109b Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7UD

Design & Access Statement

Full Planning

February 2018

Figure 1: Photographic Analysis

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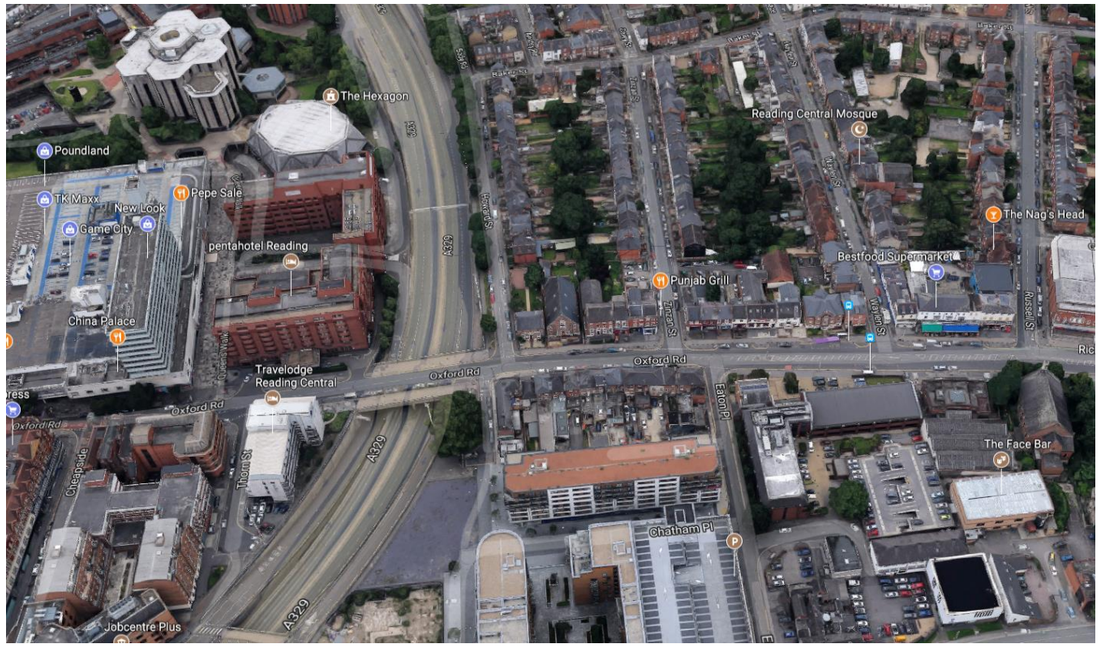
Figure 2: Site Location

Figure 3: Location



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Aims

This architectural design document has been prepared by architecture & Interior Design as part of a full planning application on behalf of our client for the change of use from sue generis to A3 and A5 restaurant/takeaway, with relocation of shop front to the front and side elevation.

1.2 Design Ethos

The design approach can be summarised as follows:

- To provide customers with elegant style dining experience with modern and elegant fittings throughout.
- The design should incorporate various aspects of sustainable design, and looks to new technologies and local workforce.

1.3 Location

The application site is located in Reading on the main Oxford Road leading towards Broad Street and into the city centre.
The site benefits from public transport with bus services operating on Oxford Road and Broad Street, leading throughout Reading and towards the city centre which is walking distance away.

The site is ideally located for the proposed change of use being within a prime city centre location as part of the Oxford Road Conservation area
The site is walking distance away from the city centre with a mix of high street commercial retail and food eateries.

The site is a corner building cornering Oxford road and Zinzan Street.

1.4 Existing Site

The site sits within a busy and prime area of Reading with many public and private facilities available locally such as educational, retail, restaurant/takeaway and high street businesses surrounding.

The building in question is currently vacant previously used as a betting shop operating as Ladbrokes, and has been vacant for a number of years.

Visually and structurally the building is in good condition with alterations proposed to the shop front and to part of the side elevation.

The front entrance from Oxford Road is positioned at an angle and part open access from Zinzan Street.

The site is in an ideal location for the proposed use as it sits close to the city centre with many high street retail businesses, making it an ideal location for the proposed change of use.

1.5 Proposal

The proposal is for the change of use from sui generis to restaurant A3 and A5 providing grilled healthy food, with alterations to the shop front facing Oxford Road and part alteration to the side elevation facing Zinzan Street.

The proposed change of use and shop front alterations will help create an elegant and welcoming dining experience within a prime city centre location.

The proposed shop front will be squared off and bought forward on the Oxford Road elevation and a glazed panel installed on the Zinzan Street elevation, in aluminium frame powder coated.
Being in a conservation area the addition of timber ornate columns to the front and side elevation will provide a continuous and even street elevation.

The external envelope will be smooth render finished and painted matt white along the ground floor front and side elevation to provide a fresh elegant appearance and create a visually attractive building.

The proposed changes will improve the aesthetical appearance of the building externally, with large glazed windows which will bring light into the space and attract customers, giving views in and views out.

2.0 History

Reading is a large, historically important town in Berkshire, England, of which it is the county town.

It is located in the Thames Valley at the confluence of the River Thames and River Kennet, and on both the Great Western Main Line railway and the M4 motorway. Reading is 75 miles (121 km) east of Bristol, 25 miles (40 km) south of Oxford, 42 miles (68 km) west of London, 17 miles (27 km) north of Basingstoke, 13 miles (21 km) south-west of Maidenhead and 20 miles (32 km) east of Newbury.

The first evidence for Reading as a settlement dates from the 8th century. It was an important trading and ecclesiastical centre in the medieval period, as the site of Reading Abbey, one of the richest monasteries of medieval England with strong royal connections, of which the 12th century abbey gateway and significant ruins remain.
By 1525, Reading was the largest town in Berkshire, and tax returns show that Reading was the 10th largest town in England when measured by taxable wealth. By 1611, it had a population of over 5000 and had grown rich on its trade in cloth. The town was seriously affected by the English Civil War, with a major siege and loss of trade, and played a pivotal role in the Revolution of 1688, with that revolution's only significant military action fought on the streets of the town.

Reading is an important commercial centre in the Thames Valley and Southern England. The town hosts the headquarters of several British companies and the UK offices of foreign multinationals, as well as being a major retail centre.Whilst located close enough to London to be sometimes regarded as part of the London commuter belt, Reading is a net inward destination for commuters. During the morning peak period, there are some 30,000 inward arrivals in the town, compared to 24,000 departures.
Major companies BG Group, ING Direct, Microsoft, Oracle Hibu (formerly Yell Group),have their headquarters in Reading. The insurance company Prudential has an administration centre in the town.PepsiCo and Wrigley have offices. Reading has a significant historical involvement in the information technology industry, largely as a result of the early presence in the town of sites of International Computers Limited and Digital. Other technology companies with a significant presence in the town include Access IS, Agilent Technologies, Cisco, Ericsson, Symantec, Verizon Business,and Commvault These companies are distributed around Reading or just outside the borough boundary, some in business parks including Thames Valley Park in nearby Earley, Green Park Business Park and Arlington Business Park.

2.1 Hertiage statement

The Oxford Road was one of the earliest roads out of Reading to the east, being the primary conduit to Pangbourne and Oxford south of the River Thames.
East of the intersection of Russell Street, the Oxford Road was called Oxford Street until at least the mid- 1850s but this had been changed by the 1870s.

Today, the Oxford Road in Reading is well known for its vibrant multi-cultural array of shops lining an active pedestrian and vehicular traffic route. It is also plagued by a self- defeating reputation as a somewhat rough area that decades of crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) have given it. The "broken window theory" in townscapes has proven itself true along the road in many patches.

Despite these factors, the underlying historic fabric remains strongly visible, and in grasping an understanding of the story of Reading as its population progressed west of town, no street can tell this story better than the vibrant Oxford Road.

The history of the modern build-up of this medieval route is seen in the first instance by the many impressive stands of terraced Georgian housing along the route.
This early Georgian infill of the route can be very clearly seen starting from the town end next to the IDR bridge and running clear to Argyle Street in the west.
There are several long terraces of listed buildings dating to the early 19c, notably at 149-177 Oxford Road, 187-193, 195-197,197-203 and Prospect Terrace at 237 – 247 Oxford Road (including 2 Lorne Street) along the south side of the street. All are in poor to moderate condition with several being converted to shop fronts at their bases.

The Georgian houses and terraces line the route largely of red brick with a noted grand stand of stuccoed villas at nos. 197-203. Notable are the single houses at 101 and 104 Oxford Road. Amazingly, most of the listed Georgians still retain original windows and doors. Some brick walls onto pavements in front of these properties (notably at 149-153) need attention and re-pointing but are original.

With the creation of Waylen Street and Zinzan Street in the latter 1830s to 1840s, the two-story shops had completely filled in between Russell Street and Howard by the early 1850s. The history of shops to provide wares to the local residents west of town, has always been a feature of the road and the shops there now are today's generation of that tradition. Their frontages, today, however, lack respect to the age and history of the properties. A more unified appearance could raise the profile of the area and increase profitability for many of the shops. Poor and irregular street frontages do not help.

There is an enormous amount of brick that went into the building of the Oxford Road. Much of it is red brick, with the majority of the shop front properties being overpainted usually in white. (Source: Castle Hill & Russell Street Conservation Area Review)

The proposed change of use will be beneifcial for the area providing healthy grilled food within a prime city centre location.

The proposed Oxford street elevation is a mix of traditonal and modern shop fronts, with elements of ornate detailing in the form of timber panelling and stone surrounds, which provide the area with character.

The proposed shop front has been designed to reflect the surrounding features, by introduing ornate timber columns to the front and side elevation and timber panelling to the bottom.

Western Edge

Northern Edge

Eastern Edge

Southern Edge

Planning Application Number:	960109
Site Address:	109b Oxford Road Reading RG1 7UD
Description:	Alteration of existing shop front.
Case Officer and Phone No:	Andrew Dawe
Date Received:	08 November 1996
Date Valid:	20 November 1996
Decision Level/Committee:	N/A
Decision Type:	Application Permitted
Application Status:	Determination Made
Applicant Name & Address:	Ladbroke Racing Brighouse Crt Barnwood Business Centre Barnett Way Glos GL4 3RT
Agent Name & Address:	Ladbroke Racing Brighouse Crt Barnwood Business Centre Barnett Way Glos GL4 3RT
Agent Phone No:	
Decision Date:	14 January 1997
Sent Date:	14 January 1997
Ward:	N/A
Parish:	Reading Borough
Area Team:	N/A
Consultation Period Begins:	
Consultation Period Ends:	

3.0 Planning Guidance

3.1 Planning History

4.0 Proposed Development

4.1 Design Concept

The internal layout will be altered on the ground floor to provide a suitable dinning layout for customers, with facilities to create longevity and sustainability to the building.
The proposed relocation of the shop front will provide an elegant and welcoming appearance and attract customers.
Externally the building will be finished in ornate timber columns to provide a traditional appearance to reflect the surrounding street scene, with smooth render finish to provide a modern and traditional clean elegant appearance

4.2 Use

The existing site is currently used as sui generis betting shop, which has been vacant for many years, the proposed change of use to A3/A5 restaurant/takeaway will provide healthy grilled food to the community something which is required in the area and as part of a healthy lifestyle.

4.3 Amount

The amount of development on the site that is considered appropriate has been arrived at by examining and responding to the following issues:

- Urban design and size of the blocks in the area.
- Ensuring the public and private realms are clearly defined and works with the existing context.
- Height and massing of the surrounding buildings.

The proposed installation of the new shop front, and internal alterations does not affect the building footprint.

4.4 Layout and Scale

The internal layout on the ground floor will be altered to provide the best setting for a restaurant with dining space, kitchen preparation and disabled toilet facility.

Externally the building will be retained, with the existing shopfront to be bought forward from the front elevation and a glazed panel installed on the side elevation.
The addition of ornate timber columns to the front and side will provide a traditional appearance and with the render finish to the lower part of the building will give the modern appearance which we feel will create an elegant and attract frontage.

The proposed changes will regenerate the building to a modern standard and attract customers.

4.5 Appearance and Materials

The external shop front windows/doors will be painted RAL 3003 and internally on the ground floor the layout will be changed to suit the proposed change of use.
Materials used internally and externally will be of high standard and quality to represent quality dining experience.
The ornate timber columns will be hardwood timber to provide longevity and a solid appearance, painted matt white to reflect the render finish.

4.6 Opening hours

Mon-Fri: 11.30am – 11.30pm
Sat – Sun: 11.30am – 11.30pm

4.7 Staff

The restaurant seeks to employ 6 no full time staff and 3 no. part time staff

4.8 Access

Bus routes serve the surrounding local area and therefore the application site is within short reach by public paid transport. The closest bus route is located on Oxford Road which is approx. 1 minute walk from the site.

Reading central railway station and reading West are both approximately 10 minutes walking distance away from the site, leading throughout reading and to other cities.

As the internal site is level there will be no difficulties in providing pedestrian access.
The property is accessed via Oxford Road.
The entrance to the front of the property is level with the external pedestrian footpath; should any wheelchair users require access, would not be a problem for them.

4.9 Parking

The site is located close to the city centre and is easily reachable by car and public transport, with bus stops and railway station close by and also with paid car parking nearby.

5.0 Conclusion

The proposal for the change of use to A3 and A5 with the existing shopfront to be relocated on the front elevation and glazed panel fitted to the side elevation will visually improve the character of the building and make it stand out and attract customers.

Being within a conservation area, the addition of ornate timber columns and features to the front and side elevation will reflect the surrounding elevations and provide a coherent and continuous street elevation.

The ground floor restaurant / takeaway will continue to be economically viable for the local area as it is well populated with a mix use of buildings, from retail to restaurants in a well populated and city centre location

The proposed restaurant will provide a family friendly dining experience with family seating areas, providing healthy grilled food, as part of the new healthy style of living, something which is limited in the area and would be very successful.

Being located close to city centre the site is close to many attraction sites and retail businesses.
The proposal will provide healthy grilled food and dining facilities to Reading residents and tourists visiting the city.

The proposed changes are intended to fit within the existing building fabric, which will improve the aesthetical appearance of the building and attract customers while at the same time offer a modern interior and exterior appearance that sits comfortably within its context.

The changes to the existing building would be very successful in this vicinity which will only add as a positive project to help bring up the surrounding area. We feel that all the requirements have been met and give a positive result to this proposal.