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PLANNING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

In support of an application for Conversion of existing premises from
Dance Studio to 1 x 3-bed dwelling (C3 Use Class)

**Webbs Court
8 Holmes Road
Earley
Reading
RG6 7BH**

September 2024



Introduction

This planning design and access statement has been prepared by STL Architecture to support the detailed planning application submitted on behalf of our clients, for Conversion of existing premises from Dance Studio to 1 x 3-bed dwelling (C3 Use Class)

This statement has been prepared in the context of the Reading Borough Councils Local Plan, adopted November 2019 and will cover the history and context of the proposal and outline the necessary information required to provide a determination by Reading Borough Council planning officers. The resulting conclusion is that key material considerations, including, impact on; character, neighbour amenity and highways safety are acceptable and the wider objectives of the relevant local and national planning policy are therefore met.

Site Context

The existing site is The Lodge School of Theatre Dance. This site is located within Earley, which has a large number of residential uses above shops and close to suburban housing area.

Earley has a number of local amenity spaces and public car parks situated in close proximity.

The site is located approximately 3 km to the south east of Reading town centre and is within easy reach of local services and public transport routes. The site is within a designated AQMA (Air quality management area).

The applicants own and control the application site in red as marked on our Location Plan.





Planning Policy

National

RBC Local Development Framework

Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

CC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3: Adaption to Climate Change

CC5: Waste minimisation and storage

CC6: Accessibility and the intensity of development

CC7: Design and public realm

CC8: Safeguarding amenity

EN14: Trees, hedges and woodlands

EN18: Flooding and sustainable drainage systems

H1: Provision of housing

H3: Affordable housing

H5: Standards for new housing

H7: Protecting the existing housing stock

H10: Private and communal outdoor space

TR3: Access, traffic and highway-related matters

TR5: Car and cycle parking and electric vehicle charging

RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres

RL3: Vitality and Viability of Smaller Centres

Supplementary Planning Documents

Affordable housing (2013)

Revised parking standards and design (2011)

Planning obligations under section 106 (2015)

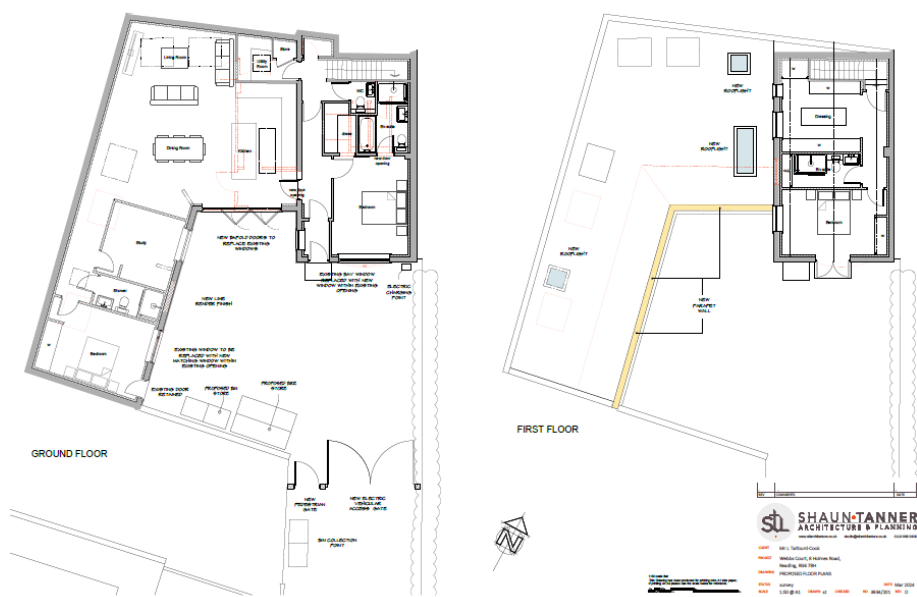
Sustainable design and construction (2011)

The proposal will involve internal alterations of the existing premises to form 1 x 3-bed, 2 storey dwelling within existing footprint/ shell.

Existing Layout



Proposed Layout



Access and Parking

It is noted that due to the proximity of the site within the Reading town centre and being within a walking distance of Palmer Park carpark that a reduction in normal parking standards would be permitted. However, there will be a reduction in traffic movements based on the current use, there will be 2 car spaces retained on site with the addition of an electrical vehicle charging point.

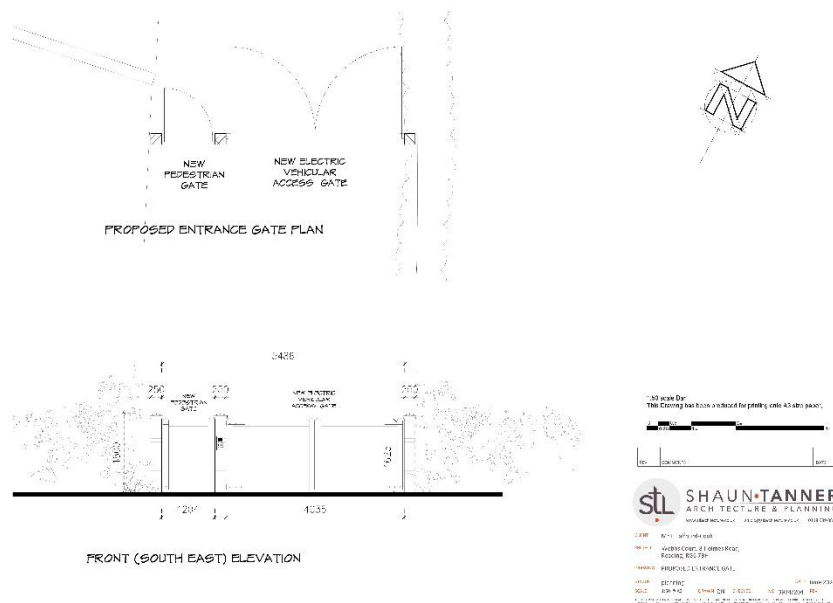
The application includes the provision of bin and bike stores within the site.

Refuse collection will be adjacent to the highway as per plans attached.

Access and Landscaping

The proposal will have direct access via courtyard retained.

There are no plans to provide enhanced landscaping as the application site is wholly contained by the built forms and there is a new entrance gate proposed for privacy.



Principal of Development

The application site has an established existing use Class E. The site is located in an area where there are a variety of land uses. Dual use properties along Wokingham Road are common and Holmes Road is entirely residential. The proposal is therefore compatible with the wider land uses and would be located in a sustainable location with a variety of shops and public services within walking distance. The principle of conversion to residential is therefore acceptable subject to all other material planning considerations being satisfied.



Character and Appearance

Local Plan policy CC7 outlines development must be of a high design quality and should maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the area. There are no plans to alter the current external appearance as outlined earlier in the statement.

Render externally matching existing area and bi-fold doors to replace existing window are the small changes in appearance of existing building.

Residential Amenity

The current layout is designed to avoid any overlooking of private amenity areas and this will be retained.

Flooding and Drainage

The application site does not give rise to concerns with respect to flooding or drainage. The site is not located within Flood Zone 2 or 3. The existing surface water and foul systems are already in place and there are no plans to alter these.

Ecology and Biodiversity

This proposal is not supported by an Ecology survey, as it is not applicable in this case.

Adaptation to Climate Change

The following devices will be incorporated within each home:

- Water efficient taps.
- Water efficient cisterns.
- Low output showers.
- Flow restrictors to manage water pressures to achieve optimum levels.
- Electric vehicle charging point.

Renewable and low carbon technologies have been considered and the applicant has elected for a fabric and renewable energy approach to meet the necessary CO2 reduction targets in accordance with Local Plan Policy CC2 and CC3. An efficient mechanical heat recovery ventilation system is proposed that will introduce filtered air changes to the building to ensure the internal comfort of the building is maintained, all necessary with the AQMA.

The available options for delivery of energy have been appraised and replacement highly efficient individual condensing gas boilers are the optimal method of supplying the



homeowners with efficient, cost-effective space heating and hot water. The current gas boiler will be replaced with a high efficiency unit to comply with current regulations.

The heating design will be enhanced by specifying full zone and optimum start controls to ensure that the homeowners have an effective, easy to control system. A high percentage of internal lights will be low energy which will reduce energy and CO2 emissions further.

Sustainable Construction

This development is a proposed conversion from non-residential to residential with minimal internal/external alterations, as such BREEAM assessment would not be a cost-effective method of demonstrating the proposed reductions in carbon emissions. Please refer to the Melin Energy Statement.

Air Quality

It is acknowledged that the site is within an AQMA and measures can be taken to mitigate the effects of poor air quality on future residents.

Surveys have been undertaken in the past within this pollution corridor. The conclusion states that future occupants are not predicted to be exposed to pollutant concentrations above the relevant AQOs. On this basis the application site is considered suitable for residential use.

Current glazing is a mixture of single and double glazed units. It is proposed to replace all units with Argon filled double glazing to comply with current building regulations.

Standards for New Housing – Policy H5

The minimum gross internal floor area for a 3-bed 2 storey dwelling is 102sqm. The proposed floor area is 202sqm. The current layout as proposed complies with Policy H5.

Development Contributions

The current premises have been in use for more than 6 months in the previous 3 years. Therefore, a CIL charge will not be applicable.

Conclusion

This application makes good use of an existing building in a highly sustainable location including excellent access to frequent public transport links, adequate parking and bin & bike stores. There are parks nearby for outdoor activities