

New Student Residential Development

79 Silver Street, Reading



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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. 79 Silver Street, Reading.

The proposals are for the demolition of an existing 3 storey office block 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 Chamberwell Investment Services 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

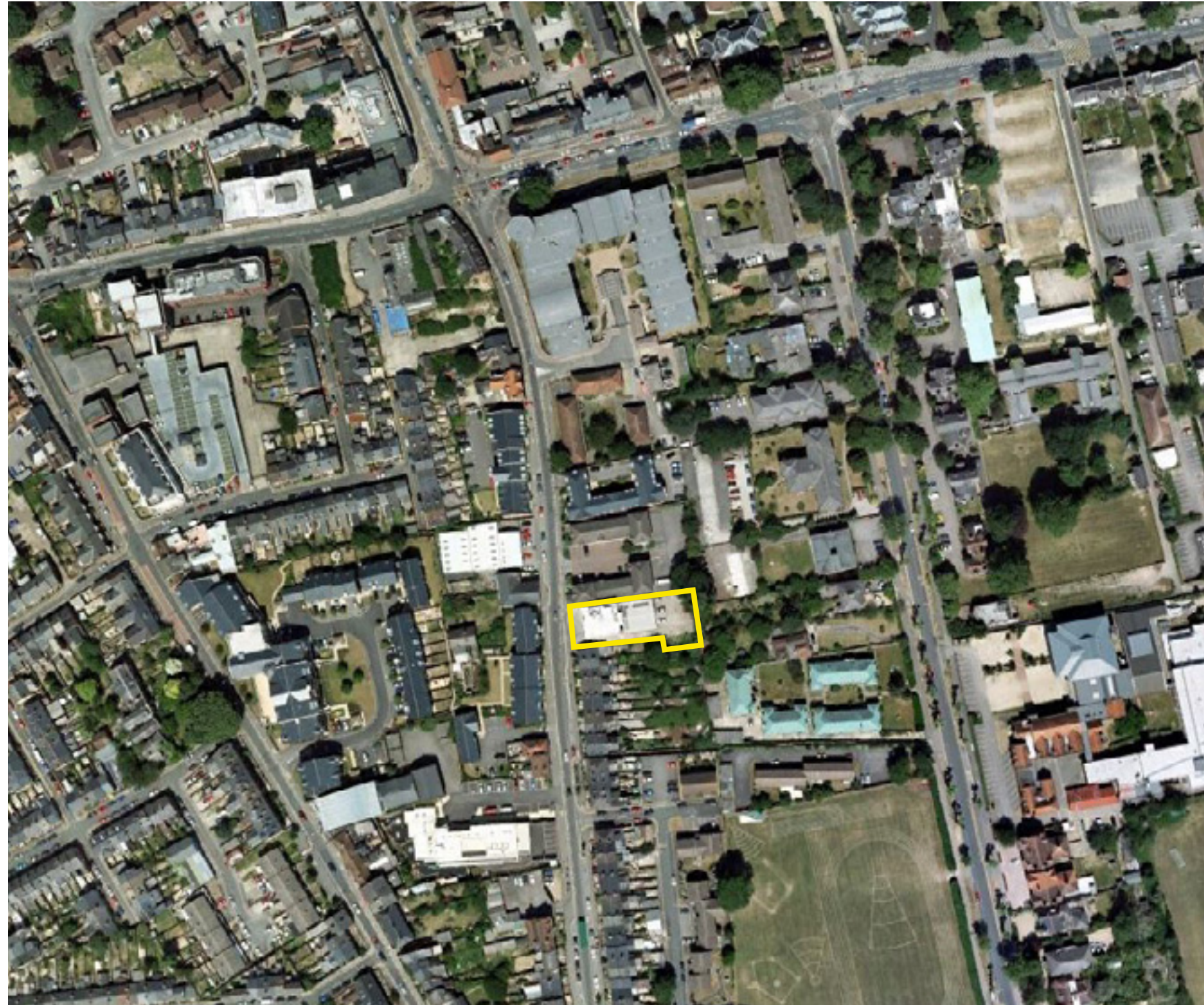
1.3 Client Brief

O'Connell East Architects were approached by Chamberwell Investment Services Ltd to develop proposals for the re-development of 79 Silver Street, Reading to provide a luxury student studio scheme.

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 3 storey office block 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 Kendrick Road Conservation Area. The site is currently occupied by a 3 storey office building with A1/A3 retail use fronting the road.

Connectivity

79 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.

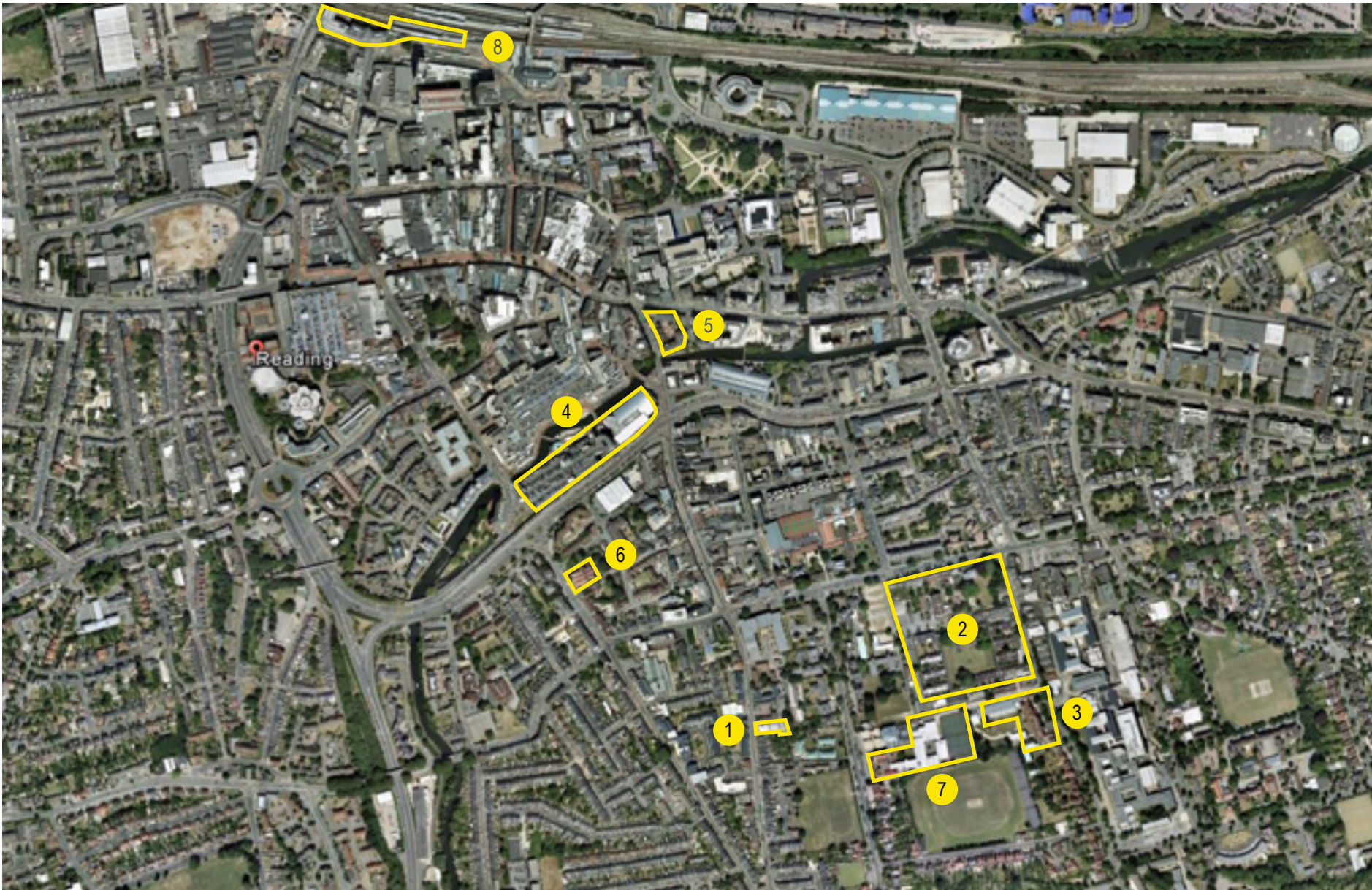


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2.1 Contextual Analysis

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	Sustainability	Shadow Analysis	Access	Working Drawings	Scheme Visuals
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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 adjacent to the site is generally 2 storeys with 3-4 storey 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.



5-6 Storey Apartments at Silver St



3 Storey Apartments - opposite the site



3-4 Storey Apartments - opposite the site



3 Storey Windsor Court - adjacent to the site



The Rising Sun - Silver Street

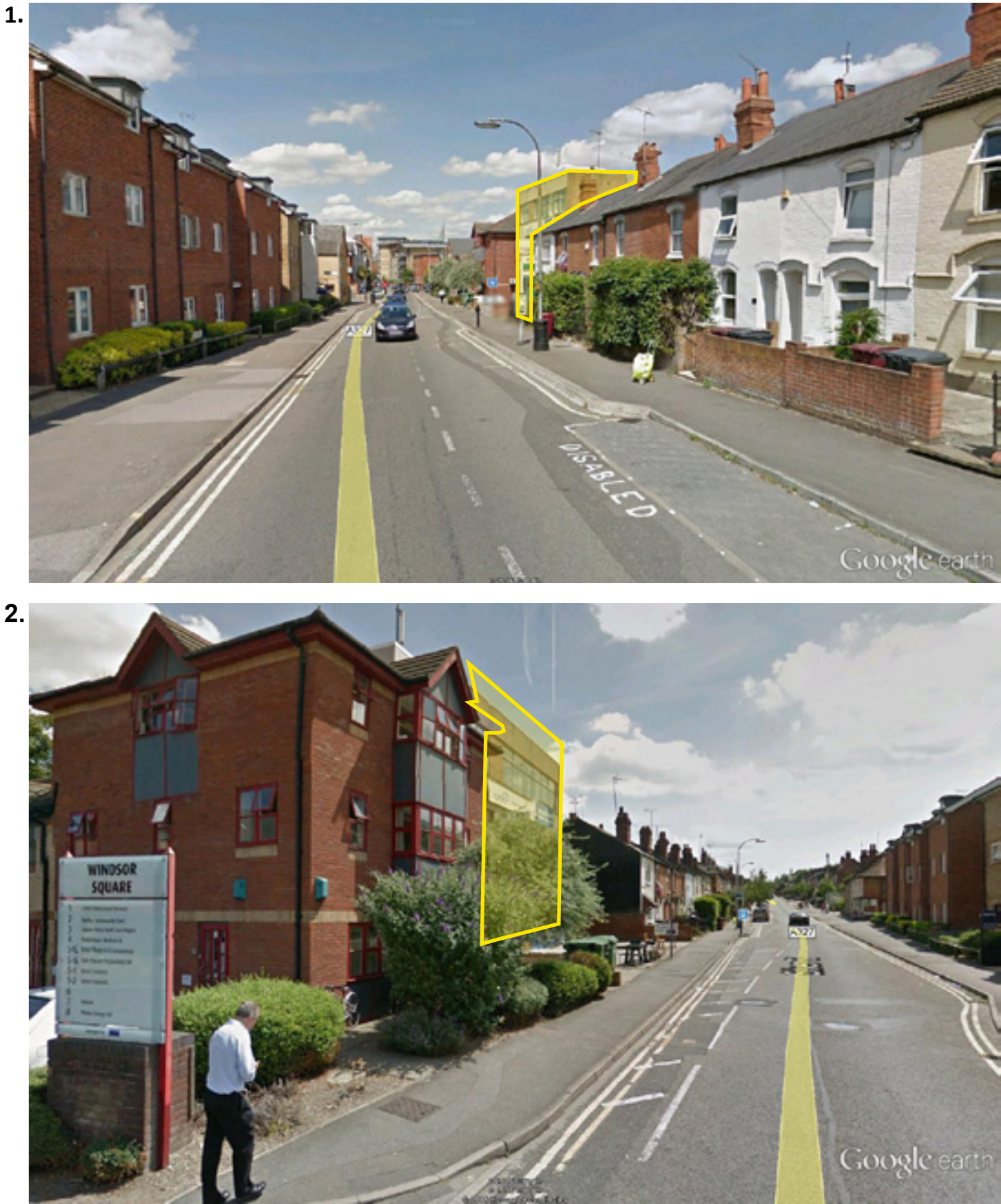
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2.1.3 Approaching Views

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

From the south - the roof profile of the existing office is flat and a storey higher than the adjacent terraced properties. It's form detracts from the general pitched roof lines that dominate the street frontage and reduce the visual impact at street level.

From the north - the flat roof and office mass is largely concealed behind the neighbouring 3 Storey office block.



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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 PH dominates the western street frontage on approach to London Road with a 4-6 storey residential block on the eastern corner.



SILVER STREET - PHOTO MONTAGE



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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

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2.1.6 Conservation Area

The site is located to the west of the designated Kendrick Road Conservation area and has a common boundary on the eastern edge of the site with the gardens of No.26 & 28 Kendrick Road.

Properties within the Conservation Area are of mixed type but are typically 2-3 storeys and generally benefit from mature gardens with tree cover and front gardens to back of footpath.

There are no special focal points within the Conservation Area, and views out are also limited.

There are 2 mature trees adjacent to the site to the NE corner - one of these is within the conservation area.

Refer to TPM Landscape Design Statement for more detailed information.

No.26 & 28 KENDRICK ROAD

Views of the new development from the gardens of No.26 & 28 will be largely screened by mature tree cover at the end of their gardens. The tree cover will also provide privacy to residents of the proposed development.



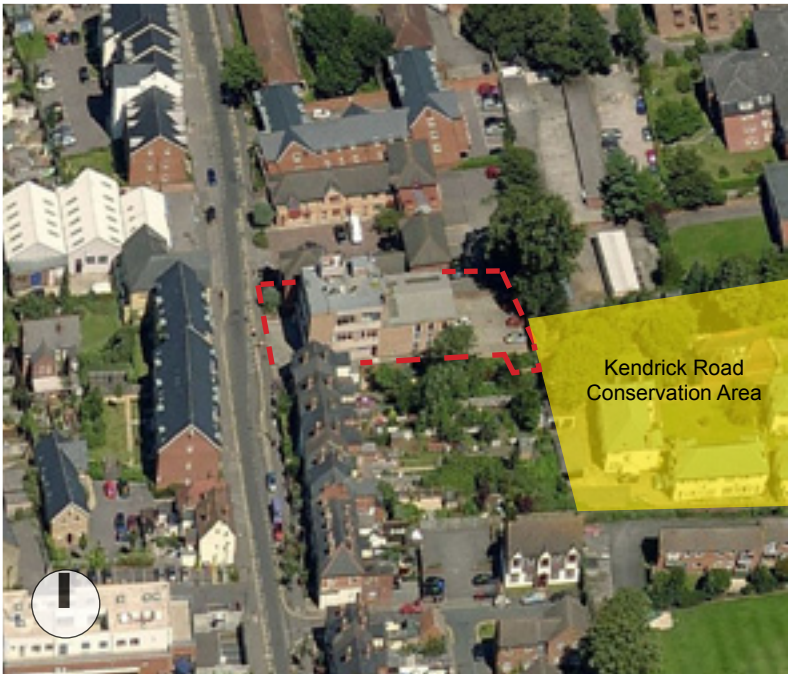
Indicative view from gardens of No.26 & 28 Kendrick Road



Plan extract indicating Kendrick Road Conservation Area (shown yellow) boundary adjacent to site



No. 26 & 28 Kendrick Road



Aerial view north



Aerial view East

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2.1.7 The Site

The existing building is a 3 storey office block constructed in brick with flat roof and render panels to the front and side elevations and curtain walling / cladding to the rear.

This building comprises of approximately 980m² (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 commercial building presents as a bulky flat roofed block stepped back from Silver Street and has a poor visual relationship to the Victorian terraced homes to the south.

The new Silver Street frontage and massing will be closely comparable in height to the existing building and housing opposite so there is no significant change in terms of shadows cast to the west and north-west.



FRONT: EXISTING SITE VIEW

2016



REAR: EXISTING SITE VIEW

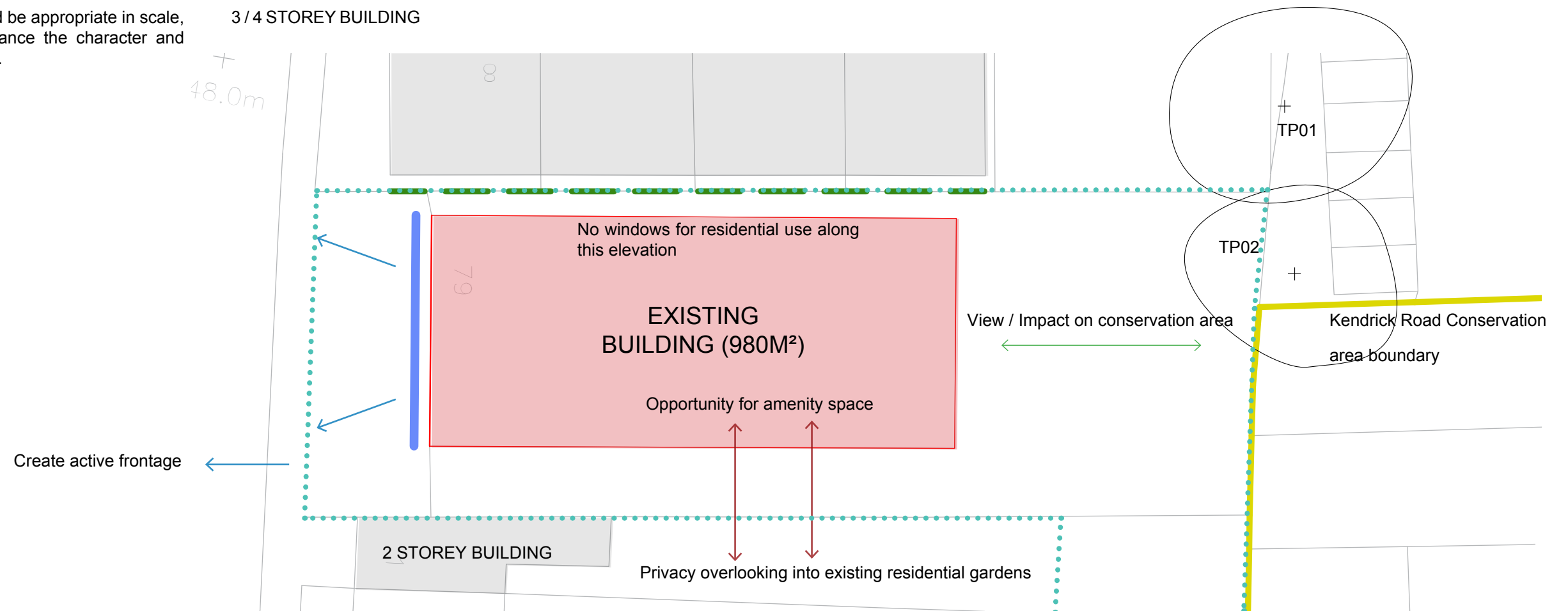
2016

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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.



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.



1. Saxon Court



2. Kendrick Halls



3. Queens Court



4. Central Studios



4. Fawley Bridge



6. Windsor Hall - University Halls



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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.



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