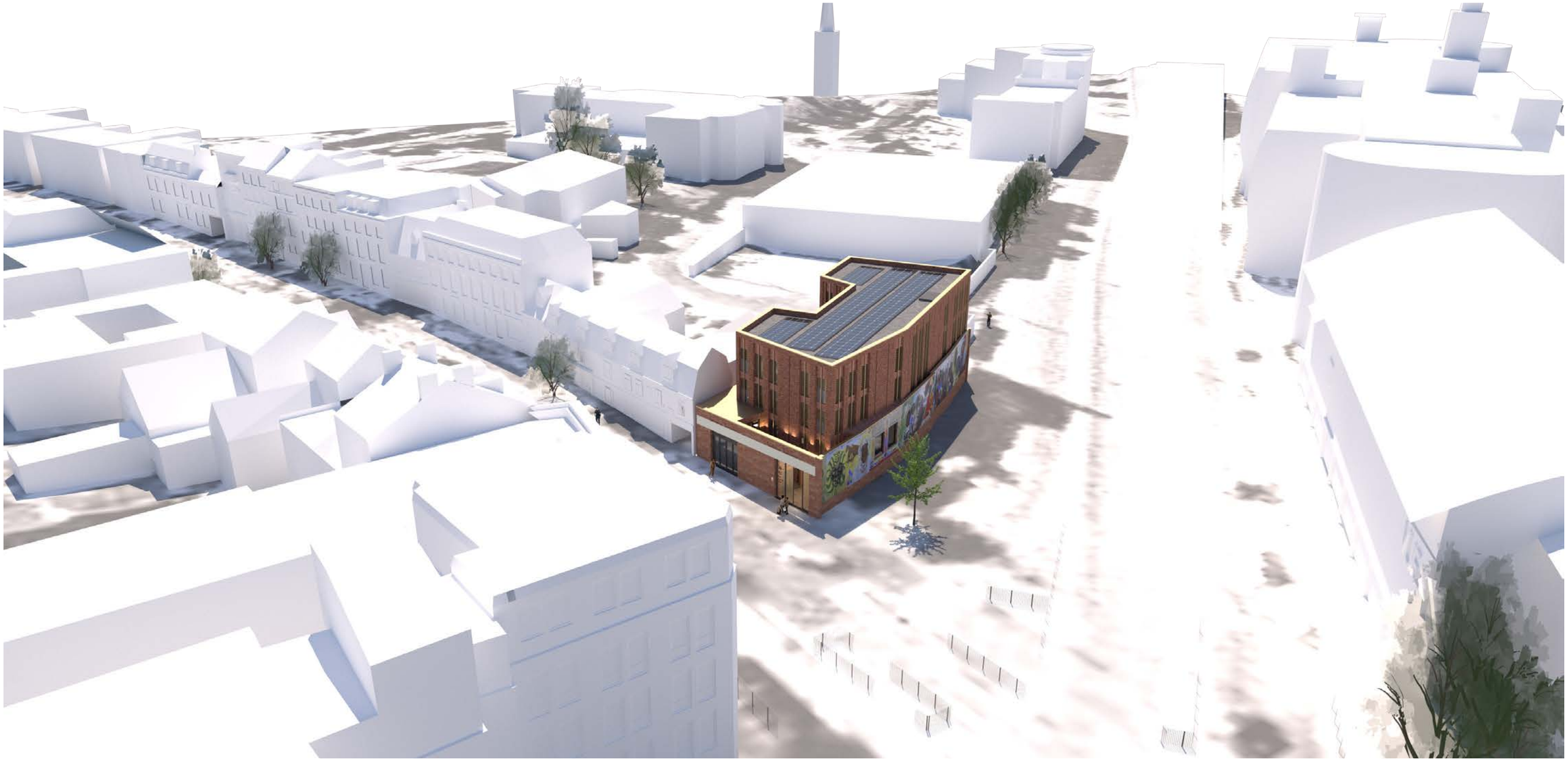


CENTRAL CLUB / READING

[DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT]

August 2024 – rev 2
job no: 426

Executive Summary

MURAL PROTECTION & RESTORATION.....[PAGE 18-21]

the mural is to be preserved during the construction of the proposed development and will be restored to ensure its sustainable future as a valuable work of art

17 RESIDENTIAL UNITS.....[PAGE 32]

a mixed development of 1-bed, 2-bed, and 3-bed flats are proposed, all exceeding minimum spatial standards

COMMUNITY SPACE .....[PAGE 33]

space has been included for use by a community organisation offering an open and flexible ground floor space with London Street frontage

Colony Architects have followed a long process of design to arrive at these proposals. This application is the first planning application submitted following a series of Pre-Application advice, specialist reporting, consultee dialogue, and community discussion.

The design proposals made in this application are high quality, carefully considered, and the result of years of development as more information is gathered.

The application includes fully detailed plans, elevations, sections and details for the proposals, as well as numerous CGIs created to help explain the proposals in detail. Our reports are written in clear and plain English in the hope that our work can be understood by a broad range of interested parties.

The application includes numerous reports made by specialists and the proposals have coordinated that information. We believe that the proposals can be supported fully by the planning officer, RBC’s planning committee, and the Planning Inspectorate.

This Statement

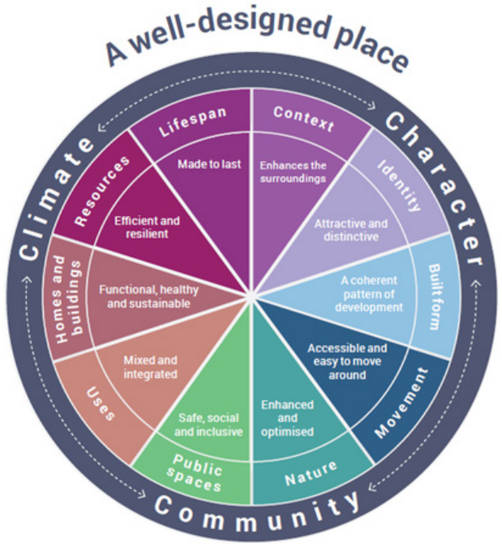
Colony Architects use a Design and Access Statement as an illustration tool to explain the planning application design proposal, the rationale behind its creation and how it is appropriate for the context. The Statement also serves to meet statutory requirements, local planning policy and national guidance documents. Statutory requirements of a Design & Access Statement.

The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013 requires a Design and Access Statement to be made in the following application situations:

- Major Developments
- Within a designated area (Conservation Areas, World Heritage Sites)
- The provision of one or more dwellinghouses; or the Provision a building, or increase in building area greater than 100m2

The statement should cover:

- The design principles and concepts that been applied to the development
- How access relating to the development has been dealt with, adopting local planning policy requirements
- Explain the steps taken to appraise the context and how the design of the development takes the context into account
- State what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development, and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation



Design Guidance Documents

There are many design policy documents that inform the process of design at the pre-construction stage, these include the National Model Design Code, Building for a Healthy Life and reports such as Better Building Beautiful Commission. In addition to the statutory requirements of a Design and Access Statement, there is further guidance on the document structure and overall design process within the National Design Guide – Planning practices guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places, prepared by The Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government. This guide identifies three over arching priorities: - Climate, Character & Community. These themes re are then broken into the 10 essential characteristics that a well-designed place or building should embody. Our Design and Access Statements references these 10 chapters to present the design proposal and illustrate the suitability and well-designed nature of the proposal.

Design Process

During the design process, the design team observe not only statutory requirements and guidance documents, but also local planning policy requirements, examples of these documents include:

- Design Quality (Supplementary Planning Documents / Guidance)
- Character & Conservation Area assessments
- Lifetime Homes & Wheelchair User housing requirements
- Housing Design Standards
- Sustainability Checklists
- Parking & Highways Standards

Components for good design

A statement must demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development. It is that an applicant should understand the context in which their proposal will fit and use this understanding to design the scheme. To gain a good understanding of context and to use it appropriately, applicants should follow a design process which includes assessment, involvement, and evaluation, as well as proposing a final design. The following are important components for good design that this statement discusses:

Use

How the use or mix of uses proposed for the land and buildings have been derived from an understanding of the site's context.

Amount

How much development is proposed. For residential development, this means the number of units proposed for residential use. The statement should explain and justify the amount of development proposed for each use, its distribution across the site, how it relates to the site's surroundings and how accessibility to and between all parts of the development have been maximised.

Layout

The way in which buildings, routes and open spaces (both public and private) are provided, placed and orientated in relation to each other, and to buildings and spaces surrounding the site.

Scale

The size of the buildings (including their height), in relation to their surroundings. The statement should also explain and justify the size of individual building parts and how these relate to each other.

Appearance

The visual impression made by the building should be explained and justified, including its built form, architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture.

Detailing

Consider how the building is crafted and materials relate, the detailing should reinforce the macro level design concept at a micro level off detail. The touch and feel of a building is just as important as the aesthetics.

Landscaping

The treatment of private and public spaces to enhance or protect the amenities of the site and the area in which it is situated, through hard and soft landscaping measures, and how these will be maintained.

The Access Component

Design and access statements should explain how access arrangements will ensure that all users will have equal and convenient access to buildings and spaces and the wider transport network. It should include an explanation of the applicant's policy and approach to access, with particular reference to the inclusion of disabled people, a description of any consultation undertaken in relation to access issues and how the outcome of consultations and advice received on accessibility issues has been followed. Access for emergency services should be explained where relevant.


A LUTA CONTINUA
FOR
UNDER OFFER

Introduction

THIS DOCUMENT
This design and access statement has been prepared to support the full application for the conversion and extension of the former Central Club to create 17 residential units and community space.

THE SITE
The site is close to Reading town centre, fronts onto two major roads, and is in a residential area with ground floor commercial units.

THE BUILDING
The existing building is not in use, last being used as a youth club, until 2006. There is a large painted mural on the north elevation depicting characters from black history. The mural is well known and an important community asset.

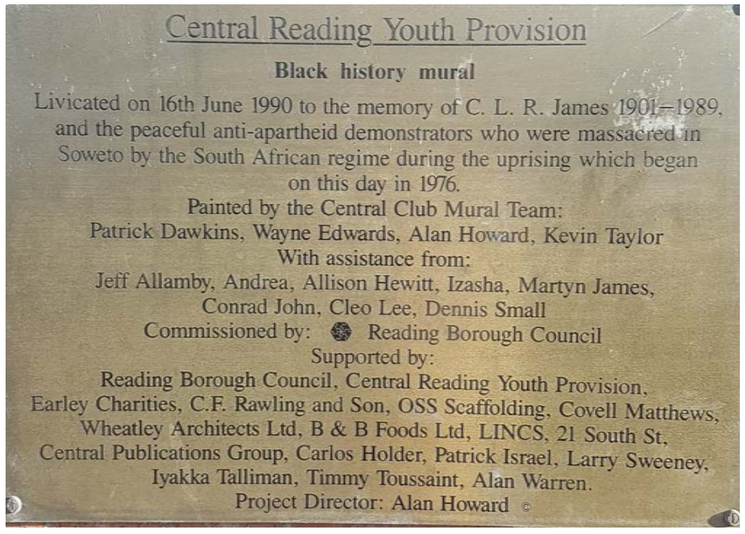
The Central Club building is being sold by Reading Borough Council (RBC) which includes the mural. To safeguard the total asset the sale includes the following conditions:

- to retain and maintain the mural
- to include allowance for community space
- to follow the requirements of the Local Plan
- to ensure the proposals are of high quality

PROCESS TO DATE
The design team have engaged in pre-application enquiries with RBC, and consulted with key stakeholders to ensure that the proposals are suitable. Please refer to other submission documents and drawings for more detailed information.

This document shows the information used to establish the context of the site, explains the steps taken in response to that context, and shows the development of the proposals.







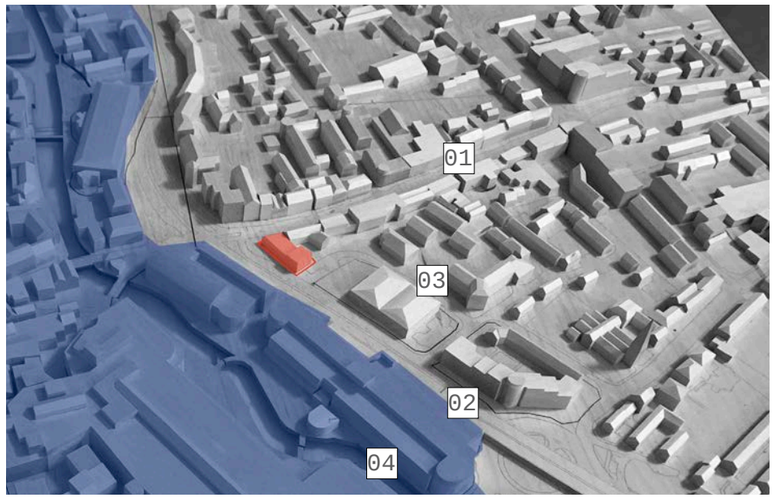
Site Location & Character

[SITE ANALYSIS]

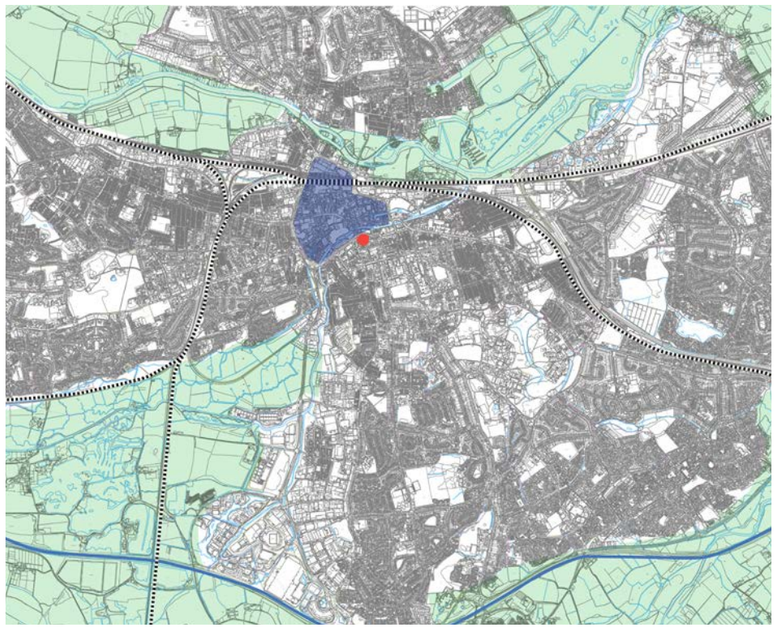
The application site lies to the south of Reading town centre. The local area is mostly retail and commercial use, often with residential accommodation over. Reading's primary shopping centre The Oracle lies nearby to the north, with shopping, leisure and car parking facilities [04].

The site holds a prominent position on the corner of Mill Lane and London Street. Mill Lane and the A329 form part of the larger IDR (Inner Distribution Road), a ring-road that defines the central retail area of Reading [02]. London Street, a one-way route extending south from the town centre, is lined with retail and commercial properties [01].

To the East is Crossland Road, a service road for commercial properties fronting London Street, and the neighbouring John Lewis distribution centre [03]. Directly to the south is a small pedestrian highway, linking London Street and Crossland Road.

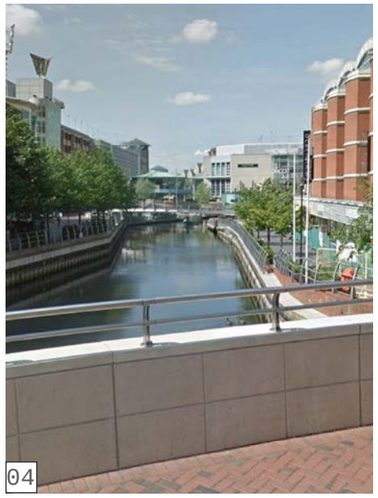














Site Context

[SITE ANALYSIS]

The immediate context for the Central Club site is the wide and busy IDR junction. [01] The scale and character of the site's context differs on each side.

The London Street facade is flanked by a small scale terraced listed building with domestic appearance and shop front. [03] Opposite is the impressive facade of the Great Expectations building. This is a conservation area and the street is a busy linking route for pedestrians and vehicles.

The north facade is more isolated as it faces a 40m wide highway and has wide gaps to either side. This facade features a large painted mural which increases the building's disparity in the setting.

The Crossland Road facade is set in a mixed context of residential and commercial "backs", with almost all available space used for car parking. [04]

To the south is an alleyway with pedestrian scale and of moderate use as a cut-through. [02]

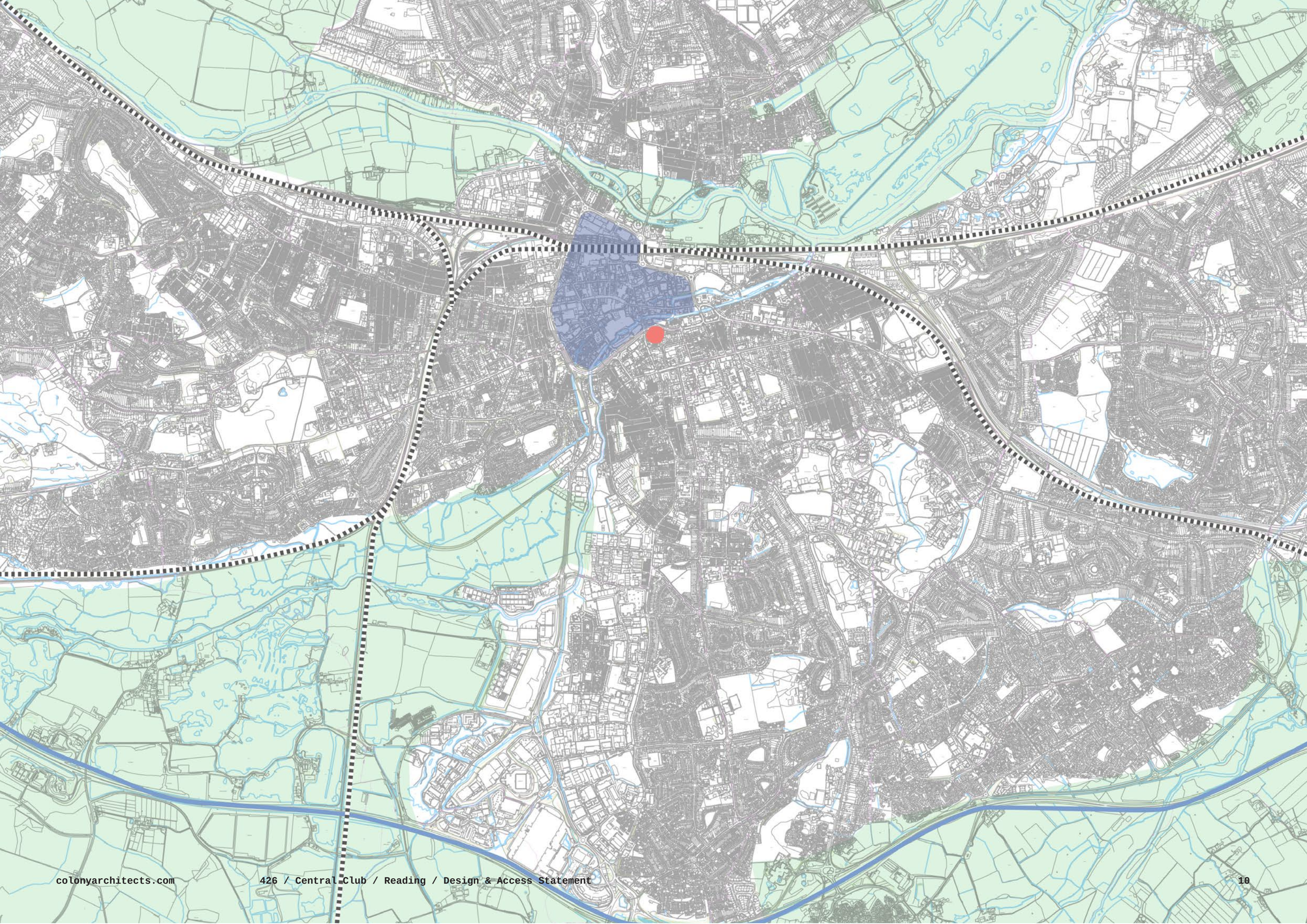



01


02


03


04



Site Forces

[SITE ANALYSIS]



URBAN GRAIN

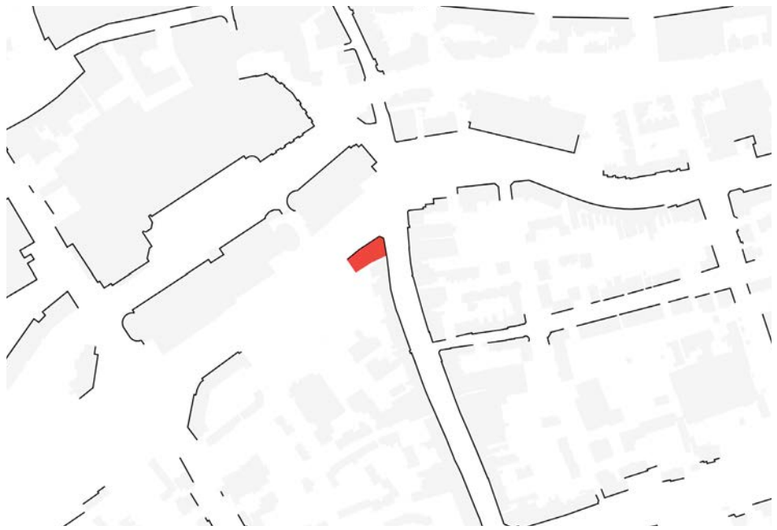
The urban grain diagrams show how the buildings relate to the voids in the local town planning. Understanding how the those buildings front the voids will improve the proposals by making a positive contribution to the existing urban fabric.

Well defined urban grain to the east and south create strong enclosed and active spaces, characteristic of a vibrant townscape.

The density of the urban grain falls away to the west and north where modern urban planning has eroded the tighter street pattern.

Slight widening of the grain to the north/east offers potential of enhancement to the public space.

A successful design on the proposal site should fill the site footprint on west and north sides and present the IDR with a strong form to reinforce the existing grain pattern.



FRONTAGES

Study of building frontages shows that London Street has a strong frontage on both sides. This is indicative of an important circulation route.

Conversely, the IDR frontage lacks definition and spaces are poorly contained. This lack of spatial definition results in a limited sense of place and creates negative space in the townscape.

Crossland Road has a distribution centre & delivery yard which gives a weak frontage to the IDR. The warehouse scale of the building works against the larger massing of the Oracle and cinema opposite, creating imbalance. Both frontages are inactive due to the buildings facing away which creates the feeling of the space being disused.

A successful design proposal should continue the established London Street frontage and strengthen the IDR frontage by having active frontage on that side and by increasing the building mass and scale.



BUILDING HEIGHTS

(Taller buildings are shown darker in colour)

Study of the wider context building heights reveals that taller buildings are clustered around the junctions of the major roads.

Buildings adjacent to the proposal site show variety of size and height. Along the IDR, buildings with tighter grain show taller heights. The western part shows less building work following demolition for the IDR, and original buildings at residential scale create a weak development structure.

London Street is a conservation area, and has retained a relatively low-rise scale (2-4 storeys).

A successful proposal should increase the existing building height to fill a gap in the town planning and be more consistent with the local context. Such a proposal would also benefit the conservation area by partially screening the Oracle from view.


FOR SALE
SOLD
LD15 NJU
LJ21 CRW
R051 JON

Existing Building

[SITE ANALYSIS]

The application site is fully occupied by an existing building referred to by locals as the “Central Club”. It is brick built and tall for single storey, rising to two at the rear. The most prominent feature of the existing building is a 40m long painted mural on the north facade.

USE
The building has had many functions since it was built in the 1920s as a police garage and most recently was a youth club and music venue before its closure in 2008. The internal condition is disused and in places derelict.

LONDON STREET FRONTAGE
The Central Club fronts onto London Street with two openings through its brick and stone facade. Its contribution to the street scene is reasonable, offering an unusual form and styling from a visually non-evident era.

MURAL
The mural was created in the 1990s by a community group in partnership with Reading Borough Council. The project was led by artist Alan Howard. The mural depicts positive contributions made in black history through scenes, figures, and symbolism. Local people from the community are also included in the artwork. It has high value as a community asset and is being considered for listing by Historic England.

SIZE
The existing building is approximately 570m² with a further 100m² at first floor.

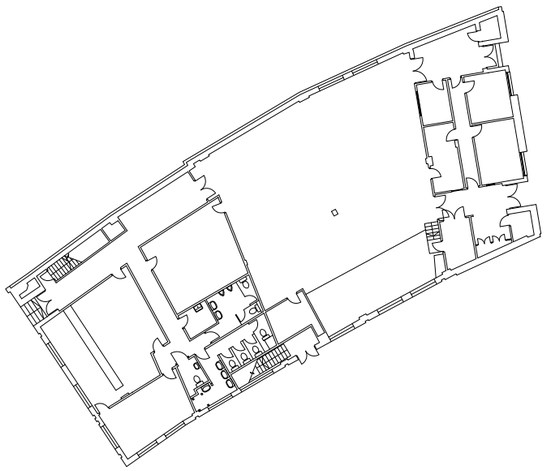


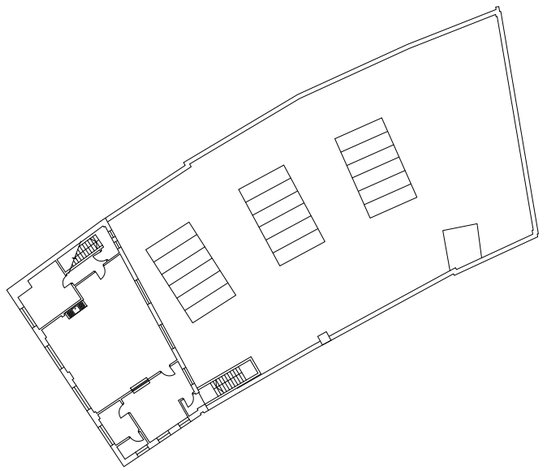














Conservation Area

[CULTURE & HERITAGE]

The proposal site lies within Reading's Market Place conservation area. This extends from the southern end of London Street all the way into the town centre, making a fairly continuous line of heritage assets.

London Street has a high concentration of listed buildings lining the street and create a strong sense of place. The majority of buildings fronting London Street are listed and of good quality. Together they make one of Reading's finer streets.

The RBC conservation area appraisal document identifies that both ends of London Street have "bookends" of taller, modern buildings [01]. The proposal site sits within one of these zones.

At the north end of London Street the IDR cuts through the conservation area and the town planning at this junction lacks high quality buildings or heritage assets [02]. The proposal site fronts the IDR in this zone and relates to this context.

There is an opportunity here to add quality to the "bookend" zone and to oppose the low-level sprawl found along other parts of the IDR.

This application is supported by a detailed heritage report.



LISTED BUILDINGS

- GRADE I
- GRADE II*
- GRADE II
- CONSERVATION AREA

A successful scheme on the proposal site would enhance the Market Place conservation area by retaining the London Street frontage and respecting the scale and massing of the London Street scene.




LONDON ST. READING.




PARNELLS THE PRINTERS LTD.


LONDON STREET READING.

Heritage Assets

[CULTURE & HERITAGE]

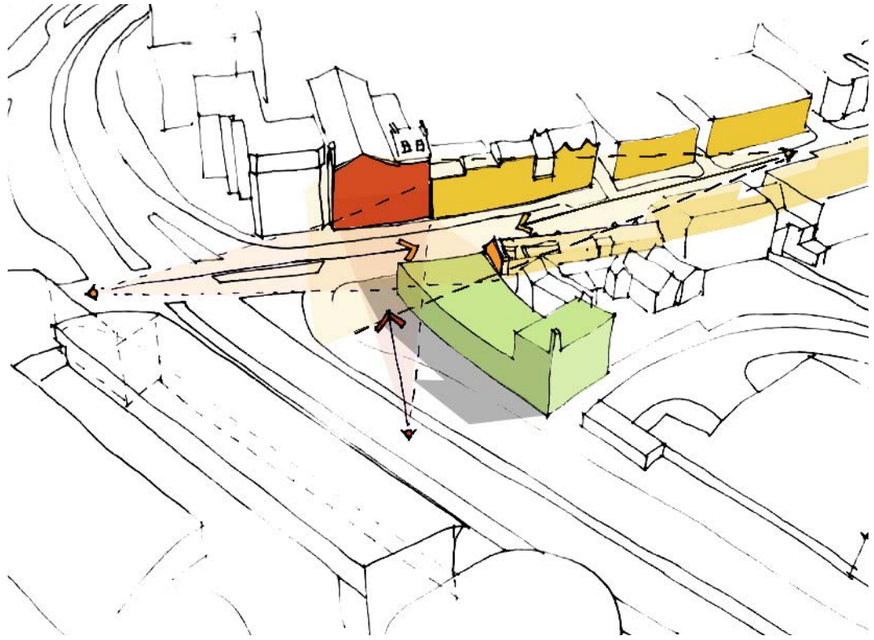
The existing building on the proposal site is not listed, but is of an acceptable quality and character that makes a positive contribution to the conservation area. The 1920s facade is brick and stone, with unusual proportions. With careful treatment, the existing frontage could become a valuable layer in the urban fabric, displaying an age of building otherwise largely absent.

KEY VIEWS
There are three important key views to the London Street section of the conservation area:

[01] FROM MIDWAY LOOKING NORTH TOWARDS THE TOWN CENTRE
This view looks down hill towards town and from the elevated position some viewing over the rooftops is possible. This sets London Street in a context by making the rear of the Oracle building visible over the smaller London Street frontage - an effect that is not entirely satisfying. A taller building "capping off" the northern end of London Street would screen part of the Oracle and present a more sensitive material than grey metal panels as a backdrop.

[02] FROM INSIDE THE IDR LOOKING SOUTH
This view looks slightly uphill and the gentle curve of London Street can clearly be seen. This adds interest by not showing the termination of the street and limits the viewer's vision to a scale commensurate with a cohesive street environment. From this angle the proposal site gives a weak offering against the 5 storey buildings opposite, and fails to enclose the London Street space and the result is an unsatisfactory merging of that space with the wider and more open IDR. A successful proposal that clearly articulates the separate spaces of London Street and the IDR would enhance the conservation area at this end.

[03] FROM THE IDR LOOKING EAST
This view looks directly at the Great Expectations building as seen behind the mural. As it is seen from a place of common traffic congestion, this is a likely view for commuters around Reading to have had time to enjoy. The listed buildings give a fine façade, and the mural vibrant and thought-provoking visual interest. A proposal seen from this point of view should be set back to not obscure views of the adjacent listed frontages of London Street.




01


02


03


FORWARD EVER
A LUTA CONTINUA
SO DO WHAT YOU MUST!
ONE GOD ONE AIM
BLACK WOMEN UP FRONT
Malcolm X

The Mural History

[CULTURE & HERITAGE]



CENTRAL CLUB BLACK HISTORY MEMORIAL
Artist Alan Howard was commissioned in 1988 to design and create a mural on the Central Club northern wall. During the researching process for this application it became clear that there is limited information available to explain the mural.

The proposals seek to make the mural more easily understood by the creation of information boards that can be displayed on site, on a website, or retained in archives for future reference. This document suggests a nature or scope of such work. A community engagement exercise should be undertaken to complete this.

Key members of the community surrounding the mural have been contacted and their input sought for future community collaborative working.

Mural Explanation

[CULTURE & HERITAGE]



[01] NEFERTITI
[02] AKHENATEN
rulers of Ancient Egypt
famous for ruling in peace
earliest record of One Supreme God
great purveyors of the Arts

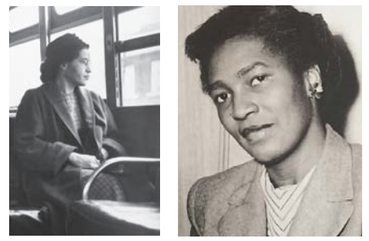
[03] QUEEN AMINA
the Warrior Queen
first queen of Zazzau
excellent military strategist



[07] SOJOURNER TRUTH
abolitionist and women's rights activist
won the first legal case to reclaim her son

[08] KING CETSHWAYO
Zulu king
Opposed war with British

[09] MARCUS GARVEY
political activist, publisher, orator
Black Nationalist & Pan-Africanist
Founder of UNIA



[13] ROSA PARKS
activist and civil rights campaigner
"mother of the freedom movement"
famous for pivotal role in *Montgomery Bus Boycott*

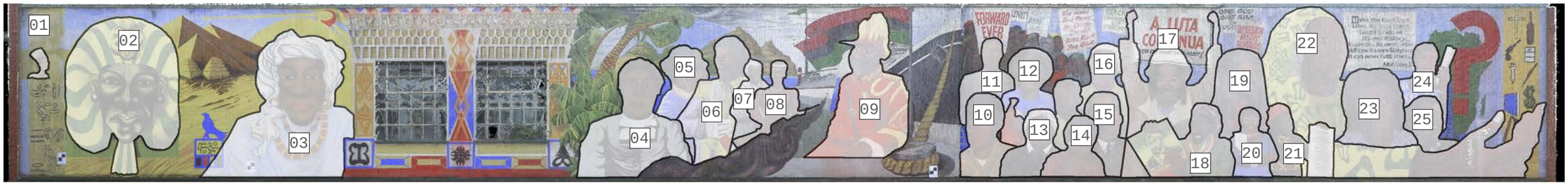
[14] CLAUDIA JONES
feminist, black nationalist, activist
founder of Britain's first major black newspaper *West Indian Gazette*
founder of *Notting Hill Carnival*



[17] TERRANCE "JEFF" ALLAMBY
shot dead in Reading

[18] DAVID "ARCHIE" ARCHIBOLD
Appollo Youth Programme
MAPP Partnership

[19] BOB MARLEY
singer, musician, songwriter
pioneer of reggae music
Pan-Africanist & social reformist



[04] HARRIET TUBMAN
abolitionist and social activist
born into slavery
escaped and rescued others
icon of courage and freedom

[05] OLAUDAH EQUIANO
writer and abolitionist
sold as slave
helped pass Slave Trade Act 1807

[06] TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE
Haitian general
leader of Haitian Revolution
turned slave rebellion into revolution

[10] FRANTZ FANON
psychiatrist & philosopher
Pan-Africanist
anti-colonialist

[11] MALCOLM X
Muslim minister
human rights activist
vocal advocate for black empowerment
"A man who stands for nothing will fall for anything"

[12] ANGELA DAVIS
political activist, academic & author
communist and left-leaning political thinker

[15] MARTIN LUTHER KING JR
civil rights activist
non-violent protester
led marches for the right to vote
leader of *Montgomery Bus Boycott*
"I have a Dream"
Nobel Peace Prize winner

[16] NELSON MANDELA
anti-apartheid activist
first president of South Africa
racial reconciliation
president of ANC
icon of democracy and social justice
Nobel Peace Prize winner

[20] SHIRLEY GRAHAM-PAUL
Reading community midwife
depicted holding an image of Mary Seacole, a nurse from the Crimea
founder of *Friends of Mary Seacole*

[21] YVONNE HUGGINS
depicted holding a list of people killed in police custody

[22] ?
[23] ?
[24] ?
[25] ?

Mural Restoration

[CULTURE & HERITAGE]

The mural will be protected during the construction works and a detailed scheme has been outlined. There are four phases to the mural's protection.

PHASE ONE - PROTECTION OF THE ARTWORK

The first step to be taken before any work is commenced on site is to ensure that the painted face of the mural wall is protected from even minor damage. It is proposed to cover the artwork in a protective padded layer, which is boarded over with construction grade plywood to prevent any accidental damage through impact. There is potential for the temporary covering to display community artwork.

PHASE TWO - STABILISATION OF THE WALL

Parts of the exiting building are not suitable for future retention and will be removed before construction work can commence. The stability of the mural wall will be ensured during this phase by the insertion of a steel frame to brace the existing wall.

PHASE THREE - RECONNECTION TO THE BUILDING

Once the structural work of the proposed building has been completed the mural wall and its structural frame can be connected back to the building. This will ensure the long-term stability of the wall and the mural.

PHASE FOUR - RESTORATION OF THE ARTWORK

Once the construction works are externally complete there is no further risk to the mural and the protective covering can be removed. At this point the mural will be fully accessible and the restoration can be undertaken.

A detailed schedule of work for the mural has been identified and is the subject of a supporting document.



- spot repairs to mural substrate where fixing points have blown out render. lose render to be removed and rusted fixing replaced with stainless version
- areas of localised repainting required where hairline cracks have been left to grow. crack to be raked out to solid material and filled then repainted.
- areas of cleaning where exposure has allowed mural to become coated in semi-organic grime. pressure cleaning or other treatments to be carefully tested before commencement.
- large expanse of varnish applied across most of the mural to be removed with appropriate chemical solution and correct varnish reapplied sensitively.

Townscape Role

[SITE ANALYSIS]

In order to design proposals for a site, we need to understand the context and wider townscape role that the site has. The analysis has identified some important roles that the site needs to perform on a townscape level.

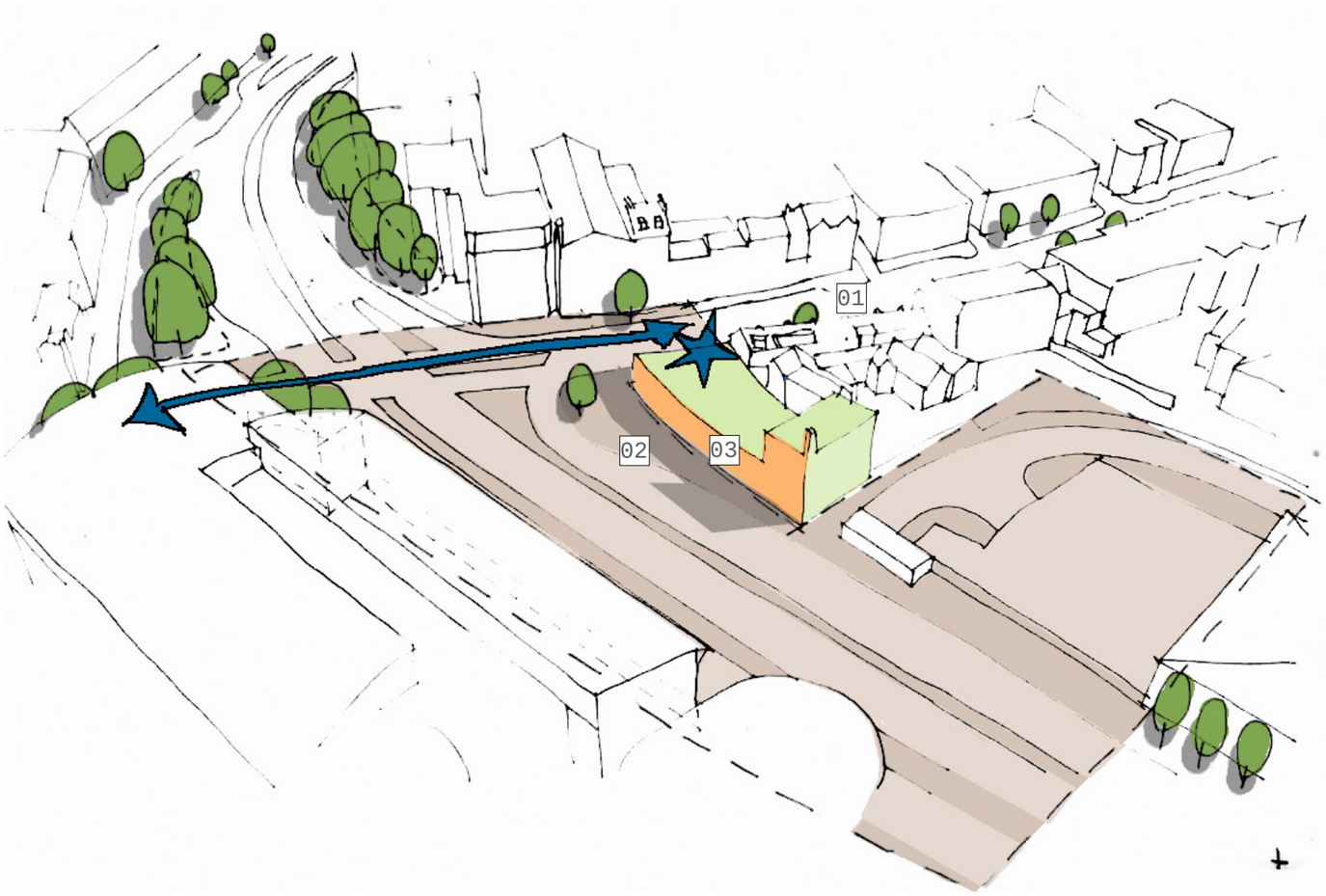
The proposal site is directly adjacent to the IDR which, along with the River Kennet, presents a barrier between Reading town centre and its northern urban regions. The barrier means that there are routes into Reading only at key points. The IDR and London Street junction is one of these points, and the architecture and urban realm needs to support this to avoid the town centre and outer regions being segregated.

[01] CORNER PLOT
The existing building has two primary façades: London Street and the IDR, as the building relates to two major roads. This then makes the corner position a prominent one in the town centre and to overcome the severing effect of the IDR, an increase in scale and architectural landmark will assist to visually link either side of the road.

[02] PUBLIC REALM OPENNESS
The increase road widths at the junction, together with the reduced scale and massing on the site and nearby has created a 'leaky' and expansive space. This adds to the severing of the road network. It also suggests that an improved, and less car dominated environment should be considered to raise pedestrian priority over the car.

[03] MURAL
The north elevation of the site features a prominent mural. The bright colours and the uncommon nature of large-scale artworks in British towns make the mural (and therefore the site as a whole) conspicuous in the townscape. For cultural value, the site has a larger-than-town-scale significance. The quality of the art work and vibrant colour scheme will assist with an increased scale of architecture to enliven this area of the town.

A successful design on the proposal site would fill the entire site with building to reinforce the large scale of the IDR context & be a catalyst for public realm improvements



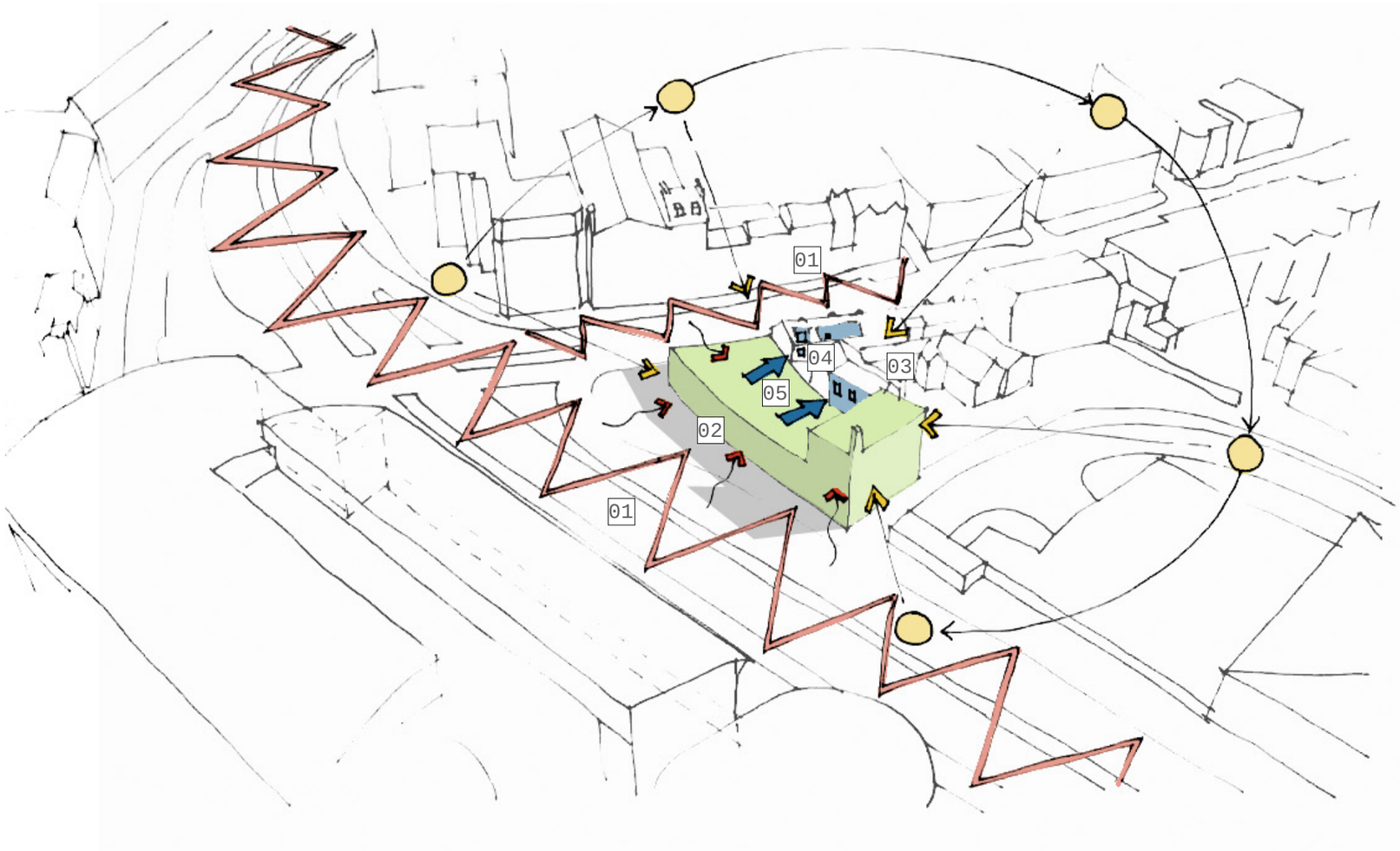
Environmental Considerations

[SITE ANALYSIS]

In addition to the heritage, mural and townscape considerations, the proposal has a number of environmental and neighbourly considerations to successfully overcome. The diagram and explanatory points below explain these concerns.

[01]
The IDR, Mill lane & London street are busy town centre roads, these generate significant noise and cause air quality issues.
[02]
The mural elevation faces north, which does not benefit from sunlight. Accommodation on this elevation will need to be less dependent on daylight.
[03]
The south facade benefits from the solar orientation, and potential views over Crossland Road. This also benefits from facing away from the busy roads. Overheating might also be a consideration for accommodation facing this direction.
[04]
Nearby office and residential windows are seen at the properties south of the site. Views out from the scheme will need to consider potential overlooking.
[05]
Any increase in scale might be overbearing on the existing properties to the south of the site.

A successful design will resolve the conflicting constraints of noise, solar orientation and impact on neighbouring properties





SUMMER 2018 - EARLY DESIGN CONCEPT
Initial design thoughts considered a statement architectural proposal, with a *floating cube* hovering above the existing building. The proposal included a bar at mid level which was later removed to resolve occupant conflicts.



WINTER 2019 - CONCEPT EVOLUTION
The cube concept was developed in greater detail and thoughts about patterns and decorative facade treatments were explored







JANUARY 2020 - MASSING EXPLORATION
After receiving early feedback from a scoping meeting with RBC, townscape analysis and massing rationale exercises were carried out to ensure that the proposed form and scale of the development was appropriate to local and town-scale contexts



FEB 2020 - PRE-APP SUBMISSION 1
The first pre-app design focused on creating a landmark scheme for 31 units, split between two blocks. The front block is lower in scale to address the conservation area setting requirements. The rear block is



taller to address the wider townscape requirements match IDR scale and create a landmark at this important junction. The scheme placed a communal garden between the blocks. Concerns where raised with the design on scale, the *back-to-front* arrangement of having the larger block to the rear, and some of the units at lower levels had daylighting concerns.



MAY 2020 - POST PRE-APP REVIEW
The scheme underwent a decrease in scale to follow conservation officer comments. The low-rise concept forced the removal of the separate blocks and the proposals took on a horizontal proportion.

Design Evolution & Pre-Application Advice

[DESIGN RESPONSE]

The proposed design has arisen from an extended design evolution process that has included two pre-application planning enquiries, presentations to Reading's Design Review Panel, discussions with Conservation Officers and other planning consultees to sculpt the design into a coordinated solution.

The images on these pages illustrates the development of the design and key strategic architectural and planning decisions made along the way.

The design team consulted community members, groups, and end users to ensure that the design and proposed accommodation is suitable for the local requirements.



JUNE 2020 - LOW PROFILE BLOCK MASSING EXPLORATION

Various massing ideas were explored for a low-profile scheme, these ideas also explore retaining the mural only, and removing much of the existing building.



AUGUST 2020 - CREATING THE CORNER ENTRANCE

With the existing facade removed it allowed an alternative elevation strategy to be explored along London Street. This design emphasised the horizontal floor slabs with a contrasting material.



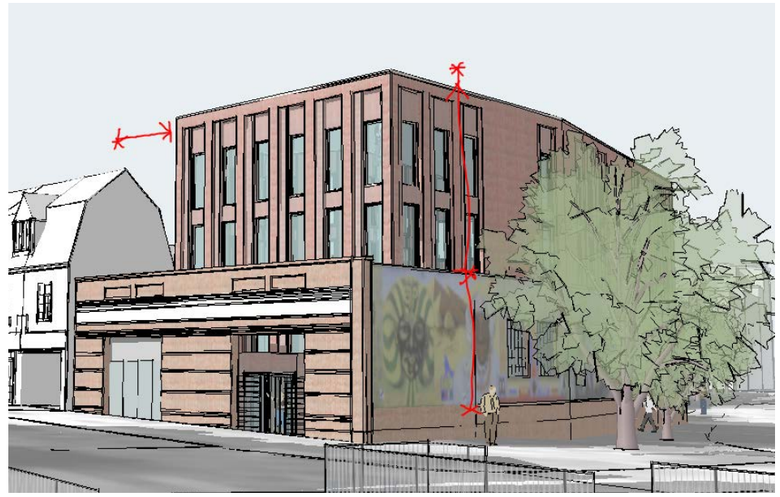
SEPT 2020 - MATERIALS

Following discussions with the conservation officer, brick was considered as the preferred primary material. The frontage on London Street was still a cause for concern as there are few modern façades here.



NOVEMBER 2021 - PRE-APP 2

The second pre-app retained the existing building across two floors and the London Street facade. The proposal mounts a new element over the mural *plinth* level. The DRP requested clarity in the design as to whether the new part sat *on* or *in* the existing building.

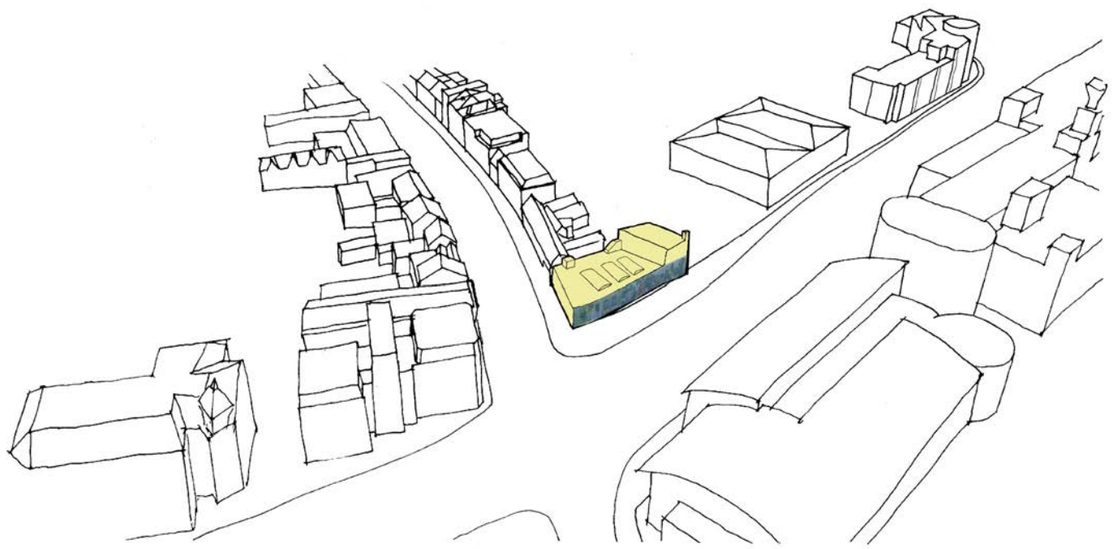


APRIL 2022 - REVISED DESIGN CONCEPT

The elevation detailing at Pre-App 2 was criticised for being "easy to build badly", so a simplified facade was explored. The top floor was extended to increase the proportion of new building seen over the mural to avoid visual competition, and apply a more elegant parapet detail.

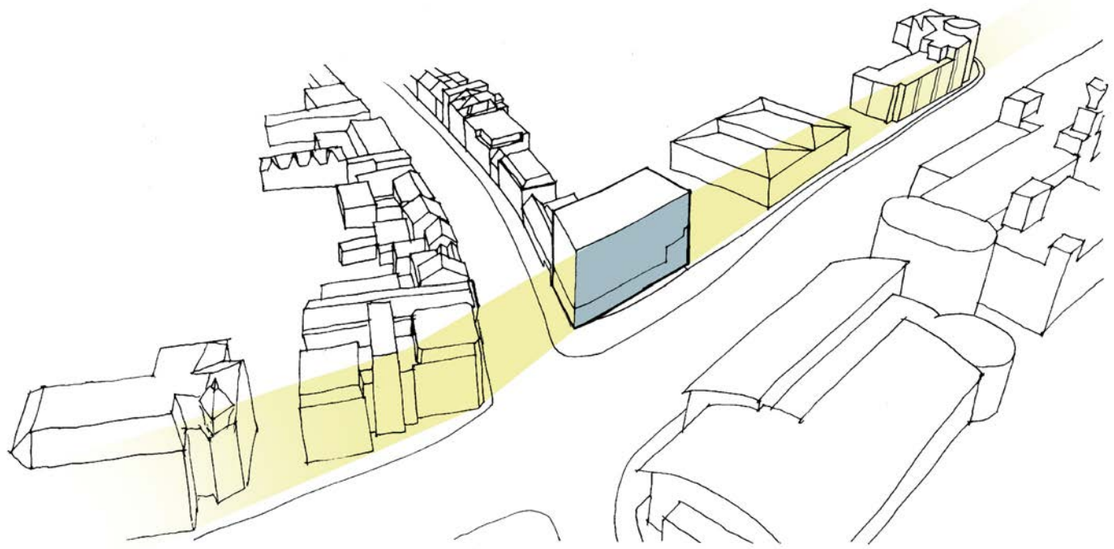
Setting the Scale on the IDR

[DESIGN RESPONSE]



WEAKNESS IN ADDRESSING THE IDR

The existing facade does not have sufficient scale and height to balance the width and openness of the IDR and Mill Lane. In contrast the Oracle shopping centre opposite is 5-7 storeys in height and offers a strong frontage. The site and nearby depot to the east are only two storeys and so fail to generate the required sense of enclosure There is an opportunity to address this townscape issue and improve the setting along this section of the IDR.

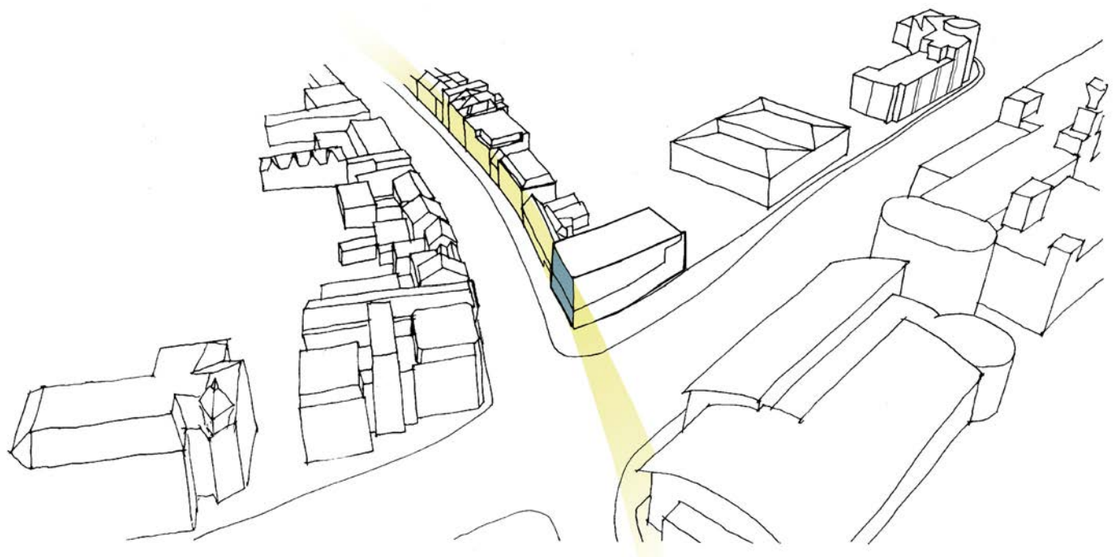


SCALE OF IDR FRONTAGE

A 4-5 storey increase in façade scale would be a solution that could overcome this IDR enclosure issue. It could be the catalyst that fills the street scene gap that extends from London Street to the corner Hotel.

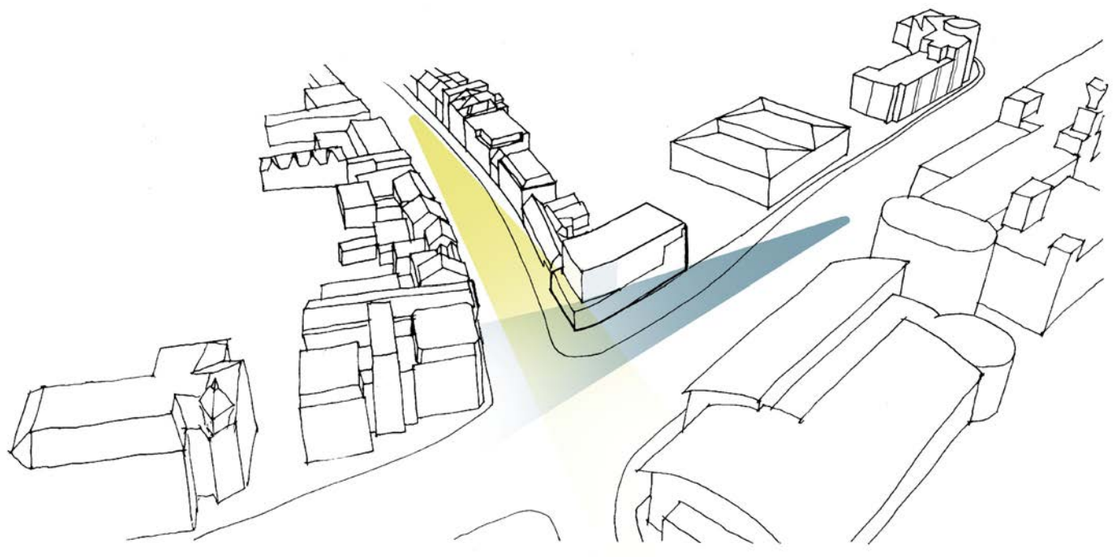
Respecting the Scale on London Street

[DESIGN RESPONSE]



ADDRESSING LONDON STREET

The conservation area setting of the London Street is a more intimate and sensitive setting than the IDR. The current two storey scale of the façade is an unusual depression in the street scene that could be increased slightly to offer a level of enclosure characteristic of London Street.



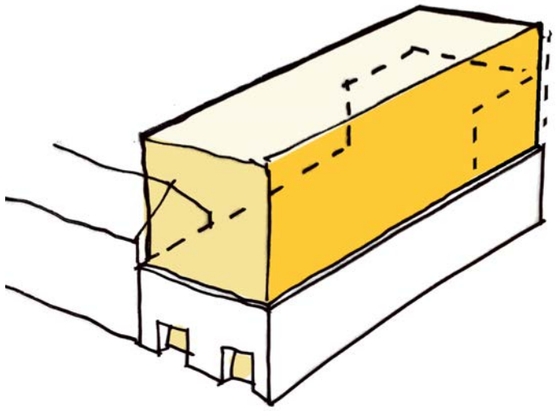
SCALE OF LONDON STREET FRONTAGE

Although an increase in scale would address the enclosure, there are other heritage considerations that would require this to be sculpted or set-back to avoid negative impact the context or nearby listed buildings.

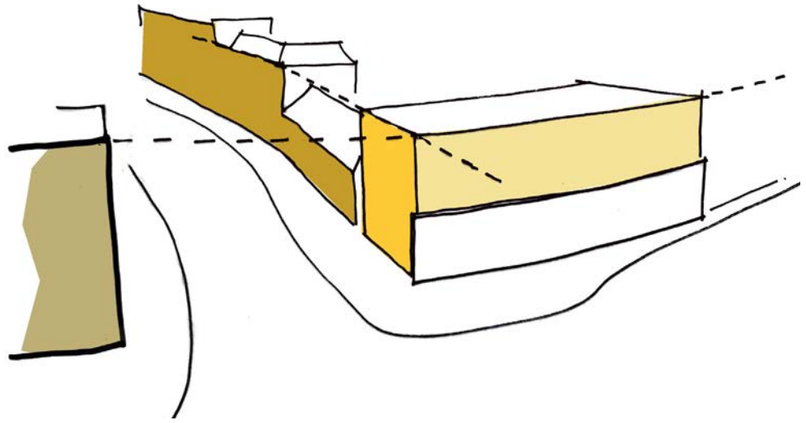
The increase in façade scale will also need to preserve key views of the conservation area and listed buildings. This will determine the form and shape of the scale increase.

Concept

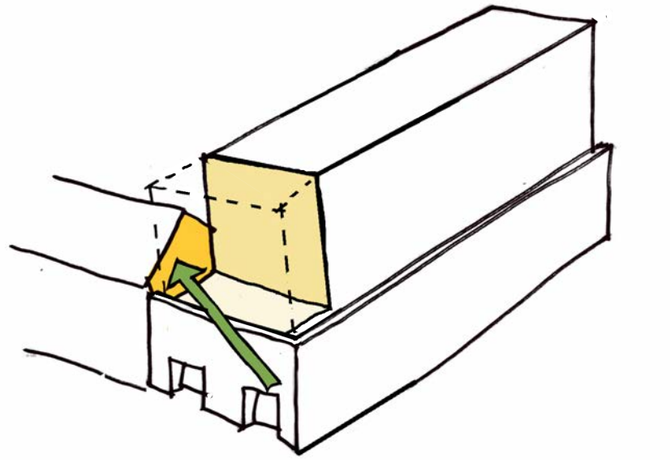
[DESIGN PROPOSAL]



01
retained mural and facade with block inserted within existing building



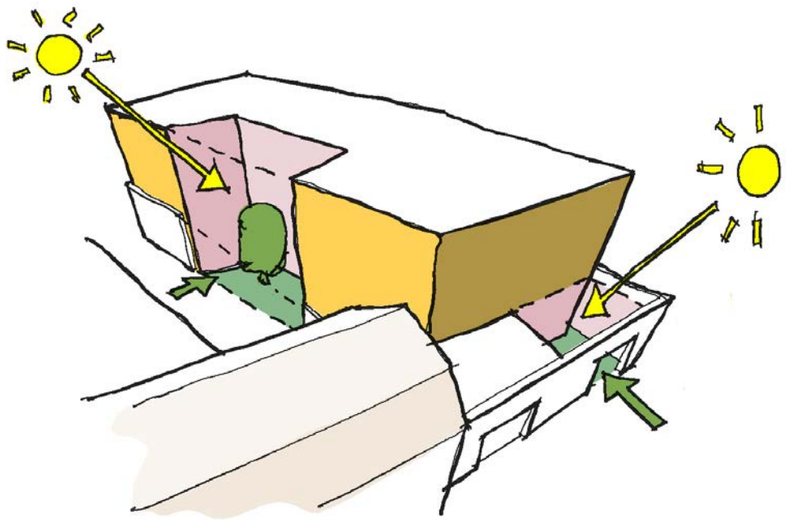
02
suitable scale & massing established by context and townscape analysis



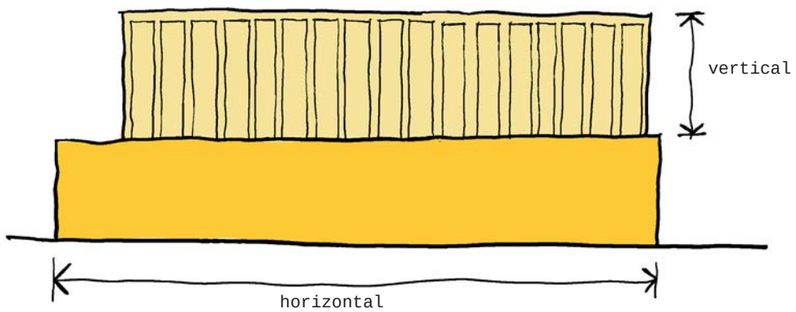
03
facade set back to respect heritage view of neighbouring gable end wall

Concept

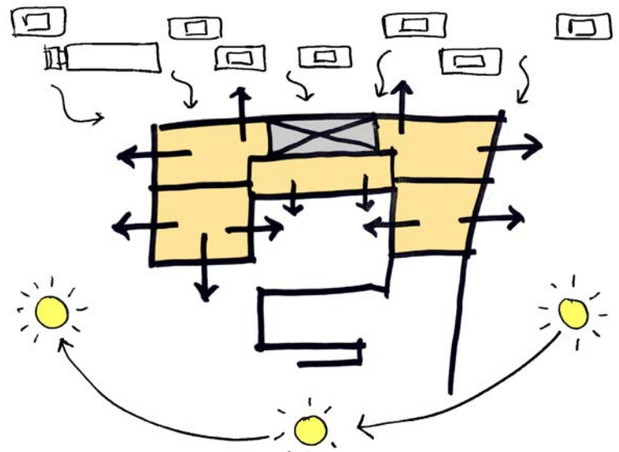
[DESIGN PROPOSAL]



04
courtyards added at entrance points to bring natural light deep into plan



05
horizontal base with mural given architectural freedom by contrasting vertical treatment of inserted block



06
all units given dual or south facing aspects and circulation space noisy & dark IDR aspect


Art Centre
36 - 42
Art Centre

Access & Links

[DESIGN PROPOSAL]

The proposal provides access to the new residential dwellings and community space through an enlarged existing entrance aperture on the northern eastern corner of the retained existing building facade. This forms the main entrance, which first arrives into a small external courtyard, before leading to individual entrance doors to the residential and community spaces.

The arrival courtyard not only creates a degree of separation from the hostile street but it also exposes the rear side of the mural and offers an opportunity for artwork, more details about this is covered later in this statement. Lockable external gates will secure this courtyard, and be open 9am to 5pm. Outside of these hours residents and community users will have keys to allow access.

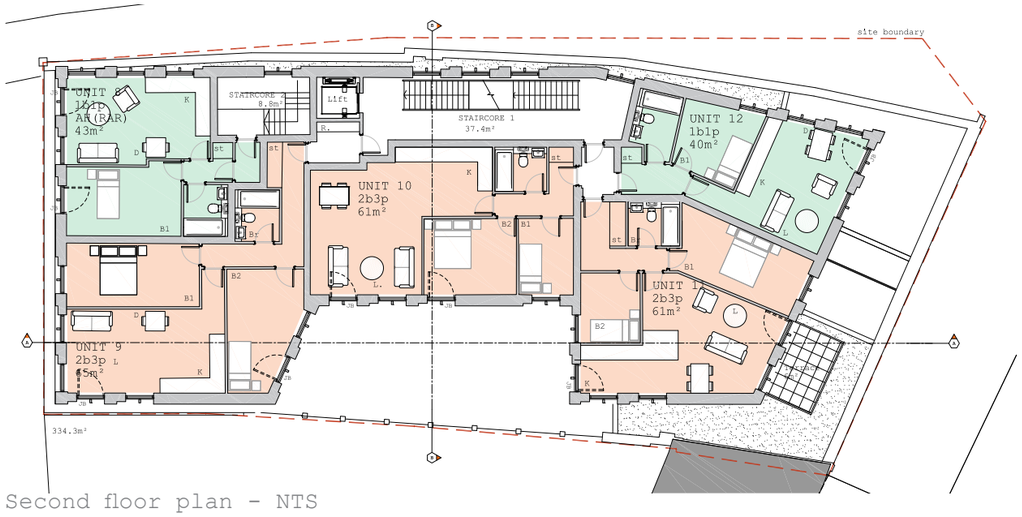
The second building access point is from the central courtyard, which is accessed off the pedestrianised (highways land) link between London Street & Crossland Road. Bins, cycles and resident access is made through a secure lockable gate to the courtyard. Bins will be collected from this point and taken to the turning head at Crossland Road for refuse collection.



Proposed site plan



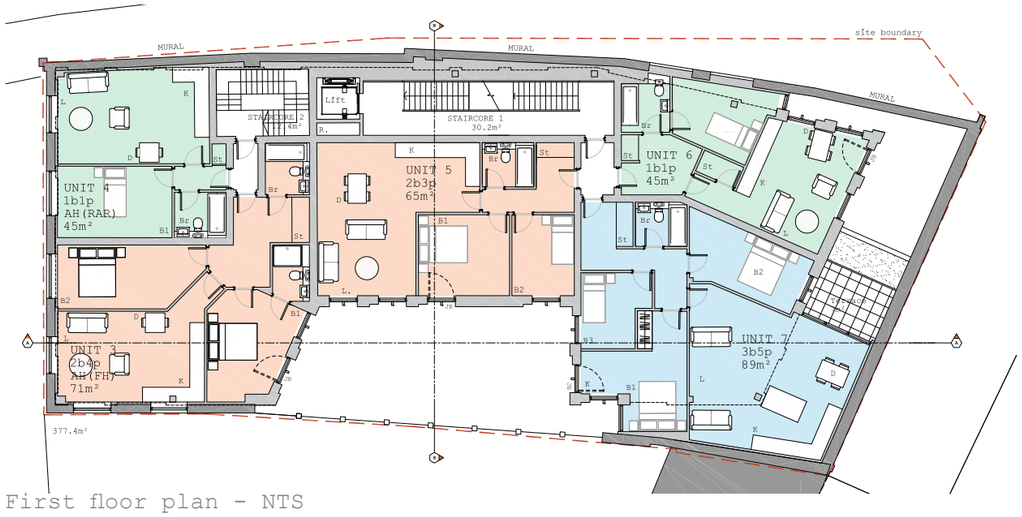
Proposed entrance from London Street



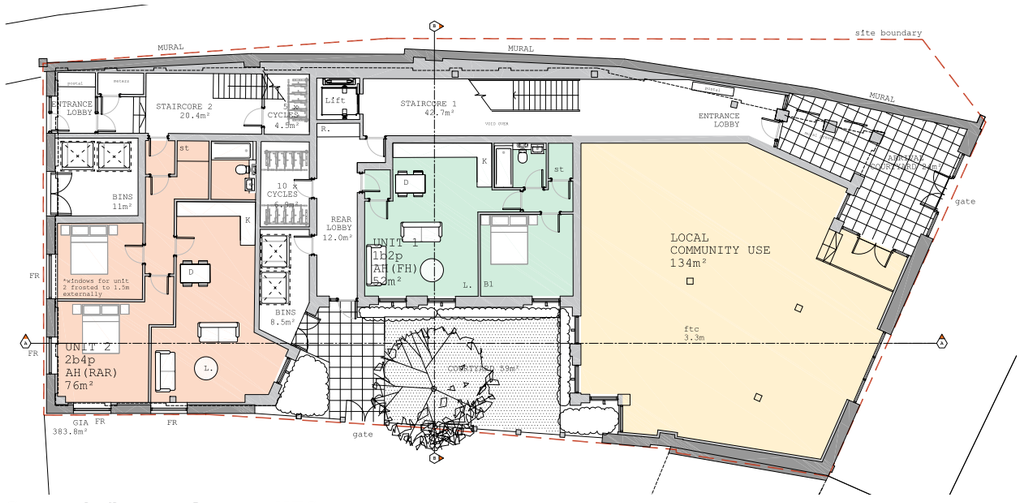
Second floor plan - NTS



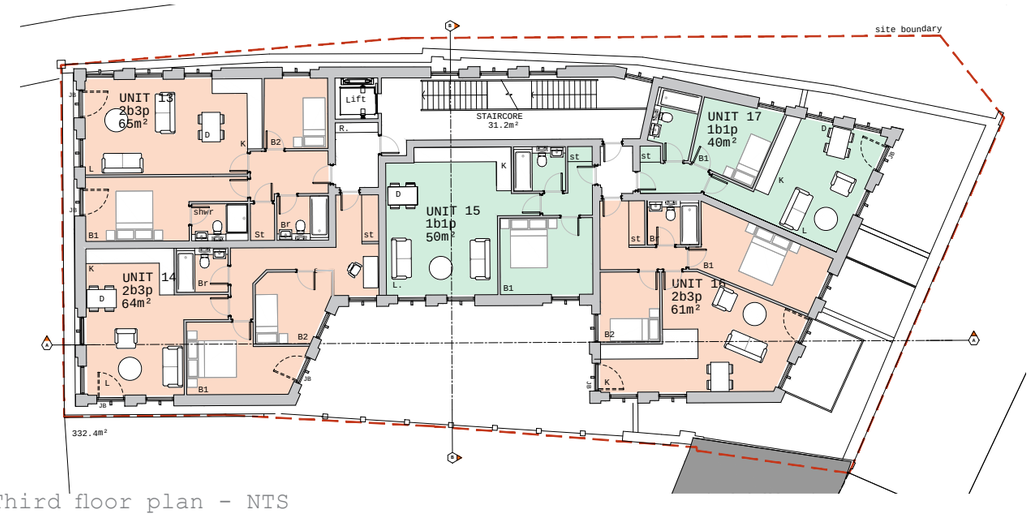
Section A-A - NTS



First floor plan - NTS



Ground floor plan - NTS



Third floor plan - NTS

Red line area	571.5 m²							
Ground floor								
	**Unit 1 (1b2p)	*Unit 2 (2b4p)	bins	cycles	circulation	local community use	**Net sale area**	**GIA**
	52	76	19.5	11.4	70.7	134	**128** m²	**383.8** m²
	559.52	817.76	209.82	122.664	760.732	1441.84	1377.28 ft²	4129.688 ft²
First floor								
	**Unit 3 (2b4p)	*Unit 4 (1b1p)	Unit 5 (2b3p)	Unit 6 (1b1p)	Unit 7 (3b5p)	circulation		
	71	42	65	45	89	42.6	**312** m²	**377.4** m²
	763.96	451.92	699.4	484.2	957.64	458.376	3357.12 ft²	4060.824 ft²
Second floor								
	*Unit 8 (1b1p)	Unit 9 (2b3p)	Unit 10 (2b2p)	Unit 11 (2b3p)	Unit 10 (1b1p)	circulation		
	43	65	61	61	40	46.2	**270** m²	**334.3** m²
	462.68	699.4	656.36	656.36	430.4	497.112	2905.2 ft²	3597.068 ft²
Third floor								
	Unit 13 (2b3p)	Unit 14 (2b3p)	Unit 15 (1b2p)	Unit 16 (1b1p)	Unit 17 (2b3p)	circulation		
	65	64	50	40	61	31.2	**280** m²	**332.4** m²
	699.4	688.64	538	430.4	656.36	335.712	3012.8 ft²	3576.624 ft²

Totals	**1b**	**2b**	**3B**					
17 units	**7**	**9**	**1**			**TOTAL GIA**	**990** m²	**1427.9** m²
	41%	53%	6%				10652.4 ft²	15364.204 ft²

*AH (RAR) "Reading Affordable Rent"
** AH (FH) "First Homes"

AH sale area m²/ft² =	284	Private sale area m²/ft² =	706		
	1377.28		7596.56		
	28.7%		71.3%		
AH non-sale area m²/ft² =	137.7	PR non-sale area m²/ft² =	83.9		
	1481.652		902.764		
AH total area	421.7	PR total area	789.9		

Schedule of accommodation

Use, Amount & Layout

[DESIGN PROPOSAL]

USE

The proposed mixed-use scheme provides 17 residential dwellinghouses (C3) and 137m² of community hall (F2) accommodation. The residential unit types offer a balanced mix of 1,2 & 3-bed units. A portion of these units are allocated as affordable housing; details of which are covered in the affordable housing statement.

AMOUNT

The 17 residential units are all compliant with Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan, which states that new dwellings are to achieve National Space Standards, set out in the table below. All dwellings exceed the minimum spatial standards including room sizes and built-in storage provision.

Table 1 - Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m^2)

Number of bedrooms(b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

COMMUNITY SPACE LAYOUT

The community element is positioned on the London Street side, an active retail and commercial frontage that would be enhanced by this community activity. The community space has rear access for servicing through the central courtyard and also has shared access to the bin & recycling facilities.

The community space has a taller floor to ceiling height at 3.3m, to increase the breadth of functions that the space can offer. To create this additional floor space the accommodation is split over two levels, where the entrance point is at the higher street level.

The community space layout has intentionally been left unplanned as it will be for the end user to plan as best suits them. It is considered that it will contain a main space, toilet facilities and possibly office areas.

RESIDENTIAL LAYOUT

The residential accommodation is mainly positioned on the upper floors as the retained building facade and mural offer little opportunity for fenestration. Accommodation that requires less natural light is more suited for the ground floor.

The residential units face southerly to benefit from natural daylighting and also to face away from the hostile IDR environment to the north. The lift and stair core have been positioned on this northern aspect as they are not habitable spaces so do not require a daylight aspect, and road noise is acceptable. A noise and air quality report has been prepared to illustrate the residential accommodation has been designed to be acceptable in this context.

Many of the units hold corner positions and are dual aspect to provide good levels of natural light for longer periods of the day. To further illustrate the quality of the natural lighting, a daylight report has been prepared to support this layout concept.

There are a few instances where residential units have a north facing habitable room, but these have been designed out as far as possible. The air, daylight and noise reports show this as acceptable.

The level external access and lift core allow all residential units to be wheelchair accessible. The scheme has been designed to make units accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations, which is a requirement of Policy H5.

As the development has fewer than 20 dwellings there is no requirement for M4(3) wheelchair housing.

Scale & Massing

[DESIGN PROPOSAL]

SCALE AND MASSING

The proposal strengthens a prominent corner junction within the town centre by successfully redressing the lack of enclosures along the Mill Lane and London Street. The proposal balances this useful scale increase against potential harm on the nearby listed buildings and conservation area through a set-back facade and uncomplicated architectural form.

KEY HERITAGE VIEWS

The site analysis identified three key viewpoints that the proposals should be reviewed against to access the impact that it has on the conservation area context. The three images below illustrate these views, with the proposals overlaid.

[01] NORTH ALONG LONDON STREET

The key consideration here is whether the proposal is overbearing on the pitched roof terrace to the south of the site. The proposal sits slightly higher than its low-slung neighbour, but visually below the modern Oracle Centre behind. In this important aspect the proposals avoid significant change or harm to the setting of the conservation area.

[02] SOUTH ALONG LONDON STREET

The important aspect of this view is the gentle rising historic street scene of London Street that curves away to prevent an endless vista. However, the corner junction with London Street and the IDR, which is poorly articulated and enclosed allows London Street to unsatisfactorily blur with the IDR. The proposals seek to address this issue by reinforcing the corner and frontages. The set back from London Street preserves the end gable to neighbouring site No. 44, which is an attractive heritage asset from this view.

[03] WEST ALONG THE IDR TO THE CONSERVATION AREA

The openness of the junction, when looking west along the IDR, offers a key view of the *Great Expectations* building's decorative façade. The lower scale of the existing Central Club allows glimpses of the façade over. The proposed scale increase is set-back from the London Street side. The resultant impact on this view is slight, but not lost. When balanced against the benefits that the scale and massing offers the articulation of the corner and improved enclosure from the IDR for London Street it should be considered a solution of reasonable balance between conflicting site forces.



01 View north along London Street



02 View south along London Street



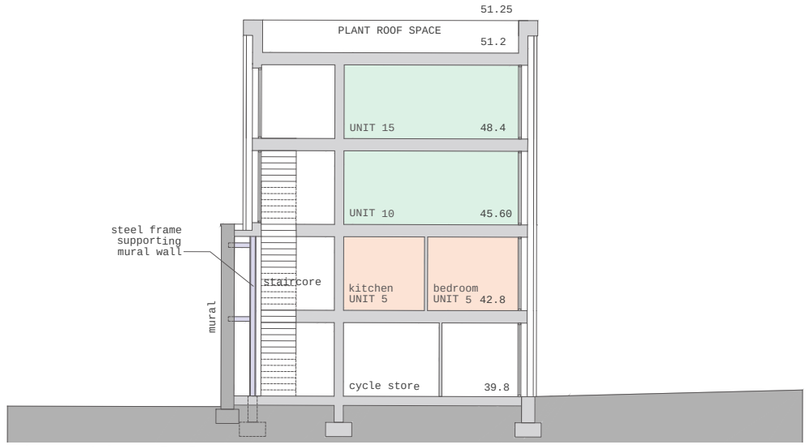
03 View west along IDR



Proposed north elevation



Proposed south elevation



Proposed section B-B



Proposed street scene along the IDR

Appearance & Materials

[DESIGN PROPOSAL]



Proposed west elevation



Proposed east elevation


FORWARD EVER
A LUTA CONTINUA
SO DO WHAT YOU MUST!
Malcolm X

Appearance & Material

[DESIGN PROPOSAL]

APPEARANCE

The appearance of the scheme has been driven by the concept of a colonnade inserted behind the retained mural facade. The colonnade element has a vertical emphasis, which is in contrast to the horizontal mural facade, thereby helping to distinguish the old and new elements. Where existing walls are removed, or inserted elements are set in, the colonnade extends to ground level to express this articulation.

The vertical effect of the colonnade has been achieved through the fenestration setting out, brick detailing, and the inclusion of elegant vertical fins that subdivide the windows. Where there are larger areas of brickwork, the colonnade rhythm is continued with a repeating vertical channel echoing the fins.

MATERIAL

The building is an uncomplicated form and employs a carefully selected, limited palette of materials. Brick is the primary material used, selected to be similar to the existing building and create visual harmony. This creates a simple backdrop and allows the mural to stand out. Brick is extensively used in Reading and London Street which makes it a sympathetic choice to blend into the context.

[01] The Newport gallery presents a good example of a historic building extension where a similar brickwork tone is used, so the entire building feels like one, but it is obvious which is new and old.

[02] The facade example illustrates the elegance of a thin mullion fin that runs through the window section of the colonnade, adding subtle detail and texture to the facade.



Proposed brickwork, red with light buff/grey mortar, laid with various brick bonds



Existing brickwork to the retained existing building



Bronze style metal cladding to in-fill wall sections between new and existing buildings



New windows, metal frame, bronze colour

01

02


LANDMARK 0118 957 5888
skn
PRIVATE PARKING

Fenestration & Detailing

[DESIGN PROPOSAL]

COMPOSITION
The proposal is a regular geometric form with a simple palette of materials. The quality of the architecture depends strongly on the detailing of how these materials are constructed and abut each other. The window openings are a critical part of this design.

WINDOW OPENINGS
The recessed patterns of brickwork, windows and vertical fin together form a repeating motif applied to all elevations of the building. This detailed extract shows how the motif has been composed using varying depths of brickwork panels and metal linings to the reveals. The openings are glazed with metal window units with frames coloured bronze to give accent to the brickwork without heavy delineation (especially important on the mural facade). The subtle differences between fixed panes, juliet balconies, and opening windows will create a rhythm in the elevation without attracting attention away from the conservation area and mural.

EXISTING & PROPOSED LAYERS
The existing openings on the western and southern façades of the existing building are retained, but with adjusted head and cills to suit the new floor levels. To record the existing layout, any remnants of lintels and cills cut to allow the new opening will be retained to enable the former layout to be understood. A different and more traditional industrial Crittal style window will be installed into these openings, helping to distinguish the old from new.

[01] existing brickwork repointed as necessary

[02] existing openings glazed with Crittal style units

[03] new metal capping profile to complete existing walls

[04] new brickwork “colonnade” layer in stretcher bond

[05] new brickwork “reveal” layer in soldier stack bond

[06] new brickwork “interior” layer in header bond

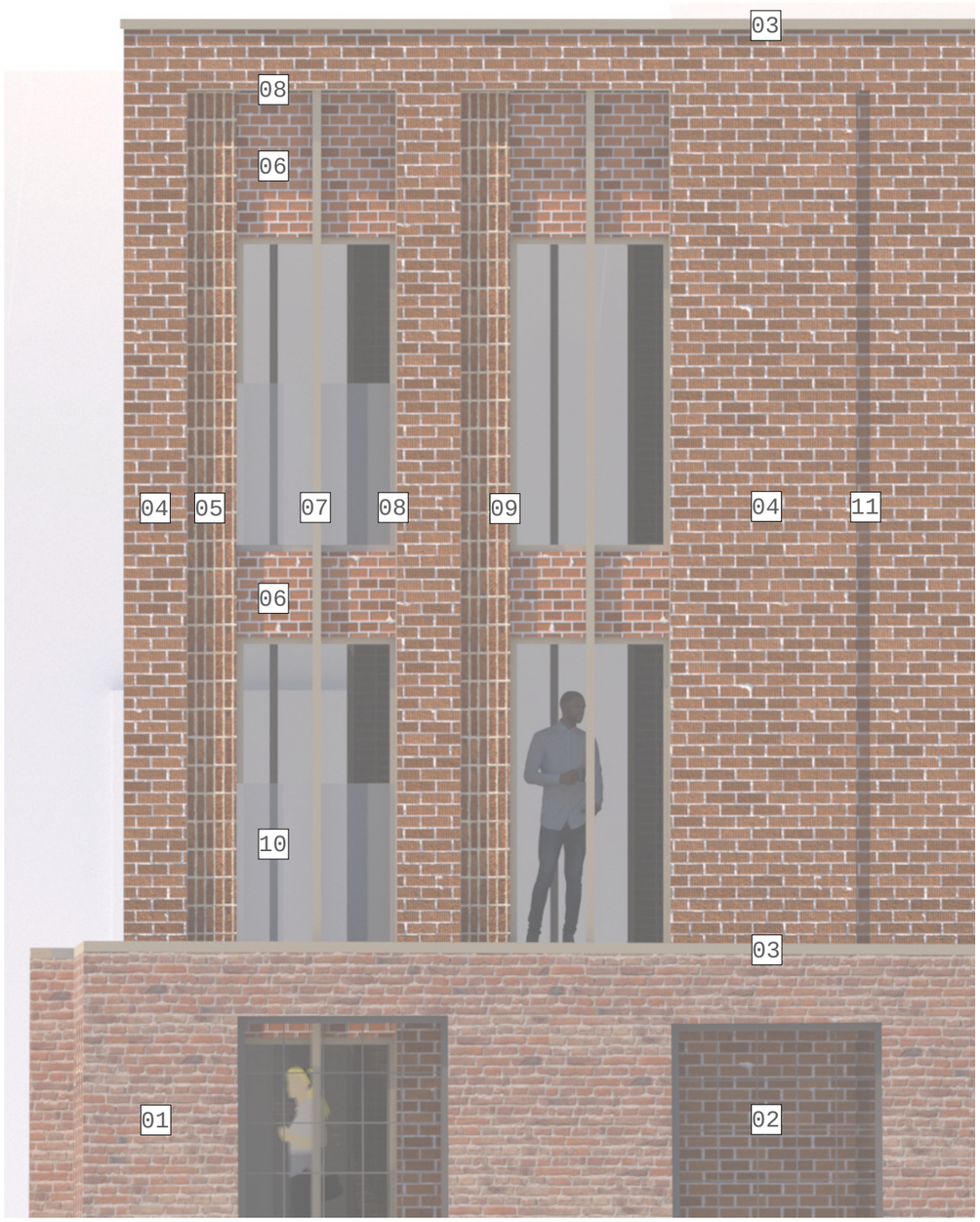
[07] bronze coloured metal fin mullion dividing opening

[08] bronze coloured metal reveal flat outlining opening

[09] bronze coloured metal glazing units with openable lights

[10] fixed glazing for juliet balconies covering inward opening doors

[11] recess in colonnade brickwork expressing rhythm of glazing fins



Landscape & Public Realm

[DESIGN PROPOSAL]

PUBLIC REALM
The existing building occupies the full site boundary, giving limited opportunity for external public realm or amenity for the dwellings. External space opportunities have been maximised to address this and new courtyards and terraces have been introduced into the scheme to provide outside space.

The site is located centrally to Reading, therefore residents benefit from the numerous town centre parks, public spaces and leisure facilities.

ARRIVAL COURTYARD [01]
The entrance courtyard is located on the north east corner of the site via London Street and is a shared landscape space for the residents and community space uses, with a total area of 24m². The space is semi enclosed and sheltered by the over-sailing first floor, it is hard-landscaped, with planters.

This space includes the rear face of the mural wall and provides an excellent opportunity to include an educational aspect of the scheme. A detailed explanation of the mural and its story will be exhibited here for the public to better understand the heritage and value of the site.

REAR COURTYARD [02]
The largest courtyard space is central to the south elevation. It improves the natural light to the residential units and provides secure amenity space. The 59m² space is hard-landscaped, with planting and a feature tree. There is an opportunity for a community art installation project here.

This space allows access for the bins and bicycles through a rear gate to the highway to the south. There are residential windows that face into this space and to prevent amenity users clashing with occupants a buffer of planting has been positioned in front of the windows.

The ground level changes across the length of the courtyard which will be ramped to ensure level access.

AMENITY TERRACES [03]
JULIET BALCONIES [04]
In addition to the courtyards, all residential units have either private external amenity terraces or juliet balconies. Policy H10 (private and communal outdoor space) sets the following criteria:

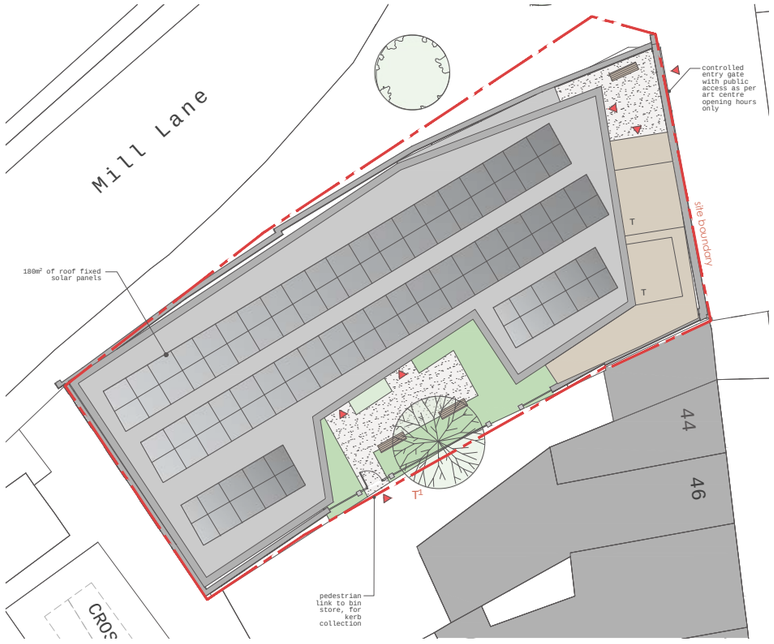
" Dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space, including green space wherever possible, that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens."

" The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identify whether they are private or communal spaces, ensure that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhance safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing."

Given the town centre location and tight site constraints, there is no opportunity to provide generous external amenity space. The proposals make the most of the space available. Nearby residential schemes provide limited amenity space, which is the character of the area and therefore this scheme meets this criteria.

SECURED BY DESIGN
Both ground floor amenity spaces are fenced and have controlled access. During the day, or when the community centre is open to the public, the glass doors to London Street will be fixed open. Outside these hours the space will be locked with access given only to those with key fobs or codes etc.





Sustainability

[DESIGN PROPOSAL]

The scheme has been designed with sustainability and low-energy use in mind. To accompany this application a energy report has been prepared to illustrate how a energy use has been minimised within the design. In addition to the low-energy design, the scheme design aims to adheres to the following sustainable criteria:

ENERGY & CO2

Aim: To conserve energy, in particular carbon dioxide emissions and maximise the use of energy efficiency techniques.

- optimise the use of the energy from the sun and limit heat losses
- optimise natural daylighting, energy efficient lighting, external lighting and natural ventilation
- use of energy (e.g. thermally massive materials, levels of insulation, energy efficient white goods and use of green / brown roofs)
- local energy generation from renewables
- minimise CO2 emissions associated with operational energy consumption
- solar space heating and natural lighting maximised through glazing position
- Use of renewable energy such as PV, ASHP, GSHP & wind
- A-rated appliances to be recommended

WATER

Aim: To improve efficiency in the use of water, conserve water resources and minimise vulnerability to flooding.

- water saving devices to achieve a maximum consumption of 105 litres per person per day
- recycling rainwater and reduce the use of potable water
- collection, treatment and re-use of grey water
- roads and paths be located away from areas of potential flooding
- incorporate harvesting and re-use of rainwater
- sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) and how will they be incorporated
- no substantial ground works reducing risk of floodwater diversion
- surface water is to be discharged into soak-aways to disperse rainwater on-site
- water butts can be installed to collect rain water for gardening

MATERIALS

Aim: To retain local character and promote the use of materials with a low environmental impact.

- materials to help retain local character
- ensure long life
- ensure a low environmental impact
- responsibly sourcing materials
- re-using existing structures
- materials selected to be harmonious with the local environment
- development adds to local character positively
- standard building products in ample supply ensure low transportation burden and availability from local sources

WASTE

Aim: To minimise the production of waste and maximise re-use and recycling.

- audit of materials present on the site
- assessment of the materials that could be re-used (conversion)
- use of construction, demolition waste and recycled materials
- storage and recycling of waste for all users of the site
- minimise waste sent to landfill
- contractor to manage waste responsibly including separating waste during construction
- waste and recycling bins to be integrated into council network reducing burden on transport
- garden provided includes space where user is able to compost household waste

POLLUTION

Aim: To minimise damage to the environment through air, surface water, land, noise or light pollution.

- noise and light pollution
- nitrogen oxide emissions and global warming potential of insulants / refrigerants
- release of pollution into the atmosphere
- pollution transported through surface water runoff
- development sited to minimise the impact of flooding
- development has been situated to reduce unwanted communication between proposal and surrounding house, including spread of noise and light
- A-rated appliances will reduce reliance on harmful refrigerants
- no harmful materials are required for the construction or maintenance of the building
- development is outside flood risk areas, reducing likelihood of c contaminants from flooded surface water

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Aim: To improve the quality of life in homes through good daylighting, improved sound insulation, provision of outdoor space with good accessibility.

- incorporate private outdoor space and external views
- adequate and appropriate lighting
- sufficient daylight
- ventilation & air quality
- the needs of future occupants
- private garden area offers opportunity for range of healthy activities
- large areas of glazing provide views out and connection to garden
- level access allows flexibility of user and provides for less ambulant

MANAGEMENT

Aim: To manage the site in an environmentally and socially considerate manner.

- community and stakeholders involved in the design process
- flexibly designed buildings which cater for shared use
- ensure people feel safe and secure
- reduce opportunity for and fear of crime
- environmentally and socially considerate construction
- guidance for the non-technical building user provided so they may understand and operate the building efficiently
- building maintenance
- raise environmental awareness
- environmentally and socially responsible contractor can dramatically reduce the impact of a project on the environment and community
- clear Operation & Maintenance manuals given at project completion allows non-technical users to understand the technologies and their efficient use

ECOLOGY

Aim: To retain, protect and enhance wildlife habitats and natural features.

- wildlife habitats and natural features on and adjacent to the site retained, protected and enhanced
- not using previously undeveloped land
- removal of contamination from the land
- no substantial trees felled or cut back
- substantial planting proposed with the development

TRANSPORT

Aim: To reduce the need to travel through appropriately located development.

- promote alternative and sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport
- reduce the need to travel, especially by car
- provide cycle storage
- public transport networks considered
- location of the development and proximity to local amenities
- deliveries and the manoeuvring of delivery vehicles
- proposal sits in walking and cycling distance of many facilities
- cycle storage is provided in the garage
- local public transport includes bus routes and railway station

INNOVATION

Aim: To recognise innovation in the field of sustainability.

- innovative sustainability measures in terms of a procurement strategy, design feature, management process or technological development

LIFESPAN

Aim: To sustain their beauty over the long term an emphasis on quality and simplicity.

- designed and planned for long-term stewardship by landowners, communities and local authorities from the earliest stages;
- robust, easy to use and look after, and enable their users to establish a sense of ownership and belonging, ensuring places and buildings age gracefully;
- adaptable to their users' changing needs and evolving technologies; and
- well-managed and maintained by their users, owners, landlords and public agencies.



The Central Club Proposals

[SUMMARY]

Colony Architects have followed a long process of design to arrive at these proposals. This application is the first planning application submitted following a series of Pre-Application advice, specialist reporting, consultee dialogue, and community discussion.

The design proposals made in this application are high quality, carefully considered, and the result of years of development as more information is gathered.

The application includes fully detailed plans, elevations, sections and details for the proposals, as well as numerous CGIs created to help explain the proposals in detail. Our reports are written in clear and plain English in the hope that our work can be understood by a broad range of interested parties.

The application includes numerous reports made by specialists and the proposals have coordinated that information. We believe that the proposals can be supported fully by the planning officer, RBC's planning committee, and the Planning Inspectorate.

