



Content

PART I

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Status of this document
- 1.2 Planning Application Supporting Documents
- 1.3 Client Brief

2.0 Site Analysis

- 2.0.1 Site Location

2.1 Contextual Analysis

- 2.1.1 Places of Interest
- 2.1.2 Site Scale
- 2.1.3 Approaching Views
- 2.1.4 Silver Street Character
- 2.1.5 Local Building Materials
- 2.1.6 Conservation and Heritage
- 2.1.7 The Site
- 2.1.8 Site Constraints
- 2.1.9 Existing Development
- 2.1.10 Social & Economic

PART II

3.0 Design

- 3.0.1 Design Process

3.1 Use & Amount

- 3.1.1 Design Strategy
- 3.1.2 Aerial View of Scheme
- 3.1.3 Proposed Use
- 3.1.4 Room Type - Typical Studio
- 3.1.5 Studio with Dormer
- 3.1.6 Accessible Studio
- 3.1.7 Accommodation Schedule
- 3.1.8 Unit Types and Sizes

3.2 Layout & Landscape

- 3.2.1 Site Layout
- 3.2.2 Internal Arrangements
- 3.2.3 Floor Plans
- 3.2.4 Landscape - Courtyard Precedents
- 3.2.5 Landscape - Courtyard Proposal

3.3 Scale & Massing

- 3.3.1 Block Plan Options
- 3.3.2 Street Frontage
- 3.3.3 Contextual Relationship
- 3.3.4 Privacy and Overlooking
- 3.3.5 Privacy Solutions

3.4 Courtyard Comparison

- 3.4.1 Courtyard Precedents
- 3.4.2 Proposed Scheme
- 3.4.3 Contextual Relationship

3.5 Viewpoints

- 3.5.1 Viewpoints - Existing
- 3.5.2 Viewpoints - Proposed

3.4 Appearance

- 3.4.1 Material Selection

3.5 Shadow Analysis

- 3.5.1 Shadow Study
- 3.5.2 Sunlight Study

3.6 Sustainability

4.0 Access

- 4.0.1 Traffic & Servicing Strategy
- 4.0.2 Security Fixtures

PART III

5.0 Planning Drawing Pack

5.1 Plans

- 5.1.1 Location Plan
- 5.1.2 Site Plan
- 5.1.3 Lower Ground Floor Plan
- 5.1.4 Ground Floor Plan
- 5.1.5 First Floor Plan
- 5.1.6 Second Floor Plan
- 5.1.7 Third Floor Plan
- 5.1.8 Roof Plan

5.2 Elevations

- 5.2.1 Elevation 1 - Silver Street
- 5.2.2 Elevation 2 - Block A Courtyard
- 5.2.3 Elevation 3 - Block B Courtyard
- 5.2.4 Elevation 4 - Block B West
- 5.2.5 Elevation 5 - South
- 5.2.6 Elevation 6 - North

5.3 Sections

- 5.3.1 Building Section A - A

6.0 Scheme Visuals

- 6.1.1 View 1 Front Elevation
- 6.1.2 View 2 Front Elevation
- 6.1.3 View 3 Block A West
- 6.1.4 View 4 Block B East
- 6.1.5 View 5 Block B West
- 6.1.6 View 6 Courtyard
- 6.1.7 View 7 Courtyard
- 6.1.8 View 8 Courtyard
- 6.1.9 View 8 79 & 40 Silver St.
- 6.1.10 View 8 79 & 40 Silver St.
- 6.1.11 View 8 79 & 40 Silver St.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Status of this document

This Design and Access Statement is in support of a detailed planning application for the redevelopment of No. 40 Silver Street, Reading.

The proposals are for the demolition of an existing single storey industrial unit and construction of a new 3/4 storey privately operated student accommodation development including basement, and landscaped courtyard.

The development will also include ancillary spaces such as concierge, laundrette, refuse and bicycle storage and substation.

This document has been prepared by O’Connell East Architects on behalf of Silver Street Developments Ltd. and is intended to explain the design and access strategies that have been used to address the Client brief for the site.

**1.1 Planning Application
Supporting Documents**

- 1. Proposed Plans, Elevations and Sections
- 2. Landscape Statement
- 3. Design and Access Statement
- 4. Planning Statement
- 5. Ground Investigation Summary
- 6. Below Ground Drainage Statement

1.3 Client Brief

O'Connell East Architects have been retained by the same developer of the recently approved redevelopment of 79 Silver Street into purpose built luxury student accommodation.

The developer intends to continue their substantial investment in the area by bringing another low quality and out of character building into much needed, modern day occupation.

The site is located in a predominantly residential area within walking distance of Reading City Centre, and the University of Reading White Knights and London Road Campuses and is an ideal site for student accommodation.

It is proposed that the existing single storey Industrial unit which is of low architectural quality be demolished and replaced with high specification, purpose built student accommodation that is in keeping with the character of the street scene. The buildings retention and conversion has also been fully considered but it was ultimately established not to be a viable option given the extensive level of investment that would be required to bring it back into a habitable condition.

The proposed scheme will be an all studio development in response to market trends.



2.0 Site Analysis

2.0.1 Site Location

The Site is located on Silver Street which connects London Road to the south of Reading City Centre.

The eastern boundary of the site shares a boundary with the designated Southampton Street Conservation Area. The site is currently occupied by a single storey industrial units with A1/A3 retail use fronting the road.

Connectivity

40 Silver Street is well positioned with convenient access to the University of Reading Campuses, the City Centre and Reading Railway Station and is located on a primary bus route.

This close proximity allows journeys to be made primarily on foot, by bicycle or by local bus service.

- 1. The Site is within a 20 min walk /6 min bike ride or 9 min bus ride of the main University of Reading White knights Campus.
- 2. The Site is within a 5 min walk of the University of Reading London Road Campus.
- 3. Reading City Centre can be reached within 8 min walk/5 min cycle ride/5 min bus ride.
- 4. Reading Station is 1 mile away from the site and accessible via 14 min walk/ 13 min bus drive or 9 min bike ride.

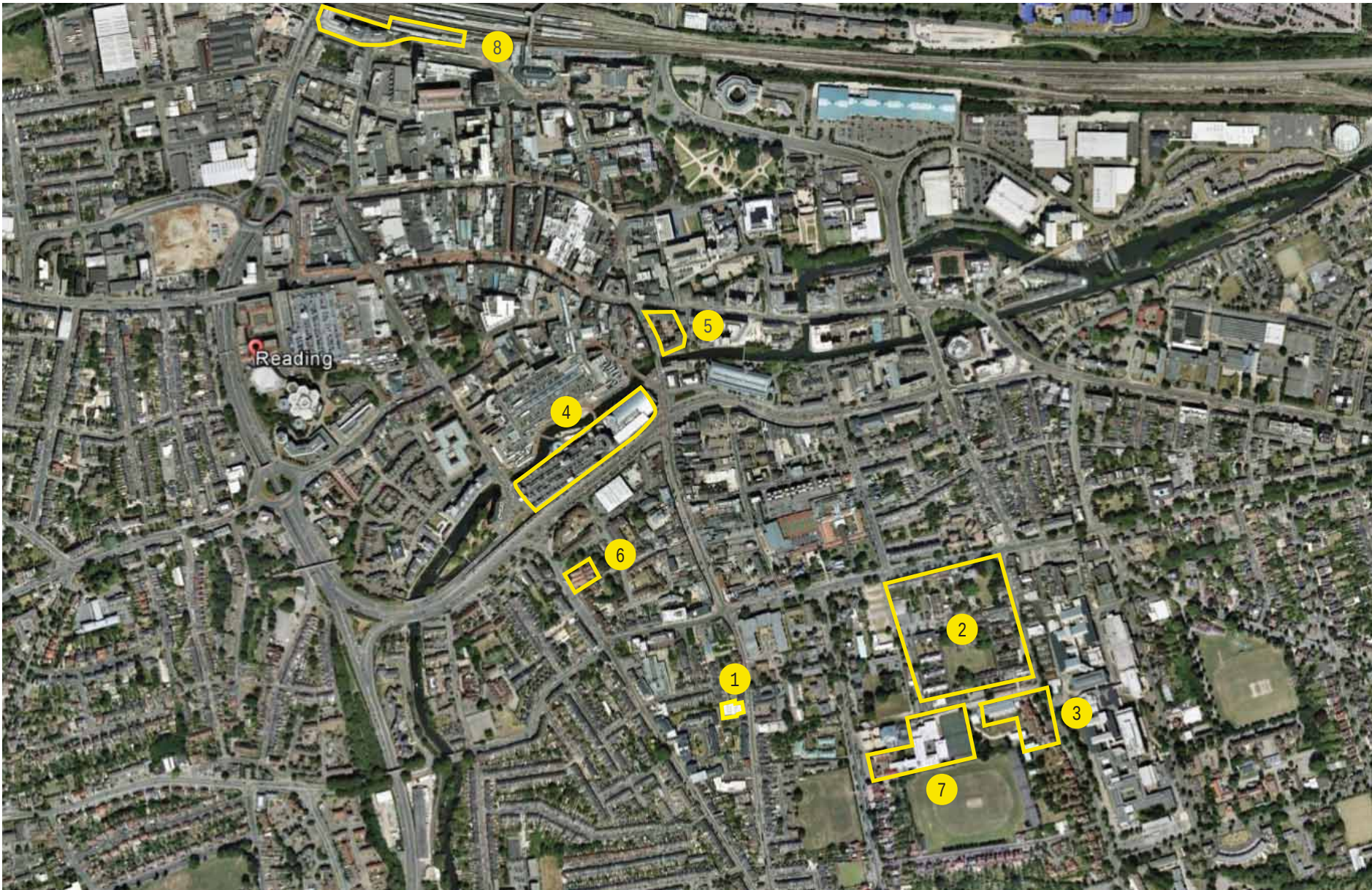


Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals

2.1 Contextual Analysis

2.1.1 Places of Interest

- 1 The Site
- 2 University of Reading, London Road Campus
- 3 Museum of English Rural Life
- 4 Oracle Shopping Centre
- 5 Reading Central Library
- 6 St Giles Church
- 7 The Abbey School
- 8 Reading Train Station



Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals

2.1.2 Site Scale

The site is located within a primarily residential area with offices and commercial uses immediately adjacent and opposite respectively.

Terraced housing along Silver Street, in close proximity to the site is generally 2-3 storeys with 3-4 storeys residential flats opposite and 3-4 storey office accommodation adjacent.

The proposals have been developed following a detailed analysis of the local context and will restore the building line and step down to make an appropriate transition in scale between commercial offices to the North and the terraced housing.



3-4 Storey Student Accomodation scheme recently approved at 79 Silver St.



5-6 Storey Apartments at Silver St



3 Storey Apartments - North along Silver St



3-4 Storey Apartments - North along Silver St



3 Storey Windsor Court - adjacent to the site

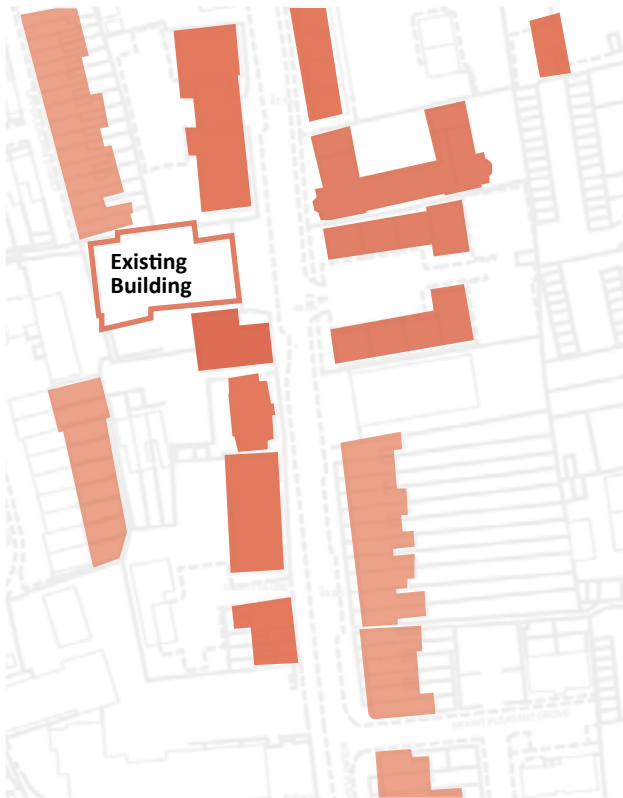


The Rising Sun - Silver Street



Surrounding Uses

- Residential
- Commerical
- Office
- Leisure



Building Heights

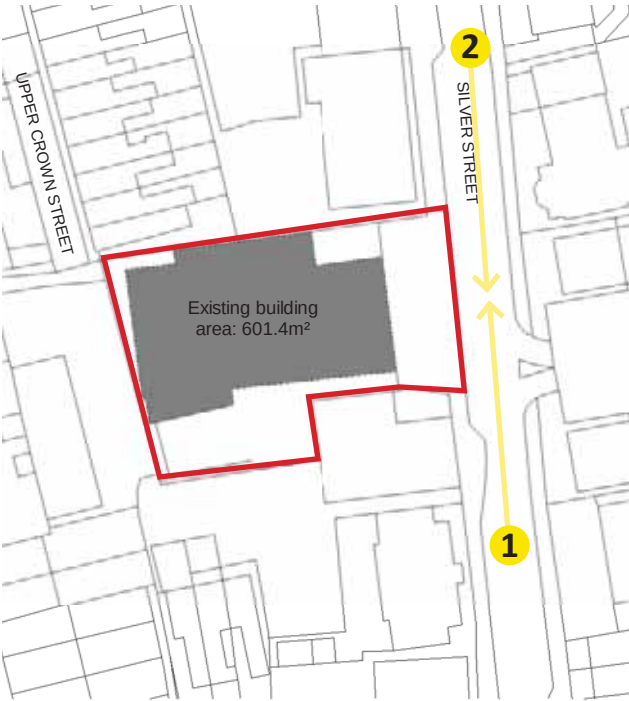
- 1 - 2 Storeys
- 3 - 4 Storeys
- 5 - 6 Storeys
- 7 - 8 Storeys

Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals

2.1.3 Approaching Views

The site is approached along Silver Street from the north or south and slopes down towards Reading centre to the north.

The roof profile of the existing industrial unit is pitched and lower than the adjacent terraced properties. It's form detracts from the general context that dominates the street frontage.



1.



2.



Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals

2.1.4 Silver Street Character

Silver Street is a residential street with some commercial use towards the northern end on approach to the junction with London Road and Reading City Centre beyond.

Properties fronting Silver Street are primarily two storey terraced properties in traditional masonry construction. These houses have a common building line, and are set back from the road with small front gardens, which provides the opportunity for brick walls, trees, hedging and mature planting, all of which add to the character of the streets.

There is no consistency in brick colour, bond or features which include stone cills & heads, brick jack arches, contrasting brick details and some of the properties have been painted white / cream.

Travelling along Silver Street, you can see there is a common occurrence of stepping gables on the domestic terrace dwellings.

From the site to the north of Silver Street, the character changes to more commercial style low-rise office buildings and residential apartment blocks with pitched roofs, gables and dormers.

The Rising Sun Arts Centre dominates the western street frontage on approach to London Road with a 4-6 storey residential block on the eastern corner.



Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals

2.1.5 Local Building Materials

The predominant building material on Silver Street is masonry, with the primary colours being red / brown and grey brick with contrasting feature brick detailing.

Newer developments including Windsor Place, immediately adjacent to the site, include red/brown and buff brick or render details.

Pitched and flat roof dormer projections are also present on a number of the newer developments.



Silver Street Terrace Properties



Silver St / London Road - new residential



Windsor Place - commercial



Silver Street - new residential

All above images taken from Google

Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals

2.1.6 Conservation and Heritage

The site is situated to the West of Silver Street well outside the designated Kendrick Road conservation area.

There is a Victorian Grade 2 listed building By Alfred Waterhouse at 30 Silver Street (Rising Sun Arts Centre), while the proposed site is close to this buildings it does not affect it or is surrounding landscape.

There are many buildings within the surrounding area which are listed or have considerable architectural merit however these are predominantly within the London Road area and are not affected by the sites locality.



- The site
- Grade II Listed Building
- Kendrick Road Conservation Area
- 79 Silver Street - Recently approved scheme

Site Analysis	Use & Amount	Layout & Landscape	Scale & Massing	Appearance	Shadow Analysis	Sustainability	Access	Working Drawings	Scheme Visuals
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2.1.7 The Site

The existing site compromises of an single storey industrial unit, constructed in brick with pitched roofs and render panels to the front and side elevations.

This building comprises of approximately 635m² (GIA) which is to be demolished.

The property is set back from the adjacent building lines and offers little in terms of Architectural interest and character.

The existing industrial building presents as a bulky corrugated pitched roofed block stepped back from Silver Street and has a poor visual relationship to the apartment blocks to the north. It covers almost the whole site area allowing little apace for any landscape/ tree planting.

The new Silver Street frontage and massing maintains consistency with the design, scale and massing of the recently approved 79 Silver Street scheme proposed on a site adjacent.



FRONT: EXISTING SITE VIEW



INTERNAL: EXISTING SITE VIEW

Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals

2.1.8 Site Constraints

The diagram below shows the site constraints and opportunities in terms of creating a development with a positive relationship with the street and surrounding properties.

Any new development should be appropriate in scale, massing and form and enhance the character and visual appearance of the site.

Effects of the proposed scheme on neighbours have been carefully considered to minimise impact in terms of shadowing and overlooking.



Site Analysis	Use & Amount	Layout & Landscape	Scale & Massing	Appearance	Shadow Analysis	Sustainability	Access	Working Drawings	Scheme Visuals
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2.1.9 Existing Developments

Student developments can bring activity, life and economic vitality to previously under utilised areas, as well as providing accommodation for expanding or adapting universities.

There are a number of negative connotations associated with the adaptation of residential dwelling houses into Houses of Multiple occupation. These include; elevated noise levels, reduced building quality and security. It can therefore be beneficial to provide students with managed, high quality purpose built student accommodation, close to the universities.

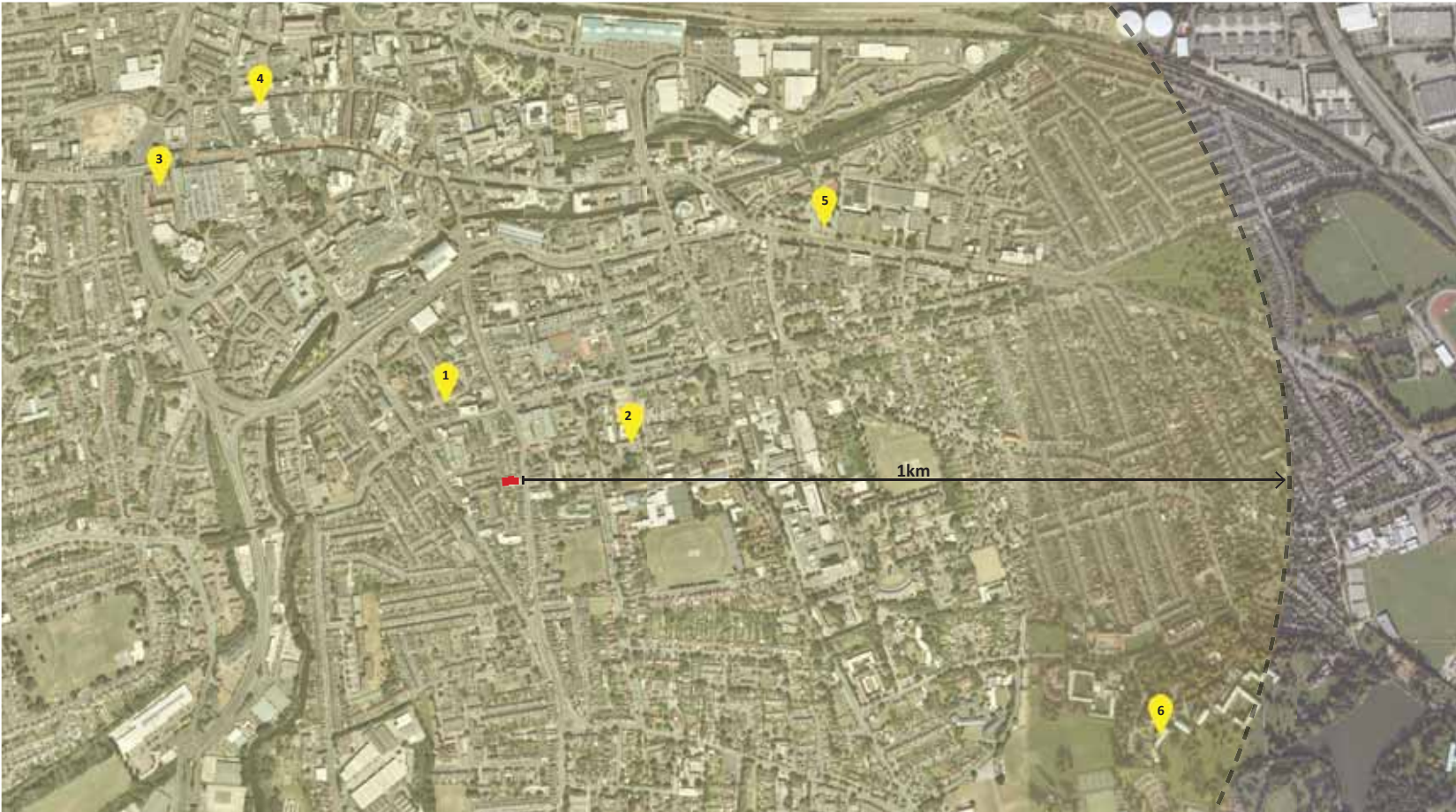
A dispersal of managed student accommodation developments can also be beneficial as this reduces the compound effect of large percentages of students living in particular areas of the town.

There are several examples of purpose built student accommodation located on sites around Reading.

79 Silver St



3-4 Storey Student Accomodation scheme recently approved at 79 Silver St.



1. Saxon Court



2. Kendrick Halls



3. Queens Court



4. Central Studios



4. Fawley Bridge



6. Windsor Hall - University Halls



Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals

2.1.10 Social & Economic

It is widely recognised that the growth of student populations in major cities has had a positive effect on the regional economy. As well as the students contributing financially to the area, the University is one of the city’s largest employers, provides a range of facilities and pro-actively encourages social and cultural activities.

In order to maintain the University’s local, national and international significance as a major teaching and research institution, the supply of new purpose-built student accommodation in sustainable locations needs to be maintained in order to meet the growing demand for this type of high quality accommodation. The importance of purpose build student accommodation cannot be underestimated as it gives the opportunity to free-up the supply of much needed houses in residential areas whilst also re-establishing permanent communities and improving street safety and crime levels.



Site Analysis
Use & Amount
Layout & Landscape
Scale & Massing
Appearance
Shadow Analysis
Sustainability
Access
Working Drawings
Scheme Visuals