

New porch and entrance and recladding
Christchurch Surgery
81 Christchurch Road, Reading RG2 7BD

Design and Access Statement



QPArchitecture

April 2026 – Rev B

For Milman Road and Kennet Surgery

1.00 Introduction

This application relate to Christchurch Road Surgery, which is a part of the Milman Road and Kennet Surgery group. The existing building is used in conjunction with other surgeries in the group with small consulting rooms in a converted house.

This application focusses on the need to improve accessibility for disabled patients and visitors to the surgery and to improve the overall patient experience using the surgery. As part of this process the opportunity is also being taken to improve the appearance of the surgery from the street and to give the waiting area and reception a much needed uplift.

As can be seen from the accompanying photographs the surgery is an old, converted house that has been used as a Surgery for many years and the entrance, waiting and reception areas are outdated and badly need improvement.

Access for wheelchair users is difficult with a small concrete ramp, with no handrails leading to a small door that is barely adequate for a wheelchair to get through safely.



The external appearance of the building has not substantially changed since it was originally converted for medical uses, and the low-level pitched tile roof is clumsy and unattractive. The building fails to stand out as a community asset in any shape or form.

Internally once a wheelchair user has managed to gain access, they find themselves in a very small lobby with a further door to navigate into the waiting area and reception desk. The present arrangement is very difficult for wheelchair users, mums with buggies and the frail and elderly to manage.

The proposal to create a new entrance porch with two pairs of automatic opening double doors at the outside and an automatic opening inner set will provide a much improved, suitable approach and entrance to the surgery for all users and is the most appropriate solution to improve equality for access for all to the building.

2.00 The site and context

Christchurch Road is a busy urban road in Reading and is characterised by a mix of residential uses, houses and flats, with ground floor retail and commercial uses in small shopping parades. There are public houses, restaurants and traditional shops to be found close by the surgery, and the following photographs illustrate the variety of uses and appearances to be found close by the site.



From the photographs there is a lot of traditional red/brown brick buildings with concrete tiled roofs to be found in the area. Equally the parade of shops and commercial uses, with flats above, shows a lot of painted or rendered elevations making this part of the road distinctive and obviously different to the traditional residences opposite.

The above show the mix of properties, styles and uses that can be seen from the surgery entrance drive. The following photographs illustrate the neighbouring properties to the surgery and the street scene generally.

At present the only distinguishing feature that sets the surgery apart from neighbouring houses is the entrance board at the roadside!





As can be seen There are a wide range of external materials, colours and building types in the area and the proposals have been designed to complement the existing area but to make the statement that the building is an important community asset and needs to be visually distinguished as such.

3.00 Design proposals

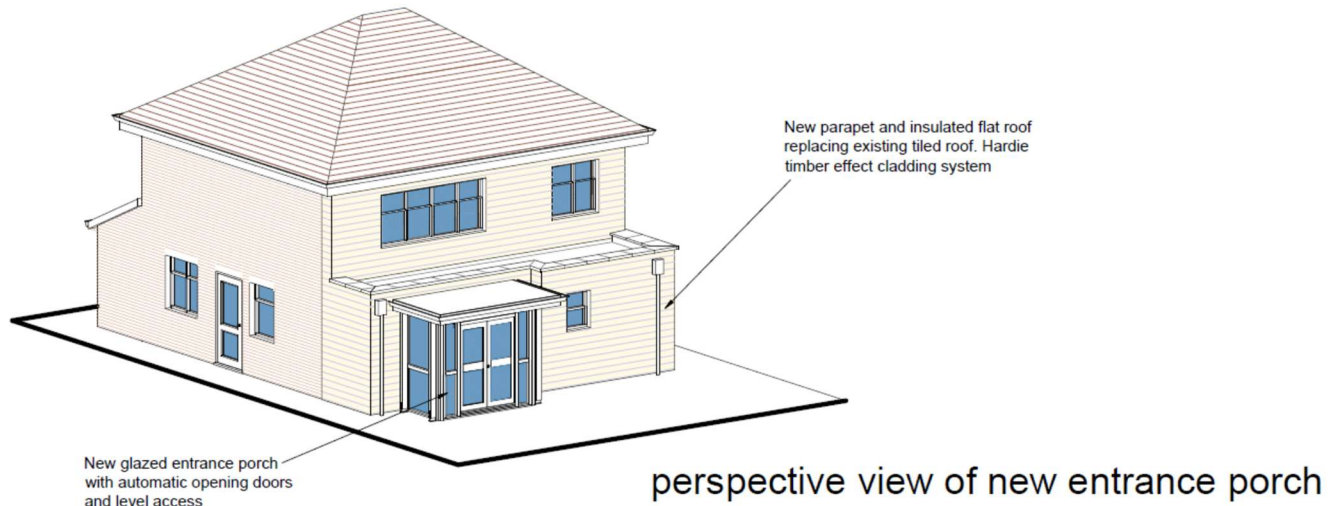
The surgery has recently been undergoing an internal redecoration and replacement of sanitary fittings as a general upgrade. To complete this process the building access needs to be significantly improved to create equal accessibility for all.

Several options were considered but the financial constraints and ever-increasing construction costs have limited the scope to that of a minimal intervention to create a new accessible entrance and provide a new face to the street. It is deemed important that the surgery appearance be improved and be made distinctive to help the building stand out as an important community facility, rather than as a timid converted house.

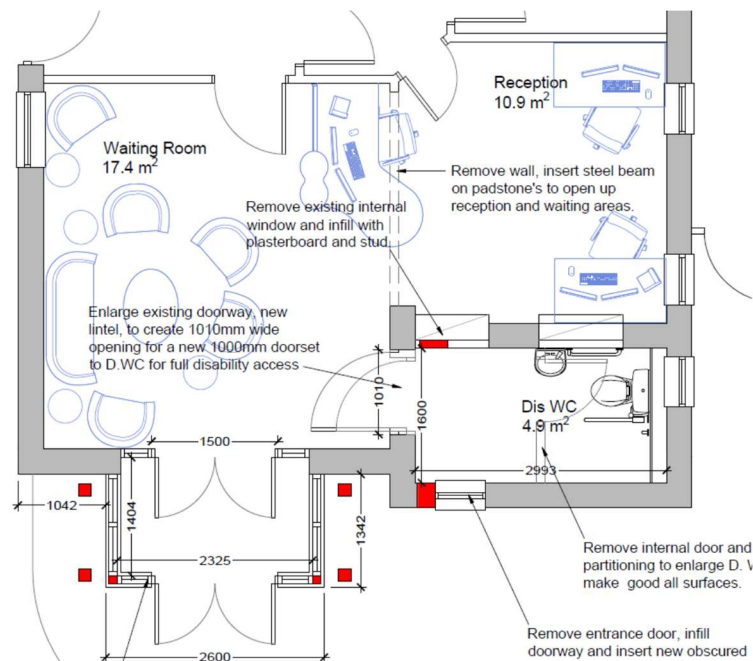
Consequently, the design has evolved to remove the large waiting room front window and replace this with a new colour coated double glazed entrance porch set under a flat canopy with external supporting columns. This will signal 'entrance' far more positively than the present small door.

It is proposed to clad the front elevation with a light coloured non-combustible ventilated rainscreen cladding system such as Hardie panels, to refresh the elevation and appearance and create a distinctive refurbished face to the street. The new entrance porch will be designed to use matching materials and colours with the automatic opening doors clearly picked out.

This new construction will be both prominent and a strong visual signal to the new front door. In parallel with this the external tarmac will be regraded to provide a gently ramped surface affording a level access for wheelchair and buggy access.



Internally the current entrance lobby will be removed and the old entrance door infilled and replaced with a new small window. This new arrangement will add space to the WC so that an effectively Building Regs compliant accessible WC can be formed with ease of access from the waiting area.



The extract from the application drawings above shows the enlarged Disabled WC and the new entrance porch with inner and outer doors both set of which will be automated for full

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accessibility. The waiting areas and reception will be opened up to create a less institutional feel and provide a comforting attractive space.

To enhance the appearance of the surgery from Christchurch Road it is proposed to remove the low level pitched tiled roof and form a new parapet and insulated flat roof entrance range against which the new porch will be constructed.

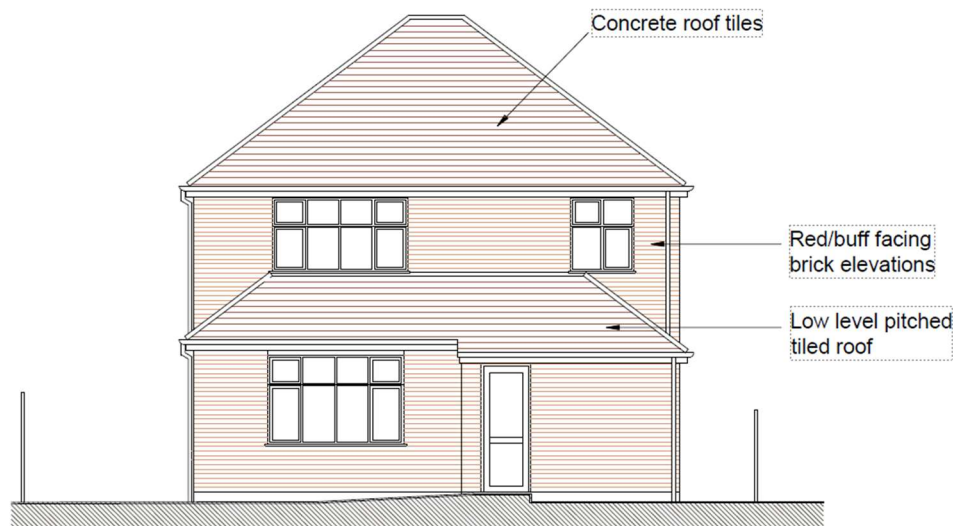
This remodelled entrance range and parapet, together with the first-floor front elevation would be clad with a Hardie Non-combustible timber effect cladding system to refresh the look of the building and give it a sense of distinctiveness that is currently lacking.

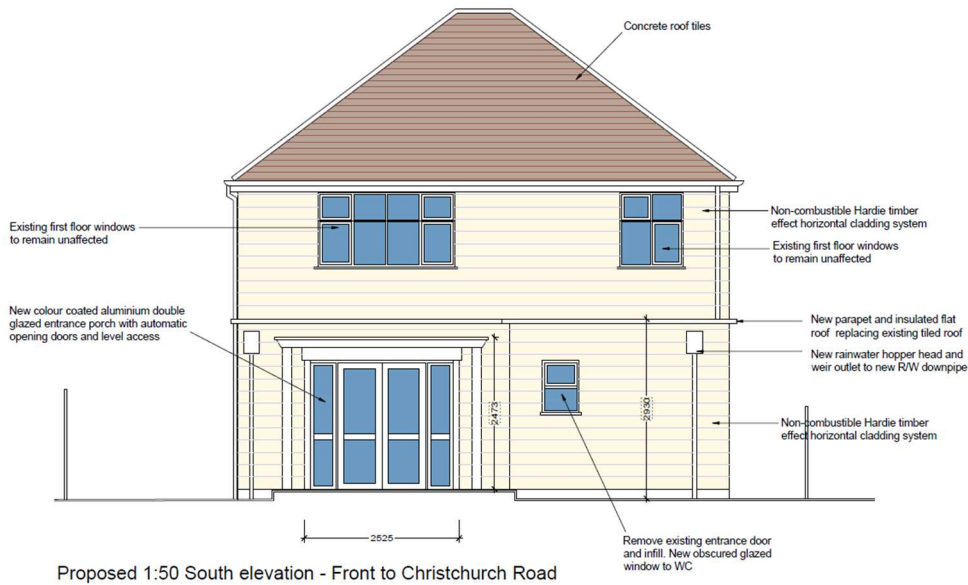
4.00 Sustainability

The new flat roof replacing the old low level tiled roof at the front of the building will be constructed to 2025 building regulations thermal insulation standards. The addition of the over cladding will add to the thermal performance of the existing walls, and the new porch and window will be designed to meet 2025 thermal standards.

As part of the redecoration internally all light fittings are being replaced with LED fittings reducing the consumption of electricity significantly.

The drawing extracts below illustrate the before and after images of the front elevation.





Existing front elevation above, proposed front elevation below

As can be seen the new remodelled elevation is more structured with a strong entrance and more attractive overall appearance befitting the surgery.

5.00 Site and landscape

The site is laid out with a tarmac front area which is used for patient parking. There is no formal marking out of parking spaces, and empirically 1 or 2 cars can be parked there at any one time, albeit rather closely. Staff tend to park in the sideways to the west of the building, and the space to the rear is overgrown gravel with shrubs and is in rather poor condition.

The front area tarmac will be regraded to form a new level access to the main entrance and will be marked out for a disabled patients parking space. Staff will continue to park in the side driveway leaving space for a disabled visitor to park in front of the building.

A polycarbonate and colour coated steel frame cycle shelter with capacity for 6 cycles will be positioned at the front of the surgery close by the new main entrance to encourage both staff and visitors to use alternatives modes of transport.

6.00 Summary

The proposals will significantly improve accessibility, allowing far better access to the surgery to users of all capabilities. The new entrance will create a strong visual feature helping wayfinding. The enlarged disabled WC will bring the surgery into line with current requirements for equality and disability.

The provision of a dedicated disabled parking space at the front of the surgery, with the regraded tarmac providing level access to the new entrance doors, will facilitate easy access for all.

The provision of a covered cycle shelter will help to encourage use of cycles for travel to the surgery.

The new front elevation cladding and the replacement of the low-pitched tiled roof with a new parapeted flat roof entrance range will improve the appearance of the surgery, giving it a more contemporary and distinctive image.

The remodelling of the waiting and reception areas will produce a less institutional feel and be more reassuring to patients.

The internal redecoration and upgrade of light fittings will reduce electrical consumption considerably and contribute to a more sustainable building. Moreover, the new extension will be constructed to current insulation standards to comply with Building Regulations.

The remodelling of the external areas will facilitate on-site parking providing a dedicated space for a disabled user.

The proposals comply with local planning policies and will enhance the provision of medical care to patients using the surgery, providing community benefit.