design of the scheme fitting in to the local area. This was supported by the responses to the following questions:

Do you agree with the proposed layout and design of the proposals?

- Clear majority (75%) support or strongly support this statement with the rest remaining neutral

Do you think the landscaping proposals and design materials will make a positive contribution to the local area?

- Over 70% agree or strongly agree with the statement whilst the rest remained neutral or did not know

Do you agree proposals provide a sustainable choice for a new high-quality student accommodation?

- Clear majority (75%) support or strongly support this statement with the rest remaining neutral

Any further comments

General comments raised during the public consultation included:

Concern for local crime

- According to residents East street has previously had issues with anti-social behaviour
- However, the consensus was that the scheme would help alleviate that problem if there is sufficient security

Traffic management during construction

- There is concern about how much disruption there will be to residents living on East street during construction considering the entrance to the development
- Questions were raised about the management of the site during construction and further clarification was sought how to raise concerns about construction safety going forward

Attendees were positive about the impacts of students in the area specifically local firms expecting an increase in business

Final thoughts

The feedback to the questions and general comments was very positive towards the scheme. There was universal support of the scheme itself, with the only real concern regarding how the construction period would be managed. Importantly, no concerns were raised regarding the height of the scheme which had been a previous concern raised for the previous application.

A more detailed analysis of the feedback will be included in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).



Figure 47 Photos from the public consultation event

10.0 drawing schedule

10.0 DRAWING SCHEDULE

Please refer to the submitted application drawings for further details

GDL Architecture

Drawing Title	Drawing Number / Reference	Revision / Status
Location Plan	18053_001A_A1_Location Plan	A
Existing Site Plan	18053_002_A1_Existing Site Plan	-
Existing Topographical Plan	18053_003_A1_Existing Topographical Plan	-
Existing Site Sections	18053_004_A1_Existing Site Sections	-
Proposed Site Plan	18053_007A_A1_Proposed Site Plan	A
Proposed Site Sections	18053_008_A1_Proposed Site Sections	-
Proposed Block Plan	18053_009_A1_Proposed Block Plan	-
Level 0 As Proposed	18053_010C_A1_Level 0	C
Level 1 As Proposed	18053_011_A1_A Level 1	-
Level 2 As Proposed	18053_012_A1_Level 2	-
Level 3 As Proposed	18053_013_A1_Level 3	-
Level 4 As Proposed	18053_014C_A1_Level 4	C
Level B As Proposed	18053_015C_A1_level B	C
Level R as proposed	18053_016_A1_level R	-
Proposed Elevations _ North & East	18053_020B_A1_Proposed elevations North & East	B
Proposed Elevations_ South & West	18053_021A_A1_Proposed elevations_ South & West	A
Proposed Elevations _ West	18053_022A_A1_Proposed elevations West	A
Proposed site Elevations _ North & East	18053_023_A1_Proposed site elevations North & East	-
Proposed Sections	18053_025A_A1_Proposed Sections	A
Proposed Elevations Colour – North & East	18053_030 Proposed Elevations Colour	-
Proposed Elevations _ Colour- South & West	18053_031 Proposed Elevations Colour	-
Proposed Elevations Colour - West	18053_032 Proposed Elevations Colour	-
Subservience	18053 VS001A subservience A3	A
Cycle Storage	18053 VS010 A3 cycle storage	-

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