

07.00 | Proposed Scheme

Landscape & Appearance

07.08 | Proposed Landscape

As mentioned in the existing landscape section, there is no soft landscaping within the scheme.

With regard to hard-landscaping the site plan on page 45 shows how the residual areas at the front of the building between the new external wall lines and the property line will be made good with granite coloured stone paviors to match the grey brickwork to the base of the ground floor windows. This will anchor the base of the building to the site.

Following construction works it may be necessary to re-surface the carpark area to match existing and re-line.

07.09 | Proposed Appearance

The proposed appearance of the building reflects the conceptual approach outlined in section 04.00, whereby the existing main brick façade is removed, the profile of the façade simplified, additional floors are added and a new rhythmic elevation of brick and glass is applied. To provide a hierarchical logic the buildings elevation has been divided in to a base, middle and top, with the fenestrations on each elevation being composed as follows:

Greyfrairs Road: Symmetry either side of entrance/core. The glazing and sobriety of the elevation grid is interrupted by variation in window width to creative ‘movement’.

Stanshawe Road: Symmetry either side of centre line of the brickwork element. Asymmetrical windows wrap the corners adding movement and fluidity.

As discussed earlier in this document, the site has been identified as an important transition point between the proposed massing of the Station Hill development and the mass of the terrace houses along Stanshawe Road. To assist in this transition the roughly ‘L’ shaped building footprint has been considered as two interlocking blocks:

1. The ‘statement’ block which sits on the corner of Greyfrairs Road and Stanshawe Road and
2. The ‘transition’ block which adjoins the neighbouring terrace houses on Stanshawe Road.

The statement block has been wrapped in a new skin of orange brickwork which compliments and enlivens the local context. The brick is articulated through a rhythmic pattern of punched glass windows and solid grey panels. The size and proportion of the openings results in a strong, gridded elevation treatment which sits comfortably within its prominent location within the existing street scene and which reflects the buildings use as an office.

Whilst the majority of the windows have perpendicular reveals, those of the windows directly above the main pedestrian entrance are flared. This subtle change adds relief and emphasises the location of the main



Distant view looking west down Stanshawe Road to West elevation



Brick and Glass, Denwent London, Piercy Conner Architects



Close view of Stanshawe Road West elevation showing blind windows

entrance. This is further accentuated through the use of an accent coloured panel at each floor and a feature window on the top floor.

The ground floor is set back from the floors above and finished in contrasting blue/grey brickwork with glazed curtain walling. The columns of the existing structure are expressed in light grey. This solution sets the building on a solid plinth at street level. The design of the main entrance to the building and the setting out of the curve at the corner are described in section 07.03.

The brick and glass treatment is used to turn the corner from Greyfriars Road to Stanshawe road with a curved treatment that softens this transition. Along Stanshawe Road, a combination of recessed building line, lower parapet, use of contrasting white render and smaller apertures completes a change in scale to reflect the residential character of the immediate neighbours.

An existing projecting bay window is retained and re-clad in an aluminium panel system to match that of the solid window panels. This form adds further interest to the Stanshawe Road elevation and frames the vehicular and secondary pedestrian entrance.

In response to concerns raised by RBC following the previous application, the top storey of the building is a recessed mansard which is finished in lead with regularly spaced roll joints and which incorporates sloped windows. The mansard is set back 1000mm from the outer face of the brickwork parapet which when combined with the visual lightness of the cladding system will help to reduce the presence of the top storey from street level.

It is proposed to extend the white render on the Stanshawe Road elevation on to the west party. Above this will be a mansard with opaque glass windows. The overall effect of this approach is to reduce the visual dominance of the additional storey from Stanshawe Road. The north Greyfriars Road party wall shall be extended in brickwork up to the base of the proposed mansard.

On the north internal elevation the existing deep horizontal banding will be removed and the wall will be extended and re-clad using the render system. The west internal elevation will be extended in brickwork to match the existing and the deep horizontal banding will be removed and replaced with a new thinner aluminium profile to remove the pigeon perch. Although the existing window apertures on both elevations will be retained, the windows themselves will be replaced. The new windows will have a better thermal performance therefore increasing the energy efficiency of the building and will be set flush with the external wall to remove an existing pigeon perch.

The open top plant enclosure on the roof will be clad in aluminium louvres spaced to achieve the appropriate free area required for the plant. The plant enclosure is set back from the façade to ensure that its visibility from the ground is reduced.

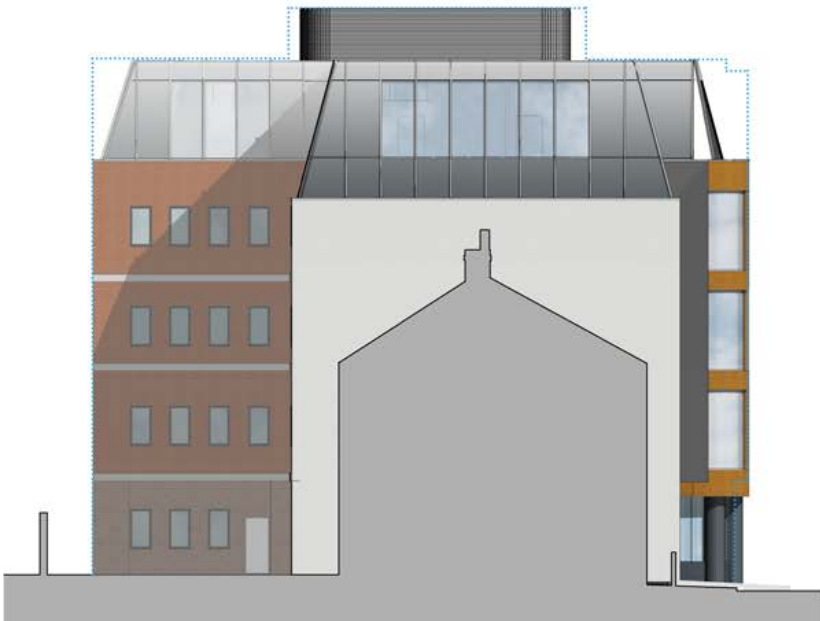
In summary, we have worked closely with our Client Croudace Properties and RBC planning and design officers to create a design response which positively captures the opportunity for a well-proportioned corner building whilst anticipating the dramatic change in scale and character the new Station Hill quarter will bring.



Proposed East Elevation



Proposed North Elevation



Proposed West Elevation



Proposed South Elevation

07.00 | Proposed Scheme

Access

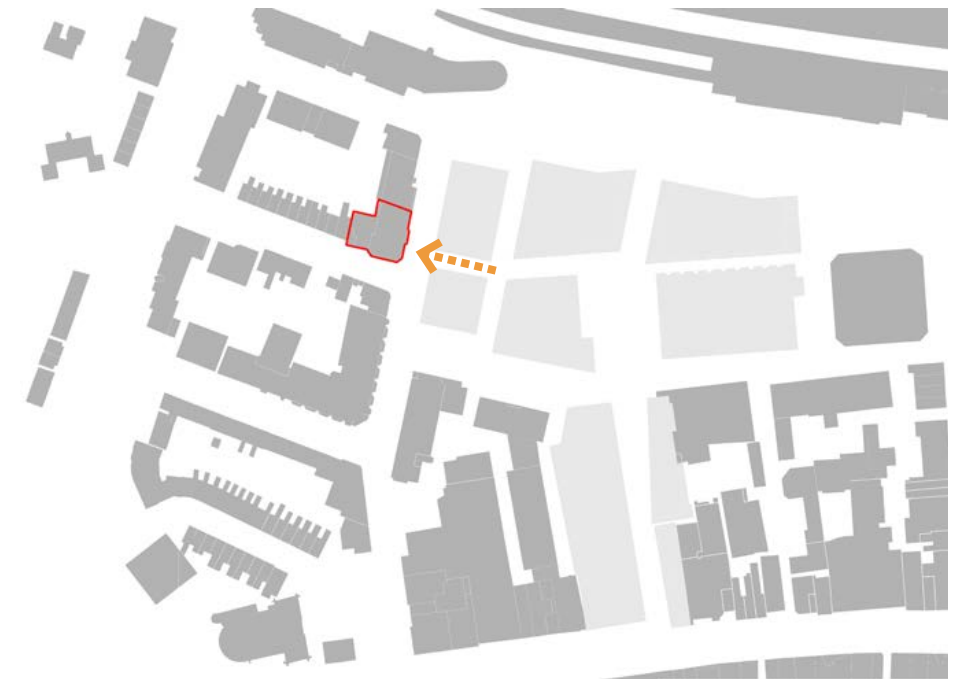
07.10 | Proposed Access

Pedestrian and vehicular access to the proposed building are broadly as existing however the design team have proposed the following improvements:

- Level thresholds throughout ;
- All new doors sized to be wheelchair accessible;
- Disabled shower and toilet to every floor;
- Disabled refuges to each stair core at each floor;
- 8 secure covered cycle parking spaces at ground floor; and
- New automatic pedestrian and vehicular security doors

The existing access points to and from the building are retained as existing.

The image to the right shows a view through the Station Hill development towards the application site acting as a point of orientation within central Reading.



Urban grain diagram showing location of view through Station Hill scheme to application site



3D view showing view through Plot A of Station Hill scheme to proposed building

08.00 | Sustainability, Transport & Flood Risk

08.01 | Sustainability Statement

The proposed scheme seeks to recycle and extend an existing vacant office building, thereby retaining the embodied energy locked within the structural frame.

The design team will review the feasibility of whether any of the existing facade which is to be demolished it can be re-used in the new scheme.

From an energy efficiency perspective, the proposed building will benefit from new energy efficient services and a new high performance facade to the south and east elevations. The building will seek to achieve an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of ‘B.’

A BREEAM Pre-assessment achieving a BREEAM rating of ‘Very Good’ forms part of the technical documentation submitted with this application.

08.02 | Transport Strategy

The proposed development looks to add an additional 2 floors of accommodation to the current building, which will increase the gross external area from 1,321 sq.m to 2,166 sq.m, thus an increase of less than 900 sq.m.

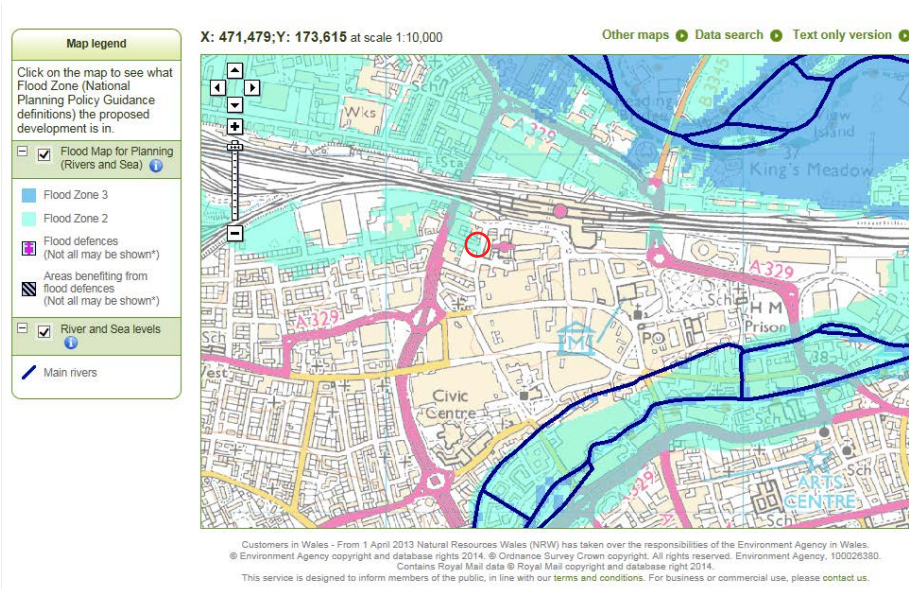
The Department for Transport guidance for determining the impact of a development and the level of study required to support any application suggests that any increase in a B1 land use (office) less than 1,500 sq.m does not require any supporting transport evidence as the likely impact is minimal and would not have a material impact on the adjacent highway. This coupled with the premise that the proposed development does not propose any increase in parking provision on site, further supports the premise that a Transport Statement as defined in the DfT guidance is not required.

However, we note that RBC seek clarity on the existing and future status of the building and the associated transport related facilities to allow them to review and determine the application. Therefore Peter Brett Associates have provided a separate technical note which summaries the transport related issues in terms of

- Floor Area Alterations;
- Building Access;
- Car Parking;
- Cycle Parking; and
- Facilities and Waste and Servicing.

This note forms part of the technical documentation submitted with this application.

Peter Brett Associates have utilised a similar approach on other similar scale projects within the Reading area, including adjacent sites.



Extract from the Environment Agency Website flood map

08.03 | Flood Risk

The image above shows an extract from the Environment Agency website flood map which indicates that the application site is currently within Flood zone 2.

Following Environment Agency guidance with regard to the ‘*Householder and other minor extensions in Flood Zones 2 & 3*’ form, we confirm that the proposed non-domestic extension to the existing building does not create more than 250 sq.m of building footprint.

On the basis, that there is no cumulative impact of minor extensions in this area the completion of the above Environment Agencies form is included within Appendix A of this Design & Access Statement and forms the Flood Risk Assessment for this planning application.

In summary, as high-lighted in the proposed access section, there are no proposed changes to the existing pedestrian access and egress points to the building or their threshold levels.

09.00 | Conclusion

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Having undertaken a thorough analysis of the existing context, and developing a design response from this baseline in close collaboration with Reading Borough Council, the design team have produced a scheme design which is commensurate with the aspirational nature of this key site in central Reading.

The existing building on the site presented the design team with an opportunity for a rebirth of the existing structure. The proposed scheme grasps this opportunity with a piece of contemporary architecture which will help revitalise this site and the wider immediate area. The brick facades will provide animation to the street scape at ground floor and above within a cohesive piece of architecture appropriate to context.

The design team have pleasure in submitting this application on behalf of Croudace Property Limited to Reading Borough Council for detailed planning consent.



Artist's impression of view from Corner of Greyfriars Road & Stanshawe Road

A | Appendix A - Flood Risk Assessment

Householder and other minor extensions in Flood Zones 2 and 3

Applications for planning permission should be accompanied by a completed form. An electronic version can be submitted by 'printing' it to a PDF writer.

This guidance is for domestic extensions and non-domestic extensions where the additional footprint created by the development does not exceed 250 sq. metres. It should NOT be applied if an additional dwelling is being created, e.g. a self contained annex.

We recommend that:

Planning Authorities:

- 1) Refer the applicant to the standing advice pages on the Environment Agency website or provide them with a copy of this page for them to include as part of the planning application submission.
- 2) Check the planning application to ensure that one or other of the mitigation measures from the table below has been incorporated.

Applicants:

Complete the table below and include it with the planning application submission. The table, together with the supporting evidence, will form the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and will act as an assurance to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) that flood risk issues have been adequately addressed.

Applicant to choose one or other of the flood mitigation measures below	Applicant to provide the LPA with the supporting information detailed below as part of their FRA	Applicant to indicate their choice in the box below. Enter 'yes' or 'no'
Either ; Floor levels within the proposed development will be set no lower than existing levels AND, flood proofing of the proposed development has been incorporated where appropriate.	Details of any flood proofing / resilience and resistance techniques, to be included in accordance with 'Improving the flood performance of new buildings' CLG (2007)	yes
Or; Floor levels within the extension will be set 300mm above the known or modelled 1 in 100 annual probability river flood (1%) or 1 in 200 annual probability sea flood (0.5%) in any year. This flood level is the extent of the Flood Zones	This must be demonstrated by a plan that shows finished floor levels relative to the known or modelled flood level. All levels should be stated in relation to Ordnance Datum ¹	no

Subterranean/basement extensions

Due to the risk of rapid inundation by floodwater basements should be avoided in areas at risk of flooding. The LPA may hold additional guidance for basement extensions.

Self-contained basement dwellings are 'highly vulnerable' development and should not be permitted in Flood Zone 3. We are opposed to these developments.

Continued...

¹ Ordnance Datum or the abbreviation 'OD' is the mean level of the sea at Newlyn in Cornwall from which heights above sea level are taken. The contour lines on Ordnance Survey maps measure heights above OD for example, though these are not accurate enough for a flood risk assessment..

Cumulative impact of minor extensions and the removal of Permitted Development rights.

There is potential for the cumulative impact of minor extensions to have a significant effect on flood risk. Where local knowledge (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment held by the LPA/information provided by the parish council) suggests this is the case the guidance contained in FRA guidance note 2 should be applied. FRA guidance note 2 can also be applied where permitted development rights have been removed for flood risk reasons. The Environment Agency does not usually comment on minor development in this category.

Permeable paving and changes to permitted development rights for householders

On the 1st October 2008 the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) in England was amended by the Government (Statutory Instrument 2008 No. 2362).

One of the changes introduced by the GPDO amendment is the removal of permitted development rights for householders wishing to install hard surfacing in front gardens which exceeds 5sq. metres (i.e. 1m x 5 m) without making provision to ensure permeability. This means that use of traditional materials, such as impermeable concrete, where there is no facility in place to ensure permeability, requires an application for planning permission.

In order to help and advise householders of the options for achieving permeability and meeting the condition for permitted development status the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has produced guidance on permeable paving which can be found on the following link <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pavingfrontgardens>

The Environment Agency supports the GPDO amendment as it is in line with the recommendations of the Pitt Report regarding the need to better tackle the impact of surface water flooding. However, Local Planning Authorities should determine these applications in accordance with the CLG guidance **without** consulting the Environment Agency.

End of comment

B | Appendix B - Architectural Drawings

